

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

David's Heart Through the Psalms: A 40-Day Lenten Devotional

The 40 days (46 with Sundays) of the Lenten season begins on March 5. Traditionally, Christians would receive ashes on their foreheads as a sober reminder that we will return to dust and to relate to Jesus' death on the cross. While Advent is a time of joyful anticipation in preparation for Christmas, Lent is commonly regarded as a period of sober observance in preparation for the death and resurrection of Jesus. Lent is a meaningful way to connect and relate to Jesus in His rejection, arrest, suffering, death, burial and ultimately His resurrection.

During Lent we will walk alongside King David through his life and prayers, exploring the Psalms that poured from his heart. Aligned with our sermon series the "[Life of David](#)," this daily devotional invites us to approach Easter in a posture of prayer, reflecting on what it means to have a heart after God's own heart.

This devotional features a daily reflection written by members of our church family from different life stages and backgrounds. These personal, homegrown perspectives will encourage us to draw closer to God, no matter the season we're in. Together, we'll be reminded of Jesus' pilgrimage during the 40 days (46 with Sundays) leading to Easter.

Challenge: Use this season to focus on intentional prayer. As you reflect on the prayers of David, let these daily devotions guide you, keeping your focus on Jesus and the cross He bore for us.

Daily devotionals are available on [our website](#), and will be emailed each day via the Prayer Chain email.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Wednesday, March 5 | Day 1

Today's Devotional comes from Pastor Nate Keeler

[Psalm 3](#) – Depending on God to Fight Fear

"But you, Lord, are a shield around me, my glory, the One who lifts my head high... I lie down and sleep; I wake again, because the Lord sustains me. I will not fear though tens of thousands assail me on every side." (Psalm 3:3, 5-6)

We've all been there—lying awake in the middle of the night, our minds spinning with fear and anxious thoughts:

"Will we make the mortgage payment this month?"

"What if the test results confirm my worst fears?"

"How am I going to reach my sales goal?"

"What if our marriage never heals?"

Sleepless nights are often fueled by fear and anxiety. When worry invades our rest, Psalm 3 offers a powerful reminder of where true peace is found.

When David wrote this psalm, he had every reason to be afraid. His own son, Absalom, had betrayed him, leading a rebellion that forced David to flee for his life. And yet, instead of giving in to fear, David chose to depend on God. He describes the Lord as his shield—his protection on every side (verse 3). He trusts God so fully that he is able to lie down and sleep (verse 5), even with 10,000 reasons to be anxious (verse 6).

One of the key themes of Lent is learning to depend on God for our most basic needs—food, shelter, protection, and rest. The nighttime hours, when our minds are most vulnerable to worry, can be transformed into sacred moments of trust. The next time anxious thoughts threaten your rest, turn to Psalm 3. Meditate on its words, and actively surrender your fears to the Lord.

David's trust in God points us to the ultimate Son of David—Jesus Christ. On the night before His crucifixion, facing the unimaginable weight of the world's sin, Jesus entrusted Himself fully to the Father's will ([Luke 22:42-43](#)). Even in His death, He rested in the Father's plan, awakening three days later to resurrection life. Jesus is our pioneer of true rest.

Reflection Questions

- What fears are keeping you from resting in God's peace?
- How does Psalm 3 encourage you to trust Him more fully?

Prayer: *Lord, I confess my anxious thoughts and my tendency to fear. You are my shield and the One who lifts my head. You sustain me and provide for all my needs. Help me to trust You—both as I lay down to sleep and as I wake to a new day. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Lent Encounter Invitation

We invite you to come out this evening, **Ash Wednesday, March 5**, to set aside distractions and enter into a unique evening of reflection and prayer as we begin Lent, walking with Jesus to the cross. The sanctuary will be set with five self-guided stations designed to cultivate a sensory experience of reflection and prayer as we begin the season of Lent. The experience will take about 30 minutes to complete and will be open 5:45-8:45 p.m. in a come-and-go format. This is a great event for all ages. Kids 5th grade and under should be accompanied by an adult. Don't miss this incredible evening!

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Thursday, March 6 | Day 2

Today's Devotional comes from Pastor Terry Foester

[Psalm 7](#)

"O Lord my God, in you do I take refuge; save me from all my pursuers and deliver me, lest like a lion they tear my soul apart, rending it in pieces, with none to deliver." (Psalm 7:1-2)

Refuge isn't a word we use very often. Maybe the idea of taking refuge feels outdated, something only used in the context of war or the battlefield. Or maybe we don't use the word because we've learned to rely on ourselves in everyday life.

This got me thinking. Do we really know how to talk about refuge anymore? And maybe an even better question is, do we know how to seek it?

Refuge is more than just protection. It's about where (or in whom) we place our trust when life feels overwhelming. In a culture that values independence, admitting we need refuge can feel uncomfortable.

To David, refuge is who God is to him in his most desperate moment. He feels his pursuers closing in like lions hunting their prey. Picture a National Geographic scene of a lion in slow motion about to capture an antelope! David likens himself to the vulnerable antelope. He feels helpless, exposed and about to be torn apart.

But this imagery isn't just poetic. It's a spiritual reality we all face. 1 Peter 5:8 reminds us that *"the enemy prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."*

As you read Psalm 7 today, pay attention to how David responds. Does he run in fear? Does he blame others? What specifically does he ask of the Lord?

Refuge isn't something we naturally seek when life is calm. It's discovered in times of desperation. David knew this well. His life was marked by one challenge after another. At times, he fell short, relying on his own wisdom. But more often than not, he had the ability to look up and say, "God's got this!"

Perhaps because David was so familiar with struggle, his prayer life reveals this truth: We don't find refuge when life is peaceful. We find it in the most desperate moments.

David takes refuge in the Lord right in the moment when he feels like he is about to be devoured. He cries out: *"My shield is with God, who saves the upright in heart." (Psalm 7:10)*

This reminds me of the armor of God described in [Ephesians 6](#). Our shield isn't just something we hold. Our shield is faith in God. He is our defense. He is both our refuge and our deliverance. He is our salvation. And the only shield we have is trusting in Him.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Take a moment now. Where do you find yourself? What's going on in your life? What difficulty are you facing? Where is it hardest? And most importantly...what does it look like for you to take refuge in the Lord?

Prayer: *Lord, help me to take up the shield of faith in my life. I put my faith and trust in you. Your way is my way. Your path is my path. I trust in you alone. And as the enemy prowls around, remind me that I have perfect and eternal refuge in you. Jesus, thank you for laying down your life for me. Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Friday, March 7 | Day 3

Today's Devotional comes from Pastor Bo Matthews

[Psalm 8](#) – The Majesty of God and Human Dignity

*What is man that you are mindful of him,
The son of man that you care for him? (Psalm 8:4)*

American astronauts first walked on the moon in July 1969, and a journalist for *Time* Magazine wrote the following:

“The black vastness that served as a backdrop for the two astronauts’ walk on the moon also was a reminder of something else. Stargazer, now star-reacher, man inhabits a smallish planet of an ordinary sun in a garden-variety galaxy that occupies the tiniest corner of a universe whose scope is beyond comprehension.”

Very moving, and he left us here in our tiny corner, small and alone in the universe.

David also wondered how something so vast and enduring as the heavens could be anything but indifferent to us, who go about for a few years and then are gone and soon forgotten, while the fiery stars shine unchanged generation after generation. He put it this way:

*When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,
what is man that you are mindful of him,
the son of man that you care for him? (Psalm 8:3-4)*

Very moving, and he too left us here in our tiny corner, small as ever but under the mindful care of the Maker of Heaven and Earth, whom no one had ever seen, until he chose to visit us in this “tiniest corner of a universe whose scope is beyond comprehension,” and he said, **“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father”** ([John 14:9](#)). Then, around 3 p.m. on Passover Friday, he bound himself to us in a new and everlasting covenant of forgiveness.

Prayer: *Most loving Father, preserve us from faithless fears and worldly anxieties, so that no clouds of this mortal life may hide from us the light of that love which is immortal, and which you have manifested to us in your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Saturday, March 8 | Day 4

Today's Devotional comes from Allison Brown

[Psalm 11](#) – Trust in the Lord's Sovereignty

I trust in the Lord for protection, so why do you say to me, "Fly like a bird to the mountains for safety."
(Psalm 11:1)

I love the seeming audacity of David in this psalm. He's so blunt. As if he is sitting at home, fire roaring, in the middle of a snowstorm. People around him are telling him to flee and yet, he responds in confusion. Why would I leave this refuge? Why would I run out into a blizzard when I am protected here by the Lord?

About a year ago, I was diagnosed with a condition called POTS which causes me to faint at unpredictable times. It's easier to remain at home, seated on the couch or at my desk, where my husband is a call away. There are no triggers to set off my condition. There are no variables I cannot account for within my apartment. Logically, it is the safest possible location for me. It can feel like the world outside is my personal snowstorm, and I'm safe and sound by the fireplace. Yet, I still have to leave. I have to walk out to my car; I have to risk exposure to other people who behave in unpredictable ways; I have to sometimes collapse against someone I'd rather not; I have to rely on others to care for me. In that way, I can relate a lot to David saying, "Why should I leave?" The difference is that I'm talking about my home, and David is talking about the presence of the Lord.

This diagnosis has forced me to be truly powerless. My body turns off and I'm left unable to control it. I'm learning that my sense of "control" was always an illusion. The truth is, any of us, at any moment, can experience that illusion shattering. Some of the strongest people I know have had such an experience. If God did not exist, that would be it. We would live in a crippling state of fear at all times. Fortunately, that isn't where God leaves us. Instead, all throughout Scripture, He tells us, "Fear not, for I am with you" ([Genesis 26:24](#), [Joshua 1:9](#), [Isaiah 43:5](#), etc.). Do not fear to walk out into the world; do not fear to fall and stumble; do not fear relying on others—for God is with you.

I read David's opening verse as a response to God's assurances of safety. When David had every reason to fear, when the people around him were warning him to flee, he said, "I trust in the Lord for protection." May each of us this week echo David in our hearts. When fears arise, may we whisper this in reply: I will trust in the Lord for protection.

Prayer: *Lord, help me to place my trust and safety in you and not myself. Take my fears far from me and let me experience the peace of your presence in my life.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Monday, March 10 | Day 5

Today's Devotional comes from Kendra Young

[Psalm 13](#) – How long, O Lord?

"How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?" (Psalm 13:1-2)

I don't know anyone who hasn't felt this way at some point in their life. There are days, seasons and even years when we are called to trust the Lord in waiting. David is vulnerable in letting the Lord know the despair he is feeling. He clearly feels forgotten, unseen and unheard, with the enemy standing exalted over him.

I have been there—I've got the t-shirt, as they say—and I don't know a worse feeling. David knows he is wrestling not against flesh and blood but against darkness when he pleads with the Lord to consider him and lighten (illuminate) his eyes (verse 3). He is praying to see things from God's perspective—to see and be seen.

When I have found myself in despair, it has helped to remind myself: *"Facts first, feelings follow"*—instead of the other way around. When feelings come first, we can be misled by them. If we stay in the Word, grounded in truth, we become better equipped to deal with the powers of darkness, our humanness and the mental battles that come with emotions. It is God's Word that *lightens* and illuminates—it is a lamp unto our feet. I rely on that truth, and I am intimately acquainted with waiting seasons.

I married at 21, right out of college, with simple dreams: a Christian marriage and motherhood. I was born with these desires planted in my heart. I expected to have four children in my 20s. Instead, I experienced 18 years of infertility—a long season of waiting that felt unfair and, admittedly, filled with misunderstandings between me and the Lord. My husband moved away from living Christian values. I so desperately wanted to be a mom, yet not in a conflicted home. I pleaded with God, much like David, asking why He had placed the dream in my heart only to withhold the miracle I wanted.

