

Nudges of the Spirit

Meditations for November 26th to December 2nd



Nudges of the Spirit is currently a ministry of Deacon Carolyn Quinnell, Sandy Freiberger and Denise Bersos.
This week's selections have been written by Carolyn.

Sunday, November 26th (Christ the King) Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 / Psalm 100 or 95:1-7a / Ephesians 1:15-23 / Matthew 25:31-46 *(written by Carolyn)*

Ezekiel 34:11 *Thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out.*

I was looking for my son in a crowded airport terminal, when suddenly I saw him towering over the people around him (he's quite tall). A sense of gladness and joy swept over me. How awesome it is to know that our heavenly King, the creator of the universe and all that is in it, searches for each of our hearts in the same way I looked for my son. And while I only had to look in an airport terminal, our Father will search for us wherever we may be. Sometimes that might be in some not-very-nice places, yet He is willing to meet us there. I wonder if He gets a sense of joy when we finally turn to Him and say, "Abba, here I am." Our Lord is seeking you. Have you answered?

Abba, here I am. Amen.

Monday, November 27th Joel 3:1-2, 9-17 / Psalm 106:1-18 / 1 Peter 1:1-12 / Matthew 19:1-12 *(written by Carolyn)*

Psalm 106:6 *Both we and our ancestors have sinned; we have committed iniquity, have done wickedly.*

At the beginning of the month our church held a generational healing as part of our regular healing service. In preparation for that we had people fill out two family tree genograms; one for the blessings that have been handed down and the other for the non-blessings. On the later people wrote conditions like cancer or heart problems, but in addition things like abuse, coldness and neglect. Let's face it, we all have baggage that we carry around and some of that load comes through our family lines. The purpose of our special service was to hand over to God those traits we would like to see stopped. The first step in doing any of this is to take a look at our own behavior and admit to the Lord that yes, we are sinners – all of us. After which, we can move on and ask His forgiveness.

Thank you, Jesus, for taking my sins upon yourself. Amen.

Tuesday, November 28th Nahum 1:1-13 / Psalm 121, 122, 123 / 1 Peter 1:13-25 / Matthew 19:13-22 *(written by Carolyn)*

Psalm 121:3 *He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.*

Have you ever stood at the seashore with the waves lapping around your feet? If so, you know that the movement of the water will cause the sand under your feet to shift, and it becomes difficult to stand in one place. That could be a metaphor for different aspects of our lives. Eons ago, when I worked for a small bank, our company was bought out by a larger one from out of state. It came as a complete surprise to those of us on the front lines. Suddenly, our secure positions were no longer that, as the "new bosses" had their own way of doing things and did away with entire departments. With Jesus, we do not have to worry about the "ground" we stand on suddenly shifting. He is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. He is our rock.

Thank you, Jesus, for being the rock of my salvation. Amen.

Wednesday, November 29th Obadiah 15-21 / Psalm 119:145-176 / 1 Peter 2:1-10 / Matthew 19:23-30 *(written by Carolyn)*

1 Peter 2:4-5 *Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

A sculptor was once asked what they saw when they looked at a piece of marble. His answer, "I see a beautiful creation waiting to come out." Perhaps our Lord views us that way; each of us a beautiful creation waiting to be

released from the confines we're in. But our emerging is not going to happen all by itself. Notice the first three words in the verse above, "Come to him." In other words, it is only when we submit ourselves to the hands of the Lord that our inner beauty is released. The opening lines of the selection for today from 1 Peter remind us to rid ourselves of some really nasty stuff: malice, guile, insincerity, envy and slander. So, yes, as a sculptor cleans dust away from his creation, so our Lord pours His living water over us to wash away all that is not of Him. So, for today, how might we be nurtured more by our heavenly Lord?

Wash me, Lord, wash me. Amen.

Thursday, November 30th (St. Andrew) Deuteronomy 30:11-14 / Psalm 19 or 19:1-6 / Romans 10:8b-18 / Matthew 4:18-22 *(written by Carolyn)*

Psalm 19:14 *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.*

Sometimes preachers will recite this verse as a prayer just before they begin to speak to a congregation. I've heard it said that the reason the sermon comes where it does in the service is that it's preceded by scripture and followed by our profession of faith in the Nicene Creed. The sermon, therefore, is merely a commentary on that which surrounds it. Ideally, it is a good message; but if not, at least it will be bracketed by "the good stuff." The verse above serves as a reminder to the preacher that he/she is not to rely on their own intellect, but on the Lord. Actually, the same holds true for all of us when we speak to others about Jesus. Our reading from Romans for today reminds us that it is our task to bring the Good News to our world. So, take heart, Jesus is our rock and redeemer we stand on when we speak. He will not let us down.

Open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. Amen.

Friday, December 1st Isaiah 24:14-23 / Psalm 140, 142 / 1 Peter 3:13 - 4:6 / Matthew 20:17-28 *(written by Carolyn)*

1 Peter 4:3-4 *You have already spent enough time in doing what the Gentiles like to do, living in licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry. They are surprised that you no longer join them in the same excesses of dissipation, and so they blaspheme.*

There is a t-shirt from The Chosen TV series that reads: Not What We Were. In his letter, Peter is writing to people who were not what they had previously been. By extension, he writes the same to us today. As you look back on your life, how have you changed as you have progressed in your spiritual walk with Jesus? Thirty years ago, I could not have imagined myself to be someone who is comfortable praying out loud for anyone. Yet, it has become routine. Each time we give ourselves to Jesus anew, we leave a bit of the old behind and take in some of Him. It's an ongoing process. Thankfully, we have each other for encouragement and Him as our guide.

Lord, thank you for my friends in Christ. Amen.

Saturday, December 2nd Micah 7:11-20 / Psalm 137:1-6(7-9), 144 / 1 Peter 4:7-19 / Matthew 20:29-34 *(written by Carolyn)*

Matthew 20:31 *The crowd sternly ordered them to be quiet; but they shouted even more loudly, "Have mercy on us, Lord, Son of David!"*

The "they" in the verse above are two blind men sitting outside of Jericho. They heard a large crowd, asked what was going on and were told Jesus was passing by. This was their chance! Of course, they are going to shout out to Him. I wonder if they realized when they woke up that morning that their lives would forever be changed that day? I wonder if they had any inkling that they would be talked about some 2,000 years later as examples of persistent faith? We never know when Jesus is going to pass by. We never know when He will stretch His hand out to us with a reminder of His love and compassion. Likewise, we never know when He will use our hands as instruments of that same love and compassion. Therefore, as we are taught in some of the parables, be ready. Jesus is coming!

Jesus, may we be open to your presence this day. Amen.

