

DAILY PRAYER POINTS

SUNDAY – There is a reason the Lord has brought you to this new week. Pray that He will shine brightly through you so that everyone that comes across you this week may know His presence in you and be blessed by your words and actions.

MONDAY – Thank God for the strength and ability to serve Him each day through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Spirit. Pray that we'll all know God's blessing and strength in serving the Lord with joy and thankfulness.

TUESDAY – Paul tells us to 'be completely humble' Just appearing humble won't cut it. Pray that as you look to Christ's humility the Holy Spirit will make your heart more and more like His. (Eph.4:2)

WEDNESDAY – Ask God to help Session and the Committee of Management as we prayerfully plan for the future of St Andrew's during an uncertain time within the PCQ and Australia, as a whole.

THURSDAY – Pray for our church family, and a restful and joyous Christmas holidays.

FRIDAY – **Continue to pray for those in need of God's healing and comforting hand:** Belinda Birch, Edith Collins, John Donnell, Jane Kippin, Kevin Petrofski Jr and Margaret Petrofski, and Dawn Robinson. **Pray also for blessings on those who can't get to church:** Audrey Armstrong, Del Finn, Carol Gillett, Joey Kelly, Gladys Marnock, Millie McCarthy, Heather McGaw, Marie McKee, Mavis Smith, and David Valentine.

SATURDAY – Give thanks that in all circumstances our Heavenly Father knows our needs and supplies them richly to us in His Son and His Spirit.

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THE ANCHOR

NEWSLETTER OF THE ST ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



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CHRISTMAS - A STORY OF PLEASURE AND GRIEF

BY PAUL TRIPP

|| love the pleasures of Christmas. I love how much of God's glory is edible—the cookies, the chocolate, the cookies, the big dinner ... oh, did I mention the cookies?

This week we need to remember that the birth of Christ is deeply connected to pleasure in the heart of God. But it's not the pleasure you and I would typically associate with the joys of Christmas.

It's the pleasure of grief.

Isaiah writes in Chapter 53, verse 10, **“Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him”** (KJV). The ESV translates, **“Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief.”**

How could it be that God the Father would ever find pleasure in the crushing of his Son? If you're a parent, you know that it pains your heart to see your child experience a minor bruise. Can you imagine, as a parent, watching the grief and torment that Christ faced on the cross?



How could it be? Scripture answers Scripture: **“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life”** (John 3:16).

At any point in 2022, were you tempted to doubt the love of God? If not, you probably will in 2023, or you are certainly near to someone who is questioning. Maybe it will be during a moment of physical suffering, and you wonder why God has allowed this pain to be your experience. Perhaps it will be amid a very significant, relational disappointment when somebody you love has turned their back on you, and you wonder why God has brought this into your life.

Maybe this economy or inflation produced financial difficulty, and even though you've sought to obey God and strived to be a generous steward of the resources he's given to you, you lost your job or are barely paying your bills. Or as you look around at the world you live in, all you see is evil is prospering, and you wonder, “Where is God? Where is his love?”

Whenever the enemy would whisper doubt into your ear, run to Isaiah 53:10 and John 3:16. God's love is so magnificent and faithful, so powerful and willing, that he would be pleased to give his Son to cruel suffering and cruel death so that you would know life.



And, if he would do such a thing, would he abandon you in your moment of need? Romans 8:32 says no, he will not! “He who did not spare his

own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?”

If you're anything like me, it's easy to find evidence of the love of God when you're experiencing pleasurable seasons of life. But neither God nor his love change when those physical pleasures are taken away.

During these moments of uncomfortable grace, your inner peace won't be found in understanding. No, your spiritual rest is secure in the pleasure of the Father and the willingness of his Son.

There is no more clear-pointed, rest-giving demonstration of the love of God for you than the gift of his Son.

Merry Christmas!

God bless,



MONTH OF PSALMS

BIBLE READING PLAN

The psalms are the beautiful songs of the Hebrew people. Whether you're searching for a little sliver of peace amidst uncertainty or strength during a trying time you can find it in the Psalms.

WEEK 4 | Day 24 **Salvation** Psalm 3, 14, 121 Day 25 **Sin and Repentance** Psalm 25, 32, 38, 51 Day 26 **Thanksgiving** Psalm 75, 106, 136 Day 27 **Trust** Psalm 31, 40, 56 Day 28 **Victory** Psalm 21, 76, 144 Day 29 **Wisdom** Psalm 90, 107, 111 Day 30 **Worship** Psalm 33, 34, 145.

GIFTS AND OFFERINGS

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