

David constantly cried out to God. I can only ask God to increase my awareness and improve my obedience. Matthew 5:8 says, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."

1 Samuel 2:1-10; Psalm 85; Ephesians 2:1-10; Matthew 7:22-27

Birthday: Abiyu Baker

Today's Calendar

7:00 a.m.	AA "Hour of Power"
9:00 a.m.	A Way Out
9:30 a.m.	Friday Life Group
10:00 a.m.	Friday Bible Study
12:00 p.m.	NarcAnon "Clean at Noon"
8:00 p.m.	Friday Night Young Peoples' AA

Today's Ministry: Youth Group

Saturday, May 7

Matthew 7:28—8:4 *When Jesus came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him. A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."* (vv.1-2)

Leprosy was a terrifying disease when Jesus walked the earth. There was no cure. If you were declared a leper, you were banned from your home and city and sent to live in a leper community.

"Armie" is the nickname I've given the armadillo living beneath my house. He or she digs its hole by the front door and under the cement entry. I continually fill in the hole and several days later Armie has re-dug its way out. Although there must be a back door, I haven't found it.

One day a news segment caught my attention. "Armadillos spread leprosy by direct contact with saliva." Well now, I've always believed leprosy to be a disease of Biblical days. Further, Armie and I have a "live and let live" relationship. Although a nocturnal animal, I've on occasion seen it high-tailing across my back yard. I have no intention of getting close enough to contact leprosy. However, perhaps it's time to re-think Armie's residency.

Jesus remains our Great Healer.

Numbers 11:16-17, 24-29; Psalms 87, 90; Ephesians 2:11-22

Birthdays: Connie Tily, Karen Edds, Fred Van Vonno & Donald Rabener

Anniversary: Dennis & Wendy Hudson

Today's Calendar

7:00 a.m.	AA "Hour of Power"
9:30 a.m.	AA Step Study for Women
12:00 p.m.	NarcAnon "Clean at Noon"
5:00 p.m.	Holy Eucharist, Rite II
6:00 p.m.	Passover Seder
6:30 p.m.	Klean N'Krazy
8:30 p.m.	NarcAnon "Not Alone"

Today's Ministry: Acoytes

by Shirley J. Conley

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"Growing into Jesus - Reaching out with love"

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St. Mary's

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Growing into Jesus - Reaching out with Love

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Sunday, May 1

Luke 12:13-21 *Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."* (v.15 NIV)

"You can't take it with you." How many times I've heard this expression. I've never been a materialistic person. I'm happy for the neighbor's shiny new car in their driveway, a friend's new dress, or the co-worker who flaunts a promotion. Never was this phrase fraught with so much meaning than when I lost everything after the death of my husband. Left without a job, I sold our meager possessions to pay the mortgage until the house sold. All my hopes—gone. My dream of turning a desert property into an oasis—gone. A flood of tears followed each item sold, including my car as it was towed down the dirt road.

The lesson was not easy, but I, like the Israelites, would learn to live by God's grace and direction. Life is more than material goods. As I grew in my relationship with God, He began to bless me abundantly. Not with the life I envisioned, but a life that comes with endurance. How worthless is temporary earthly wealth? "You can't take it with you."

Leviticus 25:1-17; Psalms 93, 96; James 1:2-8, 16-18

Birthdays: Elizabeth Moran, Cris Branden & Jeremy Brown

Today's Calendar

7:30 a.m.	Holy Eucharist, Rite I
9:00 a.m.	Contemporary Family Worship Service (Confirmation-The Rt. Rev. James H. Ottley)
9:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist, Rite II
10:00 a.m.	Coffee & Cake Reception in the Courtyard
10:15 a.m.	Sunday School
10:15 a.m.	CFW Band Rehearsal
10:15 a.m.	Outreach Committee Meeting
11:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist, Rite II (Verger Commissioning The Rt. Rev. James H. Ottley)
4:00 p.m.	Life Group
6:00 p.m.	R.O.C.K.

Today's Ministry: Shepherd Group

Monday, May 2

Colossians 1:9-14 *For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding the Spirit gives.* (v.9)

Each Tuesday morning a group of us get together for an hour and a half for Women's Bible Study. The first thing we do is lift our prayer requests to the Lord—praises and needs. It's not unusual to spend a third of our time discussing and preparing the list. The needs are many. We especially love it when our prayers are answered and someone is recovering well from surgery or illness. At the end of our meeting we each draw a name from the container. We will lift her up in prayer all week.

Many times I'm unaware of that particular lady's special prayer need. At that point, the apostle Paul tells us how to pray for other believers. We can request they understand God's will, gain spiritual wisdom, please and honor God, bear good fruit, grow in the knowledge of God, be filled with God's strength, have endurance and patience, stay full of Christ's joy, and give thanks always.

When I don't know what to pray, I can always use this list given to the Colossians.

