



Society of St. Andrew  
GLEANING AMERICA'S FIELDS  
FEEDING AMERICA'S HUNGRY

## Daily Lenten Devotions

scripture readings • reflections • prayers



# A New Day Dawns

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! As Lent begins, we set out on a solemn 47-day journey to Easter. “A New Day Dawns”, the theme of SoSA’s Lenten devotional program is based on the scripture verse in 2 Corinthians with a focus on new beginnings.

<sup>16</sup>Therefore, we do not lose heart. Though outwardly, we are wasting away, inwardly, we are being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup>For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. <sup>18</sup>So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

Based on this verse or another favorite scripture, these devotions were written to feed your spiritual hunger and inspire you to recognize and thank God for your new beginnings.

During Lent, we journey to the cross assessing our spiritual health throughout the season. While using the tools of prayer, self-examination, confession, repentance, and “A New Day Dawns,” we will gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of what Jesus did for us and how that gives us hope today.

As your spiritual hungers are sustained by these devotions this season, please give back to the Society of St. Andrew to meet the physical needs of those less fortunate. With a monetary contribution, you provide healthy nourishing food for people in greatest need, right here in the United States.

Thank you for using and sharing “A New Day Dawns” devotional materials, for telling others about the Society of St. Andrew’s gleaning and feeding ministries, and for making a generous gift to feed families in need.

Together, let us praise and give thanks to God for each new day because of Christ Jesus!



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## Lesson from a Loom

**Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 4:7-18

Many years ago my grandmother gave me a very old, blue and white blanket. It had belonged to her mother and was hand-woven on a loom in the 1800s. It was too delicate to be used, so I put it in a cedar chest to keep it safe, checking on it from time to time to make sure it was okay. Recently, I opened the cedar chest and discovered, to my sadness, that the blanket had become dry and brittle, almost crumbling at my touch. Nothing could be done to save it.

There's a lot in life that crumbles us. Hardships, sorrows, illnesses, and age all take their toll on the earthly vessels we now call home. Just like the blanket, our bodies cannot last. But we know this isn't the end. There will be a new beginning for us in heaven. "And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body." (Phil 3: 20-21). Christ is with us giving us courage, faith, and hope every day until that day when we will be rewoven by Him in heaven.

**Prayer:** Father, we know you are the master weaver. You created us. You sustain us, and you will make us new again in Heaven. Thank you. Amen.

*Regina K. Carson | Chesterfield, VA*

## Meet Me on the Beach

**Scripture:** Isaiah 6:3-4

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory... the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke."

Isaiah encountered the Holiness of God in the Temple; for me, it occurred on the beach one day.

My wife and I were on a trip to visit family, and we took a short break from driving to walk out on the beach. It was a nice day, and it was unusual to see so few people on the beach. We seemed to be alone as we walked closer to the shore. As we did,

the sound of the waves became louder and louder until there was no sound except for the waves coming ashore. My wife and I said nothing. It was as if our entire world was only our silences and the sound of the waves. A sense of the holiness of the moment and place surrounded us. We simply stood there without moving, looking out to the limitless sea and sounded by the music of the waves. After several long minutes, we turned to each other and acknowledged we were in a Holy place.

As I close my eyes, I can go back to that shore and recall how God's Holiness and Presence come to us even on the waves of the sea.

**Prayer:** Gracious and Holy God, Thank you for the moments we sense you come near. May we remember no day, time, or place is beyond being touched by your Holiness. Amen.

*Charles Gambrell | Indianapolis, IN*

Friday, March 7

## Morning Runs

**Scripture:** Hebrews 12:1

I'm an early riser. Some of my best mornings are when I'm able to take a run in the predawn light of a new day. No matter the season, our neighborhood offers much to see and consider as the sun peaks through trees and crests over rooftops.

During Lent, the landscape is in the beginning of a fading winter and the arrival of spring. There is a beauty in the starkness of my surroundings before spring brings on its green paint. In the light of that starkness, my eyes see my neighborhood with a different clarity.

Those runs offer me solitude, time to reflect, and ponder. Some mornings, a feeling of losing heart runs with me. Yet, in those moments, I'm reminded of the unseen. I wonder how the good Lord, a friend, or a stranger might be conspiring to bring relief to my slipping heart.

Lent can be a tough run. We know its road, hills, curves, straightaways, and blind spots.

Yet, at the end of Lent, just like the end of a morning run, I feel mentally and physically resurrected by its transforming story. For me, that resurrection and transformation are grounded in the last verse of Hebrews 12:1: "And let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us."

**Prayer:** Father of us all, during Lent, help us persevere and not lose heart. Amen.

*Bill Pike | Richmond, VA*

Saturday, March 8

## Mornings with Gratitude

**Scripture:** 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Mornings begin slowly at Brandermill Assisted Living Center. Pre-dawn, I grope for my clothes and assess which of my bones and joints ache. Moving carefully, I start down the long hall to breakfast. On the way, I am greeted by nurses and residents, "How are you this morning?" I mumble an answer. But one lady always answers this question with "Thankful!" This response causes me to stop and remember my many blessings. I pause, thank, and praise God. As I continue to breakfast, I remember a poem from my childhood..."Here is dawning another blue day...Think! Will you let it pass useless away?"

**Prayer:** God, we praise and thank you for our many blessings. The best blessing of all is that you are always with us. We pray you will find some way to use us today. Amen.

*Judy Gattis Smith | Midlothian, VA*



## Every Day Can Bring New Beginnings with Jesus

**Scripture:** Psalm 118:24

A significant “new beginning” for me was at age ten. My family moved to an area outside the city limits. This provided better academic opportunities for me, a shy bookworm, and also removed me from occasional situations where I’d been verbally abused at my previous school and church by someone I’d once considered a friend. I was excited about these new educational possibilities, and I quickly made friends at my new school, two of whom became lifelong sisters in Christ.

Soon after, we joined a new church, and the loving faith community helped me better understand that Jesus is not only our Savior but our friend. Furthermore, a Scripture learned in sixth grade Sunday School truly resonated with me and begins my day ever since: Psalm 118:24. I realized that every single day could bring new beginnings for us, with new opportunities awaiting, and to be grateful, no matter what the circumstances in our lives might be.

Several other meaningful “new beginnings” followed throughout my lifetime: starting a career after college, becoming a wife, mother, caregiver, and most recently, a grandmother. The common denominator throughout these new chapters is knowing the Lord was always by my side, celebrating the joyous times and carrying me through the difficulties. What a wonderful friend is Jesus!

**Prayer:** Lord, may we rejoice as each new day begins and as we look toward the day when our ultimate new beginning comes: leaving our earthly lives to spend eternity with you. Amen.

*Julie Erickson | Olathe, KS*

## New Beginnings

**Scripture:** Isaiah 43:19

During this reflective season of Lent, I realized that our family is on the cusp of several new beginnings. Our daughter, a junior in high school, is now driving herself and contemplating college choices. We are rejoicing in all the beautiful opportunities unfolding in front of her as she begins to decide about her future.

At 51, I also recognize all of the beautiful opportunities in front of me, and I am excited by the blessing of having choices in my life again. I have been happily teaching for almost 30 years, but I am considering retirement within the next few years. I have intentionally not made a specific plan for retirement because I want to savor all the options and possibilities of what I can do in this “second half of life,” as Richard Rohr calls it.

While my daughter prepares to create and define herself, I am preparing to recreate and refine myself. I look forward to exploring more avenues of service and creative expression I could not do while working and parenting full-time. I embrace stepping out into whatever God calls me next, and I am at peace knowing that the plan will unfold in God’s time.

**Prayer:** Dear God, thank you for the example of renewal through Jesus’s life, death, and resurrection. Help us keep our eyes open to new beginnings during all the phases of our lives. In Christ, we pray. Amen.

