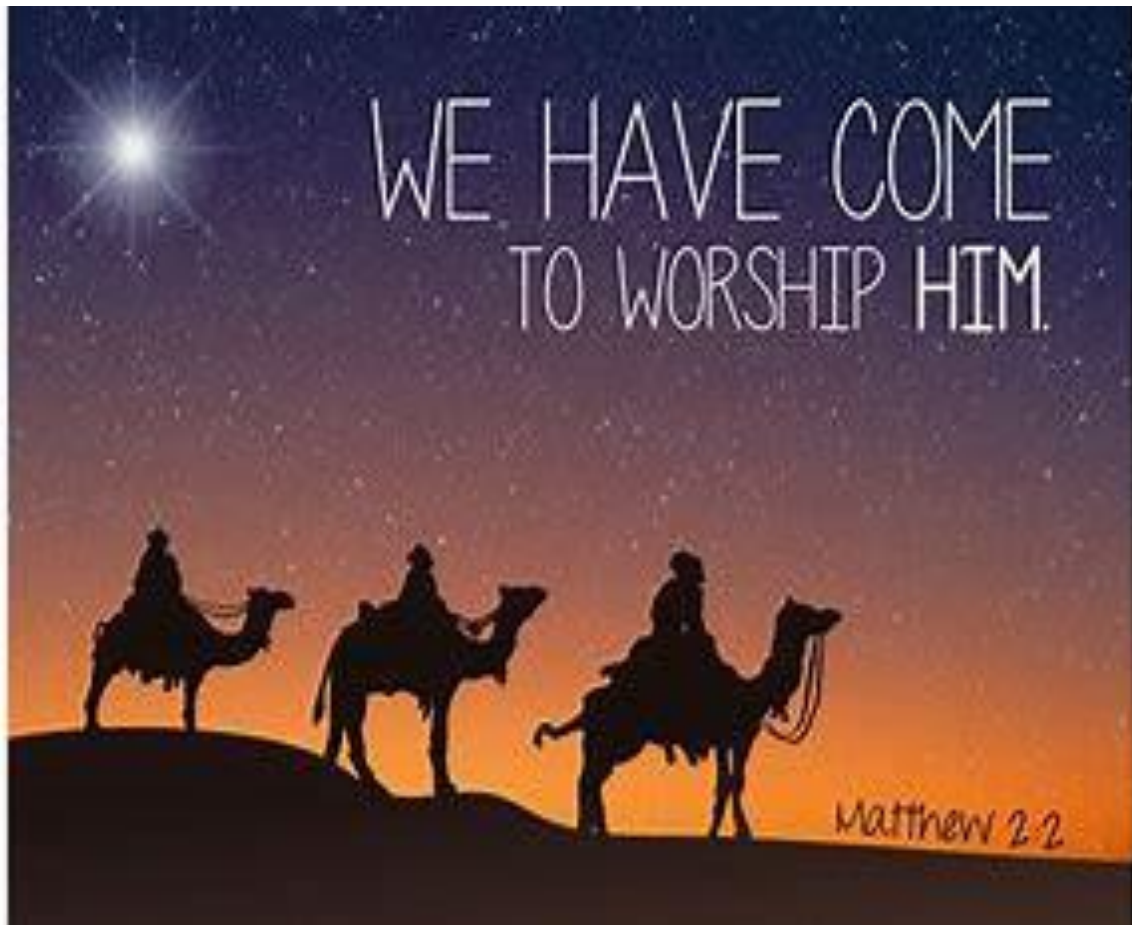


RESURRECTION NEWS



JANUARY 2020



Pastor's Letter

January, 2020

Funeral Sermon for Frances Sieber

November 23, 2019

John 11:25-26

In the name + of Jesus. Amen.

The two sisters of Lazarus were grieving the death of their brother just as you, Robert and Andy grieve the death of your wife and mother and as we all grieve for our sister in Christ. Jesus came to them. And it would be entirely correct to say that Jesus came to them from heaven, to comfort them with the comfort that only He can give. **"I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die."**

And now He comes to you and to us, and to all who mourn, for the same purpose – **"to comfort [you] who mourn... to give [you] a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit..."** (Is.61:2-3)

For many folks, the main source of comfort at the death of a loved one who was very ill or who had suffered for a while is that at least now there is no more suffering. The pain of the broken hip is over. The labored breathing from pneumonia is finally ended. The cancer that infected her lungs and attacked her body can't hurt her anymore. And for those who depart this life in the Christian Faith, this is most certainly true – and in our sorrow, we should all find comfort in this.

