

Whispers of the Spirit



Meditations for January 24th to January 30th

Whispers of the Spirit is a shared ministry of
Deacon Carolyn Quinnell and Ruth Wallace.
This week's meditations are written by Deacon Carolyn.

Sunday, January 24th Jonah 3:1-5, 10 / Psalm 62:6-14 /
1 Corinthians 7:29-31 / Mark 1:14-20

Jonah 3:1-2 *The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time, saying, "Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you."*

At this point Jonah has already run in the opposite direction of Nineveh, been in the stormy sea, been tossed overboard, swallowed by a large fish, prayed to God from the belly of the fish and finally was spewed out on dry land. God could have easily said to him at this point, "Now that I have your attention..." We have distractions of all sorts – anything from phone calls that "need" to be made to Facebook; errands to run or the TV; doctor's visits to grocery shopping. The list goes on and on. What does it take for God to get your attention? Perhaps we're afraid of what He will have us do. Consider this. If it is truly God asking you to step out in faith, He will be right there with you the whole way.

Lord, help me to rest in your presence and hear your voice. Amen.

Monday, January 25th Acts 26:9-21 / Psalm 67 / Galatians 1:11-24
Matthew 10:16-22

Psalm 67:3 *Let the peoples praise you, O God; * let all the peoples praise you.*

Today, according to the Church calendar, we celebrate the conversion of St. Paul. You may recall that Paul (formerly known as Saul) persecuted the early followers of Christ until Jesus was revealed to him on the road to Damascus. With that experience Paul's life took a dramatic turn and after spending time in Arabia

and elsewhere he became the apostle to the Gentiles. One thing to note about Paul; after his road to Damascus encounter, he never stopped praising Jesus. His entire life was devoted to just that – giving Jesus Christ glory. He was imprisoned, whipped, shipwrecked, slandered and eventually put to death – but through it all he praised Jesus. So today I give thanks for Paul and the witness he gave to the Gentiles. Would you join me?

Thank you, Lord, for your servant Paul and his ministry to so many who then carried on the message of your saving grace. Amen.

Tuesday, January 26th Isaiah 48:12-21 / Psalm 45 / Galatians 1:18 – 2:10 / Mark 6:1-13

Isaiah 48:16 *Draw near to me, hear this! From the beginning I have not spoken in secret, from the time it came to be I have been there. And now the Lord God has sent me and his spirit.*

Compare this verse with the first line from the Gospel according to John, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” In my mind, one points to the other. If I then focus on the first sentence, “Draw near to me, hear this,” isn’t that exactly what Jesus was saying when he walked this earth? He attracted great crowds and taught them as one with authority. The last sentence also attracts my attention for He **was** sent by the Lord God who also sent his Holy Spirit to guide us and bring us closer to the Father. Ancient words, still speaking to us today.

Lord God, thank you for the gift of scripture that we might learn of your never-ending love. Amen.

Wednesday, January 27th Isaiah 49:1-12 / Psalm 119:49-72 / Galatians 2:11-21 / Mark 6:13-29

Mark 6:19-20 *And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him.*

This is one of those times we can look at scripture and say, “What if.” What if Herod had stood up to his daughter and said, “No, you cannot have the head of John the Baptist on a platter?” What if Herod had listened closer, or more, to John? Would he have become a believer? Hindsight is always so clear. I’ve had plenty of “What if” moments in my own life, as I’m sure you have as well. Instead of looking back and saying, “What if,” perhaps we’re meant to live in the here and now and say “What is.” Yes, the Lord was with me through each “What if,” as He is with me today.

Lord, thank you for being with us as we all examine our lives and move forward in your love. Amen.

Thursday, January 28th Isaiah 49:13-23 / Psalm 50 /
Galatians 3:1-14 / Mark 6:30-46

Psalm 50:11 *I know every bird in the sky,* and the creatures of the fields are in my sight.*

When I sit down to write these meditations I usually am on the couch in our computer room with my laptop. Invariably our cat jumps up beside me to see what I’m doing. He seems to sense that I’m going to be here for awhile because he settles into his spot on the next cushion to my left. Our scripture says that God knows all the creatures. It wouldn’t surprise me to learn He uses our pets to give us a measure of companionship, comfort and moral support when we need it. Think about this. If God uses his creatures for our benefit, we must be pretty special to Him. That includes you.

Father God, thank you for our animal friends you have given us. Amen.

Friday, January 29th Isaiah 50:1-11 / Psalm 40, 54 /
Galatians 3:15-22 / Mark 6:47-56

Mark 6:48a *When he saw that they were straining at the oars against an adverse wind, he came towards them early in the morning, walking on the sea.*

It started out as a nice day for being out in our kayaks. We launched them at Carney Island with the intention of paddling around Little Lake Weir. We got to one end of the lake and the wind came up; so much that waves were occasionally splashing over the side of our vessels. Naturally where we wanted to go was into the wind on the other side. So we paddled – each of us in our own kayak. About halfway across the lake I thought of this passage. No, I didn't see Jesus walking toward me on the water, but I did ask him to either calm the wind or give us enough strength to make it to the other side. He did, and we did. Thank you, Jesus! When has he come to you in need?

Thank you, Jesus, for being with us in all circumstances. Amen.

Saturday, January 30th Isaiah 51:1-8 / Psalm 55 / Galatians 3:23-29
Mark 7:1-23

Psalm 55:24 *Cast your burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain you; * he will never let the righteous stumble.*

Notice the psalm says when we cast our burdens to the Lord he will sustain us; he doesn't say he will take the burdens away and make everything all better. He will sustain us, strengthen us, be with us while we deal with them. Jesus told his followers that he would make their burdens light. Imagine, if you will, a team of oxen who are yoked together. The two of them work with each other to pull the load. When we ask the Lord to help us with whatever load we're carrying, he does just that. Sometimes he sends us a friend to walk alongside of us. Sometimes just praying to God about the situation helps us to know he is with us. However the Lord reaches out to us, know in your heart that he's there to keep you from stumbling.

Thank you, Jesus, for walking with me. Amen.

