

Friday – Where’s Your Burning Bush?

“Who am I that I should go?” “I don’t really know...” “What if...?” “I can’t!” “Let someone else do it!” These were reluctant Moses’ responses to Lord Yahweh’s commission. (you can read his responses for yourself in Exodus 3:11-14; 4:1, 10, 13) Does any of this feel like you’ve been there? I have many times earlier in my life. Now that most of that is behind me, I look back with satisfaction on all of it. This is how God meant it to be as we move through the seasons of our life.

A curious thing happened to me. I had finished studying Moses’ story again and I began thinking of these daily devotions. I started out on an early evening walk that would be nearly a mile this time. Moses and these devotions were working in my thoughts. Crash! An explosion of thunder at my back! No time lag for the sound. No rumbling through the clouds. The sky ahead of me was in full sunshine. Behind me were gray clouds and drops of rain were starting to fall. My immediate reaction, “Yes, Lord, what is it you want me to do?” Was it a call? Was it just a happening of late afternoon Colorado weather? I took it as assurance from the Lord that in these strange and stressful times He is just as near us as he was to his Israel then. Indeed, we Lutheran Christians are in a wonderful position to insert hope wherever we find ourselves in the company of others. We are indeed Immanuel!

Saturday – God’s People Worship

Our gathering in the congregation is meant to strengthen faith and raise the voice of hope. From Psalm 22 we have these words: ²³ I will recount your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you. ²⁴ You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, give him glory! Be in awe of him, you descendants of Israel! ²⁵ For he does not scorn, does not detest the misery of the miserable; Surely he does not hide his face from him; when he pleads for help, he listens.” ²⁶ I will bring my praise of you before the great congregation.” See you Sunday!

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL
4650 Sunview Drive, Loveland, Colorado 80538

This week’s *Bring it Home* devotions were written by Pastor Al Schroeder.
This publication may be reproduced and shared.



*Devotions for
the week of
August 16, 2020*

What Now?

This week look for ways to “Go!” How can you offer hope, how can you share Christ’s love, how can you demonstrate the power of God that is at work in your life and in our world today, to someone in your life?

Monday – God Cares About What’s Happening in His World

The burning bush story is one that can appeal to children and to people of all ages. Read about it in Exodus 3 (also chapter 4:1-17, if you have time). Kids in Sunday School enjoy hearing it. Young people might identify a bit with Moses, if they take the time to think more deeply. Remember, Moses must have had a dream when he was a young man. He went out to work justice for his fellow Hebrew people. He could be their chosen liberator. Wasn't he raised to lead? A princess had adopted him, and he grew up in Pharaoh's court. He was raised among the powerful in the leading land of that time. When he killed the Egyptian slave master he had to flee, until a future time of opportunity. This story is really about Yahweh. Had the Lord not visited with the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Weren't their descendants going to be a "blessing for the nations" with a land promised to them? Then why were they now slaves in the land of Egypt? Did God back out on his promise? Could God not take care of his own people? Or did he not really care? But now Moses hears Yahweh's words: "I have been watching," "I am mindful of their sufferings," now go, liberate my people. "Go down, Moses!"

But now, forty years later, an older Moses hesitates. In fact, he is reluctant, very nearly refuses his call from God himself. Let us fix our attention on the dialogue between Yahweh and Moses. Look as Moses discovers the Lord's heart. Yahweh's heart goes out to his people in their misery. Here is the focus of this story. And it is so today, we must know this! Why did the Lord let this pandemic loose? Why must all the world suffer at this time? Why do we have to live in the middle of this anxiety, fear, panic, anxious and angry people, some who are or were friends? Know that God's heart goes out to us. Know also that God is working out good for his world. Speak with God. Speak with honest words, as Moses did. Pour out your heart.

Tuesday – God Hears the Prayers of His People

This story is about our God, our heavenly Father. "I have heard them crying out;" "I am fully aware." (Exodus 3:7-10) Hear God's passion for the people. For us, for you and me and Immanuel, and for the health and safety of all, and for the survival of the economy, and for the relationships of the nations of our global world as we are linked together inseparably. This is not a time for any of us to panic. This time of stress and strain is when we must direct our attention to our gracious God. He is "I am as I am," the God who is. Alone, there are no others. He is with us: "Immanuel." We cannot forget it. They say we live in a God-forsaking society. God will be noticed. God will be reckoned with all over the world. Let us take comfort in the love of God for his world. The God who IS, who is always WITH US. Ponder this today in all you do.

Wednesday – God goes into action for good

Hear what the Lord told Moses: "I have come down," "I will bring them out." (Exodus 3:8) Yahweh is his name, "This is my name forever, the name by which I shall be remembered generation after generation." (Exodus 3:15) The Jews, especially after they resettled the promised land after their Exile in the land of Babylon, refrained from speaking this name. They considered it too holy to speak, and they feared misusing it and sinning against the Second Commandment. Yahweh is a form of the verb 'to be,' or 'to exist.' In this form it has the force of 'causing (things) to be or to exist,' or to happen. Get the idea? He is our Creator. He is Lord of history and guides the course of human events as well as the happenings in nature around us.

Yahweh is our Lord. He was going into action and he was bringing Moses into the action as his agent among humans. So does God today act in this present time in the earth's history? And what about us? Do you realize that God has called us to be his agents within our human society? We were enlisted through the event of our baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. "You shall be my witnesses," Jesus said (Acts 1:8). In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells us that we shall be the salt of the earth, the light of the world (Matthew 5:13-16). The Christian church shall be like a city on a hill that is highly visible at all times. Do you believe this? Let's live it, shall we, in this critical time? Let it be seen in us that "God is with us!"

Thursday – God Enlists People to Get Involved

The Lord Yahweh informed Moses that he knows that his people are suffering, and his heart goes out to them. Yahweh will deliver them. Then, "I am sending you," the Lord told Moses. This brings out into the open the fact that God works through people. We are his agents to work in his plans. Do you see your life in this way? Do you think your life is just running along, and you are trying your best to get along with it? Try to see your life in God's picture.

Look at it this way. Are you a parent? Are you a child growing up, and do you respect your parents and your teachers? You are at this time in your childhood or youth finding your calling in life. Your studies are preparing you for adult life. Are you a laborer in industry that makes the world work? Do you provide food or other needs for the market? Are you doing sales or merchandizing? Are you an artist or a musician – do you know you create beauty for people to enjoy, and to make their life interesting? Are you a civic employee or a leader in the public with responsibility for the common good? Who needs what you do or produce? Whatever it is you do, you are serving the Lord's work (Colossians 3:17, 23). Ponder this today, and get ready for tomorrow.