

Messiah Lutheran Church

www.wefoundmessiah.org

Email messiahluth500@bellsouth.net

500 Baytree Road

Valdosta, Georgia 31602

Pr. Richard Pieplow, MDiv.

Ministers: Every Member

Church Office: 244-0143

Pastor's Home: 244-2831



June 08, 2008

Proclaiming GRACE

God's Riches At Christ's Expense

Est. January 3, 1956

Though Jesus was a devout Jew who practiced his faith, he was criticized for eating with tax collectors and sinners—the religiously nonobservant. Jesus criticizes the self-righteous and reminds us that mercy is to be at the heart of our religious practices. God continues to be made known in those on the margins of society, like Matthew the tax collector and the hemorrhaging woman. As we gather each Lord's day we receive the healing that makes us well and sends us forth to be signs of God's mercy for the world.

**WELCOME WITH JOY AND A FEW SHORT ANNOUNCEMENTS
RINGING OF THE BELLS AND SILENT MEDITATION**

+ please stand as you are able for these parts of the service

+ **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P In the name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires Known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the Thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the Truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is Merciful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P Most merciful God,

C we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

P In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you. *(Greet one another in the pew around with the peace offered through power of God)*

+ KYRIE *(spoken)*

P/A In peace let pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P/A For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P/A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P/A For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P/A Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C Amen.

+ HYMN OF PRAISE LBW, p 81 LSB, p. 171

P/A This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.

**C Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God.
Power and riches and wisdom and strength
And honor and blessing and glory are His.
This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.**

Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation:

Blessing and honor and glory and might

Be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.

This is the feast of victory for our God,

For the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign.

Alleluia, alleluia.

+ PRAYER OF THE DAY

P O God, you are the source of life and the ground of our being.

C By the power of your Spirit bring healing to this wounded world, and raise us to the new life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

A READING: Romans 4

Paul presents Abraham as a living model of right relationships. For Abraham and for us, a right relationship with God involves trusting that God will accomplish what God has promised, because God makes the dead alive and calls into existence what otherwise does not exist.

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." ²³Now

the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

+ THE VERSE (*spoken*)

P Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

C You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

+ THE HOLY GOSPEL is announced

P The Gospel according to **St. Matthew 9:**

C Glory to you, O Lord

Jesus demonstrates God's mercy and power, accepting the unacceptable and curing the incurable. Even the dead receive new life.

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.

¹⁰And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. ¹¹When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹²But when he heard this, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners."

¹⁸While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader of the synagogue came in and knelt before him, saying, "My daughter has just died; but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." ¹⁹And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. ²⁰Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, ²¹for she said to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well." ²²Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And instantly the woman was made well.

²³When Jesus came to the leader's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, ²⁴he said, "Go away; for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. ²⁵But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. ²⁶And the report of this spread throughout that district.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HYMN

LSB # 526

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise!

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting thou rulest in might;
Thy justice like mountains high soaring above
Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life thou givest, to both great and small;
In all life thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish, but naught changeth thee.

Thou reignest in glory; thou dwellest in light;
Thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
All laud we would render; oh, help us to see
'Tis only the splendor of light hideth thee!

TODAY'S MESSAGE

"When Facing the Worst-Case Scenario: Our God is Able" Part 5

A series of messages on the Book of Daniel

Text: Daniel 3

1-3 King Nebuchadnezzar built a gold statue, ninety feet high and nine feet thick. He set it up on the Dura plain in the province of Babylon. He then ordered all the important leaders in the province, everybody who was anybody, to the dedication ceremony of the statue. They all came for the dedication, all the important people, and took their places before the statue that Nebuchadnezzar had erected.

4-6 A herald then proclaimed in a loud voice: "Attention, everyone! Every race, color, and creed, listen! When you hear the band strike up—all the trumpets and trombones, the tubas and baritones, the drums and cymbals—fall to your knees and worship the gold statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. Anyone who does not kneel and worship shall be thrown immediately into a roaring furnace."