*Melissa Dameron-Vines | Hoover, AL*

Tuesday, March 11

## Newness of Life

**Scripture:** Psalm 40:1-3

We often think of newness as something made more beautiful, more desirable. One surviving an illness may say, “I feel like a new person!” Or, after shining up corroded metalware, one may say it sparkles like new!

However, newness of life is not always beautiful. An injury that causes a dramatically reduced ability to do things one once enjoyed is a new, unwelcome lifestyle. Financial ruin means a new way of life, in some instances even causing hunger and homelessness. Becoming incapacitated or disabled may cause extended separation from loved ones, an especially cruel new circumstance to be faced.

II Kings 24 relates the dreadful experience of people being taken away into captivity in Babylonia. There they lamented, “How can we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?” (Psalm 137) This may describe what one feels in life’s trying times. Yet we believe that though singing may be a past enjoyment, God can “put a new song in our mouth.” (Psalm 40)

Lent is sometimes called the season of the cross. The cross symbolizes Christ's sacrificial love. In real-time, though, it was a sign of shame, suffering, and death. The assurance of eternal life came on Easter. But Good Friday came first. And it wasn't pretty.

Though new things may sometimes be painful, God's unwavering love remains. "Thanks be to God who gives us the victory!"

**Prayer:** O God, for strength to endure tough times, we praise you. Amen.



*Hasbrouck Hughes | Williamsburg VA*

Wednesday, March 12

## Roses & Yesterday's Water

**Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Every morning, like clockwork, I get up, and before I change my mind, I make the bed. Somehow, this mundane act has morphed itself into a quirky spiritual practice. I have a quilt. It has two sides, one deep red antique roses, the other green with ornate gold swirls. My sleeping blanket rests at the foot of the bed with soft-colored patterns of wildflowers.

Each morning, based on how I feel in the moment, I fold the blankets showing sometimes more red, or more swirls, maybe all wildflowers. Scalloped edges or straight folds? The possible variations are endless. No color is better than the other, just different. Then I give a silent prayer of thanks for this bed, for holding my



dreams and for a peaceful rest. Then, I move on to the glass of water I put on the bedside table last night. I drink the last of it and pray thanks for yesterday, for its service, and then I let it be. Its work is done.

Slowly, I open the curtains and stand in the cream-white light, taking a deep, quiet breath of it; I close my eyes and see if I can feel that light alive inside of me. I look back at my bed, mostly roses and paisley today. I have no idea what it means, but I smile, knowing it will be interesting.

**Prayer:** Thank you, God, for being my traveling companion on this fresh new day. Amen.

*Leslie Sheehan-Entrekin | Lackawanna City, PA*

Thursday, March 13

## She Saw Well

**Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NRSV)

Iris was a member of a congregation I served. She'd lost her sight as she'd aged, but not her desire to be an active part of the congregation. And, certainly, not her faith.

A major motion picture, *The Prince of Egypt*, had been released. Church members were invited to meet at the church to view the animated feature about Moses and the Exodus.

Iris showed up. She arrived with a carload of friends. She had her white cane with her.

I was a young pastor then and was just starting to get used to being confronted with experiences I hadn't anticipated. I think the same thing may have been true for the ticket seller when Iris purchased her ticket.

One of the highlights of my life was walking into the theater with a woman with a white cane.

She gave the movie two thumbs up!

I marveled at the faith of a woman who knew the story of Moses well enough that she didn't have to see it to see it; a woman who taught me that we all tap our way

toward heaven with a faith that has not seen the kingdom with our eyes but with our hearts and souls.

**Prayer:** Holy God, forgive us when our anxious spirit wants to see before we will believe, rather than believe before faith is made sight. Give us a courageous faith that feels its way forward even in times of darkness. Amen.

*Norman Tippens | Hampton, VA*

Friday, March 14

## “Don’t You Care?”

**Scripture:** Mark 4:35-41

Who among us has not prayed “Increase my faith, Lord” or even “Help my unbelief”?

Scripture faithfully recounts not only the trusting healing faith of both a pagan Roman centurion and a foreign woman with a sick child, but also the doubts and fears of the disciples chosen by Jesus to be His apostles.

Like you, I have experienced times of doubt and questioning. Being a pastor or teacher does not preclude the possibility or likelihood of such an honest confession. Yet, in spite of these or because of these, I have been given multiple moments of insight and encouragement, and yes, I have even experienced wonders beyond my limited reason to fathom.

Thankfully, I am surrounded by a cloud of faithful witnesses, those of the distant past recorded in Scripture and church history, and those of my own personal life experiences. The revelation of God in His son Jesus is not merely a distant historical event but a continuing abiding presence in my heart, mind, body, and soul. His Spirit witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God, a fellow heir of the Kingdom, all by God’s unmerited grace and mercy.

This is true for hundreds of millions now in Glory. We are here today and will be for myriads yet to come. Thanks be to God!

**Prayer:** We thank you, Lord, that your grace is sufficient; your power is made perfect in our weakness, in Jesus’ name. Amen.

*William Nash Wade | Strasburg, VA*

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## Morning's Creation

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 31:31

I've always been an early riser, using my time for chores, school, or work. During the 2020 Pandemic, my perception changed. After morning devotions, I journal in front of a window. I love to watch Creation!

A tiny bit of light seeps through the darkness above the tree line. The sky's lavender hue mixes with a soft gray. Minute by minute, the street becomes more visible. The contours of trees and bushes become noticeable. Oak and pine trees reach for the sky. Once a solid mass of shadows, separate clusters of leaves are more distinct. With my pen in the air, I can trace their outer edges. Curves drift up and down, in and out. Their silhouettes mimic hills and mountains. A simple breeze leads the highest branches in a dance. Light softly beams its way through the woods. Birds sing. Squirrels scurry around. To be part of God's Creation is an amazing feeling!

The prophet Jeremiah reminded the Exiles their "day" was coming. Three thousand years later, God still provides. Every morning, we are blessed with the gift of a new day. What we do and how we use our time is our decision.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Creator, thank you for each glorious morning. Remind us to who we are. Show us how to serve you and others each day. Amen.

*Kelly Descler-Estes | Glen Allen, VA*

## The Bluest Skies

**Scripture:** John 6:16-21

Having lived a good part of my life on the coastal plain of South Carolina, I am highly aware of hurricanes. When they are coming, we talk about them like unwanted relatives coming for a visit. When they are gone, we speak of making it through. Names like Hugo, Hazel, Florence, Debby, Charley, Fran, and Zeta are known to us all. The wind and the water often do significant damage, so we learn to board up our windows and sometimes head for higher ground. Afterward, everyone helps everyone else in the recovery. One thing that always amazes us is the

day after the storm passes, we have the bluest skies we ever see. We come out from storm-tossed homes, see trees on the ground all around, and have no electricity. But we all stand for a while, looking at the bluest skies.

Storms come to all our lives. Winds blow, water rises, and we wonder if we will make it. We call out to God for strength, and somehow, Jesus comes to us in the storm. And though the ground may be torn apart the next morning, we look up and see the bluest skies. And somehow, God gives us hope.

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, thank you for coming to us in the storms at night and for giving us the bluest skies the next day. Amen.

*Michael Henderson | Florence, SC*

Monday, March 17

## The Dawn of a New Day

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 29:11

My new day dawning began during a contentious divorce. Abandonment, loss of income, home, and all earthly security resulted in the end of life as I had known it. I realized I had to completely turn my life over to God to survive this. God's answer was for me to go to college, earn a degree, and start a new career and a new life.

I was obedient, and after four and a half years as a full-time student working up to five part-time jobs concurrently, I graduated. Those were difficult and exhausting times, but God provided hope as well as miracles in the form of food, money, and opportunities to renew and encourage me constantly. One opportunity was my Pell Grant job in both college bookstores, where I had the chance to find used textbooks at reduced prices.

