



# Faith Reflections

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**KNOW MISSION!**  
debt

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**Behold, I am doing a new thing, now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a new way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.**

Isaiah 43:19

This prophetic word from Isaiah says to me that there is a new and better way. In this world we have much going on that tempts us to continue living in a “wilderness” and “desert” of life. It seems we are blind to alternatives.

The Son of God lived among us to show us some “new things” by first growing a deep-rooted love and relationship with him.

According to scripture the Holy Spirit will help us through our praise, worship, prayer, and relationships with one another, to open our hearts and minds to “spring forth” and receive the “fruits of the Spirit.” (Gal. 5:22-23) Thank you for “new things” through Jesus Christ. Amen.

**He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness.**

2 Corinthians 9:10

I suggest that what the apostle Paul is writing to the Corinthians can be applied to the people of Prince of Peace. We are sowers for the kingdom on earth; the seed is the Holy Spirit in us. As we grow and the seed multiplies it spreads one to another in our freely given love. The bread for food is the grace, faith and trust in God. The increased harvest is sharing the gospel with its comfort and healing words into a community of rich soil.

Ministries at Prince of Peace are vital to the community and each one of us. Let us generously commit an added portion of God's gifts to us in paying down the debt to increase the harvest of your righteousness. Lord Jesus, come into my heart; grow the seeds for a greater harvest for your kingdom on earth. Amen.

**The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.**

2 Corinthians 9:6

In Luke 6:38 Jesus says: “Give, and it will be given to you... with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

Giving is an individual heart matter – private, not public. We give because our deepest desire is to do so. God’s deepest desire was to gift us salvation through his Son. Paul then reminds us that our gifts benefit God, the church, its recipients and even us.

2 Corinthians 9:8 reminds us that the blessings we receive from giving are both spiritual and material. God owns all that we are and have been given. Can we do no less than to be thankful that we can give?

Our Lord, you have greatly blessed us. May our hearts and gifts to you reflect all that we believe. Amen.

**Thanks be to God for his gift that is too wonderful for words.**

2 Corinthians 9:15

We go before God in our pain and misfortune asking for healing and strength. We expect that God is listening and that He will answer. It is not often, however, that we ask God what we can do for Him. We, as members of the family of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, experience the gifts of spiritual guidance, comfort and peace. We are responsible for maintaining our church family, but we have fallen short. We have a debt we need to pay to enable us to do more of God's will in the world. God is challenging us!

We pray, Lord, that you will guide us in prioritizing our resources to reduce this burden of debt – to be free to glorify you in our spiritual family and in our community. Amen.

**For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

Matthew 6:21

Have you asked yourself how many of your treasures will accompany you to heaven; or, how your treasures can be shared on earth; or, what could you do if you were debt free?

Just as in our personal lives, the release of debt payments can enable Prince of Peace to be a blessing within our community.

Prayerfully consider what your heartfelt gift over the next three years can contribute to further the mission that Prince of Peace is committed to as a spiritual presence in the life of its members, those we need to reach out to and those coming in to Prince of Peace to be blessed in their time of need.

Lord, as we consider the treasures you have blessed us with, guide us in setting our priorities to share these blessings with our church and community. Amen.

**Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.**

Philippians 2:5

In Philippians 2:1-11 Paul writes to a congregation suffering from disharmony. When people feel very strongly about their beliefs, it is sometimes difficult to see beyond these beliefs to the greater ministry of God. According to Paul, this is necessary. He points us to Jesus, who in humility emptied himself of his divinity to become a servant and be recognized as a man, to be obedient to death on the cross in order to draw us to himself and to God.

To continue God's ministry at Prince of Peace, we must humbly put aside any differences to draw others to God through Jesus' sacrifice. This ministry should not be hampered by debt. Can our love for the good news of Christ and God's love for all people mold our thinking and doing? Praise God for the Holy Spirit who enables us to do so. Amen.

**While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**  
Romans 5:8

During the season of Lent we are especially aware of who we are and what Jesus did for us. Let's put that into relationship with our capital campaign to remove our church debt.

In my humanness I am tempted to find many reasons for not accepting responsibility, for all my reasons become excuses, and I want no part of those. To do my part in removing any obstacle to sharing this good news with others adds only blessings to my life. Praise God for God's goodness. Amen.

Since we are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:1-2

We have a cloud of witnesses watching our progress in all those who have sacrificed before to make Prince of Peace what it is today. This text gives us the practical advice to strip off every weight. We wouldn't try to climb a mountain with a heavy load on our backs. Is Prince of Peace's debt hampering our ministry? Jesus removed the burden of our sin. In gratitude can we do less than remove anything that hinders our sharing that good news? Does the text speak to you regarding your participation in the *No Debt! Know Mission!* Campaign? Thank God for this opportunity. Amen.

**Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.**

Luke 14:33

Father, you are a fair and just God. You never require more from one person than you do from another. You do not place caveats on rich or poor, different countries or cultures. You expect each of us to realize that all we have is given by you and can be required back at any time.

My choice is to handle life's goods as loans to be returned whenever the true owner requires them again. Your love and grace are not dependent on how I control what you have given me, but my heart is revealed by my attitude toward the true owner.

If I give up everything, I have lost nothing. It all belongs to you and I should return it with joy. Help me to hold with an open hand all the blessings you have poured out to me, so that I can both give and receive as you choose, allowing me to share in your riches. Amen.

## **Be still and know that I am God.**

Psalm 46:10

Lord, I am surrounded by noise. I cannot hear your voice, but sometimes I seek the noise to keep from hearing you. Today, I choose to hear you, though I fear what it might cost me.

