

# SPOTLIGHT

ON SAINT JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH  
BALTIMORE MARYLAND



## SEPTEMBER 2024

STANDING STRONG

We are called to stand strong. The Church, we, are the body of Christ on earth, each with their own vocation and purpose just as Christ is the head. Recently, the Epistle reading for the first Sunday in September contained the words from St. Paul concerning the armor of God. Let us take his words to heart for we are certainly in the midst of a struggle *“against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil”*.

Wrapped up in the forgiveness and salvation won for us by Christ we band together as one body equipped for the battle ahead by the Lord. Our tools and weapons are not earthly tools and weapons but spiritual things provided by the Lord; such as prayer and His Word. Early church father and bishop of Rome, Clement, wrote the following in his first letter to the church in Corinth between 81-96AD.

*“Therefore let us wage war, men and brothers, with all earnestness under His faultless commands. Let us consider those who serve as soldiers under those who rule us, how precisely, how readily, how subserviently they fulfill their orders... The great cannot exist without the small, nor the small without the great. There is a certain combination among all, and usefulness lies in this. Let us take our body: the head is nothing without the feet; likewise, the feet are nothing without the head. Even the smallest parts of our body are necessary and useful to the whole body, but all work together and experience and mutual subjection, to save the whole body.*

*Therefore let our whole body be saved in Christ Jesus, and let each of us be subject to his neighbor, according to the gift given to him. Let the strong care for the weak and let the weak respect the strong. Let the rich provide for the poor and let the poor give thanks to God, that he gave to him one through whom he might supply his need. Let the wise one demonstrate his wisdom not with words but with good works. Do not let the humble person testify about himself, but allow him to be testified about by another. Do not let the pure in the flesh boast, knowing that another is the one who provides for his self-control... Therefore having all these things from Him, we ought to give thanks to Him for everything, to whom be the glory forever, amen.”*

So we are called to work together - each with their own skill, gift, and ability. Much like an army must band together - each to their own purpose. There are times when we must step up to the *“call of duty”* and chip in where and when we are needed, even if it is out of our comfort zone. *“All hands on deck”* when it comes to work and ministry of the Church.

Let us keep this in mind as we push forward at Saint James, with her many various building issues and temporal struggles. Ask yourselves *“what as the Lord endowed to me in my skills, gifts, and abilities”* or *“what is it that I could do to step-up to the call of duty, even if it is out of my comfort zone”*? The Lord does indeed provide our direction and purpose while fighting the good fight against evil; awaiting life everlasting.

*Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate righteousness, and as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplications for all the saints, and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may deliver it boldly, as I ought to speak.*

Stand strong in the Lord, for He is able to equip and provide for you. *The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise him. The LORD is the strength of his people, a fortress of salvation for his anointed one.* -Psalm 28:7-8-

In Christ,

*Pastor Bednash.*

Ephesians 6:10-11

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand the against the schemes of the devil.