Other opportunities were two May Session scholarships and three Fall and Spring scholarships, which paid for all five semesters and sometimes with money left over to buy textbooks. Some of these opportunities were witnessed by others who were amazed at God's presence in my life.

**Prayer:** Thank you, Lord, for the dawn of every new day. Amen.

*Carolyn Purdy | Harrisonburg, VA*

Tuesday, March 18

## The Presence of the Unseen Is Real

**Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

This scripture gave me great comfort and hope when I learned I would need open heart surgery the Monday after Thanksgiving of 2011. The surgery and recovery went well. By the end of January, I was back in the pulpit, and I began to live life in a new way and with a greater purpose of service to my Lord.

Now, in 2024, a rough cough took me to the ER. They discovered I had a spot on my lung. After a month, it was established I had advanced cancer. I cannot explain why, through the heart surgery and now the advanced cancer, I have felt little fear, though the future seems most uncertain.

That said, by the grace of God, the cancer cells in my body are non-small and have a rare gene variation that permits me to forego chemotherapy and radiation and be treated by a targeted drug that inhibits these particular cells. I am not cured, but I have the potential of some good years yet in the service of my Lord.

I am thankful that I have peace, and my eyes remain firmly on what cannot be seen. And though my hope is on the unseen, my Lord has already shown me his presence in remarkable ways.

**Prayer:** Gracious God, your mercy and love are greater than I can imagine. Thank you for the years I have yet to serve you even into eternity. Amen.

*Andy Brock      Reliance, VA*

Wednesday, March 19

## There Will Be a New Day Dawning!

**Scripture:** Galatians 3:26-29

Today, I made a promise to myself to stay off the news feeds and social media. There is so much bad news in the world, and the news has a way of getting me down. However, Lent reminds us again of the good news Jesus brought to the world two thousand years ago, news we can still count on to lift us up. Jesus died on the cross so that we might have eternal life, a life far removed from our days here. I am so grateful to be alive at my age, and I give thanks for every day, as well as the joy and wonder each day brings.

Yet, we cannot ignore the pain and suffering in this world. I envision a new day dawning in eternity where Paul's words to the Ephesians come to fruition. I see a day where we are truly all one in Christ, overcoming our differences in race, economic standing, and gender. I also take comfort in Revelation 21:1-4, "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth...." I recently found Matt Redman's song, Better is One Day, based on Psalm 84. During this Lenten season, I invite you to listen to his song and re-read the Psalm it is based on. One day, I believe a new day will dawn where we will all meet together in the house of the Lord!

**Prayer:** Father, God, we yearn to be with you in your house, singing your praises! Amen.

*Bob Brooks | Pine Knoll Shores, NC*

Thursday, March 20

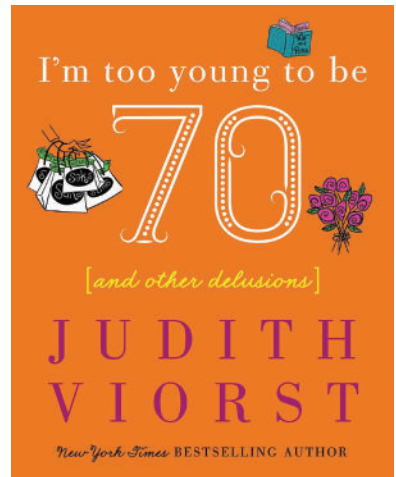
## Too Young To Be Seventy

**Scripture:** John 3:1-10

Earlier this year, I turned 70 years old. I have on my bookshelf a signed copy of Judith Viorst's book, *Too Young to Be Seventy and Other Delusions*. It has inspired me as I have entered this eighth decade of life.

It also reminds me of Nicodemus, who said to Jesus during a nighttime visit, "How can anyone be born after having grown old?" Jesus' response was telling: "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of Water and Spirit." Jesus was giving Nicodemus the opportunity to be born twice. The first time, he was young chronologically. The second would be the opportunity to be young spiritually.

Jesus' wise counsel has given me new vision as well at this stage of life. I have knowledge, wisdom, and talents God has given me for living in God's Kingdom and doing God's work of caring for my neighbor, especially children who go to bed hungry at night.



Recently, I participated in a food packing event in my town. Folks from 21 local churches and a group of teenagers from our high school packaged 35,000 meals in less than two hours. What an inspiration! What a joy! It is what Jesus has called us to do, whether we are 7 or 70 years old! We are planning to do it again next year. With the strength and vitality of the Lord, I'll be there!

**Prayer:** Come, Holy Spirit, work within me. Help me to use wisely the time you have given me to serve others with hands, heart, and voice. Amen.

*Bill Jones | Waynesboro, VA*

Friday, March 21

## Walking Through Our Struggles

**Scripture:** Isaiah 43:1-2

Wouldn't it be fantastic if every day when we awakened, we'd jump out of bed and joyfully proclaim, "This is the day the Lord has made! Woo hoo! Let's go!" But what about those days when even the prospect of getting out of bed is daunting, engulfing us with fear, dread, or sorrow? When we open our eyes first thing in the morning and feel utterly alone. Abandoned. Not having the energy to lift the covers, put our feet on the floor, and start our day. Not knowing how we're going to be able to face whatever problem or person or peril is causing us to feel overwhelmed and defeated before we even leave our bedroom.

Struggles either can consume us ... or they can force us to grow stronger and the roots of our faith to sink deeper. That's not saying losses, setbacks, reversals, challenges, disappointments, and betrayals (the list goes on and on) are endured easily. They're painful, often unbearably so. But we are not alone: As Isaiah wrote, the Lord our God, who knows us by name, has promised He will see us "through" whatever struggles we're experiencing: through the waters of grief or despair, through the rivers of nonstop problems, and through the fires of trials and tribulations.

Claim it. Cling to it. Believe it!

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, thank you for your promise that you are with us always, through every moment of every day, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

*Wendy Wilson | Washington, D.C.*



Saturday, March 22

## A New Day Dawns

Scripture: Romans 5:3-5

Thirty years ago, I suffered through a painful divorce. It has been a long and interesting journey. I do not thank God for my divorce, but I do thank God for the many blessings that followed. I earned three graduate degrees as I am a compulsive student. A second marriage brought me a much better husband and two adopted Korean daughters. More challenges and struggles followed. Within a four-month span, my home was destroyed by fire, my husband was diagnosed with bile duct cancer, and the next day was our youngest daughter's wedding. Sadly, my husband passed in 2014.

St. Paul tells us that suffering produces endurance – and endure we did through 18 months of cancer surgery and chemotherapy. Paul says endurance produces character. I am not sure about that, but my sense of humor has often made folks say, “She’s quite a character”! (I am certain that is not what Paul had in mind.) Then, character produces hope. In the midst of the challenges and changes, we often hope things will get better. Sometimes they don’t seem to. However, the end of this passage in Romans is what sustains us: “Because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.” Through thick and thin, in triumph and in tragedy, God’s light shines in the darkness.

Out of the darkness shines a new marriage now. An unexpected gift, my new husband is a committed Christian, and we are convinced God had a hand in our unlikely meeting! A new day has dawned! Thanks be to God!

**Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, may we always look for a new day, dawn shining in the darkness, and rejoice in your awesome gifts! Amen.

*Kathleen Price | Williamsburg, VA*

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## What's New?

**Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 5:17

What's new? This question seems to conflict with Ecclesiastes 1:9: "There's nothing new under the sun." It does seem there's nothing new. The same old sins, The same old mistakes, The same doubts and excuses.

However, the Bible is all about new beginnings. Genesis opens with telling of a new creation. Later, it recounts Abraham's call to a new life in a new place. Then, in Exodus, we learn of an enslaved people receiving a new life, free from bondage. In 2 Corinthians 5:17, Paul affirms that if anyone is in Christ, the old has passed away, and everything has become new!

