

West Branch Community of Christ
Participant Companion Guide – Lectionary Lessons Pilot

January 25, 2014

Third Sunday after the Epiphany (Ordinary Time)

Theme: GOD OUR REFUGE

Psalms 62:5-12 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

- 5 For God alone my soul waits in silence,
for my hope is from him.
- 6 He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.
- 7 On God rests my deliverance and my honor;
my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.
- 8 Trust in him at all times, O people;
pour out your heart before him;
God is a refuge for us. Selah
- 9 Those of low estate are but a breath,
those of high estate are a delusion;
in the balances they go up;
they are together lighter than a breath.
- 10 Put no confidence in extortion,
and set no vain hopes on robbery;
if riches increase, do not set your heart on them.
- 11 Once God has spoken;
twice have I heard this:
that power belongs to God,
and steadfast love belongs to you, O Lord.
- 12 For you repay to all
according to their work.

Central Ideas:

- ***The psalmist portrays a confidence in God that is unshakeable; an absolute trust in God.***
- ***For us to be able to sing this “Song of Faith” we must recognize God is trustworthy and our sure foundation.***
- ***God desires to be “our refuge,” “our rock,” “our deliverance,” “our salvation,” and “our hope.”***
- ***God’s power and love are always present. God will never turn away from us.***

Exploring the Scripture

This beautiful psalm has been called the “Song of Faith.” It establishes without a doubt that it is God alone who we must trust on our journey of faith. Words are powerful reminders in this psalm of our need for God and how important God is in our lives. “All things that exist owe their being to God: mystery beyond understanding and love beyond imagination. This God alone is worthy of our worship” (Sharing in Community of Christ, 3rd ed., p. 14).

As you read this psalm, notice the images created through words like, my hope, my rock, my fortress, my refuge, and my deliverance. They point to God as a strong foundation, one that is reliable and trustworthy. God, the Creator and Sustainer, wants us to experience through our faith this deep and abiding sense of connection and support.

The type of faith described by the psalmist has a particular perspective of life: confidence that is unshakeable in God and God’s promises. The question of faith is not “What do we believe?” but “Whom do we trust?” As articulated in this psalm, no other human effort, cause, or relationship is suitable for this type of absolute trust.

God is generous, always offering each day to be “our refuge.” For some, their abiding or everyday trust in God provides daily assurance of God’s steadfast love.

For others, there is a need to pour out their hearts, emptying that which binds them and distracts them from God. This psalm encourages us to keep our attention and focus on God rather than ourselves. We are warned to put no faith or trust in the things of this world. They can be distractions to our relationship with God.

As receivers and people who have acknowledged God’s power and steadfast love in our lives, we are asked to be generous and share our stories and testimonies. No matter where we find ourselves—in need or in abundance, in loss or in joy—God is there, blessing and supplying the foundation for our lives.