*“For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall never be shaken.”*

Psalm 62:1-2

 I remember a conversation with my brother-in-law several years ago on the type of book we consider Psalms to be. He felt the majority of the chapters were of a negative connotation. I had to differ, though I also had to admit there are plenty of sad Psalms. I was determined, though, to show him just how many of David’s songs are more positive than not. Sure there is lamenting because let’s face it there is much to lament about in our lives. War, drugs, famine, natural disasters, poverty and death. We are hard pressed to find good in any single day especially if we let the media attack our every thought. It was same in Biblical times. Our hearts break as we watch hundreds die in a natural or manmade disaster. Tears flow for those who hurt and have lost their way. Every day people have to deal with kids being bullied, sibling rivalry, competitive work place, demanding bosses and insufficient time to be with those we love. And that is just the tip of the iceberg as they say. It is our job as Christians to be divine channels of comfort to all these people. It is not so much what we say but more what we do. Just being present can help: when we sit and listen, when we become a shoulder to cry on or when we follow up later with that person while the rest of the world moves on.

 Visiting with a young intern, who is working her way through school to become a Funeral Director, I found myself thinking about our similar vocations and yet how conversely different they can be. Yet we both try to console people in need and I know I always rely on the Holy Spirit to work through me. Because I am human I can only do so much and I will not always be at the top of my game. Sadly we are all fallible, and I think that is what keeps us from reaching out to someone who is struggling. Not just at the doorway of death, but the many hardships we each encounter throughout life. First there are the addicts – people hooked on any number of vices; from digital delights to alcohol to imbalance of work and family. Those with more serious unspoken pain seem to get the least amount of attention simply because we don’t know how to handle a one on one situation. We fear we do not know what to say or what to do. The answer of course is Jesus. Jesus is always the answer. Take your cue from the Bible, let the Word of God inspire you and lift you up so that you can be a comfort to someone else. Take care of your spiritual life so that others can benefit from your spiritual growth. We are all capable of doing this. Sarah Young in her devotional, Jesus Calling, writes Jesus enables us “not only to be feel comforted, but also to be a channel through whom He comforts others. Thus we are doubly blessed, because a living channel absorbs some of what flows through it” (p 303, Oct 16, 2017). Take a leap of faith today and reach out to that someone who needs the reassurance that we have a loving God who cares and comforts us in every way.

*“Praise be to the God and Father of our LORD Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.”* 2nd Corinthians 1:3-4

**Pastor Cheri**