

peace be with you

weekly devotional

from the desk of Rev. Marta Wheeler

SAINT PAUL BENSON

February 1, 2023

Appreciation for Life-givers

Gliding across ice
in shiny new figure skates
feeling so grateful.

Bonded to water
Mysterious clouds, rivers
Frozen ponds and lakes.

Joined from the outset
Water of mother's warm womb
Floats. Protects. Nurtures.

This day gratefulness
Flows through her veins
Like the ocean blue.

Blessed big-hearted
blood donors give the ultimate
lavish gift of all.

Blood sisters, brothers
mysteriously filling
bags with life and love.

Dependent upon
the gifts of strangers and friends
she smiles so pretty

at the gift givers.
A frosty day well spent
with warmth of friends.

Psalm 148 ***Praise the Lord***

Praise the Lord from heaven!

Praise God on the heights!

Praise God, all of you who are his messengers!

Praise God, all of you who comprise his heavenly
forces!

Sun and moon, praise God!

All of you bright stars, praise God!

You highest heaven, praise God!

Do the same, you waters that are above the sky!

Let all of these praise the Lord's name

because God gave the command and they were
created!

God set them in place always and forever.

God made a law that will not be broken.

Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters
and all you ocean depths!

Do the same, fire and hail, snow and smoke, stormy
wind that does what God says!

Do the same, you mountains, every single hill, fruit
trees, and every single cedar!

Do the same, you animals—wild or tame—you
creatures that creep along and you birds that fly!

Continued

Psalm 148

Continued

Do the same, you kings of the earth and every single person, you princes and every single ruler on earth!

Do the same, you young men—young women too!—you who are old together with you who are young!

Let all of these praise the Lord's name because only God's name is high over all. Only God's majesty is over earth and heaven.

God raised the strength of his people, the praise of all his faithful ones—that's the Israelites, the people who are close to him.

Praise the Lord!

From the Desk of Rev. Marta Wheeler
February 1, 2023

It's easy to see that lifting praises to God is the theme of Psalm 148. We give thanks for gifts of nature. We could add our own favorite creations as well as ways of serving and being with one another.

Last weekend Saint Paul's Health Ministry team sponsored a blood drive in Fellowship Hall. It was in honor of a young mother who grew up at Saint Paul and whose own mother is a faithful, hard-working member. I'd never been to a blood drive that honored someone but was quite touched by the family. The mother and father, sister, and their six children who stayed the day to greet and give thanks to the blood donors.

Jokes were told, memories shared, frosted Valentine cookies eaten, and kids played. Most of all it was a day of gratitude for those who donated. Their blood truly is life-giving. Especially for these who need countless units because of challenging physical health.

We give thanks for those who donate or have donated in the past. There are plenty of good reasons to avoid it, but many more to support giving. Over the centuries and decades, the process improved greatly. Tight regulations, including typing and crossmatching, prevent most transfusion reactions these days.

I must say that it is a relief that the shortest days of 2023 are over! We do our best to make it through cold days in various ways. My friends are wearing fuzzy slippers, sipping hot cocoa, cheering on favorite sports teams, and making or listening to music.

We appreciate any of the ways you're able to help another. Listening or sharing our stories can increase our faith in humankind and in God.

God's love and peace to each of you,

Marta

Rev. Marta Wheeler