

June 30, 2024 – Look to the Helpers & Simple Oil Change

*Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he brought them out from their distress
Psalm 107:28*

The past is more understandable than the present. In retrospect, we see God's hand at work in the world, helping, healing, strengthening, providing. But in the present, when life is falling apart around us, God may seem absent. Where is God, we ask, when earthquakes strike or hurricanes happen? Where is God when life falls apart?

Mister Rogers of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" reminded his audience that we find God by looking for the helpers. Look for those who are helping those in need, those feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, rescuing the distressed. There we find God. The helpers in times of distress are the hands and feet of God in Christ, reaching out in love and compassion toward our neighbors. God is at work in and through them. Through them, God brings us out of our distress as we cry out in our trouble. Through their work we have deliverance. Theirs is God's work, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

A reflection by: Pastor Bill Dohle: King of Kings Lutheran in Pueblo Colorado

Jesus looked at them and said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible" Mark 10:27

When I was fifteen years old, I inherited a Rambler station wagon from my big brother. It wasn't much to look at, but it was mine.

You have to keep gas in the tank," Dad advised. "I know."

"Air in the tires." "I know."

"Can you change the oil and keep the car washed?"

"Of course I can," I lied. My ineptness surfaced the following Saturday. It was time to change the oil in the Rambler.

"You want me to help you?" Dad asked.

I should have said yes. Instead, I spent an hour looking for the oil pan and another hour wrestling with the plug. I finally removed it, drained the oil, crawled out, and poured in five new quarts. Finished at last. Or so I thought. Dad was waiting for me in the garage.

"All done?" "All done."

"Then what is that?"

He pointed to a river of oil running down the driveway – clean oil. I'd forgotten to replace the plug.

"Son, I fix things for a living. What is hard for you is simple to me. Let me help you. I'm a mechanic. And, besides, I'm your dad."

Here is what I think: our toughest challenges are simple oil changes to God.

A reflection by: Max Lucado

Prayers for Sunday July 14 AND Wednesday July 17, 2024

Confident that God receives our joys and concerns, let us offer our prayers, for the church, those in need and all of creation.

Dear Father, when our daily lives are filled with schedules and to do lists and it seems the harder we try, the further behind we get, then help us to pause to remember You are with us, ponder the blessings You have given us and pray for guidance and thankfulness that You will see us through no matter the outcome

Leader- God of Grace

Congregation: Hear our Prayer

Dear Father, You never promised us a world without potholes. They come in the form of illness, hardship, financial loss, and strained relationships. But you did promise You would NEVER leave us. Your love and peace is the only thing that can fill in the holes in our lives. Today we especially pray for, Becky, Brayden, Brianna, Darla, Dave, Denise, Jackie, James O., Jerome, Jerry, Jerry, Kristy, Larry, Lee, Nancy, Nathan, Oliver, Pat, Rachel, Tracy, Scott, Will and all those we hold in our hearts. As you welcome home your servant, Donald Lehman comfort his family and friends who will miss him.

Leader- God of Grace

Congregation: Hear our prayer

Dear Father, as many recover from hurricane damage, too much rain, and deal with the aftermath of a dam failure may they continue to look to you for strength to overcome.

Leader- God of Grace

Congregation: Hear our Prayer

Dear Father, we pray for this congregation and all who worship here. We are thankful for all those whose efforts behind the scenes often go unnoticed, for the custodians, and maintenance workers, coordinators, funeral workers, and all the volunteers who offer their services. We give thanks for all who pray for the ministries of St John's.

Leader- God of Grace

Congregation: Hear our Prayer

Dear Father, as we remember our loved ones who are no longer with us, let us always take comfort in knowing they have not left for good, just gone on ahead a little. May we find peace in our hearts for our memories, knowing they are in their forever home.

Leader- God of Grace

Congregation: Hear our Prayer

With everlasting thanks and joy for your love and forgiveness we ask you to be with us till we meet again. This week help us to take every opportunity to be thankful for the blessings of each day. Help us to pay attention to how best we can be a gift to others. May we approach each day with SOUL – serving others, uplifting lives! We ask all in the name of Your Dear Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. AMEN.