



Wednesday Prayer

4th Sunday after Epiphany – Wisdom through God

The works of his hands are faithful and just: all his precepts are trustworthy. They are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness. He sent redemption to his people: he has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and awesome is his name. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever.

Psalm 111:7-10

As Rev. Gonnerman so eloquently described in last week's Wednesday Prayer, our perception of "normal" is profoundly affected by the events around us, especially for young children. We develop our self-image, our sense of safety in our world, from how we are cared for, or not cared for. Those who grow up in unsafe, un-affirming environments or encounter them later in life, develop a negative sense of self along with coping skills which can include making unhealthy choices about relationships and all aspects of life.

In her book, *The Choice: Embrace the Possible*, Auschwitz survivor, Dr. Edith Eger, writes "Maybe every childhood is the terrain on which we try to pinpoint how much we matter, how much we don't, a map where we study the dimensions and the borders of our worth." We don't have control over which parents to whom we are born, the culture in which we grow up, or horrific events that crash into our lives. Responses and life choices are often subconscious and can be based on a sense of worthlessness, hopelessness or a sense of being a victim.

The words from the Psalmist present a new reality for all of us, a new relationship with a loving, faithful, caring God, a new choice for how we respond to the world around us. Choosing to know and love God "is the beginning of wisdom". Responding to God's love and faithfulness by sharing God's redeeming message, working for justice and peace brings each of us, and the world into a "new normal", where all are loved and valued.

Dr. Eger also writes "It took me decades to discover that I could come at my life with a different question. Not: *Why did I live?* But: *What is mine to do with the life I've been given?*" God grants each of us life. Knowing and loving God gives us wisdom choose to live it in the best possible way. We can continue in the darkness of our uncontrollable circumstances and negative messages, or walk in the light of God, reflecting that light so others may also know it.

God of light and life, grant us the wisdom to overcome the darkness of life and choose to live in the light of your justice and faithfulness so that all will know they are valued and loved by you. Amen.

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