

Good News Daily
For St. Matthew's Church
Fr. Halt Mobile: 309-660-8515

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Sunday, February 1

Hebrews 11:8-16 *It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going. And even when he reached the land God promised him, he lived there by faith—for he was like a foreigner, living in tents.* (vv.8-9a NLT)

Leaving home for college seven hundred miles away was the one of the hardest but most meaningful acts of my life. I loved my home and my family and I did not want to leave them, but my parents encouraged me to follow my dreams, to become independent, and to have faith that God would be with me and give me the strength to overcome any obstacles.

Mom and Dad made the journey to school with me, helping me move in and spending time with me when I was not attending orientation events. The last morning they met me in front of the school and we said our goodbyes. It was one of the toughest moments of my life, watching them drive away while standing alone by myself. God was with me and my college life was one of the most amazing experiences of my life.

Isaiah 51:9-16; Psalms 24, 29; John 7:14-31

ANGLICAN CYCLE: PRAY for Luwero – (Uganda) The Rt
Revd Evans Kisekka.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Glen Carbon, The Rev. Anthony F.M. Clavier, Vicar; Ng'ambo Parish: Rev. Naftari Mathew, Tabora, Tanzania; The Parish of Christ The Redeemer and St. Peter, San Juan de Miraflores, Peru, The Rev. Misael Varillas, Regional Vicar; Birthday of The Rev Donald J Schroeder, Maine.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Sunday School Ministry; Wedding Anniversary of Charlie and Charlotte Casperson.

Monday, February 2

Psalm 56 But when I am afraid, I will put my trust in you. I praise God for what he has promised. I trust in God, so why should I be afraid? What can mere mortals do to me? (vv.3-4)

One of the most blessed things about being married is to be able to share the joys and sorrows of life together. When we took our vows four years ago we became one flesh, spiritually, intellectually, and financially—we became Bill and Heather.

Recently at a Bible study we played the newlywed game where I had to guess the answers that Heather had given concerning me. I failed miserably. Instead of trying to answer the questions as I thought, I tried to analyze the questions as Heather might have thought. In real life, we try to make decisions together, as one unit, by bringing our concerns to the Lord and asking Him for guidance and trusting that He will provide the answers and never forsake us.

Isaiah 51:17-23; Psalms 57, 58; Galatians 4:1-11; Mark 7:24-37

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Lweru – (Tanzania) The Rt Revd Jackton Jeremiah Lugumira.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Feast of Title, Emmanuel Memorial, Champaign; Birthday of The Rev Christopher L. Ashmore, Jacksonville.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Rector, Curate, Vestry & Wardens

Tuesday, February 3

Isaiah 52:1-12 The watchmen shout and sing with joy, for before their very eyes they see the LORD returning to Jerusalem. Let the ruins of Jerusalem break into joyful song, for the LORD has comforted his people. (vv.8-9a)

Potty training our three-year-old was a frustrating experience. Months of praying, crying, and cleaning up mistakes had left us questioning whether this feat could ever be accomplished. Then one night while I was in the kitchen, my son yelled, "Daddy, come see." I hesitantly followed his voice to the bathroom door, wondering what I would find behind it. When I opened the door, there he was on the toilet, pointing downward. He did it. Halleluiah! Time for a dance party!

At our house we celebrate joyful moments with a dance party. My wife and I join our two sons in the living room as we dance and shout joyfully to the music, a sight that probably has our neighbors pondering our sanity, but brings happiness to our hearts and hopefully to our God, who we are so grateful to for these special moments.

Psalms 61, 62; Galatians 4:12-20; Mark 8:1-10

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Machakos – (Kenya) The Rt Revd Joseph Mutungi.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: O Father, my hope, O Son, my refuge, O Holy Spirit, my protector, Holy Trinity, glory to thee

ST. MATTHEW'S: For those who are discerning vocations;
Birthday of Maureen Angell.

Wednesday, February 4

Galatians 4:21-31 *The son of the slave wife was born in a human attempt to bring about the fulfillment of God's promise. But the son of the freeborn wife was born as God's own fulfillment of his promise. (v.23)*

One day my wife came into the kitchen and saw our son eating a piece of watermelon over his chair. The juice was dripping over his face and onto the chair and the floor below. She asked him to please eat the watermelon over his plate on the table. He replied, "No Mommy, God told me this was okay."

