

## **Devotion, Week of February 16, 2025**

### **Rev. Jeanne Simpson**

There have been so many tragedies lately – 4 plane crashes, floods, mudslides, tornadoes, snow storms, and continuing war. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict and cease fire seems to operate like a yoyo, with positions changing multiple times per day. I cannot imagine being a family member anxiously awaiting the release of a hostage and never knowing if the release is going to happen, or even if the person is actually still alive. War has broken out in northern Nigeria, Rwanda, and the Congo, and the Ukrainian war is more chaotic than ever. Where does the U.S. stand with it? Who knows? With federal agency layoffs and stoppage of federal grants, we seem to be living in total chaos.

So how do we carry on in such days? I am reminded of psalm 22. Jesus spoke part of it on the cross. And yet this psalm, like the other lament psalms, moves from despair to hope. It starts with verses of lament and pain:

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?

O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;

and by night but find no rest.

And then we move to these verses of hope:

I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters;

in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:

You who fear the Lord, praise him!

All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him;

stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

For he did not despise or abhor

the affliction of the afflicted;

he did not hide his face from me

but heard when I cried to him.

God hears our cry and comforts us, as we are reminded in the next psalm, psalm 23: “He leads me beside still waters; He restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for His name’s sake.” May you be comforted during this time of disorientation, knowing that God always reorients us with His love.

Yours in Christ,

*Jeanne*