



**February 17, 2019**  
**FUMC Portsmouth, NH**

*We Gather for Worship*

**Prelude & Entrance of Christ's Light**

**Celebrations**

**\*Call to Worship**

L: With friends and strangers, with family and neighbors, we gather.

**P: Come among us, Healing God, with that love which never ends.**

L: With faith reaching out to touch, with hearts straining to trust, we hope.

**P: Come among us, Friend of the broken, with your compassion which makes us whole.**

L: With word and wonder, with silence and song, we wait.

**P: Come among us, Dryer of our tears, to lift us to our feet to follow you.**

**\*Hymn: "Freely, Freely"**

UMH #389

**A Time for the Child in all of Us**

**Prayer (unison)**

**Loving God, we are yours. We come as we are, with our cares and concerns. We long to touch you and find healing in your embrace. Strengthen our faith and heal our brokenness so that we may worship you with joy. Amen.**

**Sung Response**

**"Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying"**

TFWS #2193

**Ministry of Music**

*We Proclaim the Word*

**Reading the Word: Mark 5:24b-34**

L: The Word of God for the People of God.

**P: Thanks be to God.**

**Message: "A Touch of Faith"**

Rev. Deb Hanson

*\*Please stand as you are comfortable*

*Large print bulletins are available from the greeters*

*We Respond to God's Word*

**\*Hymn:** "He Touched Me"

UMH #367

**Concerns and Joys**

**Silent Prayer and Pastoral Prayer**

**The Lord's Prayer** (unison)

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not in temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings**

**\*Doxology:** (*Please join in singing the following:*)

UMH #94

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

**\*Prayer of Dedication** (unison)

**Gracious God, let our congregation be a witness to you: immersed in scripture, constant in prayer, joyful in worship, generous in giving. A loving, supportive community reaching out to those in need. Accept these gifts we offer, in Jesus' name, Amen.**

**A Service of Healing**

insert

*We Go Forth to Serve*

**\*Hymn:** "It is Well with My Soul"

UMH #377

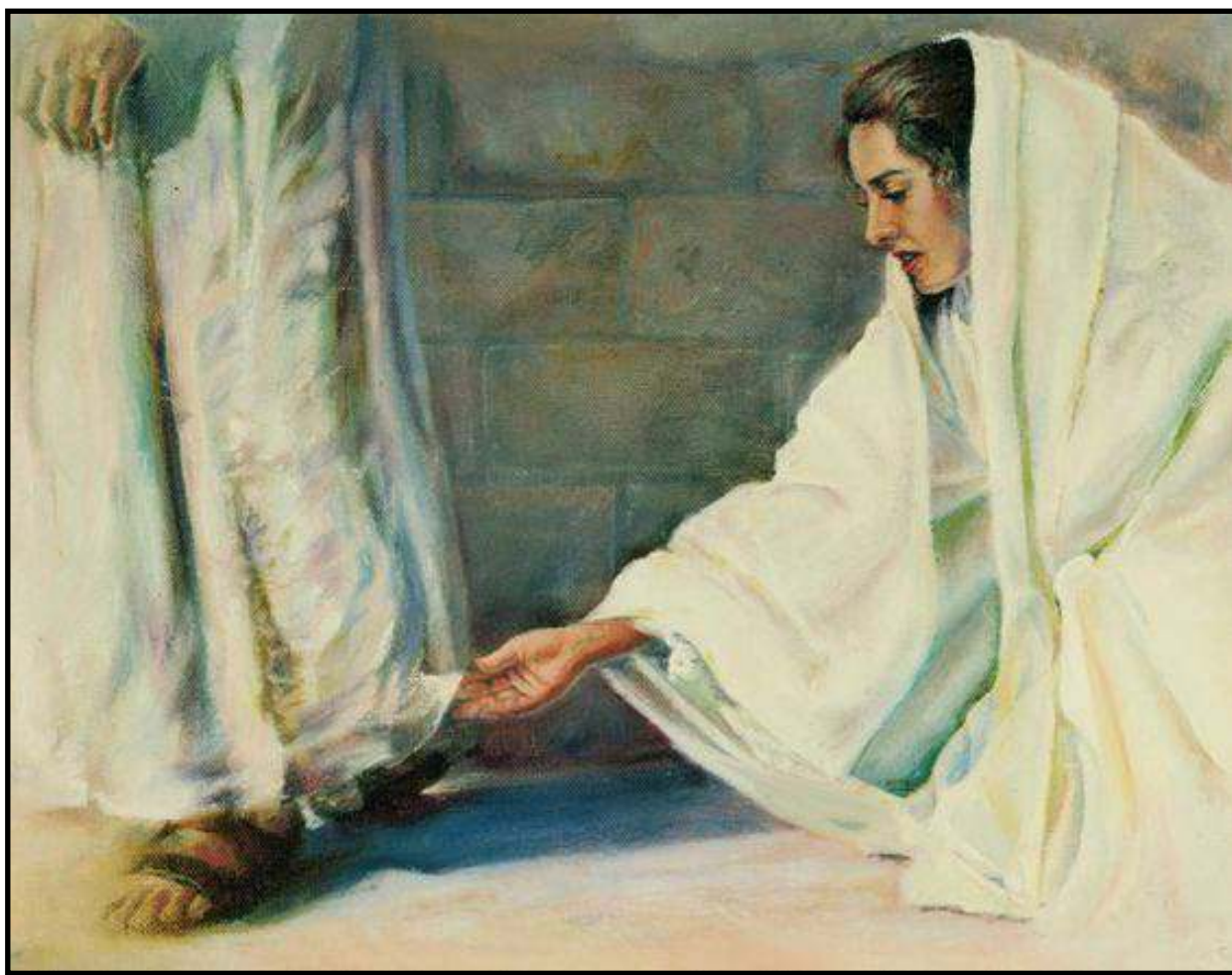
**\*Choral Benediction** (*Congregation encircles the Sanctuary*)

