

# *County-Wide Chaplaincy*

## *Thanks you!*

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**November 2024**

### **A Grateful Heart**

This is a quote by Ann Voskamp,

“I know there is poor and hideous suffering, and I’ve seen the hungry and the guns that go to war. I have lived pain, and my life can tell. But I only deepen the wound of the world when I neglect to give thanks for early light dappled through leaves and the heavy perfume of wild roses in early July and all the good things that a good God gives.”

I have read, reread, and pondered this quote many times. I relate to the struggle of feeling that we cannot be joyous and grateful for the good things in our lives when others are suffering terribly. I relate to feeling guilty when I want to burst with joy over an answered prayer in my life, while my friend continues to ask and feels only what seems like silence. We are entering a season of thankfulness as we celebrate Thanksgiving and yet many are finding it hard to be thankful at all. How do we put these two together? Can they coexist in our lives? I think Philippians 4:6-7 gives us some insight.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

I think that brings it all into a package! We ask with a grateful heart and receive peace in place of anxiety and confusion. And for me, that peace allows me to continue to let God be God even when I don’t understand.

Our Pastor recently stated this in a message on prayer: “Prayer transfers the weight of the world back onto God’s shoulders, from where I stole it when I started to worry.” I love that because when I let God have what only He can handle, I am free to feel the peace He gives and be free to recognize the many blessings both large and small that I experience every single day.

Please continue to pray for our chaplains as they balance this struggle in their lives. Their position calls them to mourn with those who mourn and bear the burdens of those who are hurting, but at the same time to rejoice in the goodness of God. We serve a Mighty God who is good all the time, even when we do not understand.

In closing, here is the follow up quote by Ann Voskamp:

“The brave who focus on all things good and all things beautiful and all things true, even in the small, who give thanks for it and discover joy even in the here and now, they are the change agents who bring fullest light to the world.” I really like that!

Our grateful hearts are powerful in God’s hands. May you have a joyous, peaceful and thanks-filled Thanksgiving!

Jan Richards

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2500 NE 78th St., Vancouver, WA 98665 • (360) 573-7127