

Hello everyone! And welcome to our Wednesday Word devotion for today, November 4, 2020. Thank you so much for tuning in and for taking this time out of your day to focus on God and focus on your faith.

So, dear friends, we made it here. The day after the 2020 presidential election. There was evening, and there was morning, the next day. Thanks be to God, we are still alive and our world is still moving.

I want to take a minute today to talk about anticipation, as I think many of us are anxiously anticipating and waiting for the results of this election to come in.

One of the gifts of being a Christian is that we are no strangers to anticipation and waiting. In fact, as our 4th and 5th grade Confirmation students can now tell you, we are coming up on an entire church season devoted to anticipation, Advent. As we wait the coming of Jesus, the birth of Emmanuel, God with us, we wait in anticipatory and often fearful, hope. I imagine Mary was terrified at the prospect of having to travel such great distances for such scary reasons while pregnant with the Son of God! And in the days of and after Jesus' death, that was terrifying for the disciples and Mary Magdalene too! What do we do when we don't know what to do?

Well, number one, we remember that God is with us in all times and places, and that particularly includes the times that feel way out of our control or overwhelming or anxious, truly God is with us and loves us through all things. And number two, God gives us some holy and life-saving and beautiful commandments that apply in every time and place, every season and moment and feeling - and those are to love God, and love your neighbors.

Ultimately, no matter how the results of the election happen, our work of loving God and loving neighbors is still important and holy and what we are called to do regardless of who sits in power. It is on us to seek justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God, as written in the book of Micah. While our actions of voting for our government leaders is super important, our everyday interactions and relationships and our faith in the God who created all of us, all of humanity, is what we must do on a daily basis. It can be super hard to love our neighbors, love the people who disagree with us, who see things differently than we do, but all of us, no matter what we look like, who we love, how we think politically, all of us, are beloved, created children of God, and it is up to us to love each other deeply.

God is with us in the anticipation. God is with us in the promises of hope. God is with us when we are exhausted and frustrated and not at our best. We are human. And God loves us with a love that is deep and enduring and no earthly thing will ever separate us from that deep love.

So today I leave you with the words of an old Taize chant that I am lifting up in prayer to God today. O God, stay with me. Remain here with me. Watch and pray, watch and pray. (repeat)

Let us now hear the Word of God in a reading from Psalm 90:

- Lord, you have been our dwelling place  
in all generations.
- 2 Before the mountains were brought forth,  
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,  
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.
- 3 You turn us back to dust,  
and say, "Turn back, you mortals."
- 4 For a thousand years in your sight  
are like yesterday when it is past,  
or like a watch in the night.
- 5 You sweep them away; they are like a dream,  
like grass that is renewed in the morning;
- 6 in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;  
in the evening it fades and withers.

So teach us to count our days  
that we may gain a wise heart.

- 13 Turn, O Lord! How long?  
Have compassion on your servants!
- 14 Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,  
so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
- 15 Make us glad as many days as you have afflicted us,  
and as many years as we have seen evil.
- 16 Let your work be manifest to your servants,  
and your glorious power to their children.
- 17 Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us,  
and prosper for us the work of our hands—  
O prosper the work of our hands!

And let us pray:

Everlasting God, source of all liberty, before whom every earthly ruler must bow and bend the knee, we lay our nation before you as we live through this election. Breathe upon us your Spirit of wisdom and discernment. Grant all who seek public office the mind of Christ, who came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life for the freedom of the oppressed. Hold before us those who face uncertain futures, or who have no voice in our political process. Uphold and safeguard poll workers and election officials in their work. Spare us from the crushing weight of cynicism. Give us grace to speak courageously, but with love, without which our words are noise and we are nothing. Gather us together under the cross, where, in all of our difference, we can stand as one people, redeemed in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Go in peace dear friends, have a beautiful day. Amen.