Many years later, the Lord called me to *change the narrative* and illuminated my eyes to see clearly that He absolutely had given me a miracle. He showed me that closing my womb was protection and a gift—it allowed me to walk free from what had become a very abusive situation. If I had had children with my ex-husband, I would not have gained the freedom I walk in now.

I often say that divorce can be worse than death because gaining closure can be challenging. In 2003, divorce became part of my story, but in early 2004, I made a decision—not to be a victim, not to let it define me, and not to let despair cause me to give up on the dream of motherhood.

The adoption agency said it would take 12–24 months to complete my international adoption. Instead, I waited almost seven years. Near the end, I told my mother I didn't think I could keep waiting. I was

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

weary, focused on my feelings, and ready to throw in the towel. But my mom, older and wiser, said, *“One more time.”*

To me, that meant renewing more paperwork, paying more fees, and lying in bed at night wondering why—when I closed my eyes—I would see a little dark-haired beauty. When my faith was the size of a mustard seed, I was called to simply trust. I would sing the words from the song *Somewhere Out There* and pray that, somewhere out there, under the same pale moonlight, a child and I would somehow find one another—just like the song says.

A few months later, on April Fool’s Day 2011, the phone rang—and it wasn’t a joke. The news and pictures that followed let me know I had been *matched* with a dark-haired beauty. Her name is now Emerson Grace, and she is almost 15.

The Lord knew the restoration plans He had all along—He just wanted me to trust Him. I had a choice, and we always do.

This relates to Psalm 13:5, when David made a similar decision: *“But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation...”*

What an example David was and is—he trusted in the Lord despite his feelings. He chose to simply rejoice in the gift of salvation. David knew we were not owed this immeasurable gift, yet our merciful Savior manifested Himself in flesh, allowing us to be ransomed through His Son’s death on the cross and the resurrection that followed. A brutal death—but oh, what a glorious resurrection. A brutal waiting period—followed by a glorious promise fulfilled.

David goes on to say in verse 6 that he will sing unto the Lord because God has dealt *bountifully* with him—meaning with abundance, provision and blessing.

Much like David, I feel inspired—despite the chaos of the world around us—to simply trust in whatever God’s plans are and be thankful for salvation, abundance and blessing.

In closing, when I traveled to China to meet Emerson Grace, I learned that her Chinese name, given to her by the orphanage, was *Gan Fuze*—which, when translated, means *“blessing, leads people to a happy life.”*

I am forever grateful to God for helping me trust Him—like David did—in my season of waiting.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Tuesday, March 11 | Day 6

Today's Devotional comes from Cynthia Brown

[Psalm 16](#)

*Keep me safe O God,
For I have come to you for refuge.
I know the LORD is always with me.
I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me. (Psalm 16: 1, 8 (NLT))*

The narrative of David's life is mostly found in First and Second Samuel. But we also get a remarkable range of "snapshots" of David in the Psalms, often seen through his prayers and psalms of praise, as well as many other reflections, from laments to celebrations to worship.

Psalm 16 includes prayers – "Keep me safe, O God, for I have come to you for refuge" and praise – "I know the LORD is always with me. I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me." This is such a powerful expression of David's trust in God, especially when we remember some of the episodes in his life when he was a fugitive in hiding and his life was in danger. I know I can't begin to understand what David's experience was like, when he was able to proclaim the Lord's presence and protection even in those life-threatening times.

Many of us know the stories of well-known followers of Jesus through the years who have been able to bless the Lord, knowing he is "right beside them," as they endured incredibly difficult medical circumstances, painful family turmoil, severe emotional upheaval or other stressful tests of their faith. Some among us in our church family have stories of our own, or of family members or loved ones who have demonstrated genuine faith (sometimes strong, perhaps only fleeting at times) as they have navigated very deep waters. Close to home here at Brandywine, Matt and Karen Douglas immediately come to mind. All who know them have seen their steadfast trust in the Lord, through all the years of Matt's debilitating disease, right up to the time God called him Home in December.

In my own life, I can affirm that the Lord was "always with me" eight years after my husband Phil had a massive heart attack, and one week later when my sons and I made the decision to have him taken off life support. Unlike David ("I will not be shaken") I was shaken throughout that whole time, though I never doubted that the Lord was with me. I'll be honest, much of my certainty that the Lord was with me all through that week, and afterwards, was because of knowing he was present and providing comfort and support, rather than necessarily feeling his presence. Like many people of faith, I can be more of a "knower," which is not an emotional experience, than a "feeler." I would love to consistently have a tangible sense of the Holy Spirit's presence during a difficult period or any other time; but when there's a shortage of "feeling," I'm grateful that the truth of "the Lord is always with me" is believable and real to me.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Wednesday, March 12 | Day 7

Today's Devotional comes from Kent Crawford

[Psalm 18](#) – God, My Rock and Deliverer

As I read this Psalm, I can only imagine the pride David feels in our Lord God.

The beginning of Psalm 18 reminds me of the beginning of the Lord's Prayer, David is just giving God his love, his praise and his admiration. Verse 1, "I love you, Lord, my strength." Verse 2, "The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer."

But then, David begins to reminisce of how he called on God those countless times and how God responded to his prayers in such amazing ways! By the time David penned this song, he had already experienced unimaginable tests of his faith in God. David's own King, Saul, had tried to kill him. Imagine that! David was just a shepherd boy and the King of Israel wanted to kill him. Then, David faced off with Goliath – do you think young David was scared? Of course, he was! Verse 6, "In my distress, I called to the Lord". No doubt, David experienced a high level of anxiety approaching the giant Goliath, who may have been almost ten feet tall!

But this Psalm isn't only about David's skirmishes with Saul and Goliath. By the time this Psalm was written, David had conquered many enemies and fought many battles. Verse 37, "I pursued my enemies and overtook them..." David had led his armies through many battles and experienced many "close calls." Through all of the wars, our Lord and our God stood with David. God gave David and his armies amazing strength, provided them tremendous advantage over David's enemies, and (I believe) performed some miraculous battlefield victories that could only be explained as the Hand of God. But God's blessings were not just minor blessings (if there is such a thing). By David's account, all God's blessings came as RESOUNDING responses to David's faith (Verses 7 – 19).

So, David is looking back – WOW! My God really did this – for me?? In verses 20-29, David humbles himself and reminds himself that God was faithful BECAUSE David was faithful and humble before God. I think David knew he could possibly be tempted with pride and David used this portion of the Psalm as a reminder that this was all about God's divinity – not David's righteousness.

For the rest of the Psalm, David just continues praising God for the many blessings God has rained upon David and Israel. And the blessings are MANY! What a testament to our Lord and our God!

In our meditation about this Psalm, please join me in this prayer: *"Oh Lord, help me to be more like David! Lord God, help me to be bold in the face of adversity and exceptionally strong in my faith. Help me to make my every action pleasing to you. And as Your blessings continue to fall upon me, I commit to praising your Holy Name."*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Thursday, March 13 | Day 8

Today's Devotional comes from Champ Thornton

[Psalm 19](#)

Psalm 19:1–6 talks about God revealing himself through creation, and then Psalm 19:7–11 focuses on how God reveals himself through his Word.

The conclusion (Psalm 19:12–14) features one of the most famous verses in the entire book of Psalms. “May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.”

So why conclude this psalm in this way? Why end a psalm about God speaking to humans with a verse about the words of “my mouth?” Slowing down and considering verse 14 under three headings will help us meditate on the conclusion to this psalm.

Response. In this psalm God is talking, he’s communicating what he is like, as well as what *he likes*. And the psalm ends by us praying: that our response to what God has revealed will please him. If an important person came to town and had communicated his preferences in advance, the people welcoming that person would work to make sure those expectations were met. Here the God of the whole universe has not shown up unannounced. Instead, he’s communicated to us. And if we’re listening, we’ll want to respond in a way that fits what he’s said. Not just on the outside—not just in our own words. But also what’s on the inside—even the thoughts and meditations of our hearts. But what’s going on is so much more than merely trying to change ourselves.

Relationship. In the last verse, David prays that his words and thoughts would actually *please* the Lord. We want to be acceptable to him, to have him smile, as it were, on our words and actions and thoughts. We are not talking about just keeping up a to-do list, but about cultivating a *relationship*—living in a way that pleases the one we love and who loves us. But who of us is up to this challenge? Don’t we fail miserably to consistently please the Lord in thought and word? And that leads to . . .

Grace. David calls the Lord “my rock”—that is, the Lord is the stability under his peoples’ feet. Our performance may be up and down, on and off, but our Rock never changes. David also calls him, “my redeemer.” In David’s day, a “redeemer” was a family member who was responsible for the well-being of everyone in the family. It’d be like an uncle who if your family got in a financial pinch had obligated himself to make sure you were taken care of. And so the Lord is our redeemer; he has taken the initiative to obligate himself to care for his people. And we know that one day he would even lay down his life to take care of, remove and pay the penalty for our sin.

Through this grace, we are strengthened to please the Lord. And because of his grace, all our actions and our words and our thoughts—fallen and broken though they may be—are pleasing to the Lord.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Friday, March 14 | Day 9

Today's Devotional comes from Sam Arthur

[Psalm 22](#)

We don't know what trial David is suffering in this dramatic Psalm 22, but it's very public. While there may be some poetic hyperbole, it seems as if his actual survival is at stake. Although God has the ability to save people, and He has a record of having done so in the past, he seems absent and unresponsive in this case. Those who witness David's predicament are contemptuous; they consider God to play no part in his situation at all.

David knows for a fact that he was chosen by God from his birth; nonetheless he has been completely overpowered and physically savaged by his adversaries. But David prays for God to deliver him from their power - and God shows up! David's life is restored; consequently, he praises God in the public assembly for responding to him. According to David, his praise to God for his deliverance will inspire belief and praise throughout Israel, throughout the nations and throughout coming generations

This remarkable Psalm has long been considered by Christians to mirror and foretell Jesus' passion experience. The general parallels between the description of David's trials and Jesus' suffering in the crucifixion are striking – there is no hyperbole here! Several vivid details are referenced by the gospel writers themselves, namely:

- God forsaking Jesus - [Matthew 27:46](#); [Mark 15:34](#)
- Insults of the witnesses - [Matthew 27:43](#); [Mark 15:31-32](#); [Luke 23:35](#)
- Jesus' executioners dividing his clothing - [Matthew 27:35](#); [Mark 15:24](#); [Luke 23:34](#); [John 19:23-24](#)
- Jesus' thirst on the cross - [John 19:28](#)
- Dogs (gentiles) surrounding and piercing Jesus - [John 19:34](#)

There is one major difference though: in Jesus' case, God doesn't show up. It appears that the insults of the witnesses were well-founded: for the next three days it could be argued that God didn't want him. But appearances can be deceiving and three days is a short time. When Jesus rose to life that following Sunday, God graphically demonstrated that "He had not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one."

And so, on Easter Sunday 2025, as the rising sun illuminates the successive time zones circling the globe, each of us in our turn will worship with the rest of Jesus' worldwide family as we "remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations bow down before him."

There is a detail in this Psalm that is easy to miss: though grossly mistreated, David never calls his adversaries "enemies." Likewise, Jesus never calls any of us his enemies; rather we are all lost sheep who don't know what we're doing. So, this Easter, if you are alienated from God, turn to Jesus and find your truest lover; and if you are a believer, glory in your adoption as brothers and sisters in His beloved family.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Saturday, March 15 | Day 10

Today's Devotional comes from Nan Marcus

[Psalm 23](#)

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. (Psalm 23:1)

Is life giving you indigestion? Feeling bloated with the heaviness of burdens and uncertainty, nausea from nothing working out as you had planned, a bitter taste of acid reflux from past decisions, sins or disappointments coming back up and lobbying for front and center occupancy on your mind and heart or experiencing temple pangs of a nagging headache from the reality of pain and sorrow?

