

Gentle Bible

The Gentle Bible is published as a resource of the Mental Health Chaplaincy, an ecumenical outreach ministry of Prospect United Church of Christ (Congregational)

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A Selection of Daily Readings
by Rev. Craig Rennebohm

An Introduction to the Gentle Bible

This gentle bible is especially for all who struggle with mental illness in their lives. Here are words of comfort and encouragement, words, which give hope and strength.

Each reading is a small unit of faith. Taken together over the days and weeks and months, they help feed and nourish the soul. The readings can be shared and explored with others and used as a resource for developing a healing, spiritual community.

Every reading expresses the love of God, the tenderness and patience of God's gentle presence in our lives.

This is a book to support healing.

Years ago, a physician friend observed that "words are medicine too." It is our hope that these few and simple words will be of help to you, and aid in creating communities of well being and wholeness in our world.

Craig Rennebohm
Mental Health Chaplaincy
Seattle, Washington
July 18, 2001

JANUARY

COMPANIONSHIP

- 1 You honor me, I am precious in your eyes
- 2 You created me
- 3 I need only say "I am slipping" and your love immediately supports me
- 4 You are my shepherd
- 5 You give me rest
- 6 You lead me beside still waters
- 7 You restore my soul

- 8 You lead me in paths of righteousness
- 9 You are with me
- 10 You comfort me
- 11 You prepare a table for me
- 12 You touch me with gentleness
- 13 goodness and mercy shall be in all the days of my life
- 14 we will dwell with God, forever

- 15 God looks for all who are missing
- 16 God's love embraces us tenderly
- 17 we are not condemned
- 18 God's imperishable spirit is in all life
- 19 God spares all things
- 20 God is merciful, very loving and universally kind
- 21 God's tenderness embraces all

- 22 how good and kind is Your spirit
- 23 You saw all that was created, and indeed it was very good
- 24 Your spirit fills the whole world and holds all things together
- 25 You know me and are acquainted with all my ways
- 26 You are always with me
- 27 if I climb to the heavens You are there.
- 28 if I descend to the uttermost deeps, You are there

- 29 if I fly furthest to the East, your hand still guides me
- 30 if I sail across the sea, your hand holds me in care.
- 31 You know me through and through

FEBRUARY

COMMUNITY

1 let us have a profound respect for each other
2 let us treat everyone with equal kindness
3 let us treat others as we like to be treated
4 let us comfort one another
5 let us strengthen one another
6 let us give courage to those who are fearful
7 let us care for the weak

8 let us be patient with everyone
9 let us think of what is best for each other and the community
10 let us adopt any custom that leads to peace
11 let us be gentle in carrying out our business
12 let us sing together and go on singing and chanting in our hearts
13 let us act with compassion, in kindness and humility
14 let us do all that we can to live at peace with everyone

15 let us talk this over, says God
16 little by little we correct
17 love trusts, hopes, endures
18 a kindly word multiplies friends
19 kindly words also heal
20 let us help each other
21 help us to be tolerant with each other

22 let us consider what we are about to do
23 may thoughtfulness be the beginning of every activity
24 let us reflect before acting
25 may everything be done decently and in order
26 help us to learn that there is a time for every activity
27 the first thing in life is water and bread and clothing and shelter
28 how good it is for us all to live together as one

29 I saw a tree
in the middle of the world
the tree grew taller and stronger
until it reached the sky
and it could be seen from the ends of the earth
its foliage was beautiful, its fruit abundant
in it was food for all

MARCH

COMFORT

1 with the help of the One who gives us strength, we will overcome
2 after his trials, Job lived on
3 the Spirit comes to help us in our weakness
4 nothing can come between us and God's love
5 we will not give up
6 we have help
7 we do not struggle alone

8 God reduces the storm to a whisper
9 God quiets the waves
10 God brings us to safety
11 Courage
12 let us be quiet now
13 do not be afraid for I am with you
14 the sun will shine, and our eyes will be glad