**May the Lord, gracious God bless and keep you forever. Grant you peace, perfect peace, courage in every endeavor. Lift up your eyes and seek His face, and His grace forever. May the Lord, mighty God bless and keep you forever.**

**\*Pastor's Charge**

**Postlude**





## Healing Service

### Reflection/Sharing

L: The Scriptures tell us not to be anxious about our lives or about tomorrow. Are there anxieties that cause you to feel separated from the peace that God promises? (Silence)

### Anointing with Oil

Name, I anoint you with oil . . . in the name of our holy and triune God for . . . (*name the expressed need for which the anointing is offered.*)

### Laying on of Hands

We lay hands on you . . . in the name of Jesus, the Christ, Savior and Healer.

L: God in Heaven, in Jesus' name, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us gathered here today and for those whose names have been lifted up, whether aloud or in the silence of our hearts. Make whole that which is broken; drive away all sickness of body and spirit; deliver them from the power of evil; preserve them in true faith that they may know the healing power of your love. Amen.

### Unison Prayer

**We thank you, gracious God. You have loved us from the beginning of time and remembered us when we were in trouble. Your mercy endures forever. We thank you, redeeming God. You have come to us in Jesus Christ, who heals us and saves us from sin. Your mercy endures forever. We thank you, holy God. You have sent us your Spirit, to comfort us and lead us into all truth. Your mercy endures forever. Gracious, redeeming and holy God, glory and praise be yours, now and forever. Amen.**



## Welcome!

Whether you are joining us for worship for the first time or after many years of attending here at First UMC, we want you to know that you are welcome!

We are an inclusive community that invites everyone to be part of our church fellowship. Thank you for being here, and we hope that you have had a meaningful experience of worshiping our God so you leave this place feeling that you have been blessed to be a blessing. Please join us again! —Rev. Deb Hanson



**Month of February** Celebrate and learn about Black History throughout the month of February at the Discover Portsmouth Center located at 10 Middle St. in downtown Portsmouth.