Psalm 23 speaks to life's realities along with God's most comforting words and promises; he **makes** (causes) us, **leads** us, **restores** us, **comforts** us, **prepares** us and **follows** (chases) after us! And gives us a cure that brings strength, hope, comfort and courage.

When David wrote this psalm, was it both an acknowledgement of all the goodness and blessings he had received in his many years of life but also a recounting on the realities and moments of his darkness such as the time he was delivered from his enemy, Saul and others?

Let your mind drift for just a moment and envision David on the hill tending his sheep. Go ahead, pause right now; close your eyes and allow your thoughts to imagine the scene. He knows all by name and perhaps has one named Mercy and one, Goodness. As he does every day with his shepherd hook in hand, he walks the field's perimeter taking headcount of his flock, one by one making sure all are near and can hear his voice. Then God calls down to David, and gently whispers in his ear, "My son, thou good and faithful servant," "surely goodness and mercy shall follow you all the days of your life and you will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

It was a time in my life these past four years where I did feel bloated with the heaviness of burdens and uncertainty of my health having been diagnosed with bi-lateral breast cancer; a churning nausea in my spirit from nothing working out like I had planned as my love and hubby for 52 years would succumb to cancer and in under 3 months join the chorus of other saints in heaven. There were and still are times I experience the nagging headache and reality of pain and sorrow in that dark valley...YET, never a time that I have not felt closer to God and continue to be. He continues to restore and quench my parched soul with His overflowing cup of hope just when I need it, massage my wounded spirit and broken heart with his unconditional promise and reassurance that nothing will separate me from His grip and leading on my life, His unending love and leading of me in new paths and opportunities for his purpose and glory.

Prayer: *Dear Lord, thank you for laying down your life for this battle-tested and scarred sheep, for never letting me go, for never giving up on me, for stretching me, for rocking me during those times my heart and eyes overflowed with hurt and tears, for Your unending patience with me, for all blessings - big and small, for equipping me for new areas of service and infusing the light of Your love in me, for your*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

incomparable joy that puts bounce in my step as I seek to mirror You in my life. You are my Shepherd and I lift this prayer of thanksgiving and praise up to You and in Your name. Amen.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Monday, March 17 | Day 11

Today's Devotional comes from Bill Wilson

[Psalm 24](#)

Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. (Psalm 24:7)

If we wanted to give Psalm 24 a descriptive title, we might choose something like "Welcome, King of Glory." Psalm 24, for being relatively brief, covers a lot of ground about our God and foreshadows the coming of our Lord Jesus.

From David's perspective, the Psalm acknowledges God's sovereignty over everything and everyone. We all belong to God for He created it all. David then describes who may "ascend the mountain of the Lord." It isn't any of us. The only one who can meet the criteria is Jesus. However, David says, "They will receive blessing from the Lord." Even though none of us can ascend the mountain to be with God, there is an indication that somehow, we might.

The remaining verses speak of letting the King of glory in. Some commentaries indicate that this is the arrival of the Ark of the Covenant (God's Word) to the tabernacle. This sounds very similar to the triumphal entry of Jesus (God's Word in the flesh) to Jerusalem to begin the Passion Week. The entry of our Lord to make the path to God our Father, to make it possible to receive His blessing.

I find the key verse to have clear meaning to me. "Lift up your heads" suggests to elevate your thoughts to something or someone beyond this world. We need to open the gates and doors that keep Jesus from coming into our lives, every part of our lives. I think Psalm 24 is very appropriate for getting our hearts and minds to focus on Jesus as we approach Easter. He has opened the gates to Heaven for us as only He could.

I encourage you to look at the hymn ["Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates"](#) as it's lyrics are uplifting and full of praise. The final verse says it all.

So come, my Sovereign; enter in!
Let new and nobler life begin;
Thy Holy Spirit guide us on,
Until the glorious crown be won.

I offer a prayer for us. *Heavenly Father, let us take this season of Lent to open the gates in our hearts and minds that keep us from You.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Tuesday, March 18 | Day 12

Today's Devotional comes from Matt Spanakos

[Psalm 27](#)

Before diving into the devotional, take a moment to read through Psalm 27 and say a personal prayer, asking God to speak to your heart through His Word.

In Psalm 27, David vividly describes his confidence in God's protection and plan for his life. This is a state of mind all Christians strive for but few would claim their own. Why? Was David foolish to believe this? How are you trusting in the Lord's protection over your life? Are you content with the plans He has for you? Have you submitted control of your finances? Your hobbies? Your relationships? How about your health?

David's conviction was not out of some kind of naive or blind faith. It was based on previous experiences where God repeatedly shielded and exalted him. In [1 Samuel 17:34-37](#), David states his qualifications for fighting Goliath, describing his experiences as a shepherd over his flock, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, ³⁵ I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. ³⁶ Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. ³⁷ The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine."

As a father, I would not be pleased to hear of my son's exploits, risking his skin against a lion for a mere helpless sheep. I would certainly have considered this gamble foolish and strongly deterred him from jeopardizing his life again. Yet, David didn't credit his victory over the lion to personal skill or dumb luck. He was keenly aware of God's hand in it, and his encounter prepared him to test God's protection against the bear, which in turn equipped him to stand against the impossible odds of Goliath. This progression leads David to the mindset of Psalm 27, where though an army besieges him, his heart does not fear. Because he has recognized God's control in lesser circumstances, he now stands with a rational confidence against an entire regiment of soldiers.

Paul almost outlines David's arc in [Romans 5:3-5](#) (NLT), "*We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation.*" Usually, we trace David's character development back to his fight with Goliath, but God had already anointed him as the future king, a man after God's own heart. Perhaps this was after David made the seemingly inconsequential choice to trust God's protection against the lion or the bear. Maybe it was something even less significant earlier in his life. However, if David had taken what human logic would consider the "wise" path and hid from the lion, sacrificing the sheep to save his behind, his precedent would undoubtedly have led to him doing the same against the bear. As for Goliath, who then would have had the guts to stand for all of Israel as well as God's honor? Instead, through each seemingly mundane

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

trial, David's character and perseverance were incrementally strengthened as he grew unwavering in the hope of God's salvation.

What we experience in Psalm 27 is a David who is still in the throes of unbearable chaos but choosing to declare what he knows to be true despite every ounce of human logic imploring him to abandon hope. As Job's wife pleaded in his trial, "Are you still maintaining your integrity? Curse God and die!" (Job 2:9, NIV). What voices of doubt do you find in life keeping you from pure devotion and confidence in the Lord? I want to challenge you this Lenten season to take a step of faith, however insignificant as it may seem, because when you stand faithful to God over a few things, He will put you in charge of much more ([Matthew 25:21](#)). In your incremental steps of faith, declare in your heart today that God is equipping you to persevere through anything this world has to throw at you. Follow David's example. Choose to see the goodness of God in the land of the living, keeping hope that one day we will dwell in the house of the Lord forever, gazing upon the beauty of our victorious Savior.

"We continue to shout our praise even when we're hemmed in with troubles" (Romans 5:3-5, MSG)

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Wednesday, March 19 | Day 13

Today's Devotional comes from Danny Bosma (*one of our high school students*)

[Psalm 29](#)

David was a man of many mistakes, but yet, he was called a man after God's own heart for how he sought the Lord in times of trouble.

Multiple times in the Bible, David's imperfections are displayed. As an example, In [2 Samuel 11:2-5](#), we learn that he committed adultery with a woman named Bathsheba, who was married to a man named Uriah. We then see in [verses 6-17](#), that David places Uriah in the front line of battle where fighting was fiercest, so he would be killed and never find out what happened.

Even after rejecting and neglecting God, and two of his commandments: #6 "You shall not commit adultery" and #7 "You shall not murder," David eventually turned back to the Lord, which is displayed through his writings in the book of Psalm. In today's scripture, David worships the Lord through recognizing his power over different parts of the earth, and also instructs us to Honor God.

Read Psalm 29. As you read this chapter, consider the following guiding questions and meditate on your responses.

- Verses 1-2: What does it look like to honor God? How can I do this through a season of lent?
- Verses 3-6: Am I choosing to listen to the Lord's voice? Am I letting him guide me through my life?
- Verses 7-9: How is God implementing his power in my life right now?
- Verses 10-11: Am I trusting the Lord to help me through the difficult parts today that I will soon face?

Spend some time in prayer asking God to help you trust his power and authority.

Have you ever been or felt far from God? Maybe you've been keeping a part of your life that you're ashamed of from God. Or, maybe you've been trying to handle your life all on your own without God's help and guidance. This *too* was David.

In today's reading, God's power is made evident as David shows God's complete control over nature and the ends of the earth. David writes in verse 3: "*The Lord thunders over the mighty sea,*" and also writes in verse 6: "*He makes Lebanon's mountains skip like a calf.*" And this same God is able to do mighty things in your life too. You just need to trust him and turn to him.

Even in your moments of disobedience or hardship, turn to God, like David did.

Sometimes, my only option is to trust God through the most difficult situations I come across.

I just completed my winter swim season at Concord High School. Though this time in my life was filled with many great moments of happiness and joy, there were also many difficult moments I found myself

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

in. At one meet, my coach put me in the 200-yard individual medley and the 100-yard butterfly. Unluckily for me, these were both difficult races with little time for rest in between, due to how the swim meet was laid out. I remember being slightly worn out, waiting at the end of the pool to compete in my second race, the 100-yard butterfly, only a short-while after I had finished my first race. I remember praying to God, asking for strength to finish without failure, and that's exactly what happened.

When we give our lives to Christ, he is in control, and he will help us even in our darkest moments—we just need to trust him and his power.

David writes in Psalm 29:1, “Honor the Lord, you heavenly beings; honor the Lord for his glory and strength. Honor the Lord for the glory of his name. Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness.”

As you go about your day, remember to trust God in your hardest situations because he is a powerful, loving God who is always willing to help you.

Prayer: *Jesus, help me to recognize your goodness in times of trouble. Help me to understand that you are on the throne seated high, and that you have complete authority over my life. Finally, help me to understand that you are my first responder in my hardest times. I love you, and I trust you. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Thursday, March 20 | Day 14

Today's Devotional comes from Rachel Ortiz

[Psalm 29](#)

In his temple all cry, "Glory!" The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord sits enthroned, King forever. (Psalm 29:9b-10)

Psalm 29 reveals the exclusivity of God's sovereignty and majesty. For the ancient people of Israel, the question was not if there was a God, but which *one* is the true God and what is his character. The imagery in this text deconstructs the polytheistic worldview of the time, pointing to the complete, singular power of Yahweh. Reliance on other gods is futile; David calls the reader to ascribe worship to the one true God, the majestic, enthroned King forever.

The voice of the Lord is above the waters, thunders, breaks the cedars, flashes flames of fire and shakes the wilderness. This vivid imagery illustrates the unmatched power and authority of God.

I can easily be overwhelmed by the pain and suffering of this world, tempted to rely on my own sense of control instead of the Lord's strength. When the world around me feels daunting, I grasp for a sense of power—a futile endeavor when compared to God's might. In what ways are you tempted to be the King of your own life? What other "gods" get your adoration and trust? Where do you hold on to the illusion of control? How can the Lord meet you whatever season of life you are in?

Perhaps Lent is actually about worship. We adore the King for all the ways He is not like us. The Apostle John reminds us of Jesus' words: "Apart from me, you can do nothing." Apart from Christ, we cannot live meaningful lives, work productively, foster friendships, raise families or do anything at all.

