

Deaconess Intern Dispatch



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Isaiah 51:3

For the LORD comforts Zion; he comforts all her waste places and makes her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song. (ESV)

Gardening Success

Let's start off with the truth: I know very little about gardening. Sure, I can put geraniums in a pot, water them, and watch them thrive, but that is about it! I love to hear about people's gardens and even better, I love to visit gardens. Smelling the fragrances, seeing the bees and butterflies, delighting in the various colors and designs. I enjoy gardens that others labor in. A big thank you to all who toil in gardens and bring beauty out of barrenness!

Although I do not till the ground or pull weeds, I know gardening is a lot of hard work. There are invasive insects and noxious weeds. Hot sun, not enough rain. Freezing frosts and too much rain. When

the fruit of beautiful flowers or delicious foods abound, it is truly a miracle of God!

Gardens are God's idea. In the beginning He created THE Garden and put Adam and Eve in it along with the animals, to thrive and to enjoy the fruits of the Garden. God gave Adam work to do, even before sin entered the world, that being to tend and cultivate the Garden. Before sin, Adam and God enjoyed fellowship in the Garden. There was peace in their relationship and in the Creation.

In our walk of life, as baptized children of God, we journey from conception, through our days and years of life, to the tomb, and blessedly, into Heaven, in and with Jesus. The walk is littered with pebbles and deep sunken stones, with aphids and garden-pillaging deer. Certainly, it is not easy, but we are not alone. The Lord journeyed here too. His path was rocky, and His burden of our sin, and the sin of the whole world, was heavy. Out of His love for us and for the world, Jesus journeyed to the Cross where He poured out His blood, paying the debt of our sin. Jesus then journeyed into and through the tomb, being raised alive on Easter morning! Baptized into Jesus, we too will follow where He has gone first, along the path, to the grave, and immediately into New Life with Him.

When Jesus was hanging on the Cross, one of the men on the cross next to His, said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” And [Jesus] said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in **paradise**.” Luke 23:42-43 (ESV)

“Paradise” is from the word meaning “Garden.” Jesus points the man right back to the beginning. Jesus’ sacrifice for sin, for the sin of the whole world, undoes the curse of sin. The Garden is restored, and we join Jesus there! Indeed, He holds our hand the whole way along the path, never leaving us, always abiding with us, into Paradise.

We are not alone. We have a true Brother and Savior who walks with us. By faith, we cling to His promises and walk in His peace until we see Him face to face.

Hope you enjoy the fruits of yours or others’ gardens this Summer!

Joy and Peace in Christ,

Lisa Mai
Deaconess Intern

Seminary Update

Last month I “virtually” walked in Graduation Exercises at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne. Upon the completion of my studies this Summer, I will receive my Master of Arts in Deaconess Studies on August 5th.

Currently I am finishing my class in “Catechetics: Teaching the Faith” taught by Pastor Seth Mierow. In July, God willing, the other deaconess students and I will return to the Seminary for our final two-week Intensive.

Thank you for your sustained love and generosity in prayers and support for me during my studies. I am forever thankful for your enabling me to do what I could not have done on my own. Thank you!

Prayers

+Pastors: For wisdom and encouragement as they find new methods for tending their flocks during the pandemic

+The Homebound: For hope and peace in Christ during times of isolation

+The Sick and Infirm: For healing and comfort for the body, mind, and soul

+The Unemployed: For meaningful work to use the gifts God gives for the benefit of others and to provide for families

+The Nation: For repentance and forgiveness for our racial strife and prejudices, our pride, and our vengeance

+The Pandemic: For the Lord to put an end to the disease which separates us from one another that we may rejoin one another and enjoy one another’s company

+Thanksgiving: 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18
“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (ESV)