Today Saturday, July 29
Anniversaries: Michael & Marian Metznik
Birthdays: Kimberly Brooks, Herb Nock, Patrick Talton
Friday’s Calendar:
7:00 a.m. Hour of Power AA
9:30 a.m. Life Group
10:00 a.m. Bible Study
12:00 p.m. A Way Out
8:00 p.m. AA Friday Nite Young People
Sunday’s Calendar:
7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I
9:00 a.m. Contemporary Family Worship
10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II
11:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II
1:00 p.m. The Muse Duo Concert
Today’s Ministry: Ushers

In every faith community, there’s usually someone who wants to take on everything by him or herself (and sometimes, it’s the pastor!). But trying to do the Lord’s work all alone can lead to lack of creativity, frustration, defeat, and burnout. I just had a funny thought: The animals entering Noah’s ark also were sent “two by two.” Even they needed each other!

So, next time you take on a task, whether it’s at church or elsewhere, phone a friend. Invite a neighbor or a family member to pitch in. It’s OK to ask for help, and most Christians enjoy helping when asked. In His wisdom, the Lord knows “there’s strength in numbers.”

1 Samuel 2:1-16; Psalm 55: 15; Acts 5:22-35

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Today’s Ministry: Acolytes

With each episode my mouth drops open in sheer awe. I find myself uttering, “Wow!” numerous times as I observe the stunning scenery, learn so much about animals and how intelligent they are. Seeing majestic whales rising up from cobalt waters, a peregrine falcon flying 200 m.p.h. toward one of the 6,000 glaciers and powerful jungle rivers, it’s easy to feel all this life and beauty is indeed praising God—as well as evidencing the artistry of the Creator. If all creation praises Him, let us do the same!

1 Samuel 2:1-16; Psalm 63; Romans 11:33—12:2; Matthew 25:14-30

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Monday, July 24
Mark 4:1-20 Then Jesus said, “Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.” (v.9)

There’s a difference between hearing and listening, as well as between hearing and understanding. When I’m in our kitchen with the exhaust fan and dishwasher running, I can hear what my husband is saying, but I can’t understand the words. Or I might talk to him while he’s working at the computer. He hears me fine, but just isn’t listening. In this verse, the Greek verb is “listen,” not “hear.” Listening involves both paying attention and understanding. God wants us to listen to His word and teachings, “inwardly digest them” (as The Book of Common Prayer says) and then act on them.

The Book of James expounds on this: “don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. For if you listen to the word and don’t obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don’t forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it” (James 1:22-25 NLT). So, listen up!

1 Samuel 24:1-22; Psalms 41, 52; Acts 13:44-52

Birthdays: Ernie Peixotto, John Suitor
Anniversaries: Jeff & Sandy Haynes, PJ & Kathryn Anson

Monday’s Calendar:
7:00 a.m. Hour of Power AA
10:00 a.m. Praying Hands (1st & 3rd Mondays)
3:00 p.m. Daughters of the King (2nd Mondays)
5:45 p.m. ACOA

Today’s Ministry: Stephen Ministry

Tuesday, July 25
Mark 4:21-34 “For to those who have, more will be given, and from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.” (v.25 NRSV)

At first glance, this saying of Jesus doesn’t seem fair. But if we take the symbolism to represent faith instead of something tangible, it is often true that when we have some faith to start with, it grows into more. And those who have no faith, while they might convert, tend to descend into deeper spiritual darkness and greater unbelief.

The context of this verse prescribes three teachings by Jesus about the kingdom of God, two of which use images of seeds growing into fruitful plants. He’s trying to get across to his disciples (and us) that we are to grow in our faith and works, not hide or bury them. And when our faith and deeds have ripened, Galatians 5:22-23 tells us what kind of fruit we will bear: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control”—and which of us doesn’t want to be like that? I love fruit salad, and this is one of the best recipes I’ve found!

1 Samuel 25:1-22; Psalm 45; Acts 14:1-18

Birthdays: Dave Astras, Jessica Hibberd, Lowell Hinchliffe, Suzanne Northcutt

Tuesday’s Calendar:
7:00 a.m. Hour of Power AA
9:30 a.m. Women’s Bible Study
9:30 a.m. Life Group ONLINE
12:10 p.m. Healing Service

Today’s Ministry: Stewardship Committee

Wednesday, July 26
Psalms 119:49-72 Before I was humbled I went astray, but now I keep your word. You are good and do good; teach me your statutes. (vv.67-68)

Having personally gone astray for quite a while before I was humbled at my conversion to Jesus Christ, I can identify with the words of the psalmist. When I came to know the risen, living Lord as my personal Savior, I needed the moral guidance God’s word and laws provide. Even now that I’ve been a believer and served God in ministry for more than 30 years, I still try to steer my life by the moral compass the Bible gives us.

Yesterday on the radio, a man was saying how “people should be able to do whatever they want to do” without suffering any consequences. That sounded like the same lie the devil told Adam and Eve in the Garden, back at the dawn of humanity. Some say people can be good without being religious. Maybe. But I know from experience: “It is good for me that I was humbled, so that I might learn your statutes. The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces.” (vv.71-72) It’s also better than living in ways that hurt myself, others, and God.

1 Samuel 25:23-44; Acts 14:19-28; Mark 4:35-41

Birthdays: Kevin Landry, Elizabeth Von Aldenbruck
Anniversaries: Gary & Lisa Bach, David & Linda Pittman

Wednesday’s Calendar:
6:30 a.m. Men’s Bible Study
7:00 a.m. Hour of Power AA
9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II
10:00 a.m. Life Group
4:30 p.m. Mary’s Kitchen
6:00 p.m. NAMI

Today’s Ministry: Sunday School

Thursday, July 27
Psalm 54 “I will give thanks to your name, O Lord, for it is good. For he has delivered me from every trouble… (vv.6b-7a)

When I was going through five of the hardest years in my vocation, my spiritual director invited me to try an exercise: Start by drawing a timeline on a large piece of paper. Above the line, write the unhappy dates or events that signified my struggles as I sought to transition from being ordained in a different denomination to becoming an Episcopal priest. Below the line, I was to note whatever good might have come out of these trials, or any positive aspect I could recall.

Imagine my surprise, when beneath nearly “every trouble” (as the psalmist writes) there was indeed something blessed, helpful, or