**February 19th** Church Council meeting @ 6pm at the church

**February 21-27** Rev Deb vacation...any pastoral needs can be directed to Sue Sarosiek @ 603.770.3439

**March 5th** Finance Trustees meeting @ 6pm

**March 6th** Ash Wednesday Prayer Service @ 7pm

**March 10th** SPRC meeting after worship.

Pastor - Rev. Dr. Debra J. Hanson

Pastor's Assistant - David Richards

Liturgist - Nancy Chesser

Lay Leader - Susan Sarosiek

Director of Music - Bevan Bloemendaal

Acolyte - Jenya Westbrook

Greeters - Joyce Blanchard & Jane Richards

Ushers - John & Cathy VanReenen & Ken Young

Sunday School - Dave Richards & Kaya Sarosiek

Sound Tech - Sue Sarosiek

Worship Service Tech - Steve Scott

Photographer - Dave Atkinson







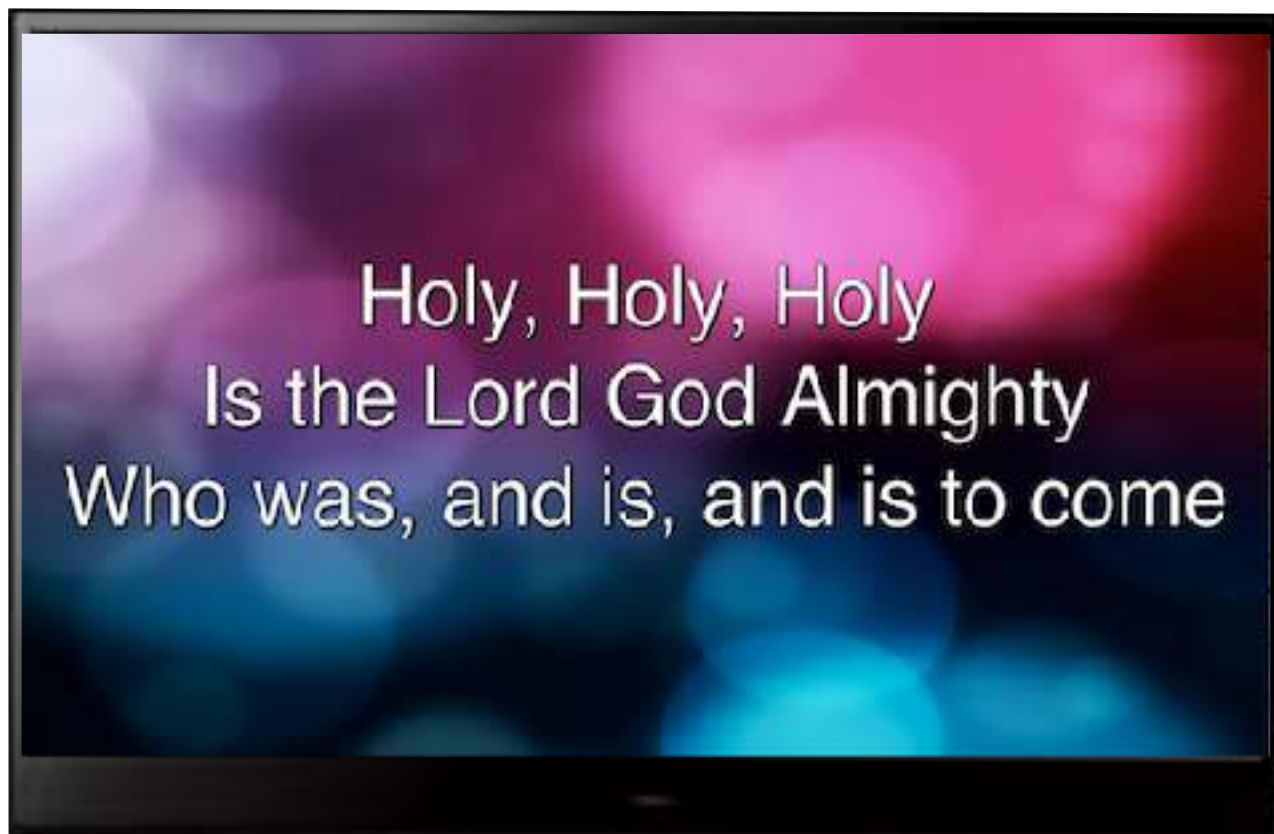
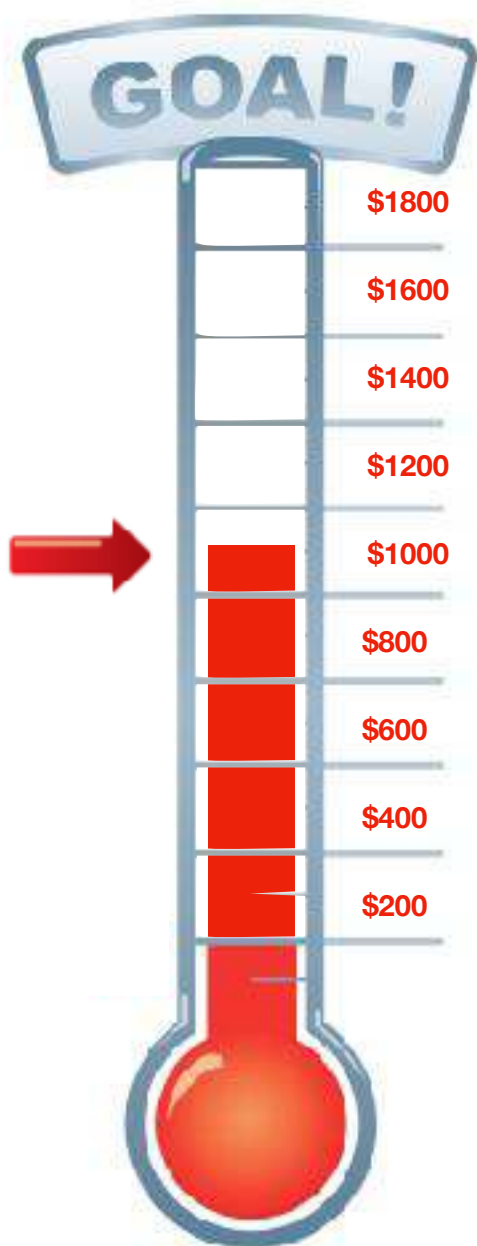
**Barbara & Jim Slater**  
**Barbara Sylvester**  
**Pauline Boynton**  
**Barbara Millar**  
**Irene Derosier**  
**Barbara Clement**  
**Malia Broe**  
**Trudy Parkhurst**  
**Joette MacKenzie**  
**Vicky Fernandez**

