

“Partnership With God”
Providence United Methodist Church
Message by DD Adams
July 5, 2015

Today’s lesson is taken from the Old Testament, Psalm 48. I’ll be reading from the *Common English Bible*. In the city belonging to our God, the LORD is great and so worthy of praise! His holy mountain is a beautiful summit, the joy of the whole world. Mount Zion, in the far north, is the city of the great king. God is in its fortifications, revealing himself as a place of safety. Look: the kings assembled themselves, advancing all together—when they saw it, they were stunned; they panicked and ran away frightened.

Trembling took hold of them right there—like a woman giving birth, or like the east wind when it smashes the ships of Tarshish. Just like we had heard, now we’ve seen it for ourselves in the city of the LORD of heavenly forces, in the city of our God. May God make it secure forever! Selah

We dwell on your faithful love, God, in your temple. Your praise, God, just like your reputation, extends to the far corners of the earth. Your strong hand is filled with righteousness. Let Mount Zion be glad; let the towns of Judah rejoice because of your acts of justice! Walk around Zion; go all the way around it; count its towers. Examine its defenses closely; tour its fortifications so that you may tell future generations: “This is God, our God, forever and always! He is the one who will lead us even to the very end. This is God’s word for God’s people. Thanks be to God.

Let’s pray. God of mercy and grace, your faithful love wraps the earth in your hands and causes your people to rejoice. We walk with you God as you walk alongside us, for you are our refuge and strength! On that great and

glorious day, we'll see your holy city ourselves and run into its safety, but for now, O Lord, until that day, we make you our joy. Amen.

Next week I'll be traveling to Richmond, VA. to visit some cousins of mine. I'll be bringing home a small pump organ that was owned by my mom's aunt. It's a small organ, about 2 x 4. Thing about a pump organ is this. If the bellows aren't pumped by someone to maintain constant air pressure it's useless. So there's got to be either someone's feet pumping away or someone else working the bellows depending on the size of the organ. Without some kind of partnership nothing happens. It's the same in our relationship with God. We work together with God, we partner with God, and beautiful music is made!

The historical background to Psalm 48 centers on a victory. The battle was a defeat of the Moabites and Ammonites during the days of king Jehoshaphat (2 Chron 20). Jehoshaphat decided to seek the Lord's help for big trouble was on its way. He proclaimed a fast for all of Judah, and people from all of its cities came to ask the Lord for help. When all the people had gathered, Jehoshaphat stood up in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem in the Lord's temple. They confessed their powerlessness against these mighty armies that were about to attack them. They didn't know what to do, and they looked to God for help.

In the middle of the assembly the Lord's spirit came upon (Ja.*ha*.zee.ol) Jahaziel. He told them the battle wasn't theirs to fight! It's the Lord's! So when the enemy approached and saw the great city of Zion, the enemy was scared to death! They fled in absolute terror! The Psalmist describes the presence of God in our lives as being like "Zion." It's like a holy mountain, and its walls can't be breached. The security we enjoy because of its walls is a place of safety.

When we walk and partnership through this life with God—we work together. We're never alone because God leads and guides our journey. When

we confront an enemy and converse with an adversary, or find ourselves in a situation that challenges us—we don't give up—we petition God. We run to our refuge and fortress—our great God and King. We petition God to send heavenly forces to dissuade. We pray to be strengthened and transformed in the challenge, but however and whatever we do, we know, we dwell in God's faithful love. And our raised hands filled with the righteousness of God we praise our King.

When our battle has been won, we remember how the Lord turned our face to praise him and give him glory. So when you walk around Zion during your spiritual journeys, count the ways your God has won the victory for you! Tell your children as you testify to future generations about God who led you to the very end! And when you think on God's unfailing love and meditate on what God's done—praise him for the partnership. Praise him for the times he's delivered you and your family. Praise him for being your refuge and high tower. Praise him for being your joy and great King. Praise him for deliverance and for the transformation that happens within you. Praise him for his unfailing love and strong hands. Praise him to the ends of the earth for his acts of grace and justice.

Let's pray. Dear God, move in us to trust you as we partnership with you through our life's journey. Help us to commit our way to you as we look up to you and our burdens roll away. If we've distanced ourselves from you help us to move closer. If you must carry us through the battle then please do it. Remind us of the triumphs in victories we've already seen from partnering with you O God. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.