

March 17, 2020

Good morning! I pray that each of you is managing on this new journey we are on. Even though it doesn't seem like we are walking in the usual paths of Lent, Lent has not been canceled! Lent has not been suspended. Lent is still here, going on, and so should we. I am using Lenten passages and themes from *The Book of Common Worship*.

"Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, God's love is poured into our hearts" (Romans 5:5)

Today we will continue with Psalm 121, verses 3 and 4.

"The LORD will not let your foot be moved nor will the One who watches over you fall asleep. Behold, the keeper of Israel will neither slumber nor sleep."

In ancient times people believed in multiple gods, and these gods were known to take naps - sleep. Some even punished people when they were awakened from their much needed naps. Our God, Yahweh, does not need to sleep; our "Keeper" God is always awake, always acting, always present. I mentioned yesterday that this is a Psalm of ascent, something that speaks to the ancient people going up to Jerusalem for a festival perhaps. The first two verses speak of asking where our help comes from and then it switches to a form of a blessing for the people on a journey. When we go on any kind of journey, it is good to know that the one watching over us is the One God who does not sleep. "Stuff" is going to happen in our lives. It is how we respond to this "stuff" that matters. Where do we put our trust, who do we ask for help? We turn to God, fully believing that He is not sleeping, He is always with us. During Lent, during this health crisis, let us continue to lean on God, knowing fully that **God is with us always**. May our faith help us to move forward, helping others when we are able. May our faith help us to care for ourselves.

Numbers 6:24-26, Yahweh gave Israel this benediction:

"Yahweh bless you, and keep you.

Yahweh make His face to shine on you,
and be gracious to you.

Yahweh lift up His face toward you,
and give you peace."

Let us pray:

Eternal God, Your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of Your Son. Help us to hear Your Word and obey it, that we may become instruments of Your saving love; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Pastor Linda