

BLESSINGS ALWAYS

November 10, 2021

Association Minister Message

Rev. Daniel L. Busch

PRAYER. “Hannah *PRAYED* and said, ‘My heart exults in the Lord; my strength is exalted in my God.’” (1 Samuel 2:1). Early in my ministry in an association at Ecclesiastical Councils (meetings to vote to ordain individuals), we all knew that Howard, a layperson would always ask candidates, “What is your *PRAYER* life like?” Howard was a psychologist, dedicated to the church and never arrogant or pushy about his Christian faith, yet his kindness and spirit-filled life was always evident when speaking to anyone. Howard understood *PRAYER* to be important in ministries of the church.

The story about Hannah found in First Samuel is rather poignant. She and her husband Elkanah had tried to have a child but for some reason she could not conceive. Elkanah’s other wife, Peninnah, had children to the distress of Hannah. After years of presenting herself in the Temple before God and praying in all earnestness, her prayers were finally answered and Samuel, the great final religious judge leader of the Hebrew people, was born, and promised to give him up to the service of God in the Temple.

“What is your *PRAYER* life like?” To whom do you offer your *PRAYER* and what do you want? *The Evangelical Catechism* question describes “*PRAYER* is the conversation of the heart with God...” Sometimes we forget the “conversation” aspect of *PRAYER*—too much asking and not enough listening to God. The *Catechism* states: “*PRAYER* is a sigh. It is sometimes speechless. It can be subversive. It is unafraid to lift its voice amid the pyramids of indifference and the vast deserts of conformity to evil that take our breath away.” God comes in the “still small voice” or like the boom of great thunder. Can we put aside our desires and hear God calling us to be in ministries and missions to God’s glory? Conversation is speaking AND listening. *PRAYER* is asking and receiving with gratitude and thanksgiving for our needs and the needs of others. Conversation opens us to see the needs of others and then being generous helping others. Selfishness becomes generosity, greed becomes sharing, and God’s creation is a gift and not an entitlement.

“What is your *PRAYER* life like?” *PRAY* down God’s Spirit upon you, others and the world. To God be the glory. *BLESSINGS ALWAYS.*