

Nudges of the Spirit

Meditations for September 13th to September 19th



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

Sunday, September 13th Exodus 14:19-31 and Psalm 114 or Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21 OR Genesis 50:15-21 and Psalm 103:(1-7) 8-13 / Romans 14:1-12 / Matthew 18:21-35 *(written by Carolyn)*

Romans 14:10 *You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God's judgement seat.*

Years ago, I was in line at a grocery store and could hear car horns beeping from the parking lot. The cashier made the comment, "Yep, you can tell the season has started by the number of honks in the parking lot every day. You just don't hear them in the summer." I had never noticed that before, but afterwards I began to pay attention to that sort of thing. I had unconsciously started judging drivers according to how often they used their car horns. I don't think that's what the Lord would have me do. Yet isn't it human nature to judge? Whenever we come across something that is new or different than what we're used to, we automatically make comparisons. I suppose it boils down to whether we simply acknowledge the difference or immediately cast aspersions on that which is different.

Lord, open my eyes that I may see as you would have me see. Amen

Monday, September 14th (Holy Cross Day) Isaiah 45:21-25 / Psalm 98 or 98:1-4 / Philippians 2:5-11 or Galatians 6:14-18 / John 12:31-36a *(written by Carolyn)*

John 12:35 *Jesus said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going."*

Yesterday my son, grandsons and I visited a cavern. At one point in the tour our guide extinguished all the lights that illumined our path, which put us in total darkness. Even though I have experienced that before, it's always just a bit disconcerting to not be able to see your hand in front of your face. There is absolutely no way I would want to live underground in total darkness for very long and we were told that over time it would affect our mental health. So, if underground total darkness has a negative impact on our well-being, what does spiritual darkness do to us? Even a small candle will bring light to total darkness, so if we continue with the analogy even a small amount of Jesus will illumine our paths. Praise God!

Jesus, thank you for lighting our paths. Amen

Tuesday, September 15th Job 40:1; 41:1-11 / Psalm 61, 62 / Acts 16:6-15 / John 12:9-19 *(written by Carolyn)*

Job 41:1 (God said to Job) *Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook, or press down its tongue with a cord?"*

Sometimes our egos get in our way – do they not? We come up with plans that lay out exactly what is to be done and how we are to go about it – only to be thwarted by the Lord. Then we get angry with God and demand answers to the question – "Why?" If everything went according to how I wanted things to go, well several dearly beloved people that I know would be alive and healthy, our world would be a kinder, gentler place and there would be no giant heat dome. But the Lord's plans are not mine to know. The very best I can do is accept the grace of His presence and assurance that He is carrying me through times and places I would rather not go.

Lord, thank you for walking beside me. Thank you for seeing the larger picture. Thank you for the gift of faith in you. Amen

Wednesday, September 16th Job 42:1-17 / Psalm 72 / Acts 16:16-24 / John 12:20-26 *(written by Carolyn)*

John 12:21 *They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."*

Where, or to whom do you turn when you wish to see Jesus? Have you ever considered looking in a mirror? Yes, you read that right – a mirror. Quite frankly, that's probably the last place I would think to look, yet if we are all made in the image of God, it should at least be an option as a place to look. Perhaps though, we get caught up in physical appearance instead of looking for tell-tale signs of the presence of the Holy One. There seems to be a peace, aura or even a particular smile that people who know Christ have. A lady I once knew looked into the eyes of her daughter and saw calmness. She asked her daughter about it and was led to Jesus. May we all reflect Him who is Love.

Jesus, help me reflect only you. Amen

Thursday, September 17th Job 28:1-28 / Psalm (70), 71 / Acts 16:25-40 / John 12:27-36a *(written by Carolyn)*

Acts 16:25 *About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.*

I love the fact that even though Paul and Silas were in the innermost cell with their feet fastened in stocks, they were still praising the Lord with their singing and prayer. I also love the fact that if you read on you will see that God used them to make new converts. I will admit there are times when it is difficult to come up with anything to sing praises about. Yet when we do, we will find a ray of light breaking into our darkness. Paul and Silas would have had very little physical light in the inner cell, but the light of Christ was shining forth from them. Can we bring a small flicker of light to someone's life today? We don't know everyone's story, nor do we need to – the light of Christ that comes through us will seek the darkness to bring illumination.

Lord, I am reminded of the song, "This Little Light of Mine." Your light shines through me. Guide me to where that light needs to shine. Amen

Friday, September 18th Esther 1:1-4, 10-19 / Psalm 69:1-23(24-30)31-38 / Acts 17:1-15 / John 12:36b-43 *(written by Carolyn)*

Psalm 69:31-32 *As for me, I am afflicted and in pain; your help, O God, will lift me up on high. I will praise the Name of God in song; I will proclaim his greatness with thanksgiving.*

This psalm seems to go right along with yesterday's reading from Acts when Paul and Silas were singing hymns and praying while chained up in prison. As we all know, there are other ways to be afflicted and in pain. The question then becomes; do we proclaim the greatness of the Lord with thanksgiving while we're in the middle of that pain? Sometimes I have to really think about what to praise God for, but He always seems to point something out: the kindness of a friend, a particularly attentive nurse, the bright sunshine or the birds singing in the trees.

Thank you, Lord, for helping us through our pain. Amen

Saturday, September 19th Esther 2:5-8, 15-23 / Psalm 75, 76 / Acts 17:16-34 / John 12:44-50 *(written by Carolyn)*

Acts 17:16 *While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply distressed to see that the city was full of idols.*

I saw an advertisement on Facebook for a T-shirt that read: "If Paul were here, we would be getting a letter soon." I had to laugh, but then thought, "Yes, we most definitely would." But ask yourself this, would it be a letter to your city? Your church? Or to you as an individual? I must admit, while I am active in my church, I can count on one hand the number of times I have attended a city council meeting. I don't know the names of any of the people in power, or even the police officers who guard their meetings. And, as I drive around, I have to wonder exactly what the idols are for the folk who live here. So today, I lift our town up to the Lord and ask Him to bless our efforts here. May our little piece of paradise reflect God's love and presence to the rest of the state.

Lord, help the people of this town serve you. Amen.