What's new? Plenty!

Every day we may find new opportunities to help others. Our son and his wife were taking an early morning walk and saw smoke coming from a house. They alerted the sleeping residents. Soon, a family with children was safely outside, and the fire department came. All was well. Opportunities to help arise unexpectedly. A stranger appeared at our Sunday School class. No one knew him, but they knew when somebody needed a friend: a new opportunity to serve. A woman in the grocery checkout line noticed the person ahead lacked the funds to pay for her order. She told the clerk to put it on her credit card: an unexpected opportunity to serve. What's new? Plenty!

**Prayer:** God, when opportunities to serve arise, give us hearts to help others. Amen.

*Hasbrouck Hughes | Williamsburg, VA*

## A Bright New Day

**Scripture:** Lamentations 3:22-23

The sunrise peeked through my bedroom window in the old farmhouse. I opened my eyes ready to experience a spectacular day at Grandpa and Grandma's! What joys would await me? The old rooster was crowing, and the hens were contentedly

scratching for tasty tidbits outside the old red hen house. Grandma had a delicious breakfast ready for me, and the swing hanging from the box elder tree in the yard beckoned to me. Perhaps I would find some baby kittens in the barn, get to watch Grandpa milk the cows, play in the haymow with my cousins, or explore Grandma's beautiful flower garden with her. What a wonderful new day I could look forward to at Grandpa and Grandma's!

Just as I could look forward to the gift of a wonderful new day at Grandpa and Grandma's, those who follow Christ can also look forward to a beautiful new day. The old has passed away. Christ has washed our slate clean, and we can begin anew, walking with him. What a wonderful, blessed walk we can look forward to because of his great love!

**Prayer:** Lord, thank you that we can look forward to each new day, guided and blessed by you! Amen.

*Joanne Singrey-Johnson | Watertown, SD*

Tuesday, March 25

## A Living Faith

**Scripture:** James 2:20

From the beginning of my walk with the Lord, I was taught my faith was more than just an open confession of accepting Jesus as my Lord and Savior. It was also a way of living I would express every day and in every way. This was modeled by my mother.

Accepting Jesus as my Lord and Savior and being baptized as an open expression of my faith were foundational aspects of my journey as a follower of Christ. However, the life-changing profundity of my belief and faith unfolds every day the Lord blessed me with.

I prayed then, and now, without ceasing, I demonstrate my faith by what I say and congruently by what I do. Am I giving, kind and loving, and does my believing prompt me to walk out my faith in such a way that piques the interest of others I encounter?

I adhere to loving the Lord with all my heart, soul, and mind, and I also strive to love my neighbor as myself. I continue to be blessed as I demonstrate my faith!



**Prayer:** Father God thank you for the blessing of a working faith. Strengthen our belief in you to be a light and do your will. In the matchless name of Jesus, we pray. Amen!

*Tracy Porter | Pasadena, CA*

Wednesday, March 26

## A New Thing

**Scripture:** Isaiah 43:19

My denomination has gone through a storm of change lately: COVID-19, a schism, political unrest, financial difficulties, etc. Sometimes, when we see things changing, we try to hold onto

how they were or revert to the past. But the past is like the sand in an hourglass: you can't put it back in the bottle.

Appointed to a church in the middle of the pandemic, all of the above factors were detrimental to the church. It's hard to connect with each other when you can't actually get together, and masks are not the best conduit for reading expressions! (Separation and masks were important to everyone's safety, though.) It was a hard

time in our lives, and some of us even lost loved ones because of the virus. It was not easy to keep our collective chins up, was it?

Still, I found at church if we focused on God, we found hope for the future, even if we couldn't see past the tough times. Our church leadership saw a new thing happening by looking toward two things: remembering how God had worked through hard things in our lives before and praying that God would show us a hope and a future that we could believe in.

**Prayer:** Holy God, in the midst of things we can't understand and things that cause us hurt, help us to remember your goodness and faithfulness so that we may trust the new thing you have planned. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

*Jacob Sahms | Chesterfield, VA*

Thursday, March 27

## In This Light is God

**Scripture:** Lamentations 3:22-23

Artists' depictions of looking out from the darkness of the empty rock tomb to the light of a new day capture the first gasp of the enormity of the moment. Jesus is not there. Such paintings capture the moment when the heart realizes things are different. For me, this moment encapsulates the instant when I discovered I no longer must linger in the state I thought would last forever.

It is as if I was looking out of the tomb of the darkness of depression into the Light of hope. The first rays of the dawn had broken through. It is as if I was looking out from the cold depths of anxiety into the warmth of Mercy's embrace.

The early disciples must have felt every emotion upon seeing the empty tomb. Mary, in despair, then hearing her name spoken, went dashing off filled with joy to proclaim that death had not claimed her Beloved. How enormous the realization that the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases! It is new every morning. A new day dawns, and this light is God. In this early awakening is the promise of hope for all eternity. May I never stop pausing, taking it in, with a grateful heart.

**Prayer:** Touch every soul with the light of your presence. Enter every heart, no matter the darkness, and soothe any fear with the brightness of your eternal glory. Amen.

*Nancy Severin | Fort Morgan, CO*

Friday, March 28

## A Reason for Praise

**Scripture:** Psalm 63:1-3

Because my mobility has become limited, I can no longer do what I used to, including work that I loved. However, I have learned to reflect on the day's blessings, thanking God at bedtime. This has become my sanctuary. I'm often amazed not only by the blessings received but also by God's unfailing grace and love. Even more, I am renewed for another day—a day filled with hope. In other words, as the light of each day dawns, I know I will have the strength to carry on. This is daily resurrection, all because Christ Jesus made Resurrection and Life Eternal possible.

**Prayer:** Good and gracious God, see me through the night into the brightness of dawn, that I might always praise you. In Christ Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Chris Suerdieck | Emmitsburg, MD*

Saturday, March 29

## I Believe in Jesus,

**Scripture:** John 15:9

I was one of six kids living with a single mom. We were poor, supported by welfare. Mom's addictions absorbed most of the welfare check, leaving little for food. I was a dirty little kid needing care and nurture. I was 7 when I had my first experience of believing.

Word got out in the neighborhood about the "welfare kids." A friendly neighbor stopped by and invited all of us to church. Not churchgoers, I was the only one that accepted her offer. (It helped I thought there might be snacks). I got myself up and dressed that morning. At church, no one seemed to notice my matted hair, dirty clothes, and holey shoes. Everyone was kind to me. I heard a bible story about Jesus and how much he loves me. The message came by way of a simple song, "Jesus Loves Me." It was easy to sing. I sang, "Little ones to him belong; they are weak, but he is strong." I still remember the feeling of happiness I had that morning.

The Holy Spirit touched my young heart that day. I felt different, and I believed Jesus' words were true. My life didn't get easier in years to come, but I felt safe, and my trust grew.





[EndHunger.org](https://EndHunger.org)



Society of St. Andrew  
GLEANING AMERICA'S FIELDS  
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## The Best Food to Those Who Need it Most

The Society of St. Andrew began in 1979 in the hills of Virginia and has grown into the largest field gleaning organization in the country. Working in a collaborative effort with thousands of farmers, tens of thousands of volunteers, and thousands of feeding programs in all 48 contiguous states, SoSA provides healthy food to those who have little or no access to it.

This nutritious, but excess, bounty is sent directly from the point of surplus (field or packing facility) to food banks or feeding programs that will share it directly with people in greatest need. The Society of St. Andrew's remarkable and efficient programs have proven extremely successful at providing nutritious food to those who need it most.

Your gifts make this possible!