15 behold God makes all things new
16 as a sign of promise, I set my rainbow in the clouds
17 we are made imperishable
18 though this body may grow old, our soul is renewed day by day
19 when this tent on earth is folded up, there is a house built by God for us, an everlasting home
20 there is always hope
21 he is risen

22 we too shall walk in newness of life
23 we shall be changed
24 the old has passed away, behold the new comes
25 we will run the race to the finish
26 now we know in part, then we shall understand fully
27 three things last – faith, hope and love, and the greatest of these is love
28 God will wipe away every tear from our eyes

29 God is tender and compassionate
slow to anger, most loving
God's indignation does not last forever
God's resentment exists for a short time only
God never treats us, never punishes us as our guilt or sins deserve

MARCH

COMFORT

no less than the height of heaven over earth
is the greatness of God's love for us
our sins are taken farther away than the east is from the west
as the most loving parents treat their children, so God treats us
God's love for us lasts from eternity and forever

30 may God give us calm and serenity

31 may peace be with us all

APRIL

HEALING

1 I live and you will live also
2 God revives the spirit, brightens the eyes, gives healing, life and blessing
3 God is not a God of disorder, but of peace
4 let us be patient and not lose heart
5 the gardener waits for the plant to grow
6 we are being built into a house where God lives
7 taking food, we regain our strength

8 God touches us with healing, each as we have need
9 let others help carry your illness
10 one who had been deeply ill and alone, came to be healed
11 the terrible journey was over, the voices stopped,
12 God cares for our heart and soul and our mind and strength
13 all created things have health in them
14 medicine, given and received, gentle instruction and care, lead to healing

15 God gives knowledge of the brain and medicine
16 God has brought medicines into existence from the elements of the earth
17 God uses medicine to heal and to relieve pain
the pharmacist makes up the mixture of them
thus there is no end to God's creative activity
and so it is that health extends across the world
18 the doctor has a healing art from the Most High, as a gift
19 the physician prays for the grace to relieve and to heal, that life may be saved
20 the doctor too, has been created by God
21 when you are ill, pray, then let the doctor help you

22 God works through all who give care
23 health and strength are better than gold
24 if one of us is ill, let us send for those who are wise and knowledgeable
25 some foods are better than others
26 let us take care of ourselves, before we fall ill
27 living with others, we begin to know ourselves
28 with new understanding, we lead new lives

29 let our behavior change, guided by new thoughts
30 may we keep a calm and sober mind

MAY

WELLNESS

- 1 let us be quick to listen, slow to speak
2 let us be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving
3 let us correct one another with gentleness
4 let us avoid pointless speculations
5 let us not dispute over opinions
6 let us avoid quarreling, be gentle and show courtesy
7 let us encourage one another and build one another up
- 8 let us live quietly
9 let us be moderate in all our activities
10 let us clear our minds
11 let us do away with bad habits
12 let us put away falsehood and speak the truth
13 let us fill our minds with everything that is true
everything that is noble
everything that is good
everything we love and honor
and everything virtuous and worthy
14 let us always seek to do good to one another and to all
- 15 let us do justice, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God
16 let us show hospitality
17 let us help one another to find useful work
18 let us assist others
19 each of us has a gift, an ability to share
20 let us be wise, kindly and considerate, full of compassion
21 by our deeds, let us demonstrate our faith
- 22 God touches our hearts with peace
23 in everything God works for good
24 the goodness and lovingkindness of God saves us
25 God is for us
26 each of us is infinitely worthy
27 God will supply every want in due time
28 God gives us eternal comfort and good hope, through grace
- 29 we are what we are, by the grace of God
30 the spirit helps us

MAY

WELLNESS

- 31 the fruit of the spirit is love,
joy
peace
patience
kindness
gentleness
self control

JUNE

TEACHINGS

- 1 I call you friends
- 2 God loves the world so much
- 3 God's goodness knows no bounds
- 4 blessed are all who are in need
- 5 blessed are all who grieve, for you shall be comforted
- 6 blessed are all who are hungry, for you shall be satisfied
- 7 I bring you good news

