

peace be with you

# weekly devotional

from the desk of Rev. Marta Wheeler

SAINT PAUL BENSON

*June 22, 2022*

## Together

Flowers flock  
appearing in bouquets in the garden  
Just as  
grass grows strong as a congregation  
passing the peace.

Robins roost  
nearing one another in tree or shrub  
Just as  
solitary raindrops rally in mass  
bringing renewal.

Forest's tree roots  
reach out, tangling up in the other  
Just as  
single branches bunch in layers  
signaling unity.

Nature teaches  
that grace comes when we converge  
Just as  
in loving actions, we discover  
holy harmony.

The faith and  
hope of each propagate more fruits  
of the  
Spirit like grains blowing in  
summer winds.

## ***Psalm 16 - The Message***

Keep me safe, O God,  
I've run for dear life to you.  
I say to God, "Be my Lord!"  
Without you, nothing makes sense.  
And these God-chosen lives all around—  
what splendid friends they make!  
Don't just go shopping for a god.  
Gods are not for sale.  
I swear I'll never treat god-names  
like brand-names.  
My choice is you, God, first and only.  
And now I find I'm your choice!  
You set me up with a house and yard.  
And then you made me your heir!  
The wise counsel God gives when I'm awake  
is confirmed by my sleeping heart.  
Day and night I'll stick with God;  
I've got a good thing going and I'm not  
letting go.  
I'm happy from the inside out,  
and from the outside in, I'm firmly  
formed.  
You canceled my ticket to hell—  
that's not my destination!  
Now you've got my feet on the life path,  
all radiant from the shining of your face.  
Ever since you took my hand,  
I'm on the right way.

## **Supportive Community**

This past week the importance of being together was brought to mind, especially when life changes. When spending some time at Saint Benedict's monastery near Schuyler, I observed the soon-to-be-licensed pastors bonding in their common goal of following their call to ministry. Their excitement is contagious!

Last Sunday, the church ladies baked cookies and made real iced tea and lemonade for my retirement reception. I am so grateful for a supportive community that goes with me in this process of retirement. Honestly, working half-time at Saint Paul doesn't seem quite real to me yet, but I'm sure it will in the next week or two. At least there are plenty of people who recognize many of the thoughts about retirement as being familiar to them.

During Patti Griffith's Celebration of Life service yesterday, the family told many stories, and then Reverends Stephanie and Jerry included their thoughts. After the service, you could hear many people adding to the shared story of the people of Saint Paul. Community is important, especially in times of transition.

*We pray for you and feel connected to you in Spirit and in truth,*

*Marta*

Rev. Marta Wheeler