

Good News Daily

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Sunday, July 26

Joshua 24:1-15 *“But if you refuse to serve the LORD, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD.”* (v.15 NLT)

Like the Israelites in this passage, we are all faced with a choice. We must decide. We must choose. Are we going to live lives that reflect our culture and world? Are we going to live our lives in accordance with God’s way and His word? These are age old questions. Joshua answers boldly and confidently.

Living in a “politically correct” and tolerant world, it is not always easy to declare our decision to follow Christ. I continue to be amazed at what is acceptable and tolerated in our society today. It seems as if everything is acceptable other than a firm conviction of Christian beliefs.

Yet, still, God offers each of us a choice. May we all be like Joshua and stand firmly in our desire to serve God and Him alone. As for me and my family, we will indeed serve the Lord.

Psalms 24, 29; Acts 28:23-31; Mark 2:23-28

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Norwich (England) The Rt Revd Graham James, Bhopal (North India) The Rt Revd Manoj Charan, Kapoeta (South Sudan) The Rt Revd Isaac Deu Chol (Diocesan Bishop)

DIOCESAN CYCLE: St. Bartholomew Episcopal Church, Granite City, The Rev. Scott Hoogerhyde, Priest-in-Charge; Nzega Parish, Tanzania, Rev. Thobias Lubika Rural Dean; The Mission of St John the Evangelist, San Juan de Miraflores, Peru, The Rev. Luis Villalobos, Priest in Charge., Birthday of Kathryn “K-Lou”, wife of The Rev. Christopher L. Ashmore, Jacksonville, IL.

ST. MATTHEWS: Halian Littlefield’s birthday.

Monday, July 27

Romans 16:1-16 *Greet each other with a sacred kiss. All the churches of Christ send you their greetings.* (v.16)

Okay, so I’m glad we don’t keep this practice today! Honestly it would be a little weird, right?

But what I love about this passage is that Paul uses so many personal names of friends in the faith. And I think that is why he tells the church to greet each other affectionately with a kiss. The intent is to say that we are all connected. We are

family—God’s family. We are friends. We have a special bond when we have Christ at the center.

I’ve been in other states, countries, churches or on vacation far from my home and met other people who are believers in Christ. It seems that almost immediately, there is a connection. There is a common bond right away because we know Jesus. There is a warmth and familiarity with each other.

I’m not on board with exchanging kisses but I am glad to be part of God’s family of believers who have Jesus as the common core, thankful to be part of the global Church.

Joshua 24:16-33; Psalms 56, 57, 58; Matthew 27:24-31

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island (Canada) The Most Revd Ronald Wayne Cutler), Bida (Nigeria) The Rt Revd Jonah Kolo, Karachi (Pakistan) The Rt Revd Sadiq Daniel

DIOCESAN CYCLE: God, protect us with your strength.

Tuesday, July 28

Psalm 62 *O my people, trust in him at all times. Pour out your heart to him, for God is our refuge.* (v.8)

Sometimes, for me, a good cry can do wonders. Most of the time I try to be positive and say encouraging things to myself and others. Unfortunately, this can carry over to my time with God in prayer. I’m aware God already knows how I feel and what I am thinking. Yet, sometimes, I’m not completely honest with myself or God.

God wants me to “pour” out my heart to Him. He actually wants my real feelings, thoughts, hurts, struggles—all of my heart—the good, the bad, the ugly. In the Hebrew, this verb “pour” is translated as the pouring out of a liquid offering. Instead of being something God doesn’t want, He actually views my heart cries as an offering.

Now, I feel free to let go and pour out my innermost thoughts, feelings and struggles. Like the psalmist says, I can trust him. He is my refuge.

Judges 2:1-5, 11-23; Psalm 61; Romans 16:17-27; Matthew 27:32-44

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Nsukka (Nigeria) The Rt Revd Aloysius Agbo, Biharamulo (Tanzania) The Rt Revd Yusuph Vithalis, Karamoja (Uganda) The Rt Revd Joseph Abura

DIOCESAN CYCLE: O God, in my busyness of today, help me not to be so busy that I miss the most important things.

Wednesday, July 29

Judges 3:12-30 *But when the people of Israel cried out to the LORD for help, the LORD again raised up a rescuer to save them.* (v.15a)

God's character is seen in the passage we read in Judges. God's people were once again unfaithful and turned away from Him. And not only unfaithful, but the *New Living Translation* says they "did evil in the LORD's sight." They suffered enslavement for eighteen years before crying out to God to rescue them. Amazingly, when God hears the people call to Him for help, He hears, answers, and sends help.

The whole book of Judges is about this same cycle. The people turn from God, do evil, are enslaved, then call out to God for help. And every time, God in His faithfulness, delivers them. It is a picture of humanity. The cycle of sin and redemption leads up to the ultimate deliverer, Jesus.

I find great comfort in knowing that God is always faithful. Even when I am not. Even when I deliberately sin, He will rescue me. He simply waits for me to ask. Have you been suffering enslavement to something? A habit, addiction, or relationship? Cry out to God. He is faithful to deliver you.

