

PSALMS OF HOPE

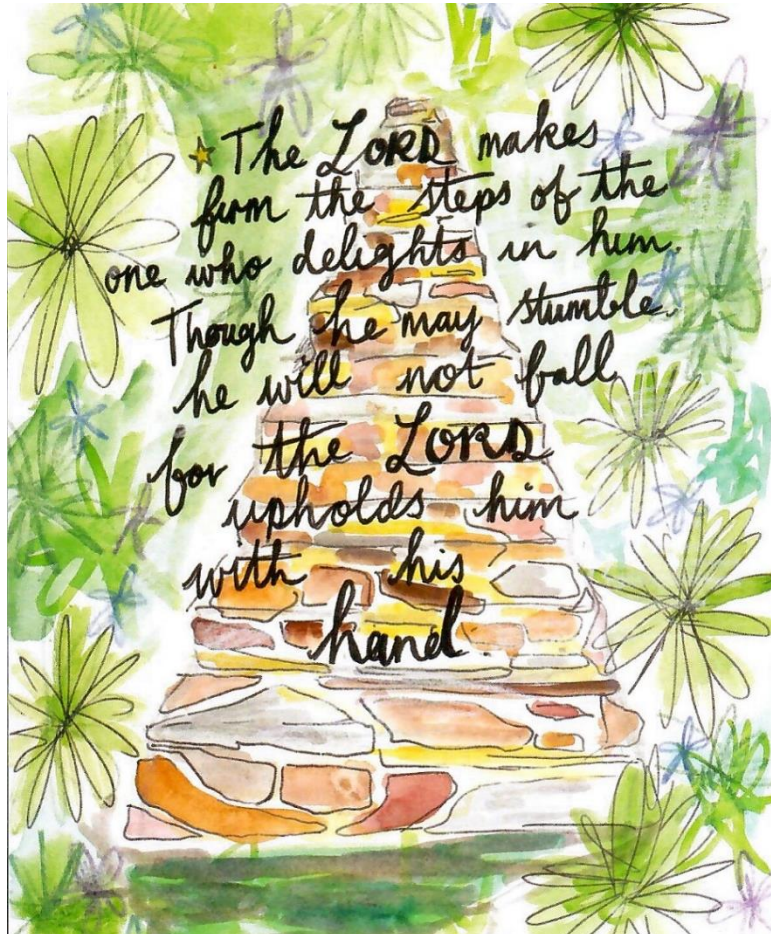
@UnitedChurchFerdown

United Church Ferndown's 2023 Lent Programme

Thursday 16th March

Reflection #23

LOVE CONQUERS ALL!



Pray:

My LORD: thank you that nothing is hidden from you. You know our thoughts from afar, you search our minds and know our all our anxieties. You know me so much better than I know myself. You see all the grime and rubbish that swirls inside me and around me and which I get caught up in, tripping up and flaying around like a ship in a storm-force gale. Yet even through my failings and flaying you don't give up on me, you don't leave me to flounder and fall. Thank you that by your grace you forgive me and counsel me, you teach me and, most wonderfully, you provide me with a new horizon, a new hope and a new beginning. In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Introduction:

I think it's true to say that we have all, at some point or another, fallen out with someone. I remember a time that really hurt me as a friend of mine began to say some really hurtful and horrible things about me. She made something up and it hurt. I spent months sad and angry because of what had happened. She was a friend who I believed was always going to be my friend. During the time, I stayed true to who I was and what God wanted me to be. I continued doing all the stuff in the church that I was doing and unfortunately my friend then missed out on it all. It hurt, but I also know now that I spent way too long thinking and fretting about it. There was honestly nothing I could do to make the situation better as this person was slowly alienating herself from everyone else too. The time I spent cross and angry was actually the time I felt far away from God, and I wasn't as productive as I could have been. When I spoke to another friend, I realised that I could do nothing about the situation I was in and by staying angry and cross I was just hurting myself. We prayed and I knew God wanted me to lose the anger. I was still very sad about the situation, but the anger dispelled. Then God blessed that response. The sun shone again.

**Read:****Psalm 37:1-9 (NIV)**

- ¹ Do not fret because of those who are evil
or be envious of those who do wrong;
² for like the grass they will soon wither,
like green plants they will soon die away.
³ Trust in the Lord and do good;
dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.
⁴ Take delight in the Lord,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.
⁵ Commit your way to the Lord;
trust in him and he will do this:
⁶ he will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn,
your vindication like the noonday sun.
⁷ Be still before the Lord
and wait patiently for him;
do not fret when people succeed in their ways,
when they carry out their wicked schemes.
⁸ Refrain from anger and turn from wrath;
do not fret – it leads only to evil.
⁹ For those who are evil will be destroyed,
but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land.

Consider:

Have you been wronged? Have you held a grudge or continued to feel cross? How did that make you feel? Know that God wants you to leave all that with him. We can do nothing by worrying or fretting over those who do wrong. God wants us to commit all our ways to him. Do we truly do this? Have we truly cast everything onto God, trusting that he knows what is best for us and can deal with it all?

Pray:

We may have situations in our lives that we need to leave in the past. Ask God to help us to do that and cast all of that onto God right now, trusting that he is mighty and strong enough to take it.

Try it out:

It's hard to let go, it's hard to trust God fully with all that we feel, and when we are angry or fretting it's even harder. Why not try leaving a small thing at the foot of the cross? God can take it! Leave something with God and feel what a relief it truly is and what sun will shine.