### **2023 STATISTICS**

**Over 24 million pounds of  
nourishing food shared**

**2,005 recipient feeding  
organizations served**

**929 generous farmers who  
shared their harvest**

**Less than 5c per serving**



We all have opportunities to share the Good News of Jesus. Words of invitation bring hope and change lives!

**Prayer:** Father, in this Lenten season, help us share the story of Jesus with those who need you. Amen.

*Deb Broadwater | Moneta, VA*

Sunday March 30

## Out of the Darkness

**Scripture:** Luke 1:78-79

“A new day will dawn on us from above because our God is loving and merciful. He will give light to those who live in the dark and in death’s shadow. He will guide us into the way of peace.” Luke 1:78-79

As I pondered the theme of this devotional and read this scripture, the following poem by Laura Hughes came to mind.

A new day will always dawn, bringing a new beginning.  
Life will forever go on, whether losing or winning.  
With hope, we can face the day, no matter what it may bring.  
Our faith keeps the dark at bay, and can help our soul to sing.  
We all can lose many things, in this so called life of ours.  
But focus on what it brings, and not on what it devours.  
Even if you are in doubt, you must not give up the fight.  
Because winning in this bout, may take up all of your might.

–A New Day Dawns by Laura Hughes

I work at a pediatric research center, and each day is a study in faith as families face cancer diagnosis and treatment of their children. For me, it is an opportunity

to help and explore the skills, knowledge, and information I can bring to help the next day dawn with hope. I ask you, what gifts has God given you that can bring another hope?

**Prayer:** Lord, open my ears to your call, my heart to your will, and help me bring hope to others. Amen.

*Kimberly Kertis | Memphis, TN*

Monday, March 31

## Deer!

**Scripture:** Psalm 42

Anxiety and worry were wrapped around my heart and mind that morning as I started down the long, winding driveway. It was soon after first light, and I was on my way to the hospital to relieve my sister so she could go home, have a shower, and a nap. She had spent the night beside our mother's bed while I was at Mama's house caring for her aging dog, Kirah, and fielding calls from family and friends about prognosis and treatment.

Overnight, the sounds and movements of the creaky old house and the anxious dog, unable to climb the stairs to the bedroom any longer, had disrupted my already fitful sleep. It seemed all my "what if and when that" concerns about the next few months had worked their way into unsettling dreams. I wasn't much more rested when I awoke than when I fell asleep. Now, fortified by coffee and breakfast, I headed back to the hospital.

Surprisingly, there were deer grazing just at the edge of the woods! In all my years of growing up in that house and coming home for over two decades, I had never seen deer on the property. But there they were! Feeding! What a gift! It was, for me, a sure sign of God's presence, peace, and hope in a troubling season.

## *Daily Advent Devotions* **Embrace Joy**

**Advent Begins November 30, 2025**

Seeking devotion writers for Advent devotionals.  
Please email [church@endhunger.org](mailto:church@endhunger.org) with interest.

**Prayer:** Gracious God, our hope in you sustains us. Help us to bear witness in loving deeds to the renewed hope you offer us each day through Christ resurrected. Amen.

*Kathleen Overby Webster | McGaheysville, VA*

Tuesday, April 1

## Each New Day

**Scripture:** Lamentations 3:22-23

My favorite time of the day is early morning. I love the prospect of a blank slate with what the new day will bring. As I awaken, I thank God for a night of rest and also thank Him for the day ahead. “His mercies are new every morning” often comes to my mind from Lamentations.

I especially enjoy early mornings at the beach.

At the beach, we always have a porch that overlooks the Atlantic Ocean, and I can watch the sunrise and a new day beginning. I will read my morning devotional and pray, but mostly, I just enjoy the beauty of my surroundings. The vastness of the ocean and the multi-colored sky never fail to amaze me. ‘My God, how great Thou art!’

As the other early risers begin to walk on the beach, I might see people walking their dogs or workers preparing the beach for a busy day. Once, I saw a group of military recruits jogging in cadence. These are all people God has put there. What if I prayed for each one? How much better their day might be!

As a part of my routine, I ask God to guide my feet to travel the path He needs me to go and guide my hands to do His will. Each day is an opportunity to reach out to others in Jesus’ name. Let’s not forget to look for simple things we can do to spread Jesus’ love daily.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, thank you for each new day you give me. Allow me to use each day as you wish to share the love of Jesus, in whose name, we pray. Amen.

*Linda M. Mays | Appomattox, VA*

Wednesday, April 2

## God's Plan for Us

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 29:11

As we become aware of God's perfect plan for us, it's like a new day is dawning...

I am blessed to see an example of this occur each month as I teach a Financial Planning & Budgeting class on the women's campus of a Christian addiction recovery center. Near the end of their 90-day program, I get to share a class I developed years ago.

As the women prepare to re-enter the real world once again, the financial planning and budgeting topics covered answer many of the questions they have as they move forward. As graduation nears, each woman often gets a glimpse of God's plan for her life, a plan that will use her and her experiences to share God's love with others.

Each woman becomes aware of what seems like a new day dawning. In the class, we discuss financial net worth, but I also talk about each of them having "personal net worth" that God already factored into His plan for them and their lives.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, thank you for loving us and for guiding us as you reveal your plan for our lives that will cause us to marvel as our New Day Dawns. In your precious name, we pray. Amen.

*Denny Engle | Gautier, MS*

Thursday April 3

## I Have Set My Face Like Flint

**Scripture:** Luke 9: 51-56

The hearing aid specialist excitedly demonstrated a new feature of what I was about to buy. Their product doesn't amplify all the sound around you but rather focuses on clarifying the sound that is coming from the direction in which you are looking. So, the position of my head determined the focus of the sound. Seems pretty basic whether we are talking about either hearing or seeing.

Setting our face in a specific way focuses not only our physical senses, but also our direction and resolve. In the third servant song of Isaiah, the prophet knows there are adversaries ahead who will object to his faithful words about God. So the

prophet persists, setting his “face like flint,” for God is with him. Picking up on this image, Luke records Jesus’ intentionality, saying that Jesus “set his face to go to Jerusalem” to embrace all that awaited him there.

The season of Lent challenges believers to fix our eyes on Jesus as God’s Messiah, God’s New Day for us. Countless times in ministry, my hearing would be a cacophony, my sight a split-screen of conflicting priorities. Countless times, the Word saves us, bringing us back to see and hear the Way, Truth, and Life of Jesus. As Jesus set his face and kept his resolve, so must we.

**Prayer:** Loving God, guide us through these Lenten days. Help us to see in Jesus the Way forward in faithfulness. Amen.

*Jay M. Hanke | Annapolis, MD*

Friday, April 4

## I See! I See!

**Scripture:** Psalm 27:13-14 (NRSV)

One summer evening, our family left the city’s lights behind as we drove into the country for the annual county fair. As we rounded a curve in the road, the lights of the carnival attractions were suddenly visible, glowing brightly in the dusk sky. I was enchanted! Clapping my hands, I leaned forward in my car seat (the kind that hooked over the front bench seat and had a toy steering wheel attached to it) and excitedly squealed, “I see! I see!” My mother loved to tell that story! I feel like I remember all the details even though I was so young.

“I see! I see!” has become my familiar shorthand to look, pay attention, something amazing is up ahead. A shorthand that echoes the psalmist: “I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.” I go back and forth: is it true that seeing is believing, or does believing allow us to see clearly? Scripture validates both in context. Jesus invited new disciples to come and see (John 1:39) and celebrated those who “Don’t see, yet believe” (John 20:29). Both seeing and believing allow me to attend to God’s good work of caring and sharing in a fragmented and hungry world.

**Prayer:** Glorious God, whether seeing allows us to believe or believing allows us to see, help us to always trust your constant good work in our hurting world. We pray in Christ, the bright morning star and our eternal hope. Amen.

