

**Luther Place Memorial Church  
Lenten Devotionals**

**Week Two – Pastor Karen Brau**

**Thursday, February 25, 2010**

**Psalm 27 -- Genesis 13: 1-7, 14-18 -- Philippians 3:2-12**

*The Lord is my Light  
and my salvation  
The Lord the Lord is my light  
and my salvation  
The Lord is my Light  
and my salvation  
Whom shall I fear?*

This is a great refrain from an African American hymn that I roll around in my head sometimes. It has a strength of word and melody that moves me onward when I am facing challenges or difficulties. The hymn comes from the sentiments and images of Psalm 27, and this verse takes in the thoughts of the first four verses. The psalmist writes confidently of their relationship with the Lord God. It is this relationship through faith that guides the way like a light and that offers salvation. That salvation may be as the ultimate of the promise that we are God's when we die or as immediate as making it through the day or the night. This assurance of the Lord as light and salvation evokes the response, whom shall I fear? Fear is a big commodity these days.

It erupts in our cities and in our world. Fear is peddled in public discourse and in doomsday scenarios. There are fear filled things happening in our work and in our communities, sometimes even in our households, yet the psalmist calls us back to "no fear." We have the immediate and the ultimate light and salvation in our God and the gift of Jesus Christ. Can we live without fear these early days of Lent? We need to talk or sing or live ourselves into that place some days, so here are the words of the chorus:

*Whom shall I fear?  
Whom shall I fear?  
The Lord is the Strength  
of my life.  
Whom shall I fear?*

Offer your own prayer...

Friday, February 26, 2010

**Psalm 27 -- Genesis 14:17-24 -- Philippians 3: 17-20**

*In the time of trouble  
he will hide me,  
oh, in the time of trouble  
he will hide me,  
oh, in the time of trouble  
he will hide me.  
Whom shall I fear?*

Sometimes trouble comes. Trouble can come fast and hard, or slowly like the dip of icicles melting. Each can cause us to lose heart, to become tentative and to doubt ourselves and God.

Think of a trouble you might have -- where do you go to find ways to deal with the situation? The psalmist in verse 5 and following in Psalm 27 is sure that the Lord God will hide us. The way the writer describes the hiding, seems almost as if the Lord whisks us away taking us to the place where God dwells (God's tent) and drawing us into God's sacred time and space. When and where do you make time to spend with God? Are you able to dedicate time each day to travel with God to that tent place -- and to seek God's face? According to the psalmist, that encounter drains the fear out of us. Further, without that temptation to fear, we may in turn face our world, even the enemies that come after us. The enemies can be personal or they can be the parts of our world life together that degrades and denies dignity to some of God's children. God invites you each day into God's tent -- are you willing to respond to the invitation?

*Whom shall I fear?  
Whom shall I fear?  
The Lord is the strength  
of my life  
Whom shall I fear?*

Offer your own prayer...

**Saturday, February 27, 2010**

**Psalm 27 -- Psalm 118: 26-29 -- Matthew 23:37-39**

*Wait on the Lord  
and be of good courage  
Oh, wait on the Lord  
and be of good courage  
Wait on the Lord  
and be of good courage.  
He shall strengthen thine heart.*

This hymn is written by the Rev. James Cleveland, and to me captures that deep faith that God is living and moving and will not fail. It speaks to the conclusion of Psalm 27, verse 14 that ends with the words, wait for the Lord...Waiting for the Lord is not something we are automatically good at. When we seek God now; we want God now. When we take time to listen to God, we want to hear from God in a way that matches our schedules and our commitments. Waiting of any kind gets a bad wrap in our faced paced society. What if part of our journey as a community of faith is to teach us a new way -- to slow down and wait on the Lord for a word, an insight, an inspiration, or a direction? I can rev it up with the best of them, yet I hear this psalm and sing this song, and I pause. Maybe that's Lent. Hearing the word and pausing. That's an act of offering hospitality to God who moves in my life. Are you able to offer hospitality to God in your life? According to the psalmist, when we wait on the lord, our hearts are strengthened, and we don't have to do the strengthening, God does it for us. Could waiting of the Lord really be an act of hospitality?

*Whom shall I fear?  
Whom shall I fear?  
The Lord is the strength  
of my life  
Whom shall I I fear?*

Offer your own prayer....