Dear Ones in Christ,

I greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us take a moment to center ourselves in God’s holy presence.

Today’s reading is Psalm 31:9-16:

9 Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in distress; my eye wastes away from grief, my soul and body also.

10For my life is spent with sorrow, and my years with sighing; my strength fails because of my misery, and my bones waste away.

11I am the scorn of all my adversaries, a horror to my neighbors, an object of dread to my acquaintances; those who see me in the street flee from me.

12I have passed out of mind like one who is dead; I have become like a broken vessel.

13For I hear the whispering of many— terror all around!— as they scheme together against me, as they plot to take my life.

14But I trust in you, O Lord; I say, “You are my God.”

15My times are in your hand; deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.

16Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.

Woven through this psalm is trust and confidence in God, yet the psalmist is clearly dealing with sickness, grief and suffering. This psalm is also echoed in the Gospel writings of the passion of Christ as is Psalm 22.

We enter this Holy Week crying out to God in our own ways just as we imagine Christ did the week before he died.

This psalm of lament draws us in in ways we never imagined possible only a few months ago. Maybe it will give words to our suffering, grief and suffering and, at the same time, remind us of how much more our Lord suffered on our behalf.

Many words are not needed. What is needed is pouring our hearts out to God and walking through this week one step at a time while practicing safe distancing even as we walk together towards Jerusalem.

God is holding us in steadfast love. May we trust in God even as we lament.

Please join me in prayer:

Everlasting and gracious God, As this psalms gives words to those of us who are sick, grieving and suffering, let us continue to trust in You. Guide us through this Holy Week in our laments and our praise.

In Christ’s name we pray. Amen!

Rev. Janice Stamper