**Rev. Bill Gardei**  
**Gayle Gardei**  
**Marion Collishaw**  
**Sue Goodhue**  
**Hunter Pinkley**  
**Sylvia Bartlett**  
**BrianThompson**  
**Our Church family**  
**Gil Stebbins**  
**Alissa Fernandez**

**Woodie Lange**  
**Roseanne**  
**Rev. David Kerr**  
**Jim New**  
**Kim Hishop**  
**Pastor Sue Ellery**  
**Nancy Chessser's family**  
**Gabor [Brianna's father in-law]**  
**Erika Guerino**

**Today's altar flowers are given in celebration of the 13th wedding Anniversary of Rev. Deb and Dave.**





The Finance Trustees are looking for donations to replace the outdated screen and projector being used each Sunday with a large LED monitor. Please see John VanReenen for details.

**SENDING A CARD, MAKING A VISIT, OR CALLING SOMEONE...**

**These are all wonderful ways of making sure our FUMC family feels connected to what is going on in the life of the church and in your life. Just saying hello can make a huge difference in someone's day. During coffee hour please take a card or note card and send one of our family members a quick hello!**





**FUMC PORTSMOUTH  
A RECONCILING CONGREGATION**

**We, the congregation of the First United Methodist Church of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, are dedicated to worshiping, learning, and serving with all people as we embrace Jesus Christ's message of love and acceptance. As a United Methodist Church we stand fully behind the statement "Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors" We celebrate our diversity and invite all persons regardless of age, gender, racial or ethnic background, sexual orientation, marital or socioeconomic status, nationality, physical or mental ability into full membership and participation in the life of this community of faith.**



**New England Annual Conference  
Tri-State District**

The Rev. Sudarshana Devadhar, Bishop  
The Rev. James McPhee, District Superintendent

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

129 Miller Avenue - Portsmouth, NH 03801

Office Phone 603-436-6038 [office@fumcportsmouth.net](mailto:office@fumcportsmouth.net)

Pastor office hours - Tuesday and Thursday 9 am - 12 pm  
[call to ensure availability]

Pastor - Rev. Dr. Debra J. Hanson

Check out our website at [www.fumcportsmouth.com](http://www.fumcportsmouth.com)

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SERMON GIVEN 2/3/19 BY  
REV. DR. DEB HANSON

“A Touch of Faith” – 2/17/19  
First UMC – Rev. Dr. Debra J. Hanson

SCRIPTURE: Mark 5:24b-34

THEME: Faith can lead us to healing and wholeness.

