

# "Walking the Jesus Path Together"

A.K.A. "THE STEEPLE"

A Weekly Newsletter from First United Presbyterian Church

Volume III • Issue 3

Friday, January 20, 2023

---

## Psalm 147:12–20

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem!

Praise your God, O Zion!

For he strengthens the bars of your gates;

    he blesses your children within you.

He grants peace within your borders;

    he fills you with the finest of wheat.

He sends out his command to the earth;

    his word runs swiftly.

He gives snow like wool;

    he scatters frost like ashes.

He hurls down hail like crumbs—

    who can stand before his cold?

He sends out his word, and melts them;

    he makes his wind blow, and the waters flow.

He declares his word to Jacob,

    his statutes and ordinances to Israel.

He has not dealt thus with any other nation;

    they do not know his ordinances.

Praise the Lord! (NRSV)



## Reflection

I once heard someone talk about our tendency as humans to blame God when bad things happen and to forget to credit God for marvels we take for granted, ascribing them only to the work of human beings. The statement was something like, "When a plane crashes, we ask 'Why did God let this happen?' but when a plane takes off or a space mission begins, we marvel at the wonder of human ingenuity."

I do this all the time.

This psalm makes me remember to thank God. It is categorized as one of the five Hallelujah Psalms. Hallelujah, or Alleluia, means "praise God." Sheepishly, I'll admit to you that when I first read the psalm in preparation for this devotion, my reaction was less than praiseworthy. I was pressed for time, tired, and like the rest of us, mired down by the events of the news in recent months. And so the psalm didn't exactly lift my spirits.

(Over)

But then I decided that it was as if I had peeked at someone else's journal entry. There are those days we have when praise and gratitude are forgotten, but thankfully, there are also the writings of others that remind us to give thanks, to praise, to say "thank you" to the God who has given us everything, who makes the wind blow, who blesses our lives, who strengthens us. We don't feel it every day nor are we aware continually. I wish we were. But I'm thankful for the reminders that come and give me a poke to remember to say Alleluia. Praise God.

### **Prayer**

Dear God, thank you for writings of long ago and in our present day that remind us to praise and thank you. Give us the discipline, like a fitness discipline, to praise you and to count our blessings, in at least equal measure to our complaints. And then, over time, perhaps we will build strength and muscle and will become a people with truly grateful hearts. It will be good for us, but we need your help. Amen.

*Written by Judith L. Watt, Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care (2015)  
Fourth Presbyterian Church, Chicago*

\*\*\*\*\*

We pray for...

Nolan Collins

Amy Nolan

Maize Thompson

Those known only to God



\*\*\*\*\*



First United Presbyterian Church will be hosting the Presbytery Meeting on Saturday, February 11. (Registration begins at 8:30; meeting will probably go until 3 - 3:30) We need volunteers to serve as greeters and hosts, food crew, registration and servers. Please sign up on the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board by Fellowship Hall. See any Session member if you have questions!

\*\*\*\*\*

**Sunday, January 22**

**9:00 am - Sunday School**

**10:15 am - Worship, Paul Millhollin, Worship Leader**

**11:15 am - Fellowship**

**Tuesday, January 24 - 6:30 pm - Session**