- 8 I judge no one
- 9 neither do I condemn you
- 10 not one of you shall be lost
- 11 your sins are forgiven
- 12 do not be anxious about tomorrow, tomorrow will take care of itself
- 13 do not be troubled
- 14 take heart, do not be afraid

- 15 let us be brave
- 16 let us be open
- 17 let us trust
- 18 the truth will free us
- 19 rest assured
- 20 I am with you always
- 21 everything is possible with God

- 22 our sorrow will turn to joy
- 23 come to me when your work is hard and I will give you rest
- 24 I have come so that you might have life and life in abundance
- 25 peace I give to you, my own peace I give to you
- 26 blessed are those of a gentle spirit
- 27 blessed are the peacemakers
- 28 peace be with you

- 29 go in peace
- 30 God loves you

JULY

GOD'S CARE

- 1 God does not despise the afflicted
- 2 God does not disdain the poor
- 3 God does not turn away, but answers when we call
- 4 God loves especially the littlest of us and the least among us
- 5 God hears the wants of the humble
- 6 God brings strength to our hearts
- 7 God listens

- 8 God keeps our souls from the pit of nothingness
- 9 God guards us in trouble
- 10 God surround us with songs of deliverance
- 11 God guards us from harm
- 12 God guards our lives
- 13 God guards our leaving and our coming back, now and for always
- 14 God shows love in every occasion

- 15 we stumble and God supports us
- 16 God will raise us up
- 17 You are the God of the humble
- 18 You are the help of the oppressed
- 19 You are the support of the fragile
- 20 You are the refuge of the forsaken
- 21 You are the savior of the despairing

- 22 God gives justice to those denied it
- 23 God gives food to the hungry
- 24 God strengthens the vulnerable
- 25 God protects the stranger
- 26 God keeps the widow and the orphan
- 27 God is merciful to all
- 28 God loves all that exists

- 29 God holds nothing in abhorrence
- 30 God's imperishable spirit is in all
- 31 God wipes away the tears from every cheek

AUGUST

WISDOM

- 1 may God comfort us in everything
- 2 may God strengthen us in every moment of our journey
- 3 let us stand firm on the solid base of faith
- 4 let us train ourselves spiritually
- 5 let us grow to maturity
- 6 let us come to full development
- 7 let us be filled with wisdom

- 8 let us learn to be wise
- 9 in wisdom, let us find joy for our hearts
- 10 let us listen to advice
- 11 let us learn from mistakes and be wiser next time
- 12 let us learn from practice
- 13 let us seek help in understanding the meaning of words
- 14 let us develop an enlightened attitude of mind

- 15 let us play fairly
- 16 let us be just
- 17 let us live a virtuous life
- 18 let us develop common sense
- 19 let us gain good judgment
- 20 let us listen and learn yet more
- 21 let us seek help when things are too difficult to understand

- 22 help us to know our limits
- 23 help us to appreciate mysteries
- 24 we cannot fully comprehend the work of God from beginning to end
- 25 we were not there when the foundations of the world were being laid
- 26 we did not set the stars in the sky
- 27 we do not control the sun in its rising, nor the coming of night
- 28 reality in its fullness and depth lies beyond our grasp

- 29 out of sorrow grows wisdom
- 30 over wisdom, evil can never triumph

AUGUST

WISDOM

- 31 within us is an eternal light
a spirit,
intelligent
holy
lucid
benevolent
loving
steadfast
dependable
unperturbed
within us is God's active power
within us is God's unceasing goodness

SEPTEMBER

TOWARDS WHOLENESS

1 this is the consolation you can offer me; let me have my say
2 hear me as I make my plea
3 I am like water draining away
4 my heart is like wax, melting inside me;
5 my mouth is dry and my tongue is stuck
6 I am worn out with groaning; every night I drench my pillow with tears
7 for me there is no calm or peace; my torments banish rest

8 my days have passed far otherwise than I had planned
9 night makes room for day
10 morning is near at hand
11 our hope comes, like the sun dawning over the hills
12 I do have faith; help the little faith that I have
13 You have kept count of my tossings; you have kept my tears in your bottle!
14 have mercy on me O God, in your goodness, in your great tenderness

