



Devotional Booklet

Introduction

The year of our Lord 2025 is proving to be exciting and busy for Redeemer Lutheran Church in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. The decision to relocate our campus facilities dominates the minds of our Called workers and lay members alike. Meetings, special events, home visits, special church services and the like have occupied our time and talents. Though all of these items are important and time consuming, what a mistake we would make if we didn't keep God and His word at the forefront of all our plans and goals.

A dozen or so men of God from our congregation have taken the time to prepare brief devotions so that we, as God's people, can easily go to Him, first hearing His word, and then responding in prayer.

Psalms 78 has given our congregation our theme for our Building on Faith campaign with these words: "We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord." The Psalmist reminds us that we who have been told the revitalizing words of the Gospel by others who came before us, in turn, must tell the countless who follow us that same life-giving message.

Our prayer is that these devotions, all taken from the Psalms, may encourage the members of Redeemer to take hold of God's promises to bless us as we move His ministry forward. What a grand opportunity our Lord has placed before us! And with the Lord's guidance, may we prove ourselves worthy of carrying out His will. To God be the glory!

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1. All Things Are the Lord's

Oh Lord, our Lord, How Majestic Is Your Name Over All the Earth

Psalm 8

Have you ever had one of those “Wow” moments in life? They usually happen after witnessing something totally extraordinary, something that far transcends our day-to-day expectations or present understanding. Very often, after witnessing such an event, we may follow it up with an expression of thanksgiving or even a song of praise.

Like bookends, both at the beginning and end of Psalm 8, the Psalmist David gives us such a refrain. He writes, “Oh LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth.” There’s really no question about what David through the Holy Spirit is telling us. He’s telling us that all things are the LORD’s! From the smallest creature that moves on the earth, to the infant child of man, to the universe in which we live, all owe their existence to the creative hand and life-giving breath of God.

The fact that we are creatures, and that the LORD God alone is our creator, that reality alone would be enough (should be enough) to capture our attention. But that’s not all there is to it. God also built into His creation a way to care for us...mind, body and soul. In the scope of His creation, he also provided us with a purpose and a way to worship Him as we live out our lives in this world. No wonder, after witnessing all this David remarked, “What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?” (v. 4)

There are two wonderful, yet sobering truths cradled in David’s expression. The first is that God entrusted man with the administration and care of his created world. What an awesome

privilege and responsibility! To think that God would create this big, beautiful world with all its grandeur and many resources and then just hand it over to humankind. What an amazing gift to put into our hands – right? And, for a very short time it worked. As long as Adam and Eve administered God’s trust in a way that was in keeping with what was good and right in God’s eyes, they were in harmony with what God intended.

It would have been nice if it stayed that way. But, as the rest of God’s Word reminds us, it didn’t. Mankind plundered the one thing that God had told them they couldn’t have, and the world has been plundering ever since. Instead of showing love and thankfulness to God by caring for what he has given us, we’ve tossed creation aside as if we were the ones who owned it.

Secondly, instead of treating us as our sins deserved, God built into His creation a way to save us, even from ourselves. He sent us one who would be both God and man in one flesh. He sent us a Savior to live perfectly in our place and then die to pay for all our sins. He sent to us a Savior who would live and rule over all things perfectly, now and forevermore. As we’re told in verse 5, “You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned Him with glory and honor. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet....” We therefore exclaim with the Psalmist, “Oh LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth.”

Prayer: Lord, teach us to see that all things are yours alone. In the wonder and appreciation of your far-reaching love, help us to administer your many blessings with thanksgiving and love. Lead us to reflect the majesty and glory that you have allowed us to be a part of. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

2. David Considers God's Victories; So Should We

The king rejoices in your strength, Lord.
How great is his joy in the victories You give!

Psalm 21:1

King David, the author of Psalm 21, was a warrior. As he prepared to fight Goliath, he had already killed both a bear and a lion while tending and defending his sheep. But David also knew that his strength in battle came from the Lord, both his God and ours! In our text, David praises God's mighty strength and writes, "The king rejoices in your strength, Lord. How great is his joy in the victories you give!"

Perhaps we don't see ourselves in battle as David did, but the war God is waging through us is even greater than David's, having eternal consequences. Ephesians 6 states, "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

This is exactly what God is doing for us, both individually as believers, and together as a congregation. Since its founding in 1939, Redeemer has carried out God's Great Commission, fighting His spiritual battles. By God's abundant blessing, His ministry has continued to grow victoriously in ways we couldn't have possibly imagined. And with God leading us, we continue to move forward fighting the good fight.