This Lenten season, as we journey with Jesus to the cross, we are invited to ponder his majesty and glory in a new way. Fully God and fully man, Jesus put on flesh and dwelt among us. He took the form of a servant as the Savior of the world, died the death we deserved, and satisfied the debt of our treason against a perfect, holy God. Because of Jesus and the cross, we are freed from the desire to be our own king; there *is* One who is worthy. And that reflection causes us to rejoice!

When your heart wanders down the path of fear or dismay, remember that "the Lord sits enthroned, King forever." Join with the angels and saints crying, "Glory!" The hope of Easter is this: we are not the savior, but Jesus is. All the glory is His.

Prayer: *Lord, thank you that you are the true King forever. Give me the strength to surrender my need for power and control and instead adore you for all the ways you are not like us. Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Friday, March 21 | Day 15

Today's Devotional comes from Joe Bidwell

[Psalm 30](#)

When I felt secure, I said, "I will never be shaken." Lord, when you favored me, you made my royal mountain stand firm; but when you hid your face, I was dismayed. (Psalm 30:6-7)

Psalm 30 is a beautiful reminder of our human condition and God's ultimate power. It can be easy to feel confident in ourselves when we earn a big promotion, secure a new job, win a tournament or successfully complete a task. In moments when life is going well, we can feel proud, in control and as though we cannot be shaken. We can all fall into the trap of believing we are invincible due to our situational security.

Similarly, David felt unshakeable because of his success, but was quickly reminded without God how vulnerable he truly was. David reminds us that our peace is not found in wealth, status or worldly achievement. It is found in God's presence and an acknowledgement that all favor and blessings come from him. Our confidence shouldn't rest in circumstances, but in the unwavering presence of God. His favor is what makes us secure, not our own efforts or achievements. Without the light of God to guide our lives, we remain empty and hollow.

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, thank you for times of favor and security, but help me to remember true confidence comes from You alone. May I praise You in good times and times of struggle. Humble my heart and when I face times of uncertainty may I trust that You are still with me even if you feel hidden. May I find peace in Your presence through all seasons of life. Amen*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Saturday, March 22 | Day 16

Today's Devotional comes from Naomi Brandt (*one of our high school students*)

[Psalm 32](#) – Blessed is the Forgiveness

When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." And you forgave the guilt of my sin. (Psalm 32:3-5)

In Psalm 32, David is reflecting on the relief he experienced after he confessed his sins to the LORD. He realized that his attempt to hide his sin only separated him from God, causing him to "waste away." This was until he humbled himself and repented, allowing him to experience the forgiveness, love and protection of Christ. As we read and reflect on Psalm 32, we can learn from David's example.

One of the biggest challenges I used to face in my walk with Christ was the mentality that I would grow in my relationship with God later- later in my life, later that year or even later that week. Whether it was reading the Bible, praying or surrendering sin, I would become stuck in this mentality until days had passed and I still felt distant from God. The longer I spent away from Him, the more difficult it became to seek him. It was an endless and dangerous cycle, but His grace was greater.

Through this, I've learned that God's forgiveness has no limit; His mercies are new every morning. No matter how far you may have run from Him, He is always waiting with open arms. You can rest in the freedom and assurance that *no* sin is outside of His grace and you are *never* too far gone.

All it takes is a humble heart, obedience and acknowledging that you are in need of God's grace. All of Heaven rejoices when a sinner repents. Whether you need to accept God's forgiveness for the first time or just turn back after distancing yourself, the freedom of Christ is so worth the humility of recognizing your sin.

Then, you can step into God's will in every aspect of your life. After David acknowledged his sins, God told him "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you" (Psalm 32:8). God knows what's best for you and will guide you and protect you if you are willing to surrender to His control. This means acknowledging that His ways are higher, denying yourself and submitting to His will. As you surrender, you can watch His plans align with your desires. "Take delight in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4).

Without Jesus' sacrifice, we would be separated from God and His hand on our lives. However, Jesus' love demonstrated for us through the shedding of His blood allows us to receive full redemption of our sins. Because of this, we can experience the joy, hope, protection and guidance that only He can offer us. As we celebrate Easter and reflect on His sacrifice, I encourage you to act now; it's never too late to turn to the Lord!

Prayer: *Lord, thank you for showing me your forgiveness when I don't deserve it. Humble me to trust in you in every circumstance, to rest in your love, and to seek your will for my life. Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Monday, March 24 | Day 17

Today's Devotional comes from Stephanie Bidwell

Psalm 34 – Taste and See that the Lord is Good

The righteous cry out and the Lord hears them. He delivers them from their troubles. The Lord is close to the broken hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. (Psalm 34:17-18)

Have you ever had a problem that felt impossible to overcome? A tough season that lingered for far longer than it seemed like you could handle? A situation that appeared hopeless and confusing? A few years ago, I faced an extremely painful time in my life that was filled with intense physical and emotional suffering. I didn't have just one health problem, I had over 40. I saw over 15 doctors and specialists that offered no real solution to my problems and left me with more questions than I had answers. I remember calling a friend one night and through my tears said, "I think this might be too big for even God to fix." I was scared, in pain, so incredibly alone and had a spirit that was absolutely crushed. She paused for a moment and then just whispered back to me. "God's got you. He's got this. It's not your job to figure it all out." I didn't realize it at the time but she was whispering Psalm 34:17-18 to me. *He is present and near. He hears you. He sees your desperation. He is actively working on bringing healing, even if it takes time. He has a plan.*

There are moments and sometimes seasons of life that can be filled with deep sorrow and pain. Sometimes the weight of it all feels too heavy and it's easy to feel like we have to figure it all out on our own. When life feels overwhelming, remember that you are never alone in your suffering. In fact, this Psalm reminds us that God is closest to us during these times, and he doesn't just observe us in our pain, he comes to rescue us from it.

As you face challenges, take comfort in knowing that God is not only listening, but He is also moving in ways that you may not immediately see. Let this truth give you strength today. The Lord is close to you, and he will not leave you in your brokenness.

Prayer: *Dear Lord, I know that you are near when I am feeling broken. In my pain, help me to feel your presence. Deliver me from the weight of my afflictions and help me to be patient as I wait. I pray that today is the day my crushed spirit is repaired and completely restored. Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Tuesday, March 25 | Day 18

Today's Devotional comes from Clayton Morton

[Psalm 37](#)

How can you trust in God's justice when wrong doing seems to prevail? We seem to see this happen every day.

In Psalm 37 we see David dealing with the prosperity of evil doers. In verses 1-3, he explains to us that we should not fret ourselves because of evildoers nor be envious of them for they will soon fade away and wither like the grass or green herb.

As children of God, we should instead trust in the Lord and do good. David says in verse 4 that when we delight in Him, He will give us the desires of our hearts. This means that He will place His desires for us in our hearts. The Lord is faithful to us. We are instructed later in verse 34, "wait for the Lord and keep His way, and He will exalt you to inherit the land."

David tells us in verses 39 and 40 that "the salvation of the righteous is from the Lord; He is their stronghold in the time of trouble...He delivers them from the wicked and saves them because they take refuge in Him." As we wait and put our whole trust in the Lord, there will be a future time when the wicked will be no more and the meek shall inherit the land (verses 10-11).

We are told in verse 28 that the Lord "will not forsake His saints" but the wicked shall be cut off. This brings us to a critical question. Are you a child of God? Do you put your whole faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?

We see in [Ephesians 2:3-5](#), we were all once, "by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind." We were people who followed their own desires and lived in sin like the evildoers David described in Psalm 37. But God in His mercy and great love for us raised us up in Christ Jesus. Scripture tells us in Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not of your own doing, it is the gift of God, not the result of works, so that no one may boast".

If you have not put your whole faith in Jesus Christ, do so today and experience the love of God that transcends anything that the world has to offer.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Wednesday, March 26 | Day 19

Today's Devotional comes from Gaylyn Crumley

[Psalm 40](#)

He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire: he set my feet on a rock. (Psalm 40:1-2 NIV)

We see in this passage that David is praising God after waiting patiently for forgiveness and healing from the grief and sin in his life. His life was not perfect, but he did live a life of faith. Throughout this chapter he shows his obedience, reliance and trust that never wavered from God. He reminds us of God's faithfulness and how God healed his broken heart. He never lost hope, David was a warrior, king, poet, political leader, gifted musician, but most importantly, he was a great teacher of prayer because of his writings of prayer to God.

David refers to the slimy pit in which he was stuck. In a ministry in which I am engaged, it is referred to as being stuck in the mud hole. When someone is going through grief there are many issues that can cause them to be in the pit: illness, divorce, loss of a loved one, loss of a job as well as other heartaches. This grief can cause one to walk away from God or to draw closer to Him. When this happens, one can't just climb out of the mud hole on their own. They need someone to walk along beside them who can pray and listen. Then with God's help along with the caregiver lending a hand, the care receiver can climb out of the mud hole and healing can begin.

God has opened my heart to minister with people in our congregation who need a caregiver. The fog of grief can be overwhelming and hard for one to understand what is taking place in their life. Some initially hide their grief or feel that they can find healing on their own. But when people recognize that their grief is a normal, natural and necessary process and that you have to go through it, then healing can begin. I thank God when I witness a person's grief and loneliness diminishing over time. What a blessing to see God transforming their life and once again be able to cope. It's not only a blessing for the care receiver, but also blessings that I receive from God.

Prayer: *Jesus, we pray that when our lives are turned upside down, we remember that in our congregation we have each other to lean on. Thank you that our church is blessed with ministries to which one can reach out for help. During this time of Lent let us pray each day and thank God for his gift of healing and salvation. For those experiencing grief or hardship, allow them to know that they are not alone. Let the lost hear of the sacrifice that Jesus Christ paid on the cross, the gift of salvation and his love that he wants them to know. Amen*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Thursday, March 27 | Day 20

Today's Devotional comes from Rebekah Anderson

[Psalm 41](#)

By this I know that you delight in me: my enemy will not shout in triumph over me. But you have upheld me because of my integrity, and set me in your presence forever. (Psalm 41:11-12)

Psalm 41 highlights our unique relationship with God. Verse 1 says: "blessed is the one who considers the poor." Then, it seems to switch gears and talk about how David has been wronged by those close to him, yet God has protected him because of his kindness to the poor. The poor here are not just people financially poor but anyone in need. Similar passages define "the poor" as neighbors (see [Proverbs 14:21](#), [Proverbs 11:21](#)). We know that Jesus tells us in the New Testament that everyone is our neighbor ([Luke 10:25-37](#))

This Psalm was likely written after David was betrayed by his son, Absalom, and his trusted advisor, Ahithophel ([2 Samuel 15-18](#)). David's son and advisor, enraged by his past sin, turned against him.

The Psalm starts the way that it does by showing that we are the ones who are poor, and God always takes care of us while also conveying the situation David has found himself in. David has sinned and has been abandoned by everyone, even the people he thought were his friends (verse 5-9), as a result. Despite his pain and mistakes, David sees God's goodness and forgiveness (verse 10).

What Jesus accomplished on Easter made it possible for us to connect with God and to personally communicate with Him. We now have constant access to God. When we sin or go through hard circumstances, we are able to go to our high priest Jesus, at any time.

When we were at our weakest (sinners with no way of becoming pure), Jesus came to save us. God made a way so that we are no longer poor. This is God's heart— to reach down and step into an intimate relationship with humanity. When our hearts are set on honoring God, He will not let us down or abandon us, even when it feels like everyone around us has.

I'm sure we can all relate to David's season. There are times in my life where I've sinned and felt like everything is going wrong. Psalm 41 reminds us of God's grace and His desire to share our pain. He promises not to leave us stuck in that pain. Though human relationships will remain imperfect, God still calls us to love each other, just as He has loved us ([John 13:34-35](#)). Matthew 5:7 says, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy." Other New Testament Passages echo these ideas of God blessing those who care for the poor ([Luke 6:38](#) and [James 1:27](#)).