You have a higher way for me, a way of quiet in the midst of noise, of triumph in the midst of despair, but I must choose obedience.

Everything in me cries out against sacrifice. Do you understand my need to fulfill the expectations placed on me by my family, my employer, myself? You know and understand, but you call me to further commitment, to greater faith.

Help me to grasp the desire of your heart and to walk in obedience to your call on my life, on my time and on my money. You are my God. Let my life exalt you, and let my offerings and sacrifices be made with joy. Amen.

**Come to me... Take my yoke... For my burden is light.**

Matthew 11:28-30

Father, your word tells me your load is easy, your burden is light, but I must share it with you.

I want to carry the burden you have designed for me, but my personal limitations overwhelm me. I lay my burdens, trials and woes at your feet. Help me to pick up your burden and to share it with you.

When I carry your yoke, you change my perspective and the world around me. I trust the yoke you have for me will not handicap me, but will set me free to do more than I could do on my own. Your yoke joins me with you in your service and for your mission. I want to be part of your answer for my church, my city and my world. Thank you for including me in your plan. Amen.

**They gave, according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, and (they did it) voluntarily.**

2 Corinthians 8:3

In one of her books of devotionals, Pastor Joyce Meyer states: “There are various levels of giving, and some are less painful than others. One way to be a giver is to use your material possessions to be a blessing. Sometimes you may need to give away one of your favorite possessions and that can be painful. But it is good to get out of your comfort zone and give until it hurts. Jesus gave his all on the cross for our sins. Surely we can endure giving up merely worldly possessions.”

We are “One in the Spirit,” and they will know we are Christians by our love. Amen.

Jesus said, “Whatever you ask in my name I will do it.”

John 14:8-14

Are these just ancient words? Once there was a little boy mesmerized by a display of chocolate mounds smothering salty peanuts nested in sticky creamy caramel. The pennies in his pocket would not be enough so he asked God to give him just one. In the next few days Grandma and her friend brought his family caramel apples coated with salted peanuts and cookies filled with chunks of creamy milk chocolate. The little boy still asked God for the candy.

So often, like the little boy, our expectations blind us from seeing God’s answer to our prayer. These ancient words in the gospel of John are living words for us today.

I invite you to walk the Prince of Peace campus while praising, praying and lifting up thanksgiving for our debt to be lifted. Please leave expectations at the door and experience God’s loving gifts. Amen.

He called out to them, “Friends, haven’t you any fish?” “No,” they answered. He said, “Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.” When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

John 21:5-6

We at Prince of Peace have property that serves our community to be the heart, hands and feet of Jesus. It is financially built on sand. I suggest that we are about to build a rock foundation that will give our mission and ministry stability, each one growing in faith and increasing our outreach, all for the glory of God.

The Holy Spirit who was recognized in each one at baptism will guide us. Where are we being called to throw out the net? Those resources are our faith. The call seems impossible. But what if we give the other side of the boat a chance? The rewards are promised to be many-fold greater than imagined. Amen.

**Then I remembered what the Lord has said: “John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” If God gave them the same gift as he gives us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?**

Acts 11:16-17

We commit ourselves to God and God alone; God baptizes us with the Holy Spirit. We then can seek God’s guidance. The Spirit quiets our fears and walks with us as we boldly obey, giving us confidence that we will survive the evil of this world.

Therefore, the Holy Spirit will be in charge of when and how much the debt will be reduced. The Holy Spirit will guide each one of us in our faith journey of being the heart and soul of God. “For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son.” (Romans 8:29)

Dear Heavenly Father, I want your Holy Spirit to guide me in the steps to take in all the decisions of my life journey. Amen.

Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything that we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus... Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable, and right and pure, and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me – everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you.

Philippians 4:7-9

When pressure is applied to a saturated sponge, water runs out. We know that water saturates the sponge so we know what will come out under pressure.

Isn't that true of us also? What we have saturated ourselves with is what comes out under pressure. God's peace comes only from knowing that God loves us and is in control. God's peace allows for courage, hope, faith and joy to run out of our "sponge of life" when it is under pressure. Ask for God's peace to fill your sponge. Amen.

**John replied, “If you have two shirts, give one to the poor. If you have food, share it with those who are hungry.”**

Luke 3:11

Looking out the window to our backyard, I observed six fat squirrels arriving for their morning feed. Many corn cobs had been strategically placed so that all can comfortably enjoy the morning feast.

Indeed, plenty of food for all of them to share. But instead of sharing, they began attacking each other and chasing each other off, in an effort for the strongest and most intimidating to have it all. And I wondered, how often are we like the fat squirrels?

We have so much. There's plenty to share with others and yet we do our best to get more and keep it to ourselves. After all, if we don't take care of ourselves, who will take care of us? John has quite a clear message for us today...**SHARE!!!** Share whatever you have with those who need it. Who will you share with this day from your abundance? Amen.

**And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.**

Colossians 2:6-7

In parts of Mexico hot springs and cold springs are found side by side. Women bring their laundry and boil their clothes in the hot springs and then rinse them in the cold ones. A tourist who was watching this procedure said to his tour guide, "I imagine they think Mother Nature is pretty generous to supply such ample hot and cold water for their free use." The guide replied, "No, there is much grumbling because she supplies no soap."

How often are we like these women with our generous God? Contentment isn't the fulfillment of what we want, but the realization of how much we already have. Be thankful for God's generosity and all that is provided for you. Amen.



*Prince of Peace*  
Lutheran Church

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