In 1992, actor Steve Martin starred in a movie called “Leap of Faith.” He portrayed a faith healer named Jonas Nightingale – not his real name – who was actually a con artist. During his tent revivals, he planted people in the audience who were actually not in need of healing, had his staff among the audience members telling him things about other people that they heard so he would know about them, and when they came forward, they were miraculously healed. Jonas had a sequined coat that he always wore for the performances, and it was a sort of symbolic way of saying what a great healer he really was.

Normally, the performances were held in larger towns and cities, but one day, as the show traveled through a small town in Kansas, the bus carrying Jonas and the crew broke down. Since it would take a few days for the parts to arrive for the bus to be fixed, Jonas decided to set up the tent and have his healing services. They followed the same routine every night until the last night when a young boy came up on stage uninvited and asked Jonas to heal him. The boy had been on crutches for a long time, and he believed that Jonas could heal him. Jonas refused, knowing that he couldn’t really heal him, but the boy persisted.

Miraculously, the boy was healed, and it had a profound effect on Jonas who realized that maybe there really was something to this Jesus, and he needed to change his life. He repented and discovered that Jesus was able to heal him of his deceitful ways, and at the end of the movie, Jonas hitched a ride with a trucker, leaving his sequined jacket and everything else behind. He didn’t know where he was going, but he knew that he was changed and had experienced his own healing. It’s an interesting movie and presents a situation that somewhat resembles today’s story in Mark 5.

Although there are actually two healing stories in this part of Mark 5, I chose to focus on the story of the woman with the hemorrhage that had plagued her for twelve years, maybe because it has always been one of my favorites. Jesus is on his way to see the daughter of one of the synagogue leaders, and on the way, this unnamed woman appears in the crowd, believing that if she merely touched the hem of his garment, she would be healed. She was healed as she believed, and yet, if she had any idea that she could turn around and disappear into the crowd, she discovered that she was wrong. Jesus knew something powerful had happened, and he stopped everything.

It is helpful to understand the cultural and social circumstances around this event. The woman had so many things that kept her from being accepted by the society around her. Women did not have status; they received their status through the male head of household. However, this woman had no male head of household because of her hemorrhage which rendered her to be considered unclean; therefore, she was not to be touched because she would contaminate the other person. This isolated her from her family, home, and friends and pushed her into poverty. Doctors often preyed on the sick, and the more money they took, the poorer the sick became until eventually, they were forced to live in small camps outside the city wall with their disease uncured.



So, when the woman decided to enter the crowd, it would be considered that she not only contaminated them, but she would certainly contaminate Jesus when she touched him. How desperate she was to find healing! Think of the courage it took for her to push her way through all those people to get close enough to Jesus so she could touch him. Think of the danger it posed for her because she could not only be trampled under the feet of such a large crowd, but she could also be stoned for touching a man in public.

We hear stories all the time about parents who are so desperate to find healing for their child, to the point where they sell all they have or do fund raisers or move closer to a children's hospital where they can find help for the child. They risk everything to try to find healing, and many children are cured through a variety of treatment centers. Doctors, nurses, other medical staff provide hope as they work with the child and parents.

This woman had hope because she had courage and faith, and yet, we might wonder how she felt when Jesus stopped. We can almost feel the silence when Jesus turns around, searching the crowd and asking who touched him. His disciples were amazed: "Jesus, the crowd is pressing in all around you, how can you ask who touched you? Everyone is touching you!" But Jesus knew that the power that went out of him was far more than just being jostled in the crowd. This was a power that was an answer to a prayer, it was the touch of faith from a woman who had given everything she had in order to be well.

