



Take Note

Sabbatical Week 12 of 12
August 16, 2026

David Stasney, presiding
Lindsey Nickel, preaching

Psalm 67

May God be merciful to us and bless us,
show us the light of his countenance and come to us.

Let your ways be known upon earth,
your saving health among all nations.

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity and guide all the nations upon earth.

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

The earth has brought forth her increase;
may God, our own God, give us his blessing.

May God give us his blessing,
and may all the ends of the earth stand in awe of him.

Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

I ask, then, has God rejected his people?

By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew.

For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy.

For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

Matthew 15:21-28

Jesus went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly.

Sabbatical Reflection, Week 12

And then there was one week left. At some point next week, I'll start to make the transition back into the life and ministry of All Angels. Late next week I'll be setting up my office computer system (which has traveled with me this summer) and will be checking in to see how the summer has been for our church leaders and staff. Spiritually speaking, I will continue in the growth that has started within me during the sabbatical. Prior to the summer, spirituality was a daily, and at times, hourly, encounter assisting the schedule of a priest. Taking a break from that schedule has shown a different side of God.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. (Ps 46:1)

But what about God while on vacation?

What is the experience of God in retirement?

Without the daily pressure of ministry – when I know that God is my strength and refuge – where then is God?

I am happy to report that God is still very present. God-in-sabbatical has been a Trinity of wisdom dispenser, guide, and deep-question-asker. When I don't need daily help (which, of course, I always need God's help) and have set aside time to ponder and think, God is very much present. Here's the interesting thing: God is not more present or less present when on vacation or doing ministry. It's the same God, of course, who is very much present. But, like how a sunset changes from one moment to the next, the complexity and depth of God's presence changes when I am taking an intentional time to rest and read.

Jesus depended upon God's presence daily in His earthly ministry. The Gospels show a number of times when Jesus escapes ministry to spend time alone with God. I have a better understanding now of why Jesus did that. The experience of God while at rest is different than when involved in daily ministry. God is the same; but the encounter of God is different.

I had a very good boss at the insurance company. Tim was always present to help me with underwriting decisions and how to craft up communication strategies. Every Friday we went out to lunch with the rest of the unit. Tim-at-lunch is a different experience than Tim-at-work. Tim-at-lunch was interested in my life; like how Christi is doing, how home ownership was going, and if I am preparing funds for retirement. Tim-at-work was interested in my work-stuff. It's all Tim (he's the same guy) but my encounter with him was different. I had no idea how important those Friday lunches were but, as it turned out, they were equally important to the day-to-day managerial Tim experience.

If I had not taken a sabbatical, I would have missed out on the God-of-sabbatical – the One who asks deep questions, who guides me and encourages me to research and think harder about things. The One who is interested in my resting life as well as my ministry life. God is the same God but my encounter with Him changed. And this is perhaps the best gift of sabbatical: encountering God-at-rest and seeing that whether in ministry, or at rest, God is always my strength and my refuge.

Announcements

New to You Summer Art Sale, July 5- September 24th Supporting Turning Points in Bradenton
100% of the proceeds from our sale go to help people one step away from homelessness.
Please check out our donated Art Today!

Women's Discussion Group will meet again next Wednesday, August 19 at 10:15am.

Prayer List If you'd like a loved one to be on the list, please contact Maria or Linn. Please specify if it is for general prayers, for cancer treatment, or for hospice.

Coffee Hour Host One of the most important things we do is gather after the service for coffee hour. If you are interested in hosting, the sign up sheet is on the Gallery table. If you would like help, sign up and we will find someone to show you how it is done.

Birthdays & Anniversaries Please email Linn Torres at lt@allangelslbk.org with birthdays/anniversaries

Visit our Website at www.allangelslbk.org.

Servers

Lector- Barbara Lelewski

Prayers- Carol Erker

Ushers- Philip Deming, Linda Fletcher

Flowers- David Stasney

Counter- Philip Deming

Coffee hour- Reuben Fernandez

Altar flowers are given to the glory of God.