 Dear Ones in Christ,

I greet you in the name of our Lord! Let us turn our hearts and minds to God’s Word.

Today’s reading is Psalm 116

1 Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge. 2 I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you." 3 As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble, in whom is all my delight. 4 Those who choose another  god multiply their sorrows; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names upon my lips. 5 The LORD  is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot. 6 The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage. 7 I bless the LORD  who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me. 8 I keep the LORD  always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure. 10 For you do not give me up to Sheol, or let your faithful one see the Pit. 11 You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

This psalm echoes what is said in other psalms asking God for protection while focusing on trusting the LORD. It seems so simple, and it can be so hard to do. We may ask God for protection but then we often try to do everything in our power to protect ourselves. Yet, the psalmist takes refuge in God.

Then the focus is on how God provides giving counsel and stays present at the psalmist’s right hand. God is always present so simply stated, “I shall not be moved.”

With this good news our hearts can be glad and rejoice and our bodies rests secure. This does not mean we don’t have moments of doubts and fears. It means we keep returning to the One who will hold us, protect us, care for us, and love us.

Where do you find fullness of joy in these trying times? What brings you pleasure? Where do you see God in the midst of everything that is happening.

My prayer is that we may focus on God more than anyone else. May we take refuge in God and keep the LORD ever before us. May this lead us to finding fullness of joy and resting securely knowing God’s got us.

Please join me in prayer:

Gracious One, whose holiness shines through all darkness, help us to be as bold as this psalmist to ask for what we need, proclaim your steadfastness, and find ways to rejoice in the fullness of joy living in your love. In Christ’s name we pray. Amen,

Rev. Janice Stamper