While Psalm 41 does encourage us to consider the poor, more than that, it reminds us that we are the poor and God has done so much more than consider us. Jesus came down to live with us and suffer for us. Because of what He's done for us, our care for others should be evident in our lives.

Prayer: *Lord, your word tells me that you protect and sustain me. Thank you God, blessed are you from everlasting to everlasting!*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Friday, March 28 | Day 21

Today's Devotional comes from Pastor Terry Foester

[Psalm 51](#) – Create in Me a Clean Heart

Confession is hard. It's uncomfortable, it can be awkward, and sometimes it even makes us nauseous. In certain situations, it takes time to gain clarity on what exactly needs to be confessed. The layers can run deep.

Think about a time you had to apologize or ask for forgiveness. I remember when my brother (my literal bro) came to me years after I had said something that deeply hurt him. I recalled the event, but at first, I minimized the impact of my words. I rationalized the season I was in, made some initial excuses, and offered an apology.

Thankfully, my brother had the courage to bring it up. That small moment between us sent me on a longer journey of self-reflection. My apology didn't sit right in my inner man. I realized I had a pattern of minimizing the impact of my words with those closest to me. Being confronted with my sin—and the wound it caused—forced me to acknowledge that despite my intentions, this was a part of who I had become.

But change came. Because my brother had the courage to confront me, I now had the opportunity to walk the path of self-reflection, repentance, confession and seek forgiveness. The path of forgiveness and reconciliation between two brothers involves the work of Jesus every step of the way. Thankfully, we are great friends to this day.

When things get messy, confession often feels more like a process than a single event. This is part of what makes Psalm 51 so powerful. We know the messy backdrop. King David—while his men were off at war—remained behind in his palace. A series of events unfolded that led him to commit adultery with Bathsheba and orchestrate the death of her husband, Uriah. David, a man often described as being after God's own heart, was both an adulterer and a murderer. (See [2 Samuel 11-12](#) for the full story.)

After a confrontation with the prophet Nathan, David finally reaches a place of true confession, expressed in Psalm 51—one of the most raw and heartfelt prayers of repentance.

His confession culminates in this plea:

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." (Psalm 51:10)

Wow. Knowing the weight of David's sins adds even deeper meaning to this prayer.

Every time I read Psalm 51, I'm reminded of a song I first heard back in the '80s: [Create in Me a Clean Heart by Keith Green](#). While the style is definitely stuck in its era, to this day, it humbles me. It brings me to a place of confession. It stirs a longing in me to be more like Jesus.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

And that prayer is still true for me today. I pray it's true for you as well:
"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

God does His best work when we finally confess our need for His help. That time my brother pointed out my sin, he was my Nathan. And I'm thankful he helped me take that journey, allowing Jesus to renew a right spirit within me.

Take time today to let Psalm 51 guide your own personal confession and follow the Lord's leading.

Prayer: *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Saturday, March 29 | Day 22

Today's Devotional comes from David Cordrey

[Psalm 56](#)

When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise - in God I trust and am not afraid. What can mere mortals do to me? (Psalm 56: 3-4)

David is on the run, fleeing from Saul. In this psalm he finds himself in the hands of the Philistines and he cries out to God, asking for mercy from his oppressors. Thankfully, most of us will never find ourselves literally fleeing for our lives. But in life, this side of heaven, we may be oppressed and many of us will be afraid as we face overwhelming trials or hardships.

There have been times when facing my future has been overwhelming and scary. About twenty-seven years ago our daughter was diagnosed with a rare genetic disorder. She is intellectually and emotionally disabled. As we learned more about the diagnosis and the challenges she would face in her lifetime, I remember thinking about her future, our future and being overwhelmed. Perhaps the peak of that fear was after hearing the story of a couple who had just institutionalized their teenage daughter because of her extreme behaviors. I was devastated and gripped with fear.

In verses 3-4, we see David lifting his eyes from his oppression to his God, the one he praises and trusts. David sets his heart on the right response - to praise and trust God. When our daughter was diagnosed, we asked God for mercy and direction. Many people were praying for us during this time and in the days and weeks that passed, my wife and I began to sense God saying to us "put your eyes on Me, trust Me, take it one day at a time, other people's story is not your story."

Later in the psalm, in verse 8, it says, "Record my misery, list my tears on your scroll - are they not in your record?" God hears our cries, and catches our tears. He is with us! At the end of the psalm David offers thanks to God in verse 13, "*for you have delivered my soul from death, yes, my feet from falling.*" David recognizes God has delivered him from death in the past and He will in the future...he can trust in God's promises.

The last twenty-seven years have not been easy, there have been moments of fear when we face new issues. It is a constant challenge to lift our eyes from our circumstances and focus on Jesus. We have seen God answer prayer and deliver us through tough times and we take comfort in knowing He promises to do it again. There is no reason to fear flesh and blood when God is on our side.

What fears can you entrust to God today?

Prayer: *Dear Jesus, thank you for seeing our tears. Help me to fix my eyes on you, even in the face of challenges. Give me the faith to praise you and trust in your unfailing love at all times and in every circumstance. Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Monday, March 31 | Day 23

Today's Devotional comes from Ella Johnson (*one of our high school students*)

[Psalm 57](#)

I will praise you, Lord, among the nations; I will sing of you among the peoples. For great is your love, reaching to the heavens, Your faithfulness reaches to the skies. (Psalm 57: 9-10)

Every September, around 200 students and leaders from our church go on a fall retreat. Personally, it is one of my favorite events that the student ministry does each year. There's a ton of things to do such as tubing, zip lining, Bible lessons and kayaking. However, my personal favorite is the worship. At every session, our worship team gets on the stage and everyone goes to the front of the room. People often race and fight to be in the first row! Friends hug, hold hands and sway to the music as they worship their Heavenly Father. It's as if all troubles have been erased from the world. There are no thoughts of sin, heartbreak or grief. All anyone can think about is the Almighty Lord, whose presence is filling the room as we praise Him.

Worshiping God during this retreat isn't particularly hard for me. The entire weekend I am surrounded by fellow believers on fire for the Lord. I have amazing friends, an awesome youth group and a loving family. However, life isn't always easy. It's when life gets difficult that worshiping the Lord becomes tough. Maybe you are in a difficult situation right now that makes praising God hard. Perhaps you've been struggling with relationships or a loved one of yours has passed away recently. Trust me, I've been there.

David was there too. In fact, when Psalm 57 was written, he was running away from the murderous and jealous King Saul. David was hiding in literal caves to evade his attackers! Clearly, David's life was not going very well. In the beginning of Psalm 57, he expressed his extreme sorrow. Psalm 57:4 says "I am in the midst of lions; I am forced to dwell among ravenous beasts - men whose teeth are spears and arrows, whose tongues are sharp swords."

And yet, even in his darkest hour, David was able to praise the Lord for his glory. He talks of God's steadfastness, love, faithfulness and how He is worthy of all the praise. Imagine being so committed to the Lord that you are praising Him, even while your life is falling apart. David truly is a man after God's own heart!

This week, as you experience the ups and downs of life, remember Psalm 57. Remember how David praised God, even when everything in his life was going wrong. Chances are you won't get chased by a murderous, jealous king or have to hide in a cave this week, but some things will likely not go your way. During tough times, it's your choice whether or not to complain and curse God or to praise the Lord for his faithfulness.

Prayer: *Dear God, I pray that you'll be with us this week as we navigate the ups and downs of life. When we are given the choice to complain or worship you, I pray that we will praise you for your unconditional love and faithfulness. Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Tuesday, April 1 | Day 24

Today's Devotional comes from Cassie Armstrong

[Psalm 61](#)

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I, for you have been my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy. (Psalm 61:2b-3)

The first thing that comes to my mind when I think of the word 'rock' is the first time I had the chance to visit the Grand Canyon. Talk about some large rocks! I was exploring by myself, and decided to do one of the riskiest things I've ever done: climb out onto the top of a rock in the middle of the canyon, onto a high point with no handholds. And did I mention it was windy? The wind gusts that day were upwards of 40 mph. You better believe I was praying my way through every step! The reward was worth it though – a complete 360° view of that entire area of the Grand Canyon. That view of God's creation was so breathtaking.

Throughout the Psalms, God is often referred to as the "Rock of Salvation". That phrase evokes a sense of stability and security. It's referring to God our Savior as the Unwavering One who provides a solid foundation for our eternal salvation. Looking over David's life, I can see so many times when his road in life was anything but stable or secure. Despite that, or maybe even perhaps because of that, David kept returning back to God, the Rock of his salvation.

As we look around at life right now, things might not always feel stable or secure. It can be a struggle to remember that we can always look to God our Rock, to help us through those uncertain times. Knowing we have Christ as our Solid Rock to stand on gives us immeasurable hope to face all of our tomorrows.

For those times of uncertainty, I keep a rock at my desk at work that I see every day. When things seem at their darkest, I like to hold on to it and use it as a visual reminder that Christ is my Rock. I can go to Him daily through whatever challenges I need to face. My challenge to you during this season of Lent is to find yourself a rock that you put somewhere you'll be able to see frequently. Every time you see it, use it as a reminder to thank God for being the Rock of our Salvation.

Prayer: Father God, thank You for being the Rock of our Salvation. Help us to always remember that You steady us and keep us secure during times of uncertainty.

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
On Christ the solid Rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."
From the hymn "Solid Rock"

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Wednesday, April 2 | Day 25

Today's Devotional comes from Terence Thomas

[Psalm 62](#)

As I read Psalm 62 my mind goes immediately to Matthew 7:24-27. "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." The rain, waters and winds in life are inescapable problems if we operate in our own power. Sin and death will wash us away if we build our life on our own strength. If we build on the rock though the rain falls, the streams rise and the winds blow against us, we won't be shaken. If we build on the rock our foundation will be sure and true, but not easy. It is harder to build on the rock than to build on the sand, but the results speak for themselves.

Psalm 62 places emphasis on the fact that nothing we can do will ever be a useful substitute to our rock and foundation in God. He is also able to provide us rest in the midst of storms.

David faced struggles of all sorts throughout his life. He is anointed as King by Samuel over his elder brothers while Israel still had a King. He battles a giant in Goliath that the Israelites are afraid to face. After slaying him, the current King of Israel Saul is determined to kill him despite the fact he had done him no wrong. David had numerous opportunities to slay God's anointed King and refused to do so. Even after becoming King the storms in his life didn't cease. He was blinded by lust and took Uriah's wife Bathsheba as his own. He made the evil he had done even worse by attempting to trick her husband into believing he had impregnated her rather than David. After that failed, he had her husband killed so he could claim her as his wife. The child from their affair dies because of David's actions and that is only the first child he loses. He loses other children due to his sins as well. David faced the storms of life, but despite his failings he's still described as a man after God's own heart. Even after his death, the Kingdom of Judah is the throne of his heirs because of God's love for him.

God promises that he'll be our rock and refuge if we build our life on him. A place to run in times of trouble. Times of trouble are never far and having a place of safety we can flee to is comforting and reassuring.

Prayer: *Lord, please help us to truly place our hope in you and to recognize you are our salvation.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Thursday, April 3 | Day 26

Today's Devotional comes from Suzanne Alayne Howell

[Psalm 63](#) - My Soul Thirsts for You

A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. (Psalm 63:1-3, KJV)

In meditating upon the thirsty land, I have experienced being thirsty and having a cold, refreshing drink of water to assuage that thirst.

Unlike that glass of water that is temporary, I rejoice that springs of living water will well up in my soul, that is eternal, from the Holy Spirit. ([John 7:37-39](#))

God's loving-kindness is unchanging and is so comforting to me. No matter how difficult the trials and circumstances I may face, having been totally blind all of my life, I can trust in God's faithfulness and unfailing love.