How often in my own life do I ask God to bless my human actions, foolishly thinking that God will bless my deeds that are not according to His will and Word? Only through seeking God and following his Word, will He provide the answers, direction, and true purpose in my life that He can bless in His perfect timing, as He did with Abraham.

Isaiah 54:1-17; Psalm 72; Mark 8:11-26

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Madhya Kerala – (South India) The Rt Revd Thomas Kanjirappally Oommen.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Lord, teach us to love each and every person

ST. MATTHEW'S: Our High School and College Students

Thursday, February 5

Isaiah 55:1-13 *"My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts," says the LORD. "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the*

earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.” (vv.8-9)

My oldest son is not one who accepts my answers to his questions without probing my logic or intellect. I frequently find myself exasperated that I am debating a three year old—why can't he just accept what I am saying and trust me?

I am sure my Father in heaven is asking the same thing of me, as I ask him why; when I hear of another person getting cancer; when I hear of friends losing love ones; when I cannot make sense of the things of this world. I always take refuge in this verse. God's ways are far beyond anything I could imagine. His Word always produces fruits, and will it will accomplish what He wants. Someday I will know the answers to my questions, and until then I will have faith that He is in control and His will be done.

Psalms 70, 71; Galatians 5:1-15; Mark 8:27—9:1

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Madi & West Nile – (Uganda) The Rt Revd Dr Joel Obetia.

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Ordination to the Priesthood, Sean D. Ferrell, Champaign.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Friends, Members, and family in the Armed Forces of the United States.

Friday, February 6

Mark 9:2-13 *Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up a high mountain to be alone. As the men watched, Jesus' appearance was transformed, and his clothes became dazzling white, far whiter than any earthly bleach could ever make them. Then Elijah and Moses appeared and began talking with Jesus. (vv.2-4)*

My family always escaped to the mountains of North Carolina every summer. We had a cabin in the woods, nestled on a sloping mountain and surrounded by a forest of trees with a roaring creek at the bottom. Our summer was filled with hiking, swimming, planting gardens, working on the house, and having fun. It was a chance for me and my siblings to reconnect with each other and our parents away from society.

Later in life when I was able to study in Italy, I would frequently escape to the mountains of Switzerland to hike in the Alps and sit in amazement of God's wonder. The Bible is filled with references of going to the mountaintop to pray, to get closer to God. When I need to escape the worries of this world, I am still drawn to the mountains, where I find God's peace.

Isaiah 56:1-8; Psalm 69; Galatians 5:16-24

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Madurai-Ramnad – (South India) The Rt Revd Marialouis Joseph

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Anniversary of the Consecration of The Rt. Rev Donald M Hultstrand, IX Bishop of Springfield; Birthday of Brenda, wife of the Rt. Rev. Daniel H. Martins, Bishop of Springfield; Wedding anniversary of The Very Rev. Sean D. and Kiezha Ferrell, Champaign.

ST. MATTHEW'S: Friends, Family, and Members who work for peace.

Saturday, February 7

Galatians 5:25—6:10 *Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important.* (vv.2-3)

Recently I called my sister who was bearing most of the burden of caring for my elderly parents. I did not want to call, because I felt inadequate that I was unable to physically help in the situation.

When I asked how she was doing, she replied, “Not good.” My heart sank as she told me of the doctor visits, the uncertainty, and the toll caregiving was taking on her own life. After a few minutes, I realized that I had to say very little. She was doing all the talking, sharing her burdens while I listened and responded when she asked my opinion. By the end of the phone call, she realized that she had been talking incessantly and she laughed and asked me, “Why did you call?” I replied, “Just to see how you were doing and letting you know I am here if you need me.”

Isaiah 57:3-13; Psalms 75, 76; Mark 9:14-29

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Mahajanga – (Indian Ocean) The Rt Revd Jean Claude Andrianjafimanana

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Lord, keep us in your power.

ST. MATTHEW’S: For a restful Sabbath as we prepare for the service of God’s Sanctuary.

by William P. Platts

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