



Wednesday Prayer

4th Sunday after Pentecost – With hearts wide open

As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, “At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you.” See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation!

We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you. There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours. In return—I speak as to children—open wide your hearts also. 2 Corinthians 6:1-2, 11-13

This week’s lessons reflect on the chaos in our world and the destructive culture we so often face – many of us with our hearts wide open. Our leadership team of LSS Metro Homeless Youth Services meets weekly, encouraging one another in the work we do to support young people living in this chaotic and often destructive culture. Our emotions range from deep sadness to anger and disbelief at the hurt some inflict upon others for power and control. Our hearts are wide open to the pain of entire communities of people who have endured this for generations. Our hope comes in the beauty of each young person.

In the May 2021 issue of Gather magazine, Amy White shares, “when life hurts so much that I can’t imagine the possibility of beauty, or it feels so overwhelming that I can’t imagine taking another step, I will need my friends and their stories. I will need their strength to remind me I, too, can be strong. I will need their grace and acceptance to remind me that in God’s eyes and in their eyes, I’m worth it.” Amy is reflecting how a treasured intergenerational friendship has given her hope.

Our leadership team listens to each other’s stories. Each leader listens to the stories of countless youth. Each of you listen to the stories and reflections shared through these weekly prayers. Some respond with an encouraging reply, to keep our work together going strong. Many find strength through taking action – writing, calling, or emailing legislators for stronger protections against sexual violence, exploitation, and trafficking. Others will take physical action by participating in our upcoming [Cherish All Children virtual 5K](#), and still others participate by [sponsoring a racer](#) to support our ongoing work.

In 2 Corinthians, Paul lays out how he and the apostles are serving – through hardships, imprisonments, riots, sleepless nights, by knowledge, patience, kindness, genuine love, truthful speech, the power of God. There is no obstacle that will keep them from their ministry.

Dear God, your word reminds us that through all the hardships, you give us strength. May we listen to one another’s stories and enter into an active love for the safety of all your children. Amen.

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director, and community advocate for racial justice.