7 The band started to play, a huge band equipped with all the musical instruments of Babylon, and everyone—every race, color, and creed—fell to their knees and worshiped the gold statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

13-15 Furious, King Nebuchadnezzar ordered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to be brought in. When the men were brought in, Nebuchadnezzar asked, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you don't respect my gods and refuse to worship the gold statue that I have set up? I'm giving you a second chance—but from now on, when the big band strikes up you must go to your knees and worship the statue I have made. If you don't worship it, you will be pitched into a roaring furnace, no questions asked. Who is the god who can rescue you from my power?"

16-18 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered King Nebuchadnezzar, "Your threat means nothing to us. If you throw us in the fire, the God we serve can rescue us from your roaring furnace and anything else you might cook up, O king. But even if he doesn't, it wouldn't make a bit of difference, O king. We still wouldn't serve your gods or worship the gold statue you set up."

WE AFFIRM OUR FAITH

P/ With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic* Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

**original and preferred text means throughout the world*

+ PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Response:

P Hear us, O God;

C your mercy is great.

OFFERING IS GATHERED

+ OFFERING PRAYER

P God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine.

C Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

+ PREFACE

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

P It is truly good, right, and salutary...evermore praising You and saying:

+ SANCTUS

Tune: Old Hundreth LBW # 565

Hosanna to the living Lord! Hosanna to the incarnate Word!
To Christ, Creator, Savior, King, Let earth, let heav'n sing!

"Hosanna, Lord!" your angels cry. "Hosanna, Lord!" your saints reply.
Above, beneath us, and around, The dead and living swell the sound.

To God the Father, God the Son, And God the Spirit, Three in One,
Be honor, praise, and glory giv'n By all on earth and all in heav'n.

+ THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

+ LORD'S PRAYER

+ THE INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P All good gifts come from God.

Come with gratitude to this table of bounty.

DISTRIBUTION

Our Beliefs about Holy Communion

The Lord's Supper is celebrated in the confession and glad confidence that, as Jesus says, He gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but His very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and with one another. Our Lord invites to His table those who trust His words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us, that we may show forth His death until He comes. Please extend hand out to receive the bread. Wine is offered from the Chalice or from individual cups. Grape juice (center ring, lighter color) is offered for those who choose not to receive wine. After the Pastor follows with the Chalice, place your empty cup in the rack on the communion rail. Children not yet prepared for the Sacrament may come forward for a blessing "that, living in the covenant of their Baptism and in communion with the Church, they may lead godly lives until the day of Jesus Christ."

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

Join in singing the following selections from various resources:

LBW # 496

Around you, O Lord Jesus, Your own you gather still
To share the feast you give us With grace our lives to fill.
You say to us so lovingly, "Take eat! This is my body!
Take, drink! This is my blood!"

We hear your invitation, And heed, O Lord, your call;
Your word of consolation Is spoken here to all.
It draws us to your loving heart; It brings to us your blessing,
Which never will depart.

We are your own forever; Until our final breath
We will be true and never In joy, in grief, in death
Depart from you, for you are still Among your people dwelling,
As you have said you sill.

LBW #514

O Savior, precious Savior, Whom yet unseen we love;
O name of might and favor, All other names above:
We worship thee; we bless thee; To thee alone we sing;
We praise thee and confess thee, Our holy Lord and King.

O Bringer of salvation, Who wondrously hast wrought,
Thy-self the revelation Of love beyond our thought:
We worship thee; we bless thee; To thee alone we sing;
We praise thee and confess the, Our gracious Lord and King.

In thee all fullness dwelleth, All grace and pow'r divine;
The glory that excelleth, O Son of God, is thine.
We worship thee; we bless thee; To thee alone we sing,
We praise thee and confess thee, Our glorious Lord and King.

Oh, grant the consummation Of this our song above,
In endless adoration And everlasting love;

Then shall we praise and bless thee Where perfect praises ring,
And evermore confess thee, Our Savior and our King!

+ PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P O God, our provider, you nourish us with holy food and drink, and you open our hearts to the needs of others.

C **Refresh us with your Spirit, that our words and deeds may proclaim your creative and life-giving Word, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

+ THE BLESSING AND SENDING HYMN

LBW # 259

Thanks we give and adoration
For your Gospel's joyful sound.
May the fruits of your salvation
In our hearts and lives abound.
Ever faithful, ever faithful
To your truth may we be found.
Amen!

+ DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Live the Gospel!

C **Thanks be to God.**



MESSIAH MESSENGER

Messiah Lutheran Church, 500 Baytree Road, Valdosta, GA.
Announcements and news for the week of June 8 – June 15, 2008
EVENTS THIS WEEK

TODAY	Sunday Classes on Summer Break 4 th Sunday after Pentecost	10:30	AM
MONDAY	Joyful Noise Lunch At Mad Dogs on Bemiss Road	11:45	AM
	Church Council	7:00	PM
THURSDAY	Thursday Crafts & Lifelifter	9:00	AM
	Baytree AA Group	7:30	PM
SATURDAY	Baytree AA Group	7:30	PM
NEXT SUNDAY	Sunday Classes on Summer Break 5 th Sunday after Pentecost	10:30	AM
	FATHER'S DAY Reception hosted by LWML, Div 5		

WE ARE DEVOTED TO OFFERING ... "God's Love, Our Response"

2008 Budget Goal	\$ 134,716.00
Goal per week	\$ 2,591.00
Goal to Date	\$ 57,002.00
Offerings for 2008 Budget – as of 06/01	\$ 63,124.00
Offering last Sunday for 2008 Budget 06/01	\$ 3,980.00
Offering for 2008 Budget 05/25 (not previously reported)	\$ 2,806.00
Weekly average for 22 weeks	\$ 2,869.00

Designated Offerings:

Building Fund	05/25 (not previously reported)	\$ 10.00
	06/01	\$ 150.00
In memory of JoAnn Cross for new Advent paraments		\$ 100.00

"God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that ... having all that you need, you will abound in every good work" (2 Cor. 9: 8)

THE ALTAR FLOWERS are a gift and a warm reminder of God's love to bloom where you are planted from Ed & Kathy Sheeley in honor of Janet's Birthday (6/7); and of their 35th anniversary, and from Bob & Angie Gannon in honor of Matt's 10th birthday on 6/17.

Thanks for the gift of flowers to enhance our worship, and to glorify the Lord our God and Savior. To order flowers, please use the registry located on the stand in the hallway toward the fellowship hall.

Grace & Peace from Pr. Richard

I was thrilled to receive an email from LeiLani Welch, a student at UGA, this week although it included prayer requests for her friends who suffered some tragedies recently. But she also wrote that she graduated with “my first degree on May 10th in Sport Management and still have a year left finishing my second degree in Broadcast News. I’ve already been on TV up here in Athens as a football practice reporter for Georgia Gameday and I’ll soon be on Palestra.com as a general sports reporter. I’m also preparing for the Miss Georgia USA pageant in November... and have also been doing some modeling here and there.” May Christ indeed guide Lani along the way. + + + I got a phone call from Janet Sheeley to tell me that a wedding date has been set: May 9, 2009 at Virginia Beach, VA, and that she would like me to perform the ceremony. Lord willing, I said I would be there.

VBS, June 16 – 20, 6 – 8 pm. Program theme: Friendship Trek

Please pick up a form to enroll your children today. Pastor Richard will also offer a class to introduce adults to the Lutheran Church and its teachings.

LAMP (Lowndes Area Ministry to People)

Please donate items for the New Horizon shelter: paper towels, Kleenex, toilet tissue, soap, body wash, band aids, Clorox/Lysol wipes, diapers, baby wipes. Last day for this 6-22-08. Thank for your support, Karin Boles

EMPTY STOCKING FUND is collected from Jan-Nov and is used to purchase gifts for needy children in the community at Christmastime... so please keep your stockings growing! Sandy A

ITEMS “LOST or FOUND” Some items lost around the church can be found in a box sitting on the book shelf in the hallway by the nursery door. There is an assortment of glasses, sunglasses, and more!

