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 34:1-10,22  
  
1 I will bless the LORD  at all times;   
 his praise shall continually be in my mouth.   
2 My soul makes its boast in the LORD;   
 let the humble hear and be glad.   
3 O magnify the LORD  with me,   
 and let us exalt his name together.   
4 I sought the LORD, and he answered me,   
 and delivered me from all my fears.   
5 Look to him, and be radiant;   
 so your faces shall never be ashamed.   
6 This poor soul cried, and was heard by the LORD,   
 and was saved from every trouble.   
7 The angel of the LORD  encamps   
 around those who fear him, and delivers them.   
8 O taste and see that the LORD  is good;   
 happy are those who take  refuge in him.   
9 O fear the LORD, you his holy ones,   
 for those who fear him have no want.   
10 The young lions  suffer want and hunger,   
 but those who seek the LORD  lack no good thing.   
11 Come, O children, listen to me;   
 I will teach you the fear of the LORD.   
12 Which of you desires life,   
 and covets many days to enjoy good?   
13 Keep your tongue from evil,   
 and your lips from speaking deceit.   
14 Depart from evil, and do good;   
 seek peace, and pursue it.   
15 The eyes of the LORD  are on the righteous,   
 and his ears are open to their cry.   
16 The face of the LORD  is against evildoers,   
 to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.   
17 When the righteous cry for help,   
 the LORD  hears, and rescues them from all their troubles.   
18 The LORD  is near to the brokenhearted,   
 and saves the crushed in spirit.   
19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous,   
 but the LORD  rescues them from them all.   
20 He keeps all their bones;   
 not one of them will be broken.   
21 Evil brings death to the wicked,   
 and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.   
22 The LORD  redeems the life of his servants;   
 none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.   
  
I have included all of Psalm 34 because it is a prayer of deliverance from trouble. Lord knows, all of us can use prayers to be delivered from all the troubles we’re seeing these days.  
  
I suppose many would raise their hands if asked the question of verse 12, “Which of you desires life, and covets many days to enjoy good?” It would even be hard to find anyone at a Trump rally that wouldn’t raise their hands and want this more than anything right now.  
  
So, here’s how:  “ Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.”  
  
This psalm is calling out all who are lying and participating in lies that yes, even the president and other politicians are telling. If we are to follow the LORD, then we must not follow those who lie. Whether it is the candidate you support doesn’t matter. If he or she is lying then you must depart from him or her.   
  
But, that’s not all. Once we depart from the lying we are to do good. Help others. Wear masks. Do what is good. We’re not asked if we want to or whether it is crowding in on our national freedoms. We are to seek peace and be active in pursing what we know in our hearts is good and what makes for peace.   
  
Many cry we need to turn back to God, but many times it is one’s own view of God where anything can be said in the midst of an election if we say, “Well, it’s just politics.” No, the LORD calls us out on such lies.   
  
We are reminded the LORD is near the broken-hearted, and saves all who are crushed in spirit. So many are hurting. We all want to be delivered from all this trouble of COVID-19. The LORD is hearing the cries of all who mourn because so many did not have to die if those in power would stop lying and do good.  
  
I invited you to prayerfully read this entire psalm several times. Let it become your prayer, and let it be how you live this day and in the future.  
  
Please pray with me. Gracious One, Forgive us for believing and repeating lies. Redeem us and empower us to depart from all evil and do good. Lead us in ways of Love to seek peace for all whom You love. In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.  
  
Rev. Janice Stamper