But the believer in Jesus Christ and His Word has a comfort at the death of a loved one that goes much further than simply the end of Fran's pain and suffering. For the truth of the matter is, Frances has been moved from this world to her heavenly home. The wages of sin have been collected from her - for the soul that sins shall surely die. Fran died for the same reason that everyone dies and that we all will one day die. For the wages of sin is death.

But just as Christ called His friend Lazarus to come out of the tomb, so He will call Frances' body out of her grave. It is ashes to ashes and dust to dust for all of us. We are all destined to return to that from which God made Adam in the beginning. And if it weren't for a loving God who has the power to overcome even death, that would be the end of the story and the extent of our peace would go no further than, 'at least she isn't suffering anymore.'

But our hope goes much further than that – because our hope is in God, who knows what to do with dust and ashes. Just as He made Adam from the dust of the earth and breathed into him His own breath and Adam became a 'living being,' so He will do even with these ashes.

For the almighty God, who can even give life to the dead, has redeemed Fran's body AND soul with His own body and blood. He gave Fran His body and blood in the Lord's Supper to eat and drink – here at this altar since you both joined this congregation on March 11, 2006, and in the hospital and the rehabilitation center. In other words, where ever Fran was, her Lord came to her with His remedy for her sin and her death –His forgiveness for all of her sin, and His life in exchange for her death.

Jesus Christ paid the wages of her sin and ours by taking all of our sin onto himself. And the wages were paid out to Him in full – on the cross. And just as God raised Jesus from the dead, in both body and spirit, so He will raise Fran's body from her grave and unite it to her spirit that is even today, with the same Lord Jesus Christ in paradise.

Jesus said to grieving Martha, **"I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die."** That's an extravagant claim to make. There needs to be darn good reason for us to actually believe such an extravagant claim like that. But we have a darn good reason to do just that. For *"Christ is risen!" He is risen indeed, alleluia!"*

Jesus does not simply have the power to raise us from the dead and give eternal life, HE IS THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE. To have Jesus is to have resurrection and life. This is the extravagant claim that Fran confessed with her lips every time she was in the Lord's house for the Divine Service and confessed with her brothers and sisters - "I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come." This is the extravagant claim that she made when she was baptized into Christ and confessed - "I believe in the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting."

When Fran knelt at this railing to receive the Resurrection and the Life in the bread and wine, she received the forgiveness of her sins and the strengthening of her faith that is necessary to make such an extravagant claim as this.

It had been quite some time since Fran had been able to make the long journey to get here for worship. But whether it was at home or at the rehab center, with either myself or our deaconess, Fran would always be glad to receive her Lord who came to her wherever she was with His body and blood and to pray, praise and give thanks for His great mercy for her. In these visits, whether it was at the house or the hospital or rehab center, she would always say that it was nice to know she hadn't been forgotten. To which I would reply, 'really Fran, who could possibly forget you?'

How much more comforting it must now be for Fran to know what she had never been able to fully know or believe - that her Lord had not forgotten her either. The One who made this promise to her in her baptism, **"I will never leave you nor forsake you,"** took her to be with Him to give her His peace and His rest.

Jesus said to Martha **"I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. DO YOU BELIEVE THIS?"** What about you? **"Do you believe this?"** What is your response to this incredible claim?

Martha said to him, **"Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."** I beg you all to respond like Martha and believe this - BECAUSE IT'S TRUE - truer than anything else in this world. By His glorious Resurrection on Easter morning, this Jesus, conquered death and the grave, once and for all - not only for Lazarus, but also Fran, and for you and for me.

And if we will believe that Jesus died and rose again for sinners like Frances who had her doubts, and like each one of us who also have our own doubts - then we will not grieve like others do who see nothing more than the 82 years, 6 months and 17 days of life in this world.