*Kathleen Overby Webster | McGeheysville, VA*

Saturday, April 5

## You Are What You Eat

**Scripture:** Luke 4:3-4

“You are what you eat,” someone once said. If that is the case, I must be a popular fast-food sandwich because, over the years, I’ve eaten too many to count! You could say I was even tempted to wolf down two hamburger patties separated by three buns with shredded lettuce, a slice of cheese, dill pickles, finely chopped onions, and special sauce!



Jesus was tempted too in the wilderness to turn a stone into a loaf of bread. He had gone 40 days without eating, and he was famished. But he learned, as I did, that one needs more than a loaf of bread to abate hunger. We also need the Word of God which will sustain us in the times we are wasting away. Physical hunger will return, but spiritual hunger can only be satisfied by the One who speaks to us through the Holy Spirit so we are renewed during each new day dawning.

**Prayer:** Good and loving God, who renews us by your Word, help us to rely on your holy food to satisfy us even when we are in the wilderness as our Redeemer was. In Christ Jesus, we pray. Amen.

*Chris Suerdieck | Emmitsburg, MD*

Sunday, April 6

## Never Be Discouraged

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 31:8

Life can be overwhelming. Sometimes, it is overwhelmingly good; and then there are times it feels like you are a hamster on a wheel that just won't quit. Most of us have pretty full days with work, family, home, community activities, and church; being overscheduled is now normal. Even kids have to keep Google calendars to keep up with it all.

One of my friends gets very frustrated with God because they believe that “he just sends trials my way.” If you believe that God is sitting up there doling out gifts and obstacles, well, that doesn't seem very loving, does it?



I try to embrace that life happens, and how I deal with it is influenced by my relationship to the loving God that scripture promises will not fail or abandon me. Some years ago I lost a job that I loved. I was shaken, felt like I had lost my identity, and didn't know what was next. Praise the Lord, I was surrounded by supportive friends and family and was reminded that I was not alone.

Does this mean that I always default to that God-trusting place and don't lose courage? Nope. Still very much human. But I'll keep trying!

**Prayer:** Lord, help me to be aware of your presence during both joys and challenges. Thank you for being with me, whether I'm aware or not. Amen.

*Jack Kincaid | Alberta, Canada*

Monday, April 7

## Don't Look Too Hard—Have Faith

**Scripture:** John 1:16-18

In times of stress, I occasionally pause and almost zone out for a few moments. If I get a feeling of being overwhelmed, it helps just to stare outside. I'm sure people think I'm wistfully looking out at the beautiful day. In reality, I see nothing: I'm just trying to calm my mind. I am actually trying to see something, nothing definable. Maybe I'm trying to see a sign from God, but nothing has presented itself yet.

For years, I have tried to see or solve those Magic Eye puzzles, where objects or words are obscured by multicolored dots. You'd think that my experience staring into space and looking through everything in my line of sight would be beneficial and help to see whatever is hidden in these complex drawings. That is not the case. I can never see the flower, unicorn, shark, or whatever is lurking in the optical illusion. I know it's there, but still, it eludes me.

I liken this to looking for God. While I know God is there, I see no physical embodiment, but I know that the presence is indeed, there. After all, God is everywhere, and when I really stop and think about it, that's enough for me. I have faith.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, help us to be patient when we look for you and to understand that you are always there in everything we see and feel every day. Help us to learn from what we see and what we don't see but know is there. Amen.

*Kathi Wise | McLean, VA*

## A New Day Dawning

**Scripture:** Revelation 21:3-4

“When we all get to heaven, what a day of rejoicing that will be!” the hymn declares. When I was young, the thought of eternal life (eternal anything) was more frightening than comforting. Even a party that never ends was an overwhelming concept. When one of the writing prompts for this devotion was, “What is your vision of a new day dawning in eternity?” I recalled how panicked I felt whenever Rev. Hardy would preach that to my teenage self.

I’ve come to embrace the words from Revelation, especially the phrasing from Eugene Peterson’s *The Message* that God has moved into the neighborhood and is making his home with men and women. That is a vision I can embrace!

Someone asked me once what I thought heaven would be like. I said that with eternity, I’d have a chance to have dinner with any combination of people I could imagine. I’m looking forward to sitting down with Maya Angelou, my great-grandmother, Robin Williams, and Jesus in a neighborhood with no sorrow, pain, or tears. What a day of rejoicing that will be!

**Prayer:** Father God, thank you for the promise of eternity and for faithfully standing with us in this life, too. Amen.

*Chris Howell | Madison Heights, VA*

## How to Pray

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:7, Matthew 6:9-13

How many times have you passed up a request to pray? There are a lot of reasons why many of us decline the chance to pray.

I don’t know what to say. I’m embarrassed. I’m not eloquent. I’m not nearly as good as [insert name of favorite Bible teacher or preacher or confident Christian friend.]

I’ve got so many things on my mind. I’m rushing from the minute I wake up until I fall asleep. I don’t want to bother God with the small stuff. I don’t want to bore/annoy/anger/grieve Him.



Google How to Pray and there are thousands of hits giving instructions, tips, the order of what we should talk about, etc., etc., etc. It's intimidating! Who wants to talk to God Almighty and get it all wrong?

So...we put it off, telling ourselves we'll pray when the time is right or when we have time to really pray a "good" prayer, forgetting that the model prayer Jesus taught us has only 70 words.

Prayer is a heart-to-heart talk with our dearest friend in the world. A shared thought while sipping our first cup of coffee; an observation made while we're on our way to work. A concern. A fear. A hope. A triumph.

It's just us talking to Him. He is always listening.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, it's truly a privilege to carry everything in our hearts and minds to you in prayer. I have to say thank you for always listening. Amen.

*Wendy Wilson | Salisbury, NC*

Thursday, April 10

## Sunrise, Sunset, Son-rise

**Scripture:** Revelation 22:5-6 NIV

The summer I turned fifteen, my father was transferred from Texas to the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. My parents planned to depart at dawn from the seaside motel where we had spent our last few days in Corpus Christi. I disliked rising so early, but I woke on time and dutifully hauled my suitcase outside just as the horizon blossomed into a delicate pink rose opening over the Gulf of Mexico.

"What a beautiful sunset!" I exclaimed. My dad laughed from under the hatch of our station wagon, where he was loading luggage. "I realize you've not seen many of those," Dad said. "But we call that a sunrise." My family teased me about the "dawning sunset" all the way to the East Coast!

Every year of our lives, we have 730 chances, weather permitting, to watch the sun rise or set. But as Christians, we know that when the sunshine falls over our faces for the last time, we will wake to see an unimaginably glorious sunrise—the shining Son of God. Popular lyrics written for Taps, the stirring bugle call played at the funerals of veterans, say it simply:

Day is done.

Gone the sun

From the hills, from the lake, from the sky.

All is well. Safely rest.

God is nigh.

And He will be—our bright Morning Star and Savior!

**Prayer:** Lord, we look forward to the day when there is no night, and you are all the light we need. Thank you for the promise. Amen.

*Andi Lehman | Hernando, MS*

Friday, April 11

## Cloudy Days are Good Days Too

**Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Paul's letter to the Corinthians has taken on new meaning to me, along with most of my older family members and friends, as we've aged. Almost all of us are experiencing health problems and the effects of aging. Accepting the realization our physical bodies aren't what they used to be makes Paul's words even more relevant to us. Looking inward and allowing God to renew us each new day is comforting, especially for those living in constant pain and/or debilitating diseases now. Though our bodies may fail us, God's love does not and continues to give us the needed strength and hope we seek.

Recently, I found myself looking forward to my simple daily task of opening the blinds around the house. Being fortunate to have clear views of the sunrise from my windows, seeing the bright sun in the eastern sky brings a peaceful feeling to me.

I'm reminded of God's radiance, eternally with us, which certainly sets my thoughts on a positive, hopeful path. However, cloudy mornings can still bring strength and renewal to us, too. Even though we don't see the sun from behind the clouds, we know the sun and God are still there, in full glory.

