



EVENING PRAYER DEVOTIONAL

MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2020

Readings: Psalm 37:18-41, Proverbs 15, Colossians 4

I am drawn towards Paul's final instructions at the end of his letter to the Colossians. ²Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. ³At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— ⁴that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak. ⁵Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. ⁶Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

In the midst of a national emergency, our lives are somewhat pushed to live differently than before. We are keeping our distance from each other, we are mindful of what we are touching or where we are going, and we find our hands have cracked from our extensive washing. How might Paul's words connect with our current situation?

"Continue steadfastly in prayer." As you have heard before, prayer is not the last resort but the first response. We hope our reflections with the lectionary can be beneficial with your own prayers. One of our chief goals for the year, set by council and vestry, is to focus on prayer and fasting. Perhaps this is the way God is leading us to begin such a task. Paul's phrase regarding prayer is very helpful here when he says to be watchful. As we pay more attention to what's around us, trying to stay safe from the virus and protecting our neighbors, perhaps this can affect our watchfulness in prayer with one another. One friend is watchful in prayer every time he washes his hands.

In our watchfulness, the Lord may open up doors we couldn't see before. This situation can help us walk in wisdom with those around us; both in our distancing but also in our caring for each other. What is the best use of our time for such a circumstance as this? What we certainly all need, and what Paul exhorts us towards, is for our speech to be gracious. There is fear, hysteria, and hype happening all around us. Our gracious speech, seasoned with salt, can bring nourishment to those stirred up. I encourage you to call each other throughout the week, give gracious speech, pray for one another, and walk in wisdom being watchful in what the Lord is doing all around you.

Baptized child of the Triune God rest easy on your pillow tonight. Amen.