I so enjoy God's Word that has been composed into beautiful choral and orchestral arrangements. Listening to this kind of music helps me to delight in, and worship, our wonderful Lord and Savior.

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, help us to praise You for your great love, as demonstrated by the death, burial and resurrection of your Son, for the complete forgiveness of our sins. May our lives reflect His love to everyone we meet, as we seek to bring glory to Your Name. Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Friday, April 4 | Day 27

Today's Devotional comes from Tim Cura

[Psalm 65](#)

Blessed are those you choose and bring near to live in your courts!

We are filled with the good things of your house, of your holy temple. (Psalm 65:4)

Have you ever experienced a moment of luxurious living that felt undeserved? Maybe you checked into a hotel and were upgraded to a lavish suite? Perhaps you were gifted a pampering spa treatment that made you feel special. Or maybe you were given a backstage VIP experience from someone generous, who honored you. As great as these life-moments are, can you imagine being treated like a VIP for all eternity. In Psalm 65, we are told that God has chosen us to live in his courts, and generously offers us all the good things of his house.

Not only that, Psalm 65 assures us that God is in every detail of our lives here on earth; God is "...the hope of all the ends of the earth..." In Psalm 139:7 David asks, "Where can I flee from your presence?" The answer is found in Psalm 65: there is nowhere we can go, apart from God's presence. This point should not scare us, but give us assurance that God is with us in all circumstances. In [Deuteronomy 31:6](#) we are promised that God will never leave us or forsake us.

How can this be, when we so frequently attempt to make it on our own, and often forget God along the way? If we fast-forward from David, to Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed a prayer of anguish. He knew in the coming hours he would take all the sins of the world, and bare them as his own. In Mark 15:34 when Jesus asks "Why have you forsaken me?" It was the first time he was ever apart from his Father. The connection of Psalm 65 to this moment in Mark 15 cannot be overlooked. You see, Jesus accepted separation from the Father so we would NEVER have to experience this pain! The lavishing blessing of our God, are ours simply in our belief that Jesus lived, died and rose again for us.

Are you experiencing God's blessing and provision? Do you feel like your life here on earth is one of hardship and the blessings are hard to see? Take a moment to pause, and be assured that throughout the Bible, God is in control. His plan to live in his courts was made available to all who call on his name. We are all invited, we simply have to accept his invitation and live eternally in his glorious and heavenly mansion.

Prayer: *Dear Lord, we thank you for your provision, your hand is in every detail. We pray our eyes would be open to your blessings and that we would always trust in you.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Saturday, April 5 | Day 28

Today's Devotional comes from Ed Rouse

[Psalm 69](#) - A Heart Transplant

We were so happy. Suzanne and I bought a brand-new car to accommodate the demands of a growing family. Doug had just been born and we were now expecting a daughter. Then with only 500 miles on the new car, I rear-ended someone and the car had to be in repair for a month. Pushing our son around in a baby buggy wasn't easy in the late fall but we persevered. Three months later, we rear-ended another person and the car with barely 1,000 miles on it had to be put back in the garage. Seriously? We will make it again! Be tough! Our new car wasn't "new" anymore. Finally, back on the road again I drove to a work assignment in Wapakoneta, Ohio. Feeling righteous and redeemed, I decided to find a Wednesday night prayer meeting in Lima, Ohio. The Lord would love that wouldn't He? Not sure where to go I made a left hand turn from the right lane and got smashed in the back and careened into a tree destroying the front. The car was totaled. I was ticketed and taken to the police station. Unable to post bond I almost went to "overnight accommodations" with the police. The words of David described my feeling; *"Do not hide your face from your servant; answer me quickly, for I am in trouble."* Psalm 69:17

I couldn't bear to call Suzanne. But when I arrived home in a rental car, she knew something had happened and we both cried. Our insurance company kicked us to the curb. "You are too great a risk. Find someone else!" Now uninsured and without a car, what is happening? *"Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck!"* Psalm 69:1

It was then that God's purpose for all this became evident. I had a bad attitude toward tithing. As a new Christian the whole idea seemed intrusive, none of anyone's business. Don't tell me what to do! When we bought the new car, the payments took the place of honoring God with what is His anyway. I had stopped tithing. The Lord wanted to deal with me to see that everything I have belongs to Him. I repented of my attitude and put my trust in Him.

This is the whole idea of Lent, isn't it? God does not need our money but He wants our heart. The 40 days of Lent are intended for reflection, repentance, fasting, prayer, giving and more time spent in God's Word **so that we may draw closer to Him**. It is well worth it no matter the cost. We encourage you to always put God first. Pray with David as he says *"I will praise God's Name in song, and glorify Him with thanksgiving."* Psalm 69:30

God bless all who read this testimony,

Ed and Suzanne Rowse

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Monday, April 7 | Day 29

Today's Devotional comes from Mercy Foester (*one of our high school students*)

[Psalm 86](#) - God's Steadfast Love and Supportiveness

A Merciful God, Verses 1-7

Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. (Verse 1)

Verse 1 helps us understand that we are in great need of the Lord. David is calling to God, asking him to save him and lift him up.

Be gracious to me, O Lord, for to you do I cry all the day. Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. (Verses 3-4)

David is saying, "I have given my soul to you God, now lift my soul up." God will lift our hearts if we bring our worries to him. God's love will give us more peace than anything else we use to "let off steam."

For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you. Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer; listen to my plea for grace. (Verses 5-6)

Our God is a merciful God. He wants to save us; He's just waiting for us to ask Him. In this prayer, David is asking for guidance in his troubles, but it's important to remember we shouldn't only come to God when we're struggling. God will be there for us in any moment, whether it's to praise Him or ask for help.

His Amazing Works, Verses 8-10

In verse 8, David tells us that our God performs works that no other false God could achieve. In my experience, the majority of my prayers to God are about mundane, everyday things, so it's easy to forget the overflowing power that God can have in our lives. Not only can He help us with our day-to-day issues, but also our big, scary, life-questioning moments.

All the nations you have made shall come and worship before you, O Lord, and shall glorify your name. (Verse 9)

Despite all of the world's ethnic and political factions, all people will come to know and worship God. Does this make you reevaluate the importance of worldly divisions happening in the world today?

The Mission, Verses 11-13

Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth; unit my heart to fear your name. I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify your name forever. (Verse 11)

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

No prayer is too big for God. The way that God loves us and helps us is something we should praise him for, forever. The most amazing gift is right in front of us, and all we have to do is take it. If we don't regularly bring things to God first, He can't help us with them.

For great is your steadfast love toward me; you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol. (Verse 13)

This week, try to be in communication with God more often. This could mean setting a reminder for yourself, or asking a friend to keep you accountable.

God's steadfast love for us will never run out. He is always waiting on us to talk to Him and worship Him. Take the step now before it's too late.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Tuesday, April 8 | Day 30

Today's Devotional comes from Josh Fung (*one of our high school students*)

[Psalm 101](#) - Leaning on the Lord, and Standing Strong in the Word of God

I will be careful to lead a blameless life – when will you come to me? (Psalm 101:2)

Psalm 101 is a declaration of devotion, commitment and dependence on the Lord. David begins by praising God's love and justice, proclaiming his intent to live a blameless life and to honor God through his actions. Yet, in the same verse, he asks, "When will you come to me?" This reveals not only David's resolve but also his awareness of his need for God's presence and strength. It's a reminder that while we can strive to live righteously, our ability to persevere ultimately comes from the Lord.

This Psalm reflects David's heart for righteousness, not as an achievement of his own, but as a strength provided by the Lord. His commitment to rebuke evil and focus on the faithful demonstrates a life set on God. In verse 8, David pledges to "put to silence all the wicked in the land" every morning. This daily renewal of his resolve acknowledges that living for God is not a one-time decision, but a lifelong, continual commitment. Similarly, we're called daily to dedicate ourselves to Christ, leaning on His grace as we navigate a world full of pervasive distractions and temptations, now more than ever in the 21st century.

In my own life, I connect with David's reliance on God. Like him, I often strive to live righteously but find myself frequently falling short, as I'm sure we all do. The weight of responsibilities, the pull of distractions and the imperfections of our human nature often leave David's question echoing in my head: "When will you come to me?" This Psalm reminds me that it's not about my perfection, but my dependence on God's presence and strength. Just as David directs his gaze above to find strength, we must look up for our reconciliation.

As [Proverbs 3:5-6](#) teaches, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your understanding." It's in surrendering to the Lord that we find true strength. It's confusing, right? Normally we'd think that having power is something of our own volition, but the Bible teaches the opposite. We're not the ones with power, but instead God. As put by Charles Spurgeon, "If God be with us we shall neither err in judgment nor transgress in character; His presence brings us both wisdom and holiness; away from God we are away from safety." We should stop trying to keep it all together and take control of our lives, but give it to the one who has already figured it all out and defeated death. Giving control to God is the most powerful thing you can do.

This Psalm also points to the hope of Easter. David's desire to live a blameless life aligns with the ultimate example of Christ. Despite our best efforts, humanity's sin required a Savior, with Jesus fulfilling that need through His death and resurrection. This sacrifice reconciled us to God, providing grace where we've fallen short. David wasn't perfect, and his reliance on God is the same as ours. He didn't have what it took to get to the kingdom of Heaven and neither do we. Just as David directs his

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

gaze to the Lord for strength, we look to Jesus Christ, whose victory over sin and death offers eternal hope.

From this Psalm, I'm inspired to lean on Christ and take up my cross daily, asking for strength to live faithfully and blamelessly in His grace. It challenges me to examine my heart to match David's desire to live for the Lord. It also encourages me to surround myself with people who sharpen my faith, as Proverbs 27:17 reminds us "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." Through prayer, community and reliance on God's word, we can strive to live a life with the Aroma of Christ, honoring Him.

Prayer: *Dear Lord, we thank you for sending your son to set the perfect example of living a blameless life, and for showing us King David's life as an example. Thank you for the hope Easter gives us, as we know that in a mere three days, you conquered death in a resounding victory. We pray that you would continuously equip us to better live in Your word and to walk with the Aroma of Christ. We pray that you will help us depend on you more and more every day and that you surround us with Godly friends to help build us up, just as we strive also to be good friends and image-bearers. Thank you for every new day, and we pray that You will instill in us this sense of purpose to live for You. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Wednesday, April 9 | Day 31

Today's Devotional comes from Kendal Hinmon

[Psalm 103](#)

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. (Psalm 103:11-12)

This verse reminds me of a time during the pandemic when we purchased a telescope for our daughter. She had been expressing a growing interest in astronomy, so we decided to surprise her for her birthday. After weeks of research and discovery we found the perfect one for her.

It was pretty amazing to see her initial excitement learning to use the telescope. She brought us along on countless nights in cold weather, pointing out interesting phenomena or just gazing up at the stars with a sense of wonder at the heavens. Her passion and her desire to share those moments with us filled me with an immense love and care for her; I wanted to give her the best, and to continue to open up a whole new world of wonder and discovery for her. And yet, as I watched her, I realized that my love, as great as it was, could never compare to the endless love of God. And more so, it made me reflect on the tenuous nature of human relationships as a parallel to our relationship to the Father. As a people, we are far from perfect; we sin, we sometimes hurt each other, but we also forgive each other as our God forgives us.

This entire psalm is a beautiful expression of overflowing gratitude to God for His overwhelming grace and forgiveness. David, "a man after God's heart," was no stranger to both great victories and deep failures. David understood firsthand the weight of sin and the infinite joy of God's mercy. He calls upon himself to bless the Lord, acknowledging the depth and breadth of God's mercy.

This emphasis on forgiveness is notable. "Who forgives all your iniquity," David declares. This powerful statement reveals the depth of God's grace. Our sins, however numerous, cannot outweigh the boundless love and forgiveness of God. He is not merely willing to forgive, but actively desires to heal and restore us.