**Prayer:** Lord of all, this Lenten season, may we turn our thoughts from the momentary troubles in our lives and focus on the sacrifices of Jesus for us and that miraculous first Easter morning. May we find wisdom, strength, and hope from the eternal promises Christ gave us. Amen.

*Julie Erickson | Olathe, KS*

Saturday, April 12

## Do You Like Rainbows?

**Scripture:** Genesis 9:13

My wife loves rainbows. We were sitting in a restaurant in Sanford, N.C., one day when she saw half of a rainbow. She jumped up to get a better look but was disappointed when she couldn't see the whole rainbow. When we left the restaurant and were going to the car, to our surprise, she discovered the other half of the rainbow. This was amazing!

Can you imagine how Noah felt when he saw that first rainbow? It was more than refracted light. The first rainbow came with a promise from God. After the devastating flood, God assured Noah and all living creatures that "Never again would the waters become a flood to destroy all life." (Genesis 9:15)

We just experienced two terrible hurricanes, and over the years have witnessed other terrible weather phenomena. Still, the rainbow is a promise that God will never judge the earth with a worldwide flood. There may be individual personal losses and death, but God has promised us, with the rainbow, that He and His love will always be with us. Sunlight reflecting colors through water is a reminder of God's faithfulness through His covenant. The rainbow is our reminder of God's love for us, so we are encouraged to share it with others.

**Prayer:** Thank you, God, for your faithfulness. Help us reflect your glory to all those around us. Amen.

*Tommy Herndon | Glen Allen, VA*

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## What Will Today Bring?

**Scripture:** Genesis 1:1-13

What challenges are you facing today? My cup runs over with them. I recently moved to a large metropolitan city after living for nearly 15 years in a rural area of Appalachia. I am working through the steps to set up a new life. It all started with a job search and has progressed through setting up a new home, learning the culture of a new area, building a new circle of friends and creating new life patterns.

Now, I can watch daily sunsets, marvel at the sounds of the river running outside my window and take meditative walks along a greenway. I have gradually shifted from a state of fear and anxiety to reveling in the changes that are evolving.

During COVID, I fell away from the habit of attending church and nurturing my spiritual life. This unexpected life change has brought home to me just how much I miss my daily conversations with God. What have you forgotten? Is this a time to reassess and open your heart to change?

**Prayer:** Lord, what will today bring? May I have the strength to walk through this day with gracefulness, kindness, and openness to the opportunities placed before me? In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.

*Kimberly Kertis | Memphis, TN*

## Dawn on the Beach

**Scripture:** Lamentations 3:22-23

It was early. The sun wasn't even up yet on the beaches of Bethany Beach, Delaware, and yet we still decided to make our way. Sunrise on the beach: a dream, a plan never fulfilled, finally reaching fruition after years of saying, "Oh we'll go this year. Oh, we'll go this year." Finally, all of us were departing, and this was the year we were finally going.

We set out, a line of us, not single file or a clump, but somewhere in the middle. Walking on dark streets, not using our phones as flashlights even though it was dark enough that we could've. Taking extra care when crossing the street so we wouldn't get hit by cars in the early morning light. Sooner rather than later, we

found ourselves laying out blankets and sitting on them in the sand, watching the sunrise over the Atlantic Ocean.

It's a memory, seeing the new day dawn at one of my favorite places, and a reminder. That was the last summer we spent at my great-grandmother's house. I cherish every memory when I look back on it, but the lesson is as simple and as wonderful as my Gee Gee was herself. Every day is a chance for a new experience; every day is a chance to watch that sunrise. To enjoy the time with the people we have, and to make every day count.

**Prayer:** God, thank you for each new day that dawns. Amen.

*Lexi Darnell | Roanoke, VA*

Tuesday, April 15

## Turn Around!

**Scripture:** Acts 3:17-21

Recently, my wife, Maxine, and I drove from a doctor's appointment in Charlottesville, Virginia, to our home in Waynesboro. We were traveling west on the interstate when we read the electronic billboard instructing all traffic to exit because the road was closed ahead.

Because of a fire ahead, all traffic was diverted. For the next several miles, it was slow, bumper to bumper, until we got to a major intersection where we learned that now even the alternate route was closed. We were told to turn around and go back the way we came, with the understanding that the interstate was now open again.

As we passed, all the drivers were soon going to be given the same instructions. Maxine commented "Don't you just want to roll down the windows and tell them, 'Turn around! Go back!'" I added, "Repent! Repent!" It was a moment of humor in an otherwise despairing trip.

The message of Lent is to repent, to turn around and go in the other direction. Make a



180, we say. And is that not why we are in worship? Because we have repented and continue to repent as the Holy Spirit moves us? Is that not a message we wish to shout to a very confused and disordered world? “Repent! Turn around! The way you are going is not the way of God!”

**Prayer:** Gracious God, if we are going in the wrong direction, show us the way that leads to you. Amen.

*David A. Rash | Waynesboro, VA*

Wednesday, April 16

## Gracefully Adopted, Eternally Loved

**Scripture:** Lamentations 3:22-23

I was born in Nanjing, China and found in a little box at the base of a bridge in Tinglin Park. Someone exercising found me and brought me to a police station. I lived in an orphanage for 9 years, worked hard in school, helped around the orphanage, and loved my friends.

Everything changed May 24, 2007. I went from being Kun Xiao Ting to being Emmerson Lily Colasanto. I was blessed and adopted by a loving American family, came to America for the first time, and became a U.S. citizen. I was excited but nervous about this transition, leaving behind my friends, my language, my homeland, and the life I knew.

I was lost in China, but Jesus found me in America. I'm beyond grateful for my physical adoption, and eventually, I was adopted into God's eternal family. I received Jesus as my personal Savior when I was 13 years old. I recognized I was a sinner and needed Jesus to rescue me. He did so through His love on the cross. My testimony evolved from physical adoption to spiritual adoption. Throughout my life, His steadfast love never ceases, and His mercies are new every morning. I rejoice everyday knowing I am loved by my Creator.

Has there been a significant shift in your life; how did you see God's love through it?

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, thank you for the story that you are writing for my life. Help me not forget you are with me in every season. May I reflect your goodness and faithfulness today and always. In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.

*Emmerson Colasanto | Lynchburg, VA*



## Bigger Than a Breadbox

**Scripture:** Psalm 111:2

Have you ever seen a picture of Andromeda, the largest known galaxy? It's about 11" wide on my laptop. Not hard to grasp. Suppose you live on one edge of Andromeda and decide to visit the other side. You board a 747 and take off at 500 mph. Pack well because your trip will take 100 billion years!

We're talking about one galaxy...out of an estimated 150 billion. Meditate on infinity for a moment. No boundaries. No start; no finish. No edges. No radius, diameter, volume, or time. No limits. Can you conceive of any problem too tough for God to handle today?

If your Father operates without boundaries, and His Son promised to prepare a place for you, then won't it exceed our wildest imagination? Is there any chance of boredom there?

Satan attempts to deceive us with mediocre caricatures of Heaven. Sitting on a cloud...strumming a harp – yet another attempt to impede our desire for His grand paradise.

Jesus likened God's Kingdom to a pearl of great price, for which we should be willing to exchange all else. Peter commands us to set our hope fully on this reality to come.

The reality you see today is not ultimate reality any more than the chance of flying across Andromeda in your lifetime. However, your choices today will greatly affect your ultimate reality. Are you preparing for the dawning of that day?

**Prayer:** Lord, I believe you're great enough to trust in every circumstance today; I believe you're preparing a place for me beyond my wildest imaginations. Amen.

