

Deaconess Intern Dispatch



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On Him

“And when Jesus entered Peter’s house, he saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. He [Jesus] touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve him...This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: *‘He took our illnesses and bore our diseases.’*” Matthew 8:14-15, 17 ESV

For eight weeks we have watched the coronavirus work its way around the world making use of our natural need to live in relationship with one another. The virus survives when it can find a new person to live in. In order to prevent it finding a new host to live in, we are practicing social distancing and under “stay home” regulations from our Oregon governor.

Each one of us is impacted, whether through contracting the disease, which is in the community now, or by social distancing, or by losing one’s job, for example. Each person feels the pain of the new disease, COVID-19.

This week as I pondered the pandemic and looked for what God was doing, a lecture by the Rev. Dr. Arthur Just came to mind. In January 2019 when he was my professor at the Seminary for “The Gospel of Matthew,” Dr. Just made us memorize Isaiah 53:4 which is the verse referenced in Matthew 8:17: *“He took our illnesses and bore our diseases.”*

Throughout Jesus’ ministry He was with people. Indeed, the very name Emanuel means, “God with us.” As Jesus healed people of diseases and infirmities, He took into His own body their illnesses and diseases. When Jesus hung on the Cross, He bore in His human and divine body all my sins, my sicknesses, and griefs as well as those of the whole world. Every virus and disease that infects you and me, is part of the broken world. **Jesus knows and understands.** On the Cross, Jesus redeemed us from sin’s bondage. Because Christ was raised from the dead, we too, being baptized into Christ thus becoming children of God, have new life and will be raised in eternal life in Him.

If you or your loved one is sick, remember that Jesus truly understands, and He is with you and them. Rest in Him. Hear His Word of comfort and love. Trust His promises that He forgives you and holds you in the palms of His nail-scarred hands. You are His, eternally.

Here are some Bible verses to memorize, or to feed on. They are God’s Word of hope for you.

Praying that you stay well and take this time at home to read your Bible and listen to sermons online or on the radio. Pray, and keep in touch with your family, friends, and congregation. You are never alone in Christ Jesus.

Love and peace in our Living Savior, Jesus +

Lisa Mai
Deaconess Intern

Isaiah 53:4

Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.

Matthew 11:28

[Jesus declared,] “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (ESV)

John 11:25–26

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.”

Lamentations 3:22–23

The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Psalms 23:1–3

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul.

Psalms 91:1–2 (Read the whole Psalm.)

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the LORD, “My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.”

Prayers

+For all pastors and called workers in the church, and all who labor in love in their congregations, especially secretaries and those managing technology: May the Lord grant peace and wisdom to help them care for His children in changing times.

+For the elderly and those who live alone: May the Lord protect them from harm and disease and give them fellowship in Himself through His Word and Church.

+For all who are sick, suffering in body or mind: May the Lord grant healing and rest according to His merciful and loving will.

+For teachers, students, and families, as they learn and teach in new and challenging circumstances: May the Lord give patience, self-control, and joy in learning.

Seminary Update

As a distance student my classes are continuing as usual. For now, all seminarians at CTSFW are studying as distance learners through the Spring Quarter. The Seminary will make its decision about Graduation exercises by May 1st.

Spring Quarter is well underway, and I am thoroughly enjoying my classes: “The Lutheran Confessions in Today’s World” and my practicum course which is focusing on the mercy of God and its expression through the Church.

Thank you for your ongoing and generous support. My heart is overwhelmed with your love and kindness! If monies are tight, please feel free to give to the general needs of the congregation instead of to me. Your prayers and love are the greatest gifts.