



Wednesday Prayer

3rd Sunday after Epiphany – Cries and Spiritual Care

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

One thing I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.

For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me high on a rock.

Now my head is lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the LORD.

Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud, be gracious to me and answer me!

“Come,” my heart says, “seek his face!” Your face, LORD, do I seek.

Do not hide your face from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger, you who have been my help. Do not cast me off, do not forsake me, O God of my salvation!

Psalm 27:1,4-9

Recently, I've been appreciating the Psalms in a new way, listening to the cries during troubled days and relying on life-giving trust as shared in Psalm 27. I didn't have this same appreciation growing up with the Psalms chanted responsively in worship, my focus more on getting the notes right than in the meaning of these poetic prayers.

This past week I attended a seminar of faith leaders and child protection professionals coming together to protect children from child abuse and maltreatment. Victor Vieth, Chief Program Officer, Education and Research of the Zero Abuse Project, trained on “When Faith Hurts – Understanding and Responding to the Spiritual Impact of Child Maltreatment.” He discussed the deep spiritual wounds of many who have suffered from abuse within the church – feelings of guilt, anger, grief, despair, doubt, fear of death, and a belief that God is unfair. And yet, victim-survivors reported praying more frequently and connecting with “spiritual experience”. Spirituality plays an important role in coping with abuse, a need for lament, spiritual care and getting through suffering together. I encourage all to attend [Zero Abuse Project's](#) 2-day course [Keeping Faith: Empowering the faith community to recognize and respond to child abuse](#), or other trainings they offer that apply to your role with children.

THIS Saturday, January 21, 10am – 12pm you can hear from another Zero Abuse Project educator, Alison Feigh, as keynote speaker for Cherish All Children's hybrid event [Supporting Youth Safety & Healthy Choices in the Virtual Playground](#). (Follow link to register.)

Protecting God, we cry out in days of trouble and we cry out for all those who have been harmed. Bring us together, trusting in your never-ending love and care. Amen.

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director.