*Paul Moore | Forest, VA*

## Good Friday Darkness is Only the Beginning

**Scripture:** Revelation 22:5

Among the gifts we may receive in life are the multitude of resurrection moments, great and small, we experience. Someone receives a job offer after months of unemployment. A doctor shares a clean bill of health after years of difficult treatment. A long period of grief yields a first glimpse of joy and hope. Years of addiction end with the first uncertain steps into recovery. Conflict and isolation with a friend or family member are replaced by a long, loving hug and words of forgiveness.

I've been blessed by many such moments in my life, times when circumstances and even my own actions have driven me into a dark pit of despair. Despite my best efforts to remain there, God has always turned on a lamp and lifted me out. I can think of times when I couldn't imagine seeing anything other than the gloom surrounding me, but only now, years later, I see that gloom as a faint patch far behind me.

Resurrection moments arrive at different times for different people. If you haven't yet experienced one, don't be afraid. Your Easter morning will arrive!

**Prayer:** Gracious God, I give thanks for the many resurrection moments with which you bless my life. May I continue to see the wonder in moments when the sunrise of your joy, love, and grace breaks into the darkness of my journey, and remember that while the darkness of Good Friday feels overwhelming, the brightness of Easter morning will drive it away. Amen.

*Matt Rhodes | Lynchburg, VA*

## Your Secret Place

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:6

A former American First Lady was known for her poised public demeanor throughout her husband's political career. So it was a surprise when, during an interview with a New York Times reporter, she confessed that when she got upset, she would go into the bathroom and hold "long conversations" with herself, in the bathtub! It was her special, private place to express her feelings.



**Society of St. Andrew**  
GLEANNING AMERICA'S FIELDS  
FEEDING AMERICA'S HUNGRY

## How Can I Help?

### **GIVE AND SHARE HEALTHY FOOD**

[EndHunger.org/donate](https://EndHunger.org/donate)

- When you give, you offer health – and hope for a better tomorrow.
- It costs just 3 cents to share one serving of food.
- Every gift matters!



### **GET OUT AND VOLUNTEER**

[EndHunger.org/volunteer](https://EndHunger.org/volunteer)

- Contact SoSA to find out more about gleaning opportunities.
- Glean a variety of crops throughout the year!
- Great for individuals, church groups, civic organizations, and school groups!



### **LEARN MORE AND TELL OTHERS**

[EndHunger.org/signup](https://EndHunger.org/signup)

- Sign-up to receive a monthly newsletter via email.
- Sign up to receive a quarterly newsletter in the mail.



Jesus spoke of the importance of having a secret, private place where each of us could speak with our Heavenly Father. Accounts throughout the Gospels tell us He Himself did just that.

Wherever we choose to speak privately to the Lord, there is one constant: He will be there. Whether it's a prayer closet, a kitchen counter, a bench in a garden, or a fallen log in a park, He is always there, waiting for each of us, staying with us, inclining His ear to us as we speak to Him.

In your secret place, His door of grace is always open.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, it's awesome that you want to spend time with us in our secret place. Thank you not only for waiting for us but also for listening to us when we meet you there. Amen.

*Wendy Wilson | Washington, D. C.*

Easter Sunday, April 20

## Deconstruction to Reconstitution

**Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 4: 16-17

"You're in atrial fibrillation," said my internist reading my EKG. "That's a death sentence, isn't it?" I said. "No, it isn't. There are many more ways to treat it today," he said.

This recent existential encounter brought forward a moment of what I already intellectually knew: my body is breaking down. This is naturally depressing. Counteracting this, the apostle Paul exhorts us not to lose heart. The very deconstruction of our outer bodies is making way for the reconstitution of a new inner person for eternity. The redeemed in Christ live at the intersection of Adam's old, sinful age and Christ's new, creation age. God's marvel is using the destruction of our outer, material bodies to produce a new, inner creation, "an eternal weight of glory."

Take the case of the caterpillar becoming a butterfly. The caterpillar becomes a chrysalis. Inside the cocoon, the caterpillar's tissues disintegrate. Out of this soup, new features of an adult butterfly emerge. The caterpillar's very breakdown gives way to its beautiful transformation.

The very decaying bodies that weigh us down are far exceeded by the weight of God's glory. Though we are decomposing, we are being newly remade into the image of Christ. Our earthly tent gives way to a "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." "We know that when He appears, we will be like Him!"



**Prayer:** Dear Lord, when this old body weighs me down, help me look to the coming eternal weight of glory. In the Risen name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

*Tom Thomas | Forest, VA*





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## Preventing Waste, Feeding Hungry People

With your help, The Society of St. Andrew (SoSA) addresses this crucial issue in two ways. In each, SoSA gathers up food that would otherwise be wasted. This fresh and nutritious food is then provided, at no cost, to food banks, pantries, and programs to feed or provide food to those most in need.

SoSA distributes food donated from a variety of sources including farms, fields, orchards, packing houses, and grocers. This is accomplished through the coordination of thousands of volunteers and events, each year.

Volunteers serve in a variety of roles. This includes gleaning fields and orchards, delivering packaged produce to hunger relief agencies, and unloading and distributing truckloads of food directly into the local community. In 2023 alone, SoSA distributed more than 24 million pounds of good food to families who might otherwise have gone without.

Often the food is surplus, inconveniently-sized, or cosmetically imperfect. Sometimes, it's marketable but the farmer or grower wants to share it with the local community to address urgent needs.

# Society of St. Andrew

GLEANING AMERICA'S FIELDS ~ FEEDING AMERICA'S HUNGRY



Share nourishing food with people in the greatest need year-round by joining the 12 Baskets Monthly Giving Program. Your gifts will make a tremendous impact by faithfully sharing healthy food with our hungry neighbors throughout the year.

## Yes! Please sign me up for 12 Baskets

- \$12 per month will share 3,200 servings of healthy food each year, touching the lives of 460 hungry children, women, and men.
- \$24 per month will share 6,400 servings of healthy food each year, touching the lives of 920 hungry children, women, and men.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other monthly donation amount

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Sign up online at: [www.EndHunger.org/12-baskets](http://www.EndHunger.org/12-baskets) or through your authorization (below).

- I'd like to donate through an automatic withdrawal from my checking account. Please contact me to set this up.

- Charge my credit card monthly  VISA  MC  AmEx  Discover  
Account # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## **Hunger Relief Ministries of The Society of St. Andrew**

**Gleaning Network** — A hands-on mission program for all ages, getting healthy food directly from fields and markets to the hungry people who need it most. The Gleaning Network brings together farmers with excess produce, volunteers to glean (pick, dig, or gather) that produce, and agencies feeding the hungry. People in need glean alongside people with plenty in this community-based program, that engages individuals, congregations, and civic organizations in service.

**Potato & Produce Project** — A produce salvage program, providing direct food relief to our nation's poor, while addressing one of the major causes of hunger: food waste. The Potato & Produce Project salvages and distributes hundreds of tractor-trailer loads of fresh fruits and vegetables to food banks, soup kitchens, and other feeding agencies each year.

**The Seed Project** offers seed potatoes and seed packets to community gardens, inner city gardens, edible churchyards, church gardens, schools, and families in underserved areas to plant. The produce grown in these communities provides fresh, nutritious fruits and vegetables to people who need it most, free of charge.

**Harvest of Hope** — A hunger-focused work/study mission program. Participants glean and distribute produce remaining in fields after harvest each morning and learn about the realities of hunger each evening. Bible study and dynamic worship round out days of Christian community and service, providing a basis for on-going commitment to ending hunger. Harvest of Hope offers middle school, high school, and intergenerational events throughout the summer. Alternative College Spring Break programs also available.

**Each year, The Society of St. Andrew distributes 90–120 million servings of nourishing food to hungry people throughout the United States.**

**EndHunger.org**

The Society of St. Andrew, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, grassroots interfaith ministry, has been working toward a world without hunger since 1979.

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