15 You have pulled me out of the horrible pit, out of the mud and gutter
16 You have settled my feet on solid ground and steadied my steps
17 create in me a clean heart, O God
18 and renew my spirit within me
19 take not your presence from me
20 and deprive me not of your Holy Spirit
21 grow and strengthen my hidden self

22 we are not stuck with the old; it is God's work to create us new and whole persons
23 we are in progress toward true knowledge
24 let us make wisdom and instruction our friend
25 let us avoid lies
26 keep us away from reckless purposes
27 let us hold back from wrongdoing
28 let us stay away from anything that makes us trip or fall

29 let us hold on to what is good
30 the spirit of truth will lead us to wholeness; we will become complete

OCTOBER

PSALTER

1 let the light of your face shine on us, O God
2 lead me, O God
3 wondrously show your steadfast love
4 O God, do not be far away
5 God restores my soul
6 Your mercy and love have been from old
7 Your steadfast love is before my eyes

8 You are indeed my rock
9 the earth is full of the steadfast love of God
10 O set me in your presence forever
11 the God of hosts is with us
12 create in me a clean heart, O God
13 trust in the steadfast love of God
14 trust in God in all times

15 hasten to help me, O God
16 I will call to mind the deeds of God
17 happy are those who live in your house
18 O God, you abound in steadfast love
19 Your steadfast love is established forever
20 my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust
21 it is God who made us and we are God's people

22 consider the steadfast love of God
23 God is at your right hand
24 blessed be the name of God
25 my help comes from God, who made heaven and earth
26 my soul waits for God
27 hope in God, hope in God, hope in God forevermore
28 how pleasant to dwell in unity

29 search me, O God, and know my heart
30 my soul thirsts for you
31 great is our God and abundant in power

NOVEMBER

ASSURANCE

1 shelter in my wings until the storm is over
2 peace to you who were far away
3 learn from me, I am gentle and humble in heart
4 My yoke is easy and my burden is light
5 come to me and I will give you rest
6 I will not cast you off
7 I will set up my dwelling among you

8 I will live in your midst
9 I will be your God and you shall be my people
10 you are no longer on the outside; you are part of God's household
11 God gives the lonely a home
12 God does not break the broken reed
13 we may be afflicted, but not crushed
14 we may be struck down, but not destroyed

15 obstacles are sure to come
16 help us to be brave and strong
17 help us to keep your souls tranquil and quiet
18 I will be with you
19 I will hold your hand
20 I will guide you with advice
21 and receive you with honor

22 let not your hearts be troubled
23 I will give you daily, all that you need
24 I will lead you in paths of love and truth
25 I will care for you, in the night and when you awake
26 grace be with you
27 grace and eternal life be with you all
28 you will be with me forever

29 may the peace of God, keep your heart and thoughts in safety
30 may God's peace keep you safe and make you whole

DECEMBER

HOPE

1 God watches over us and not one is lost
2 trust in God that things will turn out
3 morning will show the right road
4 the valleys will be filled in, the mountain will be made low and every cliff become a plain
5 winding ways will be straightened and rough roads made smooth
6 we will be led in safety
7 God's good spirit guides us to level ground

8 we may grow tired or weary, we may stumble, but God renews our strength
9 when the cold is unbearable, God sends warmth
10 winter is past, the rains are over and gone
11 I will listen to you
12 I will come to your help
13 I will comfort you to the full
14 I will answer when you call

15 God is our shelter, our strength, an ever present help in time of trouble
16 God does not grow tired or weary
17 God shares strength with the powerless
18 God brings us back from exile
19 God gives to each of us a home and infinite understanding
20 God heals our broken hearts
21 God binds up our wounds

22 we will live in a peaceful home, in safe houses, in quiet dwellings
23 we shall have quiet again and rest assured
24 we shall be God's joy and gladness
25 God is with us
26 we shall open treasures and share gifts
27 we shall be lifted up
28 we shall be filled with good things

29 our lives are restored with tenderness and mercy
30 light shines in the darkness
31 our feet are guided on the way of peace

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