Since God has so richly blessed His ministry among us, beyond what our current facility and campus can support, we now have an incredible opportunity. As King David proclaimed later in Psalm 21, “Surely You have granted him unending blessings,” so has God granted blessings to Redeemer. May confidence in the strength of God and the armor He provides lead us to praise him for all of His blessings to us. May we boldly proclaim His message of Salvation, not only today, but to future generations, all to His glory!

Prayer: Dear Lord, we know that You can do more than we can ask or imagine. Unite Redeemer to boldly move forward to do the work of spreading your Word. Amen.

3. God's People Anticipate Their King

Lift up your heads, O you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

Psalm 24:7

If you are familiar with the Christmas movie Elf, I am sure many of you can picture Buddy the Elf (played by Will Ferrell) jumping and screaming in excitement when the department store manager shares that Santa will be coming to take pictures with the kids. Of course, it seems like a ridiculous and over-the-top reaction to the announcement of his arrival. Yet, won't our reaction also be filled with the utmost enthusiasm and excitement at the arrival of our King of Glory?

God's people are invited to welcome their King with joy when he comes. For New Testament believers such as ourselves, he comes to us daily through the gospel, and we joyfully welcome him when we receive His word through faith. We can also look forward to His coming in glory on the last day when He will come to take us to our eternal home in heaven.

What a privilege we have here as members of Redeemer to take part in ministry where we welcome His coming each and every day as the gospel is taught to our children from preschool through 8th grade. We also get to lift up our heads on Sunday mornings and Monday evenings as the King of glory comes to us through the teaching and preaching of His word in our church services. God has certainly blessed those ministries here at Redeemer as more and more people want to take part in welcoming our King on a daily and weekly basis to the point that we are privileged to look to building a larger facility to carry out this important educational and saving ministry.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, fill us with child-like joy and excitement as we anticipate the coming of your Son. Help us take advantage of the many opportunities we have to welcome Him by faith through your Word. Thank you for this family of believers that we are a part of here at Redeemer where we can prepare ourselves and join with many others to greet Him and to look forward to His coming on the Last Day. In your Son's name. Amen.

4. Trust in Our God

One who lives in the shelter of the Most High will stay in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord,
“My refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust.”

Psalm 91:1,2

People who can prove they can be dependable are trustworthy. A person who shows consistent, dependable behavior over a period of time is trusted. Much more so, God has shown consistent, dependable behavior from the beginning of time. God initially promised two people, Adam and Eve, a Savior would be born, and He kept His promise. Christ the Lord their Savior was born. Also, God made a promise to Abraham and his wife Sarah in their old age. He promised them a son, and He kept His promise. Isaac was born. Moreover, God promised Abraham that the Savior of the world would be born through his bloodline. God kept his promise. Jesus was born. These things happened because God said they would. God kept his promises.

God also showed consistent, dependable behavior to his Son, and his Son trusted him. Jesus had gone weeks without food in the desert when the devil gave Jesus unsolicited advice: “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread” (Luke 4:3). Would Jesus secure food for himself or would he trust his heavenly Father to take care of him? Would Jesus take matters into his own hands or would he trust in the words and promises of God? Jesus trusted in God.

Because we are conceived and born in sin, we are incapable of having true trust in God. Instead, as sinful human beings we put our trust in ourselves, in other people, and in other things. This is why we need Jesus, who had perfect trust in God. Praise be to Jesus, who rejected every temptation to trust in himself. Let us thank our Lord

Jesus, who endured the cross and paid for any lack of trust we might have.

Our Bible reading from Psalm 91 reminds us of our consistent, dependable, and trustworthy God. May the psalmist's words create in us a renewed and confident trust in our Savior and our God in all we do as we move forward our "Building on Faith" campaign in order to tell the next generation what great things the Lord has done for us.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, you assure us you are able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine. Confident of this truth, we humbly and boldly ask for your rich blessing on our initiatives to "Tell the Next Generation." Lord, you are God. We trust in you. Amen.

5. Give Thanks to the Lord

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;
His love endures forever.

Psalm 118:1

Psalm 118 begins and ends with the same statement: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; His love endures forever. We know those lines very well; we might even say them everyday before or after a meal. In Psalm 118, the Psalmist repeats “His love endures forever” in verses 2,3, and 4. These familiar words are the theme from beginning to end of this psalm.

Give thanks to the Lord. What do we have to give thanks for? Take a minute and think about that. Many of us were raised in a wonderful Christian family; many of us went to a Lutheran grade, maybe even a Lutheran high school. Many of us have great families of our own - faithful spouses and beautiful children. Family blessings may continue with in-laws and grandchildren -- so many blessings! Add to these the opportunities we have for serving the Lord and meeting other Christians whom someday we will see in heaven. Health and wealth are even more blessings. All of this comes from God’s gracious hand. More reasons to give thanks to the Lord!