As the crowd went quiet and Jesus stood there waiting to find out who had touched him, the trembling woman came forward and fell at his feet, admitting that she had been the one. The expected reaction may have been one of reprimand or punishment, but Jesus acted with compassion and love. Yes, she had been cured, but now the healing would take place. In telling her that she was healed, Jesus pronounced her clean, affirmed her faith, and restored her not only to her family, but also to society. She was set free from societal condemnation and ostracization so she could resume her life, return to her husband, children, grandchildren. She could worship at the synagogue again, and she could walk the streets in the marketplace with her head held high.

Faith heals in many ways. For some, it may not heal the physical ailments that drag us down, but it may bring us to wholeness in spirit. My friend Phyllis died from lung cancer at the age of 52, and throughout her illness, she and I would talk about her faith. Her biggest joy was having raised three sons as a single mom. Her biggest regret was not being able to see her grandchildren be born and grow up. But most of all, she was secure in knowing that she was held in the arms of her loving Savior where she would be made whole again. Her healing was from a life time of challenges and struggles, and God had brought her to forgiveness and grace and love.

Sometimes we need healing physically, and, I don't know about you, but I am SO grateful for the people who choose to go into medicine so they can find ways to help us with our diseases and physical challenges. I am also grateful for those who treat us through emotional healing either from abuse or trauma or broken relationships or major losses in our lives. And I am grateful for friends, colleagues, church members, and family members who have helped me to find spiritual healing.

Spiritual healing was a big part of Jesus' ministry, and it is important for those times when we feel abandoned by God, unable to find even a small amount of faith that will help us get through the tough times or carry us when we are down and out. I am grateful for those who address the times when our relationships need healing, better communication, finding ways to forgive each other, and leads us to healing that touches not only our inner feelings but also the connection we have with someone else. We all need healing in some way or another.

Near the end of the service, we will offer a short service of healing, open to anyone who would like to be part of it. Jesus, as we have heard today, healed many people, and his disciples carried on the tradition by anointing with oil and laying on of hands. *"Anointing the forehead with oil is a sign, an act invoking the healing love of God. The oil points beyond itself and those doing the anointing to the action of the Holy Spirit and the presence of the healing Christ, who is God's Anointed One."* (from the General Board of Discipleship, <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/healing-services-and-prayers>). Prayers for healing, anointing with oil, and laying on of hands are not a magical formula that miraculously heal someone, but they open the door for helping us to connect with God more closely, setting ourselves right with God and with others.

We all are invited to participate in whatever way works for us. Dave Richards and I will be up front for those who would like to be part of the tradition of anointing with oil and/or laying on of hands. You may share what the healing is for, and it can be for yourself, for someone else, for a situation, a concern, or whatever is in your heart. Of course, you don't need to tell us anything if you prefer not to because God hears what is in our hearts. Also, if you prefer to stay in the pew and pray or sit in silence, that is also fine.

Whatever might be our touch of faith, we can be sure that God in Christ hears our prayers, knows what is in our hearts, and the Spirit speaks often in sighs too deep for words. Jonas Nightingale discovered that Jesus loved even him, and he was healed from his old ways, discovered faith in Jesus, and started a new journey in his life as he rode away to "who-knows-where" in the truck. The woman in our scripture story found renewal in her courage and her act of faith in touching Jesus' garment, and she was able to move forward in her life. That's what healing does. It moves us toward wholeness, helps us find renewal and invites us to share our faith with others.

Rev. Debra Dean Murphy writes: *When Jesus says to the woman, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease," it is an invitation to full restoration. He is inviting her (and us) into the Kin-dom/Kingdom of God where the last shall be first; where the hungry are filled with good things; where enemies become friends; and where diseased, broken bodies become part of the One Body – taken, blessed, broken, and shared with a suffering, waiting world.* (found at Text This Week under commentaries for today's scripture passage)

Let us pray: **Lord of healing, when someone in your world suffers, you suffer as well. Restore your world and heal your children so that no one needs to suffer any longer. Amen.** (Karl Jacobson, found at Text This Week under commentaries for today's scripture passage.)