Dear Ones in Christ,

I greet you in the name of the One who is Love. Let us quieten our hearts to hear God’s word for us today.

Today’s psalm from the Lectionary is Psalm 31:1-5;15-16

1 In you, O LORD, I seek refuge; do not let me ever be put to shame; in your righteousness deliver me. 2 Incline your ear to me; rescue me speedily.    Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me. 3 You are indeed my rock and my fortress; for your name's sake lead me and guide me, 4 take me out of the net that is hidden for me, for you are my refuge. 5 Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.

15 My times are in your hand; deliver me  from the hand of my enemies and persecutors. 16 Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.

This is a prayer for deliverance from enemies. An enemy is a person is opposed or hostile to someone else or something. Most of us like to think that we don’t have any enemies because we so often proclaim that we love everyone. The truth is we don’t love everyone and the climate in today’s world is that many are enemies of one another.

The psalmist does not question whether he has enemies; he knows he has people who are actively hostile to him. What the psalmist does is turn to the One who will be his refuge and rock when enemies try to destroy him.

The psalmist cries out to the LORD and asks the LORD to listen. As he calls out to God he says “Oh, of course, YOU are my rock and my fortress.” Then he asks that God lead a guide him.

There is no lashing out at enemies. There is no setting the opposers straight on social media. There is the petition for God to intervene; for God to protect; for God to save from enemies.

How might it be for us if we cry out to God rather than lashing out at our enemies? How might our faith be strengthened as we commit our spirits into God’s care? How might we be delivered if we seek God for refuge rather than fighting against enemies?

Please join me in prayer:

Gracious and sustaining God, we turn to you to deliver us from enemies all around who seek to destroy our spirits. Take us out of the nets that others set trying to trap us. Set us free and save us in your steadfast love. In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

Rev. Janice Stamper