Leviticus 25:35-55; Psalm 80; Matthew 13:1-16

Birthdays: Charlie Lippincott & Monica Elliott

Today's Calendar

7:00 a.m.	AA "Hour of Power"
5:30 p.m.	ACA Meeting (Adult Children of Alcoholics)
6:30 p.m.	Life Group
7:30 p.m.	CFW Band Rehearsal

Today's Ministry: St. Mary's Closet Thrift Store

Tuesday, May 3

1 Timothy 2:1-6 *I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.* (vv.1-2)

I recently became a part of a covenant group sanctioned by the church I attend. I've been joined with two other women to support each other in all ways. Following the Covenant Group Guide, we'll gather together to discuss our week stating our praises and concerns, and examine ourselves, followed by a prayer of pardon. We then read Scripture, which is repeated three times, ending with our request that the Holy Spirit use the passage to shape our faith and life for the coming week. In closing, we each pray for the world, the church, our leaders, and the lady sitting on our right.

In the Scripture passage above, the apostle Paul encourages us to pray for everyone and tells us our prayers will have powerful results. I'm sure I'm not alone when I say I've a problem praying for those in authority around the world, especially when I don't agree with their actions and words. Perhaps this exercise in praying for those I don't want to pray for will help me to understand how no one is outside God's mercy.

Leviticus 26:1-20; Psalm 78:1-39; Matthew 13:18-23

Birthdays: Agnes Vaughan, Sandy Haynes & Angela Bouchard

Today's Calendar

7:00 a.m.	AA "Hour of Power"
10:00 a.m.	Bible Study
12:10 p.m.	Holy Eucharist and Healing
4:00 p.m.	Co-Ed AA Step Study
6:00 p.m.	Overeaters' Anonymous
7:30 p.m.	NarcAnon "Just for Today"

Today's Ministry: Sunday School Teachers

Wednesday, May 4

Ephesians 1:1-10 *For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.* (vv.4-6)

At a low point in my life I walked into a little church in the small town of Chino Valley, Arizona. My head was filled with "why" questions. Why did God let the sky fall in on me? At least I felt like the sky was falling—a meteor or a bolt of lightning blocked each step I took. I didn't understand it was all part of God's plan. But why? Was everything that happened simply to gain my attention or was there a greater reason? Will I ever understand God's plan?

Scripture tells me I was chosen, predestined according to God's plan for the purpose of His will. Scripture also tells me I don't deserve to be saved and I can't earn my salvation. I can have salvation only through God's mercy, grace, and love.

No matter how good my works, only my faith in Christ will deliver me to eternity, according to His plan. It's only then, when I'm with God forever, that I will understand God's plan.

Leviticus 26:27-42; Psalm 119:97-120; Matthew 22:41-46

Birthdays: Dorothy Newton, Mary Hudson, Thad Cherwin & Erin Arnold

Today's Calendar

6:30 a.m.	Men's Bible Study
7:00 a.m.	AA "Hour of Power"
9:30 a.m.	Holy Eucharist
10:00 a.m.	Staff Meeting
1:00 p.m.	Journaling 101
4:45 p.m.	Mary's Kitchen
5:30 p.m.	AA "Daily Reflections"
6:15 p.m.	Beth Moore Bible Study
7:00 p.m.	Life Group
8:30 p.m.	NarcAnon "Klean and Crazy"

Today's Ministry: Table Hoppers

Thursday, May 5

Hebrews 2:5-18 *Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.* (v.18)

"Your only options are hip replacement or a life of pain." My orthopedic doctor looked me in the eyes and silent tears slid down my face.

Still I argued, "I planned to spend the month of July with my daughter in San Diego."

"No traveling. It will only worsen your condition. We need to schedule surgery as soon as possible."

Alone in my car I was overcome with emotion. How many times, God, will you change my plans? How many trials must I go through? What am I supposed to learn this time? Haven't I gone through enough trials? I wasn't angry. Just disappointed.

I reminded myself of all the familiar clichés; it could be worse; God will give me strength; God is in control. And, my aunt's words which always come to mind, "You come from a long line of strong women. You can do this."

We're taught as servants of God, those who know pain are better equipped to reach out to others with compassion. Now I ask myself, how can I use this experience to help others?

Daniel 7:9-14; Psalms 8, 47; Matthew 28:16-20

Birthdays: Kathryn Schultz, Vincent Miraglia, Clay Kanzler, Dave Bassion, Cory Zartman & Nathan Weidman

Anniversary: Erling & Susie Speer

Today's Calendar

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

7:00 a.m.	AA "Hour of Power"
10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist
10:30 a.m.	Altar Guild Meeting
12:30 p.m.	Overeaters' Anonymous
4:00 p.m.	St. Mary's Choristers
6:30 p.m.	Life Group
7:00 p.m.	Choir Evening Rehearsal
7:00 p.m.	AIAnon "Stepping Stones"
8:30 p.m.	DAA

Today's Ministry: Ushers

Friday, May 6

Psalm 86 *Hear my prayer, LORD; listen to my cry for mercy. When I am in distress, I call to you, because you answer me.* (vv.6-7)

Willing the pain away was to no avail. In the predawn hour, no longer able to take the pain, I lay in bed crying. I tried to pray but the only words from my mouth between my sobs were, "God help me. Please God, take the pain away."

Perhaps you're like me, waiting until you can no longer take it before crying out to the Lord. Although I pray for others daily, I seldom pray for myself. Yet, I know Jesus told us whatever we ask in his name will be given us. I believe God's Word and I know the scope of my faith. So why do I hesitate to pray for myself until there's no other choice? As a child I was taught to be brave, don't complain, no one likes a whiner. Or, perhaps it's an inbred desire to *fix* things.