

Glad River
Pastor Nathan Erb
Immanuel, Crystal Lake

There is an amazing feeling that comes over you when you walk to the river's edge on a summer morning, and the sun is glistening off the little ripples on the water, and all of God's creatures are starting their day. Imagine this scene, and take a deep breath. I can picture myself there, full of hope and peace, even if the chaos of this world surround me. No matter what kind of day I had yesterday, or the challenges I will face today – in this moment there is joy.

"There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day." Psalm 46:3-5

How I wish to believe these words every day of my life. Sadly, sinfully, I don't believe this wholeheartedly. I see trouble around me. I feel the weight of the world. "Nations are in uproar." There are wars, and moral dilemmas, and lies masquerading as truth. There is sickness, and poverty, and families falling apart. Where is the calm and quiet river whose streams will bring me gladness? Where is the help God promises?

"God is our refuge and strength, and ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea." Psalm 46:1-2

It doesn't feel that way. I'm often afraid. I believe this one day, but more often I doubt it. Is there any way for me to feel safe; to feel secure; to know that God is ever-present, and that I have no reason to fear?

"Come and see what the Lord has done. He makes wars cease; and breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the shield with fire. He says, "Be still, and know that I am God." Psalm 46:8-10

Come and see what the Lord has done. "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." I can't always count on *feeling* as if God's promise is true – but I can be still and *know*. I can sit at the foot of the cross and contemplate the battle Christ fought for me and won. I can rest securely knowing that in Christ all my sins are forgiven. No matter what I face the Lord Almighty is with us, Christ Jesus is our fortress. He is the river that stills my troubled soul.