This message of forgiveness can be echoed in the life and work of Jesus. He came to the world not to condemn the world, but to save it. He embraced sinners, while offering them the path to reconciliation with God. Through His death on the cross, Jesus paid the ultimate price for our sins, offering us the gift of eternal life.

I encourage you during this season of Lent to reflect on God's forgiveness. Take time to consider the specific ways that He has forgiven you in your life. Confess the weight of your sins and consider the grace that has been extended to you. In the same spirit, consider extending that forgiveness to others. As He has forgiven us, we are called to forgive others. This can be a challenging but ultimately freeing act. Lastly, share God's love with others. Let your words and actions reflect the love and forgiveness you have received from God.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Prayer: *Lord, thank you for your unfailing love and forgiveness. Help me to truly understand the depth of your grace and to live a life that reflects your mercy. From everlasting to everlasting, may I extend forgiveness to others, just as you have forgiven me. Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Thursday, April 10 | Day 32

Today's Devotional comes from Kaely Johnson

[Psalm 108](#)

*My heart is steadfast, O God!
I will sing and make melody with all my being!
For your steadfast love is great above the heavens;
your faithfulness reaches to the clouds. (Psalm 108:1, 4 ESV)*

Have you ever stood on a mountaintop? Watched clouds skitter across the sky, light and shadow vying for victory in the vast expanse of the heavens? Felt the wind whip your hair, call to you, as if its immense power could sweep you away until you soared above the world?

That is a mountaintop experience, and I have only felt it in one place on earth: Trail Ridge Road, Colorado. Having lived in the state for 13 years, we visit Colorado regularly. Each time our family takes the trek up Trail Ridge Road. We wind along sharp curves with sheer cliffs dropping thousands of feet below, until we reach the Continental Divide at 12,183 feet. We hike the rest of the way, finally scrambling to the top of a rocky outcropping. Every time the experience brings my thoughts to God, the Creator and Sustainer of life. On that mountaintop God is big and my problems are small.

That is a mountaintop experience, and this is a *mountaintop psalm*. It's a banner flung above a raging battle, a shout of defiance against the storm. It dives straight into victorious praise. Instead of asking, Psalm 108 grabs onto the promises of God as a victory already won.

Though it is taken almost word by word from [Psalm 57](#), Psalm 108 is arranged to create a different emphasis.

1. Where Psalm 57 begins with a cry for mercy, "Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me," Psalm 108 begins with victorious praise, "My heart is steadfast, O God! I will sing and make melody with all my being!"
2. Where Psalm 57 begins with a prayer that eventually ends in rejoicing, "Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth!" (Psalm 57:11), Psalm 108 begins with rejoicing that ends in confident prayer, "Oh grant us help against the foe, for vain is the salvation of man!" (Psalm 108:12).
3. In both Psalms, David's heart is steadfast (or fixed) because God's love is steadfast (fixed). It's the vastness of God's faithfulness that brings David to praise. "For your steadfast love is great above the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the clouds," (Psalm 108:4).
4. Both psalms originated when David was hiding from King Saul in a cave, yet they face the same situation with distinct mindsets.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

What does this mean?

It's right and good to approach God in different ways. Sometimes the faithfulness of God sinks into our hearts through prayer that leads to praise, "climbing the ladder of prayer."

But sometimes the Holy Spirit allows us to grab the promises of God and give a shout of victory regardless of our circumstances.

Psalm 108 reminds us that God has already won the victory. We don't need to cower or fret. The evil around us is just a shadow. It blocks the sun for a time, but will pass.

As we approach this Easter season, let's remember the end of our story. Calvary leads to Easter and the victory of the resurrection. And it's in this victory we can stand on the mountaintop, singing praises to our great God. Triumphant in his steadfast love.

Prayer: *Jesus, remind us of your victory and the end of our story. Let us rejoice in your fixed and steady love. In your triumph, let us sing. Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Friday, April 11 | Day 33

Today's Devotional comes from Pattie Harris

[Psalm 110](#) – The Coronation of the Lamb of God

For many years, I have been captivated by an array of scriptures that I have come to call the “Love Poems of God the Father and God the Son.” In these poems of blessings and praises to one another, we get to peer into the most exquisitely beautiful love relationship in all existence. They were penned, so to speak, before the foundation of the world. Listen to this poem of the Father extolling His Son:

“Your throne, O God, endures forever ... You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness. Therefore God, Your God has anointed You with the oil of gladness above your companions.”

These magnificent odes simulate my imagination to create worship material for my own soul. For example, in Psalm 110, I am imagining God the Father introducing God the Son to His Heavenly Host as His “Sweet Lamb of God.” He invites the Son to take His seat on the throne: *“Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies Your footstool.”* Then He asks the Son to testify to the Heavenly Host about His decision to become the Lamb of God because they had been very curious about it, wanting to know what had prompted such a drastic move?

The Son repeated His response to His Father when the redemption plan was revealed.

“Sacrifice and offering you did not desire – but a body you prepared for me. I said, Here I am... I have come to do your will, My God.” He knew that the Lamb of God’s fate was so tortuous even to the point of suffering the equivalent of an eternity in hell on the cross. Clearly, this role required absolute selflessness and astonishingly, the Son had been prepared for it for a long time. For all eternity, the Son’s abode had been in the bosom of the Father where He experienced relentless waves of the Father’s love, affection and joy. So having been supplied continually with an eternity’s worth of the Father’s love, selflessness was not problem for Him. For it was impossible for Him to suffer any deprivation due to giving Himself away. Joyfully, He took on the role as Lamb of God.

With exceeding joy, the Father proceeded to crown His Son. He *“put all things in subjection under His feet and elevated Him above all rule and authority and power and dominion and everything that was named.”*

Suddenly the heavenly host and all creation began their festival singing and shouting love poems to their King: *“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and honor and strength and blessing.”*

O Lamb of God, Because of Your sacrifice, the Father has carved out a space in His bosom for me so that I, too, might enjoy the same love He has for You for all eternity.

Would you like to write a Love Poem to the Lamb? Let’s hope that God will record it in His *Book of Remembrance*.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Saturday, April 12 | Day 34

Today's Devotional comes from John Kufuor

[Psalm 124](#)

The Psalmist David knows a thing or two about God's deliverance. In his own life, there were numerous occasions when the Lord delivered him from the snare of the fowler.

Before David became king, he was a shepherd to his family's flock of sheep. I am sure he witnessed many occasions where he had to save the flock from bears, wolves, and other predators. When Israel was confronted by the Philistines, it was David who stepped forward to face Goliath. He had already seen the hand of the Lord delivering him from lions and wild animals, and he was confident that God would deliver him and Israel from their enemies. How else do you explain a young shepherd boy with a slingshot going to face Goliath? This was the same instrument he had used during his days as a shepherd.

The Lord also delivered David from the hand of his own son, Absalom, from King Saul, the Philistines, the Ammonites—the list goes on. This Psalm, therefore, is his personal testimony to the wonders of the Lord and His hand of mercy and protection over His servant David.

Revelation of David's Heart or God's Heart ([1 Samuel 13:14](#))

God directed the prophet Samuel to anoint David because the Lord knew David's heart. Though he was the youngest of Jesse's children and overlooked outwardly, God saw his inner desire to please Him.

How does this resonate with me? I wake up every day thankful to God for His blessings and mercy in my life. James 1:5 states, *"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith..."* During my second year in college, this verse helped me realize that wisdom is better than riches. Without wisdom from the Lord, the decisions we make in life can be detrimental to our walk as Christians. Through my own experiences, I have learned that wisdom, patience and long-suffering come from the Lord, and He grants these attributes to those who ask Him.

How does this passage point to Jesus and the hope of Easter? Through Christ, the trials of life cannot overcome our souls. We have escaped the snare of the evil one because of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. Christ has redeemed our souls from the enemy. Yes, our flesh will one day be laid in a grave, but hallelujah—our spirit and soul will be with the Lord!

Luke 12:4 reminds us, *"Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul."* Psalm 23:4 assures us that *"Even though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we will fear no evil, for the Lord is with us."*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

This truth inspires me daily—before I go to bed, when I wake up and as I go about my day—to surround my life with meditation on God’s Word. Whether I’m driving, walking or resting, I keep Scripture close to my heart. On nights when I struggle to sleep, I put on my Bluetooth headphones and listen to Scripture, and before I know it, morning has come.

I have come to the realization that everything we do should be subject to the Spirit of God. Regardless of the toil or pressure we face, the Lord will see us through. He will never forsake us. Amen.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Monday, April 14 | Day 35

Today's Devotional comes from Melissa Stein

[Psalm 131](#)

Israel, put your hope in the Lord both now and forevermore. (Psalm 131:3)

Just the other day my oldest daughter, who is 9, asked to speak with me privately. She was hurting because of a situation with a friend. I got the opportunity to listen, to hug and to pray for my little girl. She fully trusts me and had the confidence that I would indeed bring the encouragement she needed. Psalm 131 is such a powerful word picture for us as we discover what it is like to put our hope in the Lord. How do we get to a place where we have the kind of hope in the Lord that David did? When God is the one we run to first? Even as Christians we can go to other things or people instead of turning towards God.

We see David in this Psalm first take a posture of humility. He lays down his pride, his rights and submits himself to God and His ways. Instead of being distracted by the things going on around him, regardless of how great they were, he finds himself content in God's presence. He is safe and secure and knows that God is all he needs. David made that decision to quiet his soul. A child who has been weaned goes to their mother because their mom is trustworthy. The child desires connection with their mom. The relationship part is crucial. David sought out a relationship with the Lord. My daughter sought me out for guidance that day because of our relationship. She wasn't going to share her heart with a stranger. She wanted her mom who had proved to be trustworthy. God wants us to seek after him. He wants us to turn to Him in our time of need. To find ourselves lost in His presence regardless of our circumstances. He wants us to know that He gives us hope in even the most hopeless situations. He has proven Himself trustworthy.

When this Psalm was written the people of Israel hoped that one day the Messiah would come. They were waiting with expectation. He came. His name is Jesus Christ and He went to the cross for each one of us so that we could have a relationship with Him. He is all we need. As we prepare for Easter and the celebration of our risen King may we take the time to calm and quiet ourselves before the Lord. May we fully surrender to him and place our hope not in ourselves, not in the things of the world, but to fully hope in Jesus' name.

Prayer: *Jesus, we thank you that you are a relational God. That through the cross we can go before a Holy God. We praise you that you are all we need. Help us to place our hope in you both today, tomorrow, and forever. Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Tuesday, April 15 | Day 36

Today's Devotional comes from Gabriel Montgomery (*one of our high school students*)

[Psalm 138](#)

On the day I called, you answered me; my strength of soul you increased. (Psalm 138:3, ESV)

Psalm 138 is a powerful reminder of God's faithfulness, a reminder that he hears and responds when we depend on him. David, the author of this Psalm, experienced countless struggles and challenges. Challenges varying from fleeing Saul, to battling enemies or even facing personal sins. Despite these he continually turned to God for strength. In verse 3, he acknowledges that God answered his prayers, not necessarily by removing the trials, but by strengthening him.

Likewise, there have been times when I felt completely overwhelmed; whether by uncertainty, by fear or by burdens too heavy to carry alone. In these times I have prayed for God to change my immediate situation; instead, I find that he changed me and my perspective. He gave me peace when I experienced anxiety, perseverance when I wanted to quit, and hope when I thought failure was inevitable. Looking back, I realize those were the moments when my faith grew the most.

This verse is a reminder that God often works within us before he works around us. When we face hardships, our inclination is usually to pray for immediate help. We want the trials to end, the pain to subside and the obstacles to disappear. Often, God's answer is not to change our circumstances immediately, it is to change our hearts. This allows us to endure obstacles with faith, courage and resilience.

