

Birthdays: Joanne Greer, Robert Sellards

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

Today's Ministry: Flower Guild

Saturday, August 25

Psalm 137 *By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion. (v.1)*

I almost always read this sentence and the rest of the psalm with tears in my eyes because I substitute earth for Babylon and heaven for Zion. I weep not because I remember heaven, but because I do not. Yet I still yearn for heaven because God has revealed it to me in numerous ways. It seems a paradox; he instilled within me this great desire for heaven and at the same time gave me a will to live so that I would remain alive on earth. Why? Why am I here and not there? The best I am able to come up with is that earth is heaven's college; I am here to learn to love. I am given endless opportunities to love: my wife and family, my community, others the world over, the environment, and even myself. These opportunities constantly provide lessons on love for me. Lord, help me be an excellent student.

Job 3:1-26; Psalm 144; Acts 9:10-19a; John 6:41-5

Birthdays: Gregg Burdick, Jane Workman, Tyler Dye, Gabrielle Bach

Saturday's Calendar
7:00 a.m. AA "Hour of Power"
9:30 a.m. AA Step Study for Women
5:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Today's Ministry: Heritage Society

By Herbert Kierulff

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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

Good News Daily

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Sunday, August 19

Mark 5:25-34 *...because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed."* (v.28 NIV)

I collect antiques as a hobby. There is nothing wrong with that except I sometimes yield to the temptation to neglect prayer and charitable activities in the excitement of a search and negotiation for an interesting item. Then I'm angry with myself and ashamed.

The temptation to overspend time works in me like a noiseless file, as one holy person put it, quietly rasping away at my resolve to keep a reasonable balance. Sometimes temptation appeals to my emotions like Delilah wheedling Sampson for his secret as a pledge of his love: "If you *really* wanted this item you'd spend more time looking." Other times temptation is a swarm of bees with all kinds of logical arguments: "Keep looking; if someone is selling now, it might be gone before you find it."

I understand in a small way what the woman with the 12-year issue of blood must have felt: simply overwhelmed by the emotion of shame and the conflicting logic of her doctors. Lord, let me touch your garment by faith every day and be healed.

Judges 16:15-31; Psalm 118; 2 Corinthians 13:1-11

Birthdays: Nan King, Anne Franzen, Rocco Smith

Anniversary: Dale & Mary Hudson

Sunday's Calendar

DISCRETIONARY SUNDAY
7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I
9:00 a.m. Contemporary Family Worship Service
9:10 a.m. Sunday School Youth Room 2 & 3
10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II
Coffee Hour - Smith Hall after 10:30 A.M. Service
5:00 p.m. Spaghetti Dinner / Ministry Fair

Today's Ministry: Counters

Monday, August 20

Acts 7:44—8:1a *Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep.* (v.60)

Take no vengeance. With his last breath Stephen pleaded for his slayers. Christians did not take revenge on Paul even though he was an accomplice in the brutal murder of Stephen and others.

Jesus repealed the ancient Lex Talionis, the Law of Vengeance that sanctions an eye for an eye and a life for a life. Can I as Christ’s follower refrain from revenge against someone who would kill my loved ones or me? I’d like to think myself civilized enough to reject murder altogether—even the thought of it. On the other hand, what about my cruel put-downs of those who insult me? What about the guilt trips I occasionally lay on my wife and children when they disappoint me? What about the times I disparage people I don’t like behind their backs? Isn’t that revenge?

There’s more. Jesus commanded me to love my neighbor as myself. This is an obligation to behave positively toward offenders, not just avoid acting negatively. Take no vengeance and forgive as well! Only with God’s considerable help is that even conceivable for me.

Judges 17:1-13; Psalm 106:1-18; John 5:19-29

Birthdays: Mary Lou Knox, Bob Cahalin, George Wright, Gwen Carey, Rick Bright, Linda Pittman, Taylor Karr

Monday’s Calendar

7:00 a.m. AA “Hour of Power”
5:30 p.m. Steven Ministry Supervision
5:30 p.m. ACA Families

Today’s Ministry: Daughters of the King

Tuesday, August 21

Psalms 121 *My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.* (v.2)

The psalmist in verse one asks where his help comes from and answers his question in verse two. His help comes from God. It has taken me a lifetime to thoroughly engage with that answer. I am still prone to look to myself first for help in times of trouble or when an opportunity opens up. Maybe it’s my individualistic personality; but most likely, it’s my pride.

