



## September 2024 HUG~in~a~MUG ~ Vol.99

*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1).*

Greetings dearest Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Conviction was one of the fifteen “C” words I spoke of last month. But this month, I am fiercely clinging to “HOPE” with each and every coming day as we anticipate a relief from Fall, school starting, vacations wrapping up, and coming on board with a fresh, newly elected Board of Officers, with its new ‘24-26 Biennium of challenges. And mission opportunities; all of them etched with things hoped for!

“Hope” is both a noun and a verb. *It means to: want something to happen or to be true, and usually have good reason to think that it might!* As a noun, synonyms might be intention, aspiration, goal, dream, purpose, or target. As a verb, it reflects optimism, positivity, take heart, to cheer, anticipate, expect, trust, believe, and to rest assured.

Luther himself summed it up as “One of the noblest and most precious *virtues of faith* is to close one’s eyes to this, ingeniously to desist from exploring the why and the wherefore, and cheerfully leave everything to God.” (AE 42:53). Isn’t that amazingly simple? That He wishes us to simply disregard the reasons and the whys and trust His goodness and mercy.

Seeking reassurance, in a wonderful old song and lyrics that popped into my mind, I searched Psalm 30:5: “For His anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but Joy comes in the morning.”

This contrast shows the distinction between Law and Gospel; that *God’s favor continues forever*. So, in the second verse of the song, “Joy in the Morning” we sing: “Let go of tomorrow; Grace will be there when you come to the end of your rope.” That is the conviction of things not seen. And the WHY we rest in our convictions and why we step out: Greeting the Dawn! Praising God for each New Day! Putting on the Armor of Salvation against the Enemies in our midst.

So, imagine the impact of this past Sunday’s Ephesians 5:27 sermon had on me. Here Paul lays out the enormity of God’s love for us, the church; not to rule, but to *love as Christ loved the church*. We were asked to reflect on how Christ gave Himself up for his church in verse 27: *that she might be holy and without blemish*. It brings us to our knees comprehending ourselves.

Amen, thank you Jesus Christ. Being loud and able to shout out our JOY: being a beloved child of God, sitting at the foot of his throne, bathing in and with hope.

And, Father God, we entreat You to bring wisdom and strength to the leaders of this Country, your Church, and entreat each one of us, Your Missionaries here on Earth, to touch the lives each new day of those who yearn to hear our voices — And know You.

**May our loving Lord direct our footsteps, according to His word.**

Respectfully Yours — ☺ Pat Reck, HUG Author