Rather, we will give thanks to God for His extravagant grace that loves sinners and doubters like Fran and like us - and live in the hope of an 'eternal life' in paradise, where every sin is washed away and every doubt is dissolved in Him who is the Resurrection and the Life.

Faith in Christ, the Son of God, assures us that His extravagant claim that He has overcome even death is true - true for Frances - and true for us. This is the truth that is powerful enough to transform our sorrow even into joy, and turn even our weeping into praise. **"O Death, where is your victory? O Grave, where is your sting?... But thanks be to God who gives us the victory."** (1 Cor. 15)

In the + name of Jesus. Amen.

Pastor Nielsen

Notes from your Deaconess

January, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters of LCR,

Can you pick one or two hymns for each church season that you always want to hear or sing during that time? I have a very hard time doing this, especially as each year I discover new tunes and texts that I love. “Of the Father’s Love Begotten,” LSB#384, is one such hymn. It has one of those old winding kind of chant tunes (from the 13th century), and its text originates in the 4th or 5th century. The phrases sung tell the cosmic and historic story of Christmas, and have echoes of scripture from the Psalms, prophets, the gospels, and even Revelation. The final verse, which has a triangle to the left of its verse number, contains a Trinitarian doxology – that is a song of praise to God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. You may have noticed and wondered about that triangle and why people stand up for singing (if they had been seated) on such verses, we do so in honor of our Triune God.

The season of Epiphany, meaning “to show forth,” begins on January 6. Through the rest of the month, and through most of February we will sing and hear of the times and places when and where Jesus’ divine nature is revealed.

Pastor Nielsen will be leading the Sunday morning Adult class and talking about particular hymns during the coming weeks. We recently purchased the newly released Lutheran Service Book: Companion to the Hymns. This two-volume set contains all kinds of information about the many hymns contained in our service book – origins of tunes, biographies of composers and text-authors, theological information as well.

I intend to lead two Saturday morning Bible studies for women this month, on January 11 and 25. We will continue our study of the book of Hebrews, probably chapters 6 and 7. We will review some each time as well, and you are welcome to come any time you are able – please don’t feel that you need to have attended the previous time.

As a reminder, a small group continues to meet most Friday mornings for prayer at church. If you would like to join us, or let us know of prayer concerns which you’d particularly would like us to include, give me a call or send an email. Also, I regularly send an email midweek to let some church members know what hymns will be sung on the upcoming Sunday. If you’d like to be included, let me know.

Our daily lectionary readings move from readings in Isaiah and Luke once we begin the season of Epiphany on January 6. We turn to the Old Testament prophet Ezekiel who conveyed the word of the Lord using vivid illustrations – in actions and metaphors – during the exile of Israel to Babylon. In the New Testament we will read the letter written to the Romans by Paul.

Under his mercy,
Sharon M. Conover

“For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out...I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice.” Ezekiel 34:11,16

MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY RESUMES - THURSDAY - JANUARY 16TH - 10:30am.

Join us as we continue our study of the Book of Revelation. Plan to join us and bring a friend.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY FOR JANUARY-FEBRUARY: 8:45AM.

January – February Series: Mining the Gems in the Hymns We Sing.

"I love Lutheran hymns because they are so rich in the gospel."

"Coming from a 'non-Lutheran' background, one of the things that I appreciate so much about Lutheran worship is the depth of Lutheran hymns."

These are just a few of the encouraging comments about the hymns we sing that I've heard over the years. We come to worship like hungry little lambs, longing to be fed with the one thing that can satisfy that hunger in our soul – God's Word. We come to the house of the Lord where our Good Shepherd calls us to come and be fed. And He feeds us with His Word and His very body and blood. We come to worship, ready to hear God's Word. We listen carefully to the three readings from the Holy Scriptures and the Word of God as it is proclaimed in the Liturgy. We are attentive to the Sermon where the Word is proclaimed and applied to our life of faith.

But how attentive are we to the Word of God as it comes to us in the HYMNS that we sing? Every hymn is a sermon in itself, proclaiming and applying the Holy Word to our life of faith in Jesus Christ. **Come to Adult Bible Study at 8:45am. on Sundays as we explore the HYMNS OF CHRISTMAS and EPIPHANY and let them feed our hungry hearts with their sung sermons.**

NEW FLOWER AND FELLOWSHIP SIGN UP SHEETS FOR 2020 are posted on the Bulletin Board in the Narthex. Please sign up now. The cost for sponsoring flowers for the altar is now \$28 for two weeks.