WE ARE DEVOTED TO PRAYER

Acts 2: 42

CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS: Jan Bristow (6/12). Missed *on this list? Please leave a note in the church office with name and birth date.*

ARMED FORCES AND THEIR FAMILIES deployed: Jeff Brown. At US bases: Andrew Vickers (Army Texas), Francis Wasikowski (Army Texas).

NURSING HOME/ASSISTED LIVING PATIENTS/SHUT-INS

Rusty Hatcher at Heritage House Nursing Home

Otto Peterson, Advent Village, FL. Nursing Home

Mike Lagioia, Heritage House Nursing Home

NEW JOYS & CONCERNS:

Mary Kinchen's "Aussie" friend thanks you for the prayers. He came through his heart surgery well.

LeiLani Welch requests prayer for her friend from Moultrie who loss a sister-in-law and niece in a plane crash, and also for her boy friend's family (the Golden's) who lost Aunt Debbie to ovarian cancer.

LIST OF MEMBERS

Steve Keller, chronic kidney stones

Warren Tinney having eye surgery tomorrow.

Verla George admitted to SGMC for respiratory and high blood sugar problems

Judy DeWitt recovering from outpatient surgery.

LIST OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Name	Concern/joy	Requested by	Relationship
Larry Ballowe	Lou Gehrig's disease	Rae Hubbard	friend's brother
Steve Robkin	brain tumor	Teri Williams	Rob's step-dad
June Orrison	cancer	Gloria Cook	cousin
Nancy Pieper	cancer	Lee & Sunny Schilly	friend
Belinda Judy	brain tumor	Dorothy Hauge	friend
Bill Horne	cancer	Don Sullins	friend
Pr. Duane Hoyer	brain tumor	Warren Gee	friend
Lil Lawrence	hospice care	Vincent family	sister
Steve Delk	paralysis due to accident	Bo Miller	nephew
Dirk Alexander	cancer	Jan Bristow	friend in Ill.
Carolynn Jones	pancreatic cancer	Jan Bristow	cousin in WI
Jim Ramsey	surgery to remove esophagus	Don Sullins	niece's father-in-law
Kaylie Ellis (age4)	leukemia	Ellen Mitchell	friend
Gary Pasquinzo	chemo treatments	Bob Burns	uncle uncle Mina Ark
Lorna	declining health	Linda Klement	mother in MN
Virginia Anderson	Alzheimer's	Betty Zipperer	sister
Marilyn McGuyrt	chemo resumed	Karin Boles	friend
Virginia Walters	terminal cancer	Bill/Karin Boles	sister
Millie Kram	pancreatic cancer	Nancy Stewart	friend
Mary Bennett	kidney removed	Susan Keller	friend
Roy McDanielle	lung disease	Duane Hauge	friend
Ricky Harrell	needs kidney transplant	Erin Jansen	uncle
Elizabeth Rabon	cancer	Erin Jansen	grandmother
Amber O'Quinn	radiation for brain tumor	Pr Richard	VSU student
Jori Hall	heart transplant list	Friends	LHS sturdent
Linda Brightwell	cancer	Tina Wright	friend/co-worker
Betty Wildes	unknown illness, coma	Jan Bristow	friend
Marjorie Priest	car accident serious condition	Jan Bristow	friend
Landon Adkins (age 5)	serious allergic reactions	Janie Jansen	friend
Ruth Eikelberg	tests for spot on lung	Nancy Stewart	mother

WE ARE DEVOTED TO WORSHIP Acts 2: 42

Organ/Piano
 Reader & Communion Assistants
 Acolyte
 Presenter, Children's message
 Greeters
 Nursery
 Ushers

