

Sally Hammel: Good morning. Will you please stand as you're able and join me in the responsive reading Psalm number 78 and your black Appleton Salter. Give ear O my people to my teaching. Turn your ear to what I say.

Congregation: I will expound a theme, hold fourth on the lessons of the past.

Sally Hammel: Things we have heard and known that our fathers have told us.

Congregation: We will not withhold them from their children, telling the coming generation the praises of the Lord and his might, and the wonders he performed

Sally Hammel: He established a decree in Jacob, ordained a teaching in Israel, charging our fathers to make them known to their children.

Congregation: That a future generation might know – children yet to be born – and in their turn tell their children.

Sally Hammel: That they might put their confidence in God and not forget God's great deeds, but observe his commandments.

Congregation: And not be like the their fathers, a wayward and defiant generation, a generation whose heart was inconstant, whose spirit was not true to God.

Choir: (Singing).

Barbara Nobles Crawford: Good morning church. Things that matter, this is my morning prayer with you. Our lives began to end the day that we become silent about things that matter. Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King said those words. In the midst of all that we are experiencing in this country today and the world, the good, the bad, and the ugly Dr King's quote resonates with me, and brings for me to the forefront at least three things that matter that I use to sustain my optimism and my belief. Those three things are faith, trust and love. Things in life really don't always make sense to us, do they? They really don't. Sometimes we are left to deal with circumstances that we cannot explain. The death of a loved one, not getting the good grades, or the promotion that we worked so hard for, or the budget that we fought for, or the wicked person catching all the lucky breaks. Sometimes we just don't understand that.

Barbara Nobles Crawford: So I say we simply have to trust and have faith that our continued obedience to God works together for the good of those of us who love him. And so why you might ask I say maybe a plausible answer is because really none of us are immune to disappointments and tragedy, challenges and the hurdles in life. Scripture tells us in Proverbs the third chapter, the five through sixth verse two, trust in the Lord with all our heart and lean not on our own understanding.

Barb Nobles Crawford: Recently, I was told by a friend, or a friend who's very close to me, that she shared her exasperation with all of the weight of the social, the human, the political,

chaos that's happening right now in the world. And I reminded her of that scripture. You might remember that later on in that scripture within Proverbs it talks about submitting ourselves to God, and that if we were to do that, he would show us the path. The path will be made clearer as we look at that.

Barbara Nobles Crawford: So I told her about that scripture and she basically admitted to me that her faith has been shaken. That her belief, she's questioning it and she said she has trouble because it really conflicts with her self-determination, her own wisdom, her own ability to be able to make things for good. And so she decided to take things in her own hands and she said her plea to herself or her creed to herself was that every day do some good. Do some good in the sense of evidence-based things. She was at a point in her faith where she said, I need to do things that I can see the immediate result of and not do as the scripture sort of asks us to do is to lean in and lean on on God in these exasperating moments.

Barbara Nobles Crawford: So what I thought about now that's a dilemma for me because I am a believer and I do have faith and I do love God and I thought, what can I say that will help her really move to a different place in her thinking? And I thought immediately about some work that I, I mean for many years I did in Brazil, and I remember the locals telling me to get up like 4:00 in the morning, 4:30 like be the first one up at the hotel and and face the east and watch the sunrise.

Barbara Nobles Crawford: What they didn't tell me was that, that would be one of the most defining moments in my life that helped affirm my faith. Because there is nothing like watching the sun rise literally out of the ocean. I mean, I was standing watching with a gazillion professional photographers and there were tourists on the other side and everybody knew to wake up early to watch this powerful unleashing of love, of nature, that's just coming out of the ocean was the sunrise.

Barbara Nobles Crawford: And I thought then to myself, if God can do this what can he do about my disappointments, my struggles, my challenges in life? And that this scripture which says don't rely just on my own understanding that I can have faith and rely upon that, that sure as we are here, the sunrises, the sunsets, all of these powerful nature unleashing moments to remind us, to remind us that these are the things that matter. Faith, love, trust in God.

Barbara Nobles Crawford: Will you pray with me? I come before you oh Lord, as the sunrises. May your hope rise up in me. As the birds sing their final songs of the season may your love flow out of me to others. As the light floods into this new day, may your joy shine through me. I come before you Lord and drink in this moment of peace that I may carry something of your hope, love, and joy today in my heart. Amen. Thank you.

Sally Hammel: Please join me in saying the Lord's prayer on the back of your program, our father who are art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us the [crosstalk 00:11:26] and forgive us for our trespasses. As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thy [crosstalk 00:11:41] and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Sally Hammel: Please stand as you're able and we will sing Oh Though Who Came As From Above number 298 in the red Crimson Hymnal.

Congregation: (Singing).

Sally Hammel: Let us go forth to love and serve the Lord. Amen.

Sally Hammel: Excuse me, I forgot about Mem Cafe. So after the service will be downstairs to enjoy coffee and conversation for the Mem Cafe as we do most Wednesdays. Please join us. Thank you.

Congregation: Thank you.