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 Lectionary psalm in Psalm 124

1 If it had not been  the LORD  who was on our  side  — let Israel now say —  2 if it had not been the LORD  who was on our side, when our enemies attacked us, 3 then they would have swallowed us up alive, when their anger was kindled against us; 4 then the flood would have swept us away, the torrent would have gone over us; 5 then over us would have gone the raging waters. 6 Blessed be the LORD, who has not given us as prey to their teeth. 7 We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowlers;    the snare is broken, and we have escaped. 8 Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

If it had not been for the Lord...the psalmist is calling all to remember it was the LORD who saved Israel, cared for them, and delivered them from all sorts of dangerous situations. Praise follows for the LORD  is the one who helped them escape from the snares of evil in Egypt.  So everyone is to know that help came in the name of the LORD, who is LORD over all.

During this time many of us have been reflecting on our lives and the evil we see all around in our nation. The evil of racism and white supremacy continue against black and brown people. The evil of Christians hating others for political gain. The evil of not caring about the most vulnerable among us. The evil of ignoring climate change and how that is destroying our world.

It is also a time to reflect on the goodness and love all around.  Countless doctors, nurses, and frontline workers have given their lives to save others from COVID-19. People are reaching out to help others they don’t know with acts of kindness. So many are praying for others and their well-being. People are surrounding those whose loved ones have died helping them in such an overwhelming time. And rainbows keep appearing after horrible storms.

How would you finish this: “If it had not been for the LORD...”? How have you seen the goodness of the LORD during this time and during your life?

Bless the LORD for we are not alone. Discover anew your praise for the LORD who is on our side to rescue, save, and redeem us.  And never forget, “Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

Please pray with me. Redeeming and Sustaining Holy One, You alone are to be praised for Your faithfulness to us throughout our lives, and especially during this trying time. Renew the joy of our salvation as we bless Your holy name. Help us to never forgot that You have more power than any other power in heaven or on earth. In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

Rev. Janice Stamper