Altar preparation/Chancel care
 Sound tech
 Custodians
 Altar linen
 Flower service
 Flower beds
 Grass cutting
 Floor Maintenance Smith's Janitorials

Kay Vincent
 Dick & Dena Rokey
 Volunteer
 Nancy Sult, Linda Welch
 Margaret Rupp, Mildred Evans
 Cyndy Pieplow
 Zach Sweeney, Tage France
 Bryce France, Mike Dauphinias
 Ellen Mitchell
 Volunteer
 Bob & Valerie Behnke
 Fran Sparks, Jan Sparks
 Helen Whitten
 Whitten family
 Fred Daniels 245-0483
 Laverne Smith 229 387-6060

Church Council.....
 Kay Vincent, president
 Jan Sparks, financial secretary
 Jeff Moxley, stewardship
 Bo Miller, worship
 John Mitchell, property

Sandy Adams, v- pres/secretary
 Kathy Lane, treasurer
 Cindy Mitchell, youth
 Bob Burns, evangelism
 Dana Black, Christian Ed.

WE ARE DEVOTED TO SERVICE

	<i>Jun 15</i> <i>(Father's Day)</i>	<i>Jun 22</i>	<i>Jun 29</i>
Reader:	<i>C Pieplow</i>	<i>N Olson</i>	<i>Rgo Hubbard</i>
Com Assist:	<i>J Sparks</i>	<i>K Wright</i>	<i>G Vincent</i>
Acolyte:	<i>R Spencer</i>	<i>A Sweeney</i>	<i>T France</i>
Chancel:	<i>L Grall</i>	<i>P Simpson</i>	<i>C Shooley</i>
Nursery:	<i>K Beles</i>	<i>P Simpson</i>	<i>D Willis</i>
Greeters:	<i>C Mitchell</i>	<i>D Beckey</i>	<i>J Willis</i>
	<i>N Boyd</i>	<i>D Beckey</i>	<i>D Willis</i>
Ushers:	<i>E Shooley</i>	<i>W Gee</i>	<i>G Vincent</i>
	<i>J Shooley</i>	<i>B Gee</i>	<i>L Vincent</i>
	<i>B Miller</i>	<i>W Finney</i>	<i>L Keller</i>
	<i>J Moxley</i>	<i>L Finney</i>	<i>J Willis</i>

The Best Answers

Beverly suffers from multiple sclerosis. She's been confined to a bed for the last twenty-five years or so. She can still move her hands and turn her head but relies on caregivers at the nursing home for everything else.

Josh is twenty-four years old. He has muscular dystrophy and soon will require a ventilator to breathe. He has been in a motorized wheelchair for the last ten years. He wasn't supposed to live even this long. He is lovingly cared for by his parents in their home in upstate New York.

Certainly as we read the gospel of Matthew we sense the relief of the woman with the hemorrhage who suffered for twelve years before she came into contact with Jesus and he cured her. Undoubtedly she suffered long and ached to be free of this condition that probably caused her to be viewed as unclean and thus forced to be apart from her family and other loved ones the whole time she endured it.

But frankly, Beverly or Josh or anyone with a lifelong illness would probably be thankful to have a disease that only lasted twelve years. Why hasn't Jesus yet said to all who suffer, "Take heart, your faith has made you well"?

We can't help but struggle with serious questions of faith when we see suffering all around: Disease never goes away. War kills too many. Poverty strangles the life out of hungry children. We cry out—"Where is the healing? Where is the justice? Where is the miracle?"

The best answers to questions like these aren't ours to have yet. Perhaps in our heavenly home God will see fit to help us understand, but faith has never been about seeing miracles. Faith is about not quite being able to shake our doubts and questions from one hand—yet always grasping tightly onto the hem of Jesus' robe with the other.

Reprinted from *Words for Worship*, copyright 2007 Augsburg Fortress.
Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT Reprinted from *Words for Worship, Sundays and Seasons, and Psalter for Worship*, copyright 2007 Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress.