

PSALM 134

A Song of Ascents.

¹ Come, bless the LORD, all you servants of the LORD,
who stand by night in the house of the LORD!

² Lift up your hands to the holy place,
and bless the LORD.

³ May the LORD, maker of heaven and earth,
bless you from Zion.

This psalm is the last of the series of 15 'Songs of Ascent'. Commentators suggest it is a final call to the priests in the temple (servants) to keep praising and praying to God on behalf of all the people, even as the people must depart back to their homes and homelands. "Come bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, who stand by night in the house of the Lord (before the dawn of the day ahead of worshippers gathering for first prayers of the day)! Lift up your hands to the holy place, and bless the Lord."

The priests then respond back to the people before they depart, saying: "May the Lord, maker of heaven and earth, bless you from Zion" (Zion = Jerusalem and the temple at its centre).

What do we need from each other and from the church community as we make our journey home (whatever home means for us at this time of our lives)? We need many things, but one of those things is prayer. It's all too easy in a world that privileges what is tangible over what is less so, to imagine prayer as just words, thoughts and feelings put out into an ether of emptiness. Is there anything beyond our senses and what can be measured scientifically? And yet, as many scientific studies being conducted tell us: prayer through whatever tradition of spirituality people immerse themselves in, carries energy and transfers energy, and especially when heart and intention is in the praying. Love is a foundational ingredient to any healing – spirit, mind and body. Pills, chemical treatment and surgery are important. Physical therapies, exercise and good nutrition are important. But most important of all, in life and in death is genuine love, care, compassion and forbearance for our variable and often broken humanity. Prayer can send forth and internalize such love energy in powerful ways.

Here at Armour Heights, we continue to offer opportunities for prayer beyond what each of us is called to practice on our own. Group prayer is a powerful experience, as is praying along with the minister during worship. Our new "prayer wall" is one more new opportunity. Have you checked it out yet in our Scott Duncan Hall? We also invite our online worshippers and participants to engage this opportunity. You can send in your prayer requests which we can then post on the wall. Check out our April 13 (Thursday) eblast for more details.

PRAYER: We ask for your blessing upon us, O God, as we make our journey home. Whether home is finding ourselves and finding home in who we are rather than in who others want us, expect us, shame us or pressure us to be; whether home is a physical journey out of one home and into another we have to make our own; whether home is a coming home to certain people, a community or a practice for our inner health and well-being we have needed to make for a while; whether home is about repenting/changing something in our lives in order to move in another direction or letting something go and moving on; however we need to think of home right now, O God, bless us as we make our journey... home. In Jesus' name; Amen.