Psalm 72; Acts 1:1-14; Matthew 27:45-54

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Nyahururu (Kenya) The Rt Revd Stephen Kabora,
Birmingham (England) The Rt Revd David Andrew Urquhart

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Wedding anniversary of The Rev. Canon Mark E. Evans
and Sandy Moore, Lincoln, IL.

Thursday, July 30

Acts 1:15-26 *Then they all prayed, "O Lord, you know every heart. Show us which of these men you have chosen."* (v.24)

Decisions are often challenging for me. Most choices are not black or white. They tend to be complicated with many facets to look at and judge. I often get stressed when making more important decisions. I tend to worry that I will pick the wrong thing and suffer negative consequences.

This passage makes the apostles' decision seem effortless! They simply ask. They even use the method of casting lots! I'm not thinking casting lots is very reliable for me. But it does show a principle by which the apostles operated. They simply asked and expected God to answer. They trusted God, the process they chose, and the decision. If only I could be more like them! I thank God for His word which shows us practical examples of ordinary people, living life and trusting God. What are you asking God for today?

Judges 4:4-23; Psalms 70, 71; Matthew 27:55-66

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Nzara (South Sudan) The Rt Revd Richard Bbikoyesu
Aquila, Blackburn (England) The Rt Revd Julian Tudor Henderson, Bo (Sierra Leone) (West Africa) The Rt Revd Solomon Leonard Scott-Manga

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Birthday of The Rev. Canon David M. Baumann, Salem, IL.

Friday, July 31

Matthew 28:1-10 *They were very frightened but also filled with great joy. (v.8b)*

This is one of my favorite passages in the Bible. There is a quite a bit to digest in a short amount of verses. So much happens. There is an earthquake, a powerful angel, a giant stone rolled away, and soldiers fainting in fear. Then as you are running quickly from that scene, Jesus appears. That is a lot to take in! No wonder the women were afraid and filled with great joy.

This is how I feel about my spiritual journey. At times I am frightened but filled with great joy. It's a mixed bag. Feelings are fickle. I've learned to allow myself to feel them but not be ruled by them. I'm impressed that these women were able to face their fear and still move quickly as the angel and Jesus instructed them. I think Jesus rewarded them by showing himself to them, exactly because they showed courage.

Lord, please give us courage to face our fear. God, please reveal yourself to us today as we go on our way. Thank You for the joy that will also be given.

Judges 5:1-18; Psalm 69; Acts 2:1-21

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Missionary District of Oeste-Brasil (Brazil) The Most Revd Naudal Alves Gomes (Primate) , Boga (Congo) The Rt Revd Mugenyi William Bahemuka, Port Elizabeth (Southern Africa) The Rt Revd Edward Ronald Daniels

DIOCESAN CYCLE: Wedding anniversary of The Rev. Brant V. and Stephanie Hazlett, Mt. Carmel, IL.

Saturday, August 1

Psalm 75 *God says, "At the time I have planned, I will bring justice against the wicked. When the earth quakes and its people live in turmoil, I am the one who keeps its foundations firm." (vv.2-3)*

I often tell my husband, "Jesus could come back at any moment now." It's usually after watching the nightly news when I say this. On the news there is so much turmoil, crisis, hatred, violence, and horrible things happening in our world. It can be unsettling. Jesus warned us about the last days. He also left us with an encouraging promise. The promise of Jesus coming again. This brings me comfort.

These words in the psalm reassure me that in an unsettling world, He has everything under control. The foundations of the world I live in, as well as my own life, are in His hands. I don't need to worry. He reminds me the day is in fact coming when there will be a judgment for all the evil in this world. Justice will be served.

I will rest in His powerful, yet gentle hands. He is my firm foundation. I will not be shaken.

Judges 5:19-31; Psalm 76; Acts 2:22-26; Matthew 28:11-20

ANGLICAN CYCLE: Offa (Nigeria) The Rt Revd Dr Solomon Olusola Akambi,
Bolivia (South America) The Rt Revd Raphael Samuel, Karimnagar (South India)
The Rt Revd Reuben Mark

DIOCESAN CYCLE: The Rev. Benjamin D. Hankinson, Edwardsville, IL,
Ordination to the Priesthood; Wedding anniversary of The Rev. John D. and
Barbara Richmond, Bloomington, IL.

ST. MATTHEWS: Allan Horsman's birthday.

by Pamela Newton

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Pray for those sick and those in distress: Margaret L., Allan H., James G., Mark S., Karen P., Noah D.

Pray for the Faithful Departed: June G.

Pray for those living in nursing homes and other shut-ins: Dale B., Barb W., and Margaret P.

Pray for The Diocese of Tabora, Anglican Church of Tanzania, The Rt. Rev. Elias Chakupewa, the clergy and people. The Missionary Diocese of Peru, The Rt. Rev. Alejandro Mesco. Fr. Kari Marcelle, the clergy and people of Holy Trinity St. Vincent. Fr. Dave and all clergy, for whom we light the candle on the west side of the Altar.