This is best exemplified by Jesus' journey to the cross. On the night before his crucifixion, in the Garden of Gethsemane, he prayed. He asked God if there was another way except the cross. Rather than removing the suffering, God strengthened Jesus. After praying, Jesus was empowered, ready to endure the cross for the salvation of the world. Jesus' example shows us that God's strength is greater than our suffering. Furthermore, when we rely on him, we will find the courage to face our biggest trials.

If you are facing a difficult season, take this truth to heart: God hears you. He will answer you. Even if He does not remove the struggle, He will give you the strength to conquer it. Trust that, in the midst of your trial, He is working within you, making you stronger, shaping your faith and preparing you for what lies ahead.

Prayer: *Lord, when I depend on you, I trust that you hear me. In every trial strengthen my heart and soul to depend on you. Help me to rely on you knowing that you will equip me. No matter what lies ahead, remind me that you are with me, shaping me and giving me the strength to endure. Amen.*

Verses for further study

- Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane: [Matthew 26](#), [Mark 14](#), [Hebrews 5:7](#)
- Encouragement in times of Trial: [Isaiah 41:10](#), [Philippians 4:6-7](#), [Psalm 34:17](#)

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Wednesday, April 16 | Day 37

Today's Devotional comes from Carol Houseal
Psalm 139 – Hold Me Fast

You have searched me, LORD, and you know me. 2 You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. 3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. 4 Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely. 5 You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. 7 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? 8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. 9 If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, 10 even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. (Psalm 139: 1-10)

When I read, and reread this passage, I experience such overwhelming grace and love and feel God's presence surrounding me. How wonderful to know and have the assurance that God is just a breath away, a thought, a prayer, a gesture. His Spirit is with us always.

Recently, Brandywine did an outreach project called "My Hashtag," which encouraged us to consider how we can share God's love with people we encounter at work or in our neighborhood.

Inspired by the challenge, we decided to organize a social event for our neighbors to extend some hospitality. I love hosting get-togethers, so inviting the new neighbors along with a few others was an easy decision. We carved out a small window on a Saturday to schedule the party. Despite the cold, rainy weather, we prepared our covered porch with lap blankets, a gas firepit, music and, of course, food. The event was a success and even inspired another neighbor to host their own gathering a month later!

This story may not sound special, but the fact that it even happened and that it went smoothly revealed that God's hand was in it, and He made it a success. We were out of town the night before for a college soccer alumni event and a friend's college match and made it home just 15 minutes before the first guests arrived. My husband and I worked as a team to "ready" our porch with all the items mentioned above. Not only did we have a great time, but after everyone leisurely left, we were able to get to the next event we had on our calendar, a professional soccer match and to pick up the boys we host as they returned from their own match in Toronto!

When I initially planned this gathering, I was so excited to host. However, the day of the party I was overwhelmed with stress, panic, worry and just wondering "what was I thinking" trying to plan this outreach with everything else going on! Thankfully, God knew that it was all going to come together because He was in the details. Verse 23 says, "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts." Recalling this promise, my thoughts calmed and allowed me to rely on His Spirit to draw in those who we were called to serve.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

What a gift it is to know that God has me “hemmed” in! That he has enveloped me with his presence. He has me on all sides and has His hand upon me.

Prayer: *Dear God, thank you for surrounding me with Your love, comfort and goodness. Even when I am unsure and overwhelmed, I know you are with me. You have shown yourself to be faithful in the past in so many ways and all the days ordained for me are already known by You. Where can I go from your Spirit? And when I do doubt or become anxious, I will recall the words of Psalm 139 knowing that Your hand “will guide me and hold me fast.” Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Thursday, April 17 | Day 38

Today's Devotional comes from Pern Lundell

[Psalm 142](#) – A Cry for Help in Distress

Psalm 142: A maskil of David. When he was in the cave. A prayer.

I cry aloud to the Lord; I lift up my voice to the Lord for mercy. (Psalm 142:1)

Look and see, there is no one at my right hand; no one is concerned for me. I have no refuge; no one cares for my life. (Psalm 142:4)

Have you ever been so lonely that you didn't know where to turn because you felt that no one really cared? Or have you ever been in such a desperate situation that you felt there was no hope and nothing you could do to fix it? David certainly felt both of those things as he was fleeing and hiding from his enemies. This short seven verse Psalm written by David is full of the emotion he was feeling. I have felt this emotion.

My daughter had a medical emergency while attending school in Canada. We needed to fly there immediately and bring her home. But I discovered my passport had just expired. Getting a passport is a slow process, and even the expedited process takes 2-3 weeks. I needed to fly the next day.

I was blessed to have a close friend in my church who was a member of the security detail at the Passport Agency in downtown Chicago. He guided me on where to go and what to do, but success was not guaranteed. I remember crying out to God as I drove into Chicago. I cannot recall the last time I felt such raw emotion. Upon arrival, I joined several hundred others who were in line for passport support. I continued to pray silently as the line of so many people crawled. When my friend saw me, he offered encouragement, but I still waited. I was running out of time.

Surprisingly, my name was called and I was ushered through four different sets of doors ending up in a small conference room. An employee entered, reviewed my information, and asked me to wait and left. This happened with four different employees. What I didn't know is that my friend, a strong Christian brother who had been sharing the Gospel to a number of his fellow employees in recent months, had apparently made close friends with the personnel who handled passport processing. Not only did I get expedited, they **handed me my new passport** (which is almost always sent through the mail)! I could not believe it. It was a miracle, a HUGE answer to prayer, and reinforced the importance of going to God first.

Going to God in prayer is always a good thing to do—whether you are in complete desperation or it's part of a daily routine. Putting God first and reaching out to Him first is the right thing to do because He is the only one worthy. And God promises to help us and never forget about us. We can lean into Him in good times and bad for He is faithful like no other.

Prayer: *Father, thank you for caring about me and hearing me when I need You. You are faithful and true, and I love You and am blessed with the knowledge that You know me and loved me first. You are awesome, holy and worthy of all my praise. Amen.*

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Friday, April 18 | Day 39

Today's Devotional comes from Pastor Nate Keeler

[Psalm 145](#) – Fasting, But a Feast is Coming!

I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever. (Psalm 145:1)
One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts. (Psalm 145:4)
All your works praise you, Lord; your faithful people extol you. (Psalm 145:10)
They tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might, so that all people may know of your mighty acts and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. (Psalm 145:11-12)

Growing up as a wrestler, I experienced both fasting and feasting. To make weight for a weekend tournament, I would often have to cut several pounds, surviving for days on small amounts of Campbell's soup and squeezable carb gel packs. By Saturday night, I would be dreaming of pasta, pastries, fried chicken and ice cream. And then—finally—Sunday afternoon would arrive. The tournament (and my suffering) was over! My mom would have a table filled with all my favorites. Oh, the joy of that feast!

David was well acquainted with both fasting and feasting, in a literal and spiritual sense. Just two Psalms earlier, he cried out from a place of suffering:

"So my spirit grows faint within me; my heart within me is dismayed. I spread out my hands to you; I thirst for you like a parched land." (Psalm 143:4,6)

David understood what it meant to be weary and in need. But even in his suffering, he never lost sight of the feast to come—the goodness and deliverance of the Lord. In Psalm 145, we see a dramatic shift: instead of lament, David overflows with praise. He repeats words of worship 19 times and lists at least 29 attributes or acts of God that are worthy of celebration. Even in seasons of struggle, he wants Israel—and the whole world—to know that with God, the fast of suffering is always followed by the feast of hope.

As we near the end of Lent, we have walked with both David and the Son of David, Jesus. Jesus entered his own fast of suffering—descending the dark stairway of betrayal, arrest, abandonment, humiliation and ultimately crucifixion. But we know how the story ends. The fast does not last forever. The grave cannot hold him. Easter is coming! Sin and death are defeated. Salvation is secured. The fasting will soon give way to feasting—so let us rejoice!

Reflection:

- If you have been fasting, how has it increased your anticipation for feasting?
- How does the hope of Easter stir up praise in your heart?

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Prayer: *Oh Lord, you know what it is to endure the fast of suffering. You gave your life so that I could share in the feast of eternity with You. You are worthy of all my praise.*

[Take a moment to praise God for as many of His attributes and actions as you can. Use Psalm 145 as a guide.]

Good Friday Service Invitation

Join us today at 7pm for our Good Friday Service

Our Good Friday Service is a vesper service of quiet reflection of Jesus' journey to the cross. It is a candlelight service of spoken word, scripture and music. Once you've experienced this time of remembrance, Easter Sunday is even more glorious! Due to the somber and quiet nature of this service, childcare is available for children in 2nd grade and younger. The deadline to request childcare is April 14. Visit brandywine.church/Easter to register.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Saturday, April 19 | Day 40

Today's Devotional comes from Pastor Terry Foester

[Psalm 143](#) — Lend Me Your Ear

One of the things I've always admired about David is the way he starts his prayers. They present a pattern on how to approach God. Today, in Psalm 143, David begins with a simple and straight forward request: *"Hear my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my pleas for mercy! In your faithfulness answer me, in your righteousness!"* (Psalm 143:1)

David begins by asking God to listen. He's asking for God's ear. Maybe that's where the idiom *"lend me your ear"* finds its origin. Psalm 116:2 echoes a similar truth: *"Because he turned his ear to me, I will call on him as long as I live."*

Think about that for a second...the God of the universe hears your prayers! Do you believe it?

Regardless of the answer, and even in times when He seems silent, there is great comfort to be found in a God who hears. At the end of any given day, the fact that God listens is reason enough to call out to Him again.

Have you ever felt truly listened to? Sadly, it's a rare occurrence in our culture – to sit with someone who doesn't interrupt, doesn't rush to respond, but simply listens. To truly listen to someone's heart is to reflect God's own character. Because God is the original listener. And yet, how often do we approach prayer the same way—quieting our hearts to really listen for His voice?

David goes on, bringing his true desperation before the Lord. You can read and pray along. David doesn't hold back his emotions or the darkness he feels. And toward the end of the prayer, David stretches out his hands—not in frustration, but in surrender.

And then, one of the most beautiful verses in this psalm:

"Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love, for in you I trust. Make me know the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul." (Psalm 143:8)

David ends his prayer with a heart ready to listen. How do we practice this sort of prayer posture? We see a glimpse here—it happens in the daily. *"Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love."*

On Resurrection Sunday, that's exactly what we rise to remember. *"Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love."* Happy Easter!

Prayer: *Lord, as the morning awakens, help me awaken to Your love today. Help me to listen for Your voice—through Your Word, through Your presence, through trusting You with whatever this day brings. Amen.*

There's no better time to turn to Him than now.

40 DAYS OF PRAYER
LENT DEVOTIONAL

Lent Conclusion & Challenge

We hope there are some lasting takeaways you've developed during this time—spirit-led attitudes, new spiritual rhythms, new margin for time with God or a greater perspective on what's truly important. Will those aspects continue for you?

Forty days is just long enough to begin seeing small changes, but lasting transformation takes time. As you step out of this season, take a moment to reflect and journal around these questions:

- What did you find most difficult about the last 40 days?
- What is a lesson you learned? Why did God want you to learn that lesson? What good might come from it?
- What is something you need to continue? (Possibly a new attitude, a new truth to live by, a new way to rely on the Holy Spirit or a new spiritual rhythm.)
- What did you learn about yourself, others or God?
- How might this new insight influence our church or those in your sphere of influence?

Join us on Easter Sunday for the Resurrection Celebration

We will celebrate Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday with three services: 8:00 a.m. Traditional, 9:30 a.m. Contemporary (also online) and 11:00 a.m. Contemporary. Classes are **ONLY** available for children age 4 and younger during the 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services.