Last Lent my spiritual advisor suggested I do a spiritual exercise. I was to look back over my life and note the times the Lord had intervened in some way so that change happened. What an eye-opener! In looking back over time, I found that God has been in the midst of every change in my life that I can remember. In the good times God has been with me providing opportunities and encouragement. In the difficult times God has been active in bringing good out of the bad.

Judges 18:1-15; Psalms 120, 122, 123; Acts 8:1-13; John 5:30-47

Birthdays: Rev. Peggy Sheldon, Carolyn Tiberio, Darcy Weir, Michael Faulkner, Bill Stuckey, John Kelley

Tuesday’s Calendar

7:00 a.m. AA “Hour of Power”
12:10 p.m. Holy Eucharist & Healing
5:00 p.m. Facility Committee Meeting
6:00 p.m. Overeaters’ Anonymous

Today’s Ministry: Eucharistic Visitors

Wednesday, August 22

Psalm 119:145-176 *I rejoice in your promise like one who finds great spoil.* (v.162)

God’s promise to me is that I will be saved through faith. To me, salvation means that God will make me whole—a complete person, being all I can be. When that occurs, I will be fully united with God in love without losing my sense of self. This union is now my goal.

Half a lifetime ago, union with God was the furthest thing from my mind. My gods were Fame and Fortune. Then God showed Himself to me in ways only God could and I realized that Fame and Fortune could be good as far as they went, but were certainly the lesser gods.

When I was awakened to God, He led me to His followers through books and personal contacts. The followers explained how sin separates me from God, my fellow humans, and my environment. But, miracle of miracles, He sent His Son to demonstrate how genuine repentance removes sin and restores good relationships. All I need do is have faith. Why would I not rejoice? Where would I be without God and His promise?

Judges 18:16-31; Acts 8:14-25; John 6:1-15

Birthdays: Dot Galfond

Wednesday’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
4:45 p.m. Mary’s Kitchen
5:30 p.m. AA “Daily Reflections”
6:00 p.m. Life Groups

Today’s Ministry: Facilities Committee

Thursday, August 23

Acts 8:26-40 *“How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.* (v.31)

The eunuch was reading from the book of Isaiah and was smart enough to know that Scripture requires interpretation. Thanks to God, Philip was there to help him. I sincerely wish that a Philip clone had been right there when my conversion experiences occurred. Instead, I tended to read some of the wrong books and consult the wrong people. I got the idea that the Bible was infallible and that Scripture was all that was necessary. After all, went the logic, if we can’t depend upon the Bible to be infallible and literal (except for transcribing errors), we might as well give up. I was badly misled.

My mind changed as I began learning about scriptural incongruities and wondering if God, who is Love, is really as bloodthirsty as a literal reading of the Hebrew Bible would have Him. Later on, as I matured I began to understand Scripture as only one of as many as six elements of theology—Scripture, tradition, experience, revelation, culture, and reason. Things began to make better sense.

Job 1:1-22; Psalms 131, 132, 133; John 6:16-27

Birthdays: Mercie Peach, Lynn Sonneborn, Tricia Cooper, Beth Schneider

Thursday’s Calendar

7:00 a.m. AA “Hour of Power”
10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
5:30 p.m. ACA Men’s Group
7:00 p.m. AI-Anon “Stepping Stones”

Today’s Ministry: Finance Committee

Friday, August 24

Acts 9:1-9 *As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.* (v.3)

Beware the downside potential of fireworks. My conversion experience came during mid-life. It involved a frightening but insightful dream repeated three times, a vision that put me on my knees in tears of gratitude, a sense of love descending upon me so overwhelming that I had to ask God to stop, and more. Exciting? You bet!

The first downside: I concluded that God loved me more than others because of these favors. Soon I would be writing a best-selling book to lead other less gifted souls to the Lord. The Christian lecture circuit would be next! My naiveté and pride led to big letdowns as God weaned me from the milk of spectacular experiences to the solid food of daily Christian life. God knocked me off my horse initially because it took that to get my attention, not because I was better.

The second downside: regret that I wasted so many years settling for the wasteland of secular life without Christ. But regret, too, is chasing after wind. I now rejoice that I met him when I did and not later.

Job 2:1-13; Psalms 140, 142; John 6:27-40