

Weekly Devotion- May 17, 2020 to May 23, 2020

Good Friends of Crete UMC,

Recently, in my devotions, my mind has turned to the hymns. I miss those moments in worship that sometimes happen - we are singing and it just happens. Suddenly a feeling fills the room, and in that moment, we are truly singing as one. Our hearts and minds are one. We are one in spirit.

Yesterday, I was talking to a church member on the phone. Our conversation had nothing to do with singing but out of the blue said, "I miss singing together in church. I never thought I'd miss that. I'm not much of a singer. Isn't that funny?"

More and more I find myself singing my prayers these days. Perhaps I've run out of words. I've spent a lot of time over the past weeks bludgeoning the doors of heaven with cares and needs that seem endless - the world's, the church's, yours and mine...

And so, I'm singing my prayers these days (which might be something of a relief to our good Lord). I'm grateful I grew up with the hymns and know several by heart. One of those is, It Is Well with My Soul.

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.

I don't remember when I first learned the story behind this hymn, but knowing it has always made it more meaningful to me because its author knew of what he wrote. He'd faced many tragedies in his life, far more than his fair share, and yet his faith held and gave peace in the midst of profound turbulence. Knowing this story gives me a measure of perspective and balance in the cares of this day. I offer this to you in hope that it will do the same.

It was written by Horatio G. Spafford, a lawyer from Chicago and close friend of Dwight L. Moody.

Hymnologist Kenneth Osbeck tells the story: "Desiring a rest for his wife and four daughters as well as wishing to join and assist Moody and [his musician Ira] Sankey in one of their campaigns in Great Britain, Spafford planned a European trip for his family in 1873. In November of that year, due to unexpected last-minute business developments, he had to remain in Chicago, but sent his wife and four daughters on ahead as scheduled on the S.S. Ville du Havre. He expected to follow in a few days.

“On November 22 the ship was struck by the Lochearn, an English vessel, and sank in twelve minutes. Several days later the survivors were finally landed at Cardiff, Wales, and Mrs. Spafford cabled her husband, ‘Saved alone.’”

Spafford left immediately to join his wife. This hymn is said to have been penned as he approached the area of the ocean thought to be where the ship carrying his daughters had sunk.

(The full story can be found at umcdiscipleship.org/resources/history-of-hymns-it-is-well-with-my-soul)

Here is the full text of the hymn. When there are no words left for our prayers, we can always sing. And in some mysterious way, dear friends, as you sing and as I sing, regardless of the distance, we are one. Amen.

It Is Well with My Soul (UMH #377)

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
when sorrows like sea billows roll;
whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.

Refrain:

It is well with my soul,
it is well, it is well with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
let this blest assurance control,
that Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
and hath shed his own blood for my soul.

(Refrain)

My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!
My sin, not in part but the whole,
is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,
praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

(Refrain)

And, Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight,
the clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
the trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,
even so, it is well with my soul.

(Refrain)

Yours in the journey,
Pastor Kristen

Announcements

Upper Room Home Delivery from Pastor Kristen

Many of us enjoy our Upper Rooms and use it as a daily devotional. We have had difficulty getting them delivered at this time but we now have received regular-print sized Upper Rooms (next week we will get the large-print versions). Contact me either by email at klarsen@creteumc or by phone and I will drop it off on your doorstep and ring your bell. If you are available to come to the door, it will be so good to see you in person! (at the appropriate social distance and I will be wearing a mask). No donation is required for Upper Rooms but if you'd like to donate to the cost, you can add it to your regular giving and mail it to the church with "Upper Room Donation" plus the amount indicated in the memo line. If you use our online giving option, just let our Treasurer, Laurie Viktora know.