Of course, the greatest reason we are thankful is because of what took place on the cross at Calvary. Jesus Christ was nailed to a cross on our behalf. He took the punishment that we deserved. He died for us, bearing the weight of the entire world’s sins on His bloodied shoulders. He then won the victory over sin, death, and devil by rising from the dead on the third day. For all of this, we give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His love endures forever.

In the middle of Psalm 118, the holy writer states: “Open the gates of righteousness; I will enter and give thanks to the Lord. This is the
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gate of the Lord through which the righteous may enter. I will give you thanks, for you answered me; you have become my salvation.” With these words, the Psalmist reminds us that we have the greatest gift, the open door to our home in heaven. Since this gift is ours, let’s let people know that this can be their gift too. God has become the world’s salvation through the work of Jesus. So, once again, let us say: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, his love endures forever.

Prayer: We give thanks to you, gracious Father in Christ Jesus, for all the things which you have provided for us in your goodness and love. Grant that at all times we recognize your loving kindness and show our sincere appreciation of all that we have received. We say thanks in Jesus’ name. Amen.

6. God's Word is Perfect and Trustworthy

The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. . . .

The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. . . .

The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. . . .

They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold.

Psalm 19:7-10

Buying a vehicle can be a stressful time. It's easy to become overwhelmed at a dealership with rows upon rows of vehicles in seemingly all shapes and sizes. Beyond all the bells and whistles, the makes and models, the goal is generally to find something reliable, a vehicle that you can trust to get you from point A to point B.

In Psalm 19, David points out some attributes and qualities of God's Word and what that Word does for God's people, almost like the sticker on the window of a vehicle at a dealership. In this psalm, David teaches us that God's Word is perfect and trustworthy.

Reflecting on the past, we clearly see that God's Word has been reliable: Look at all the Old Testament prophecies God fulfilled for his people throughout history. That reliability we find in the words of God does not change. Still today, it is evident that God's Word has the power to refresh souls, to make people wise, and to give joy, as David writes. We can rely on God's Word to take His people from point A to point B. Through the gospel message, God brings us out of the darkness of sin that separates us from Himself. He then leads us into the radiant light of His presence where He offers us a prize more precious than gold.

Looking ahead, the future may seem uncertain. What is certain, however, is that God's Word will endure. As God's people continue to give faithfully of their time, talents, and treasures to further His kingdom, God will bless these efforts and will create a place in which God's enduring, perfect, and trustworthy Word will be proclaimed for generations to come.

Prayer: Lord, your word is perfect and trustworthy, enduring for all eternity, refreshing souls, making people wise, and giving joy. Empower your people to proclaim your Word in all they do. Lead hearts to give faithfully to you, that your kingdom might be built up through the work of the church and all believers. Amen.

7. God's Past, Present, and Future

Praise the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise His holy name. Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all His benefits. . . .

He made His ways known to Moses, His deeds to the people of Israel. . . . For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love to those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgression from us. . . . But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear Him, and His righteousness with their children's children.

Psalm 103:1-2, 7, 11-12, 17

Sometimes all we can do is be in awe and say "Wow!" When you read Psalm 103, that's how we feel. The Psalm, in its twenty-two verses, shows God's majesty to the reader about as well as any place in Scripture. This Psalm shows us our sin, assures us of our forgiveness, and reminds us of both our mortality and immortality. This Psalm is awesome!

When reading this Psalm, we see our and all people's sin. We see our selfishness, how we hurt each other, how we judge each other, our inability to meet people where they are. Yet, even though Moses and God's law have pointed these sins out with their heavy handed approach, we still hear the Psalmist proclaim, "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us." God, can you really forgive us that completely?

When reading this Psalm, we are reminded that even when traumatic events occur, like the disintegration of the family, or when unexpected death tears us apart, God does not walk out on us; God does not disappear from us. His great love for us sustains us even in those tragic times. God, can you really love us that much?

King David, more than likely, wrote this Psalm after a lifetime of sin, family chaos, and challenges to his kingdom. He could have spent his final years in bitter disappointment; however, he blesses us with this magnificent testimony of his faith. David reminds us that even when life doesn't turn out the way we intended, God provides benefits for His people beyond what we deserve or expect. God was there in the Old Testament for David, He is here for us now, and He will be there when it's time to go home to Him in heaven. Praise the Lord, my soul!

