

WEDNESDAY   March 18, 2015	THURSDAY   March 19, 2015	FRIDAY   March 20, 2015
<p><b>The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun, which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy, and like a strong man runs its course with joy. Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them; and nothing is hidden from its heat. (Psalm 19)</b></p> <p>The Psalmist speaks to the tensions present in our world with words of reassurance and confidence. He speaks not with a false hope that days of peace will soon be here again. Rather, he proclaims that our lives have always been in God’s hands. Nature itself declares and speaks this often forgotten message to the ends of the earth. The exuberance of the rising sun is a daily witness; our lives are in God’s hands.</p> <p><i>May I trust You Lord, that You are present in the turmoil of this day. May I trust you with our world, may I trust you with my life, may I trust you with the people I love.</i></p>	<p><b>Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Saviour. The Sovereign Lord is my strength; He makes my feet like the feet of a deer, He enables me to tread on the heights. (Habakkuk 3:17-19)</b></p> <p>Habakkuk lived in troubling times, perplexed by the great evil and violence he saw going on around him. At times he wondered why God did not do something. Almost as an act of defiance, in the face of doubt he decides to trust. The key word in the passage is yet! These are days of trouble in our world. Will we decide to be “yet” people? Will we declare our trust in God in a dangerous time and refuse to give in to hatred and despair?</p> <p><i>O Lord, everything I see and read these days suggest that evil seems to be getting the upper hand. Help me to remember that You are always in control. Help me to trust You, even while I encourage others to do the same!</i></p>	<p><b>Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.” (John 18:36)</b></p> <p>It’s more than a bumper sticker, more than just a phrase. It’s a mindset, a filter through which we see our existence on this planet. Jesus said it, matter of fact to Pontius Pilate, a chief leader of his day: “My kingdom is not of this world...my kingdom is from another place.” We must always remember that this world and its values and its way of doing things is not our primary reality; it is not what we fight for, not what we serve. We are simply residing here as exiles and aliens, occupying and abiding until Christ’s rule is made complete.</p> <p><i>King Jesus, make me uncomfortable with the way the world views things and does things. Help me to live graciously and courageously as a countercultural influence in the midst of my broken surroundings. May my way of talking, serving, living and loving always be not of this world.</i></p>
SATURDAY   March 21, 2015	MONDAY   March 23, 2015	TUESDAY   March 24, 2015
<p><b>Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. (Psalm 34:4)</b></p> <p>A man I have respected as a faithful follower of Christ for many years recently decided to buy a gun and take shooting lessons. He, now in his 70’s had never owned a gun before. When I asked him what brought him to that decision he responded: “With all that is going in the world... and terrorists, I need to protect myself and my family”. I worry when we let fear make us ready to kill. What are the terrible results if we were all to decide to not seek and pursue peace?</p> <p><i>O Lord it’s far easier to think about revenge than it is to think about seeking peace. Help me to be a voice for proclaiming a better way than dropping more bombs and arming ourselves.</i></p>	<p><b>Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and your staff they comfort me! (Psalm 23:4)</b></p> <p>We can do terrible things when we act out of fear. Max Lucado tells the story from London England during WW2, where a number of people were trampled by a crowd who stampeded for cover because one person thought they heard an airplane flying over London. There was no plane – the person just thought they heard it. Bombs did not kill those people – fear did. “Fear” is the shadow in Psalm 23.</p> <p><i>O Lord today may I refuse to give in to the fear that some in our world would spread. May I instead choose to love as Jesus would and to live with a calm assurance of Your peace!</i></p>	<p><b>I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. (Revelations 22:13)</b></p> <p>So often in the challenges and opportunities of life it is easy to view ourselves as an island unto ourselves. It is easy to forget that, as children of God, we are loved by the one who is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.</p> <p><i>Lord, help me in the busyness of this day, with its good elements and hard to remember that you are ultimately the one who guides, loves and rules this world. May I trust you as the Alpha and Omega.</i></p>