



Welcome to the 2021 Mosaic!

Hello and welcome to the 2021 Mosaic devotional! For those of you who are new to the Mosaic, here's a little background: The Mosaic began in 2007 with the Wayfarers Sunday School class at Fredericksburg United Methodist Church, as a way to get to know each other better by sharing our faith, as well as a way to raise money for missions, through the sale of the spiral-bound books. The Mosaic devotional has been available every year since that time in book form. This year, because of the continuing challenges of COVID-19, the Mosaic is available in an online format only. We hope that you will enjoy reading these devotions, written by members of FUMC, the Wayfarers Sunday School class, and other special friends. Each week includes a devotion, along with seven Bible verses related to the theme of that week's devotion. Feel free to read all the Bible verses the same day, to read one each day of the week, or to read all of them each day of the week as you meditate on that week's theme. Certain weeks, instead of a written devotion, you will have the opportunity to view (or re-view) the "Mid-Week Meditation" videos that premiered last year on our church website. Our prayer is that you will be inspired to draw closer to God through these written and video devotions and their associated Bible verses. May God richly bless you in your spiritual journey during 2021!

The Wayfarers

WEEK 1

Psalm 23

Some years ago, a seminary student who was serving at our church preached a sermon about David with special emphasis on Psalm 23. He explained that David's rendition of his life in the Lord bore little resemblance to his actual life. For much of his adult life, David was on the run, first from Saul and then from Absalom, his son.

When I prepare to take my blood pressure, I repeat the words of Psalm 23 slowly while doing deep breathing. I do this three times before taking the reading. For each line I see a picture in my mind of what is happening.

"The Lord is my shepherd": I see my Lord walking before me dressed in a t-shirt, jeans and sandals, with his dark brown hair down to His shoulders.

"I shall not want": I see myself having a meal of tilapia (Peter's fish, as it was originally called), brown bread, grapes, and dates.

"He makes me lie down in green pastures": I see myself reclining in a lush meadow under the shade of a tree.

"He leads me beside the still waters": I see a clear brook and on the side of a tree, a cup from which I drink sweet water. (I understand that sheep will only drink from water that is not moving. How much our Shepherd loves us!)

"He restores my soul": I see a background of blue watercolor wash and before it a cross. (He has restored our souls by His sacrificial death on the cross. What a powerful image!)

"He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake": I see a beautiful park filled with flowering plants, a fountain, and a stream, and also cardinals, bluebirds, and other beautiful birds.

"Yea, thou I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou are with me": I see a pitch black narrow valley with heat lightning off in the distance; a mist is falling, the surface is made of sharp pieces of volcanic rock, and there is one dead tree on the right side of the valley. (Years ago, the Rev. Courtney Sheffield preached of the importance of the preposition "through" in this Psalm; he said by the grace of God we will make it through this daunting valley.)

"Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me": I see myself walking beside Jesus, holding His left arm. In one hand He holds the rod and in the other the staff. Around us there is a soft glow, enabling us to see one step in front of us. (I recall that with the rod the shepherd could defend his flock, and with the staff he could pull them back from disaster. Every evening the shepherd would have each sheep pass under the rod so that he could check it for wounds.)

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies": All is dark around a table illuminated by torches at the corners and a candle on the table. The table bears the Communion elements, as well as oil and a small dish of ashes, a reminder of our mortality.

"Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over": I see Jesus taking oil and making the sign of the cross on my forehead. I see my cup filled so full that some of the liquid dribbles down the sides. (I have been told that a full cup represents abundance, and that hosts filled the cups of their guests to overflowing to indicate their desire that their guest remain with them.)

"Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life": I see the image of a dove, representing the Holy Spirit, behind me. (One translation speaks of goodness and mercy pursuing me. I like that idea of God's determination to bring us to Himself.)

"And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever": I see the house of God as dazzling gold and the doors and windows bordered in precious stones.

Carol Kutty

Scripture:

Psalm 23

Philippian: 4:19

John 10:11

Philippians 4:13

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Psalm 34: 1-9

Psalm 91:1-13