HOMELESS SHELTER MEAL FOR JANUARY 11th

We have been providing a monthly meal on the 2nd Saturday of the month for the Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter now for several years. A number of people each take a volunteer to prepare a portion of the meal. Currently, Deb Nielsen coordinates the menu and oversees the collection and delivery of the meal. Assignments should be at the church kitchen by 4:30pm. on Saturday. *We're looking for a new coordinator to take charge of planning and overseeing this important service to the homeless shelter residents and staff.* If you would be interested in this, please speak with Deb.

MEN'S BREAKFAST - SATURDAY, JANUARY 18TH - 8:00AM.

Plan to join us for this special Men's Breakfast Meeting. Great fellowship, bible study and breakfast. We'll be done by 10:00am. In time to get back home to do those chores. We'll be reading and discussing C.S. Lewis' - "Mere Christianity" – Book III: Chapters 3 & 4.

THANK YOU FROM MID-MAINE HOMELESS SHELTER

Dear Friends of the Shelter,

I wanted to send a special note of thanks to your Youth Group for the recent Thanksgiving Baskets you provided for our shelter clients. What you did was incredible and very much appreciated! Our case managers and housing navigators were able to deliver your 23 baskets to previously homeless guests who are not living in their own apartments in our community. You helped to make their Thanksgiving special!

Tonya Fossett

The Lutheran Church of the Resurrection

(Report given at Annual Meeting – 12/15/19)

It has been nearly a month since we last communicated our progress related to our long-term planning process. Since our last letter, there has been considerable learning and progress to report.

As discussed previously, we have selected two broad topics and one very focused topic to be developed into actionable items. The first is to “Connect Through Lutheran Education”, the second is to “Grow our Congregation” and the third is to address our upcoming pastoral change. To begin work on this, we have divided into three teams. The broader topics will be worked on by dividing our committee into two teams of about 5 people and our Board of Elders will manage the topic of Pastoral change. These teams have been set up and work has begun!! The two teams from the committee have accepted the challenge of beginning this important work by focusing on high level thinking dealing with how we go about the challenges before us. It is important not to get pulled to a detailed discussion quite yet. The current assignment is to think strategically and not to develop a bullet point list of ideas or actions. This will come with time and prayerful consideration but it is important to understand how and why to proceed first. This work will continue in full force after the holidays.

The work being done related to our pastoral change is progressing very well. We have learned it is necessary to obtain written permission from our District President for a couple of items. First, we need his approval to seek a candidate from Seminary and second, we need his approval to interview candidates from Seminary. We have had discussions with Pres. Yeadon and he has granted approval for both. Along the lines of approval, we also need approval from the congregation to seek a candidate from Seminary. Later in today’s meeting we will hold a vote related to that approval. Should this direction be approved, we will proceed with completion of the Call Documents. If we decide to interview candidates the interviews will need to be completed by the first part of February as this information is included in the Call Documents. The placement directors at the two Seminaries will provide us with profiles of 3 to 5 candidates and we will have the opportunity to interview all or none of them. We can also request more profiles if they miss the mark on what we feel is an excellent fit. Mid-February is the deadline for submission of the Call Documents.

We have had conversations and email discussions with both Seminaries. The placement directors at both are a pleasure to deal with. They have requested information including the Congregational Profile previously submitted and our Congregational Self-Study. This self-study was completed and submitted earlier this week to both Seminaries and the New England District. This information will help them align our needs and situation with the best possible candidates should this be the direction we choose. This year, the Seminaries will produce between 100 and 110 new pastors. We are hopeful the Holy Spirit has one of them in mind just for us!!

Our network of advocates continues to grow. Brenda Bacon from the New England District has confirmed a date to visit with us to explain the demographic studies we had done and how to use them. She will be here January 14 to visit with our committee and provide us with useful knowledge related to this tool. She has also been very helpful in providing demographic information required on the Congregational Self Study and we certainly will call on her again as we proceed with the Call Documents. President Yeadon continues to pledge his support and blessings on the work we are doing. His part in this process is an important one and we are fortunate to have him in our corner. Deaconess Tiffany Manor has been very helpful in providing detailed information related to the paperwork required for all of this. She is a wonderful resource and a real pleasure to deal with.

In closing, things are beginning to happen fast!! There has been much work completed and a lot of work still in front of us. The next steps are extremely important and exciting. Thanks to all who have gotten us to this point.

Brian Watson



BIBLE QUIZ

Monthly Worship

January 5, 2020

Second Sunday after Christmas

Psalm: 119:97-104

First Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6

Epistle: Ephesians 1:3-14

Holy Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

January 12, 2020

**The Baptism of Our Lord/
First Sunday after the Epiphany**

Psalm: 29

First Reading: Isaiah 42:1-9

Epistle: Romans 6:1-11

Holy Gospel: Matthew 3:13-17

January 19, 2020

Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Psalm: 40:1-11

First Reading: Isaiah 49:1-7

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

Gospel: John 1:29-42a

January 26, 2020

Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Psalm: 27:1-9 (10-14)

First Reading: Isaiah 9:1-4

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Holy Gospel: Matthew 4:12-25

1. As Jesus was being arrested, one of the disciples chopped off what body part on the high priest's servant?

A) his left hand B) his right ear C) his big nose (D) his small finger

2. What common item did God use to unleash the plague onto the Egyptians?

A) a shepherd's rod B) an animal's jawbone C) a ram's horn D) a smooth pebble

3. in the amor-of-God analogy, what does the helmet represent?

A) righteousness B) faith C) salvation D) truth

4. What foolish thing did Isaiah say King Hezekiah did with the Babylonian envoys?

A) poisoned their wine so as to only sicken them B) handed over the temple's treasures instead of trusting God for deliverance (C) refused them entry into Israel at their border D) showed them every single item in both his palace and the royal treasures

5. What is the shortest verse in the New Testament?

A) Jesus died B) Jesus wept C) Jesus came D) Jesus ate

6. Who said this: "Can the blind lead the blind?"

A) Peter B) Paul C) John D) Jesus



FOR A FEW CHUCKLES!

The Sunday school teacher had spent three weeks teaching the story of the prodigal son to her second-grade class. She wanted to make sure the children understood every important point of the story, including the resentful brother, the loving and forgiving father, and so on. As she was quizzing her class, she came to this question: "Now children, out of the characters in the story, who was not at all happy to see the prodigal son returning home?"

"I know, I know," shouted sweet little Marianna. "It was the fatted calf."

0-0-0-0-0

George was spending Friday night and all day Saturday with his Grandmother in the country, and it had snowed overnight. Grandma couldn't wait to bundle up George and take him walking in the beautiful fresh snow.

Isn't it wonderful, George? Doesn't it seem like our Lord has painted this gorgeous scenery, just for us to enjoy this morning?"

Yes, Grandma! And do you want to know what makes it even better? God had to do this all with his left hand!"

Grandma didn't have any idea what George meant.

"Grandma," he explained patiently. "Don't you know that Jesus sits on the right hand of God?"

0-0-0-0-0

After the church service, Billy told the pastor, "When I grow up, I'm going to give you some money. My daddy says you're one of the poorest preachers we've ever had."

0-0-0-0-0

Seen on a bumper sticker: Drive carefully. It's not only cars that can be recalled by their maker.

1/7	Vary Fischer
1/10	Joan Drageland
1/12	Cianan Morris
1/17	Caden Fitzpatrick
	Lee Anne Larsen
1/20	Vesta Holt
1/22	Steve Love
1/26	Deb Nielsen



BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

1/20	Joan Drageland
1/30	Maira Goldsmith
1/??	Yvonne Batson



ANNIVERSARIES

1/13	Ken Zahner
1/21	Laverne Pelletier
	Wayne Pelletier

Bible Quiz Answers

1. B (John 18:10)
2. A (Exodus 7:15-19)
3. C (Ephesians 6:17)
4. D (Isaiah 39:2-7)
5. B (John 11:35)
6. D (Luke 6:39)

January Stewardship

	<u>January 5</u>	<u>January 12</u>	<u>January 19</u>	<u>January 26</u>
<u>Acolyte</u>	Allison Farr	Andrew Farr	Evan Farr	Emily Lynn Carlson
<u>Comm. Assistant</u>	Mark Larsen	Dan Callahan	Brian Watson	Glenn Carlson, Sr.
<u>Ushers</u>	Dan Keefe & Dan Callahan	Moe Cote & Mike Hein	Brad Fitzpatrick & Wayne Pelletier	Glenn Carlson, Jr. & Seth Carlson
<u>Greeters</u>	Avis Grant & Gail Carrano	David Leigh & Dorothy McAllister	Dan & Sharon Callahan & Matt Esculano	Rev. Robert & Vary Fischer
<u>Altar Care</u>	Amy Ouellette	Sasha Fitzpatrick	Krista Carlson	Kitty Carlson
<u>Flowers</u>	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
<u>Fellowship</u>	Becky Cote	OPEN	Sharon Klipp	OPEN

The Daily Lectionary

A guide to help you be in the Word daily

January

- 1/1 Isaiah 61:1-11 / Luke 1:57-80
- 1/2 Isaiah 62:1-12 / Luke 2:1-20
- 1/3 Isaiah 63:1-14 / Luke 2:21-40
- 1/4 Isaiah 63:15-65:2 / Luke 2:41-52
- 1/5 Isaiah 65:8-25 / Luke 3:1-20
- 1/6 Isaiah 66:1-20 / Luke 3:21-38
- 1/7 Ezekiel 1:1-14,22-28 / Romans 1:1-17
- 1/8 Ezekiel 2:1-3:11 / Romans 1:18-32
- 1/9 Ezekiel 3:12-27 / Romans 2:1-16
- 1/10 Ezekiel 18:1-4, 19-32 / Romans 2:17-29
- 1/11 Ezekiel 33:1-20 / Romans 3:1-18
- 1/12 Ezekiel 34:1-24 / Romans 3:19-31
- 1/13 Ezekiel 36:13-28 / Romans 4:1-25
- 1/14 Ezekiel 36:33-37:14 / Romans 5:1-21
- 1/15 Ezekiel 37:15-28 / Romans 6:1-23
- 1/16 Ezekiel 38:1-23 / Romans 7:1-20
- 1/17 Ezekiel 39:1-10 / 17-29 / Romans 7:21-8:17
- 1/18 Ezekiel 40:1-4; 43:1-12 / Romans 8:18-39
- 1/19 Ezekiel 44:1-16, 23-29 / Romans 9:1-18
- 1/20 Ezekiel 47:1-13,21-23 / Romans 9:19-33
- 1/21 Joel 1:1-20 / Romans 10:1-21
- 1/22 Joel 2:1-17 / Romans 11:1-24
- 1/23 Joel 2:18-32 / Romans 11:25-12:13
- 1/24 Joel 3:1-21 / Romans 12:14-13:14
- 1/25 Zechariah 1:1-21 / Romans 14:1-23
- 1/26 Zechariah 2:1-3:10 / Romans 15:1-13
- 1/27 Zechariah 4:1-5:11 / Romans 15:14-33
- 1/28 Zechariah 6:1-7:14 / Romans 16:17-27
- 1/29 Zechariah 8:1-23 / 2 Timothy 1:1-18
- 1/30 Zechariah 9:1-17 / 2 Timothy 2:1-26
- 1/31 Zechariah 10:1-11:3 / 2 Timothy 3:1-17

(Daily lectionary readings taken from LSB #299-304)

Some helpful habits for home devotions:

- *Do one reading in the morning and the other in the evening.*
- *Keep a journal or make a mental note of one thought that you would like to remember from this reading.*
- *Read and discuss the daily reading with a family member or friend.*
- *Choose one verse to commit to memory, reciting it through the day.*
- *Speak to God in prayer about something from the reading that impressed or confused you in this reading.*
- *If you miss a day or two (or three) and fall behind, don't worry and don't quit! Either set aside some time to catch up or skip those readings and move on.*
- *If you're using another reading schedule or guide, stick with it. The important thing is to be in the Word daily*