Prayer: God, I have indeed failed you, more times than I care to admit. And yet, you have always been there for me. You are with me now. You will always be there for me. Continue to work within me and mold my heart so that it is more like Yours. Amen.

8. God's Mighty Fortress

The Lord is my light and my Salvation--whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life--of whom shall I be afraid?

Psalm 27:1,2

When I was a child, one of my favorite things to do was build a fort. Maybe many of you can relate. Endless hours were spent constructing with no more building supplies than blankets, clothespins, masking tape, and, if you were lucky, a big cardboard box! Even though it was flimsy and would fall over with a good gust of wind, your fortress not only gave a sense of accomplishment, it also offered a sense of imaginary security. In a child's mind there was no safer place to be.

The reality is that in our sinful world, there is no certain physical or emotional security. At any moment crime, weather, earthquakes, war, disease, and accidents can strike, temporarily or permanently altering the peacefulness of our lives. Emotionally, setbacks can be inflicted by family, friend, and foe alike. All these things can beat us down and even cause us to spiritually falter in our faith. We wonder, why is this happening? What can I do? Where is my "safe space?"

In his divinely-inspired writing of Psalm 27, King David had similar thoughts as he struggled with great challenges through much of his adult life. David wrote (vs. 2-3), "...the wicked advance against me to devour me... though an army besiege me...war break out against me." All of these things and much more David experienced in his life. David knew that because of his sinful condition, as well as that of the world around him, even as a powerful king, he was going to experience physical and emotional pain and suffering.

But in the midst of all the pain, suffering, and trauma of his life, David knew that one of his requests of God was certain to be fulfilled. He wrote (v. 4), “that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.” What good was that in the midst of all the trauma of his life? “For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent...” (v. 5).

The walls of our earthly fort may shake and collapse. We may be unsafe, unwell, unwanted, and unloved. Nothing can tear you out of his loving grasp. Jesus came to this earth to earn a place for us at his side for eternity. You were bought at a price and Jesus refuses to let you go. Stay inside the temple of the Lord. It will never collapse, and in it we have a safe place at our Savior’s side for an eternity.

Prayer:

With might of ours can naught be done, soon were our loss effected;
but for us fights the valiant one whom God himself elected. You ask,
"Who is this?" Jesus Christ it is, the almighty Lord, and there's no
other God; He holds the field forever. (CW 863 v. 2)

9. Decision Making

To you, O Lord, I call; my rock, be not deaf to me, lest if you be silent to me, I become like those who go down to the pit. Hear the voice of my pleas for mercy, when I cry to you for help, when I lift up my hands toward your most holy sanctuary.

Psalm 28:1,2

When faced with any decision in life, we often go to a spouse, a friend, or another trusted person to get their thoughts and advice. What a blessing to have people help guide us in our decisions. Sometimes, though, the conversation with these trusted individuals is a way to confirm a decision that has already been made. You have personally weighed the pros and cons. You have done the cost analysis regarding potential emotional and financial costs. Conversations with trusted people simply reaffirm our already-made decisions. What a blessing also to have people in our lives to help solidify the decisions we make in life.

The psalmist in our Bible reading describes the first thing we should always do when faced with any decision. The inspired writer has already learned even what should be done before we realize we have decisions to make. The first thing is to call out to God, to plead for His mercy, and to trust that He will hear our plea. All other aspects and decisions in life are much more challenging without that first conversation with the Lord Almighty. God be praised that, by faith, we can make that plea to Him. By faith, we know Him; by faith, we can take the most essential first step in asking Him to bless and sustain us.

God's truths from the Bible, His means of grace, are at the foundation from which we start our decision-making process at Redeemer! Knowing our Father, we can make big, bold, and

sometimes scary decisions because we know He will bless us. He may not always bless us with what the earth views as success. But God our Father will grant us success according to His holy and perfect will for us. That knowledge provides comfort and peace as we move forward with our ministry as a Redeemer family.

God be praised for allowing us to serve Him in His Kingdom, and let us boldly make plans and decisions that He has placed in front of us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we call to you as we consider the plans we are making in service to you and your people. You have invited us to call upon your holy name. May we do so with confidence because You are our strength and our deliverer. Amen.

10. Praise God for His Miraculous Deeds

Shout for joy to God, all the earth! Sing the glory of his name; make His praise glorious. Say to God, 'How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies cringe before you.

All the earth bows down to you; they sing praise to you, they sing praises of your name.

Psalm 66:1-4

Psalm 66 recalls the miraculous way that God delivered His people from Egypt. Though God had allowed the Israelites to be enslaved, ultimately, He provided rescue. His was not any ordinary rescue: He used a series of breathtaking miracles to free them from Pharaoh, led them through the Red Sea on dry land, provided for their sustenance and safety in the wilderness and delivered them to the Promised Land.

How did the Israelites respond? When something wonderful happens to us, how do we respond?

The Psalmist opens this song with praise. In fact, the psalm is praise throughout, recalling God's wonders and providence. We, too, have reason to sing praise: God has delivered us from sin, death, and the devil. This, too, was no ordinary rescue. He used a series of breathtaking miracles to send Jesus as a man to live perfectly in our place, to rise from the dead and ascend into heaven, and to preserve His church for His triumphant return.

That's not all that God has done. His abundant grace falls daily in every area of our lives. Consider our church, our school, and our fellow believers at Redeemer. By His grace alone, God has given us blessing and opportunity beyond our expectation. Let's respond to this like the psalmist and "Shout for joy to God....Sing the praises of his name; make his praise glorious."

Prayer: Almighty God, gracious provider of all good things, lead me to marvel at your great power and stand in awe of your deeds, both great and small -- those that change the world and those that may change only my brief circumstances. May my heart and voice shout for joy and make your praise glorious for all You do. Amen.

11. God Protects Those Who Fear Him

In you, Lord, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness. Turn your ear to me, come quickly to my rescue; be my rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me. Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me. Keep me free from the trap that is set for me, for you are my refuge. My times are in your hands; deliver me from the hands of my enemies, from those who pursue me. Let your face shine on your servant; save me in your unfailing love. How abundant are the good things that you have stored up for those who fear you, that you bestow in the sight of all, on those who take refuge in you. In the shelter of your presence you hide them from all human intrigues; you keep them safe in your dwelling from accusing tongues.

Psalm 31:1 -4; 15-16; 19-20

King David, the great King of Israel, faced many hardships during his reign. This mighty king, who expanded the boundaries of Israel and possessed great power and wealth, also experienced the deep pain and struggles that we all face. He lost a child, and another son rebelled against him. In those times of sorrow and anguish, David turned to the Lord for strength and refuge.

In our daily lives, let us do the same. When we experience the joys of this life, let us not forget to turn to the Lord in gratitude. And like King David, in times of sorrow, pain, and sadness, let us also turn to Him for comfort and guidance.

Redeemer Lutheran Church is on the verge of a major undertaking: relocating and building a new facility. With this comes much joy

and anticipation for the blessings that a new building can bring—especially the opportunity for expanded ministries. But such a significant project also brings apprehension. How will we pay for it? Will some members leave because of the move? Will we lose sight of the true purpose of this new building and, like those in the time of the Tower of Babel, focus instead on saying, “Look what we’ve built”?

In these trying moments, we remember the words of Psalm 31:19.

“How abundant are the good things that you have stored up for those who fear you, that you bestow in the sight of all, on those who take refuge in you.”

With our eyes fixed on God and his Word, he will guide us to use this opportunity to spread His message of salvation to our members and to our community. Let us put our faith and trust in God, knowing that Redeemer Lutheran Church will continue to serve Him and share His Gospel.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You have placed a great and noble task before us: to share Your Gospel with future generations. Grant us courage, patience, and faith to carry out Your work for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

12. God Places His People in Just the Right Place

Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance.

Psalm 16:5 - 6

Throughout history God has placed individuals in positions to be of service to His kingdom. We think of Moses who was placed in Egypt to lead God's people from slavery to the Promised Land. We can't forget David who wrote this Psalm and, as king of Israel, led God's people against their enemies. We know of John the Baptist who prepared the people to meet their Savior.

At the current time, Redeemer Lutheran Church has pastors and committee members placed here to plan the building of a new facility. These people, with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, seek to fulfill their task of leading us to pray for the project, to encourage us to aid them in their duties, and to support the project with their gifts. The mission of telling the next generation about the Savior is clearly before us.

Psalm 16 is a powerful declaration to God's people to trust in Him. God alone is their "portion" and "cup," signifying that everything we need comes solely from Him. God is not just one part of our lives, but the entirety of our needs and desires. The Psalm also encourages us to actively acknowledge and appreciate the good things God has placed in our lives. One of those "good things" is this opportunity to tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord (Psalm 78). Christian brothers and sisters, let us all prayerfully consider how we as both individuals and as a congregation can accomplish this mission.

Prayer: Dear God, thank you for being my portion, my cup, my everything. I trust that you have set the boundaries of my life in pleasant places, and I will embrace the inheritance you have given me. Guide me to always find contentment and joy in your presence, and help me now to be a tool in our Building on Faith campaign so that we can tell the next generation the precious Gospel message. Amen.

