

MON.

November

25

Psalm  
89:1-18

I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you have established your faithfulness in heaven itself (Ps. 89:2).

## ALWAYS RIGHT ON TIME

DUANE C. BRUSH

Astronomers study a type of star called a pulsar. They pulse with a rotating beam of energy. Like a lighthouse on a dark night these stars are only detectable when the beam is pointed toward the observer. Some pulsars rotate so quickly and accurately that their pulses can be used to measure time with greater precision than previously possible. In 2011 a pulsar clock was installed in St. Catherine's Church in Gdansk, Poland. The clock is linked to 16 radio telescope antennas and it compares signals from six highly accurate pulsars. The result is believed to be, at the date of installation, the world's most accurate clock. It is projected not to gain or lose one second in nearly 1.4 billion years!

The psalmist could have had no knowledge of such precision in timekeeping. However, he perceived an eternally faithful Lord in the heavens whose love stands firm forever. An error of even a second in over a billion years is unreliable when compared to the faithful love of our Lord.

"But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son," (Galatians 4:4a). Not a second too early, not a second too late; God will never fail. Not in a billion-billion years!

*God's love so sure  
shall still endure, All  
measureless and strong;  
Redeeming grace to  
Adam's race—The  
saints' and angels' song.*  
"The Love of God" by  
Frederick M. Lehman

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**"Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the LORD, who has compassion on you (Isaiah 54:10).**

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### Prayer Needs:

Many people in the United States and Canada will come to know Christ and receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

TUES.

November

26

Psalm  
89:19-  
37

I will establish his line forever, his throne as long as the heavens endure (Ps. 89:29).

## AN ENDURING THRONE

DUANE C. BRUSH

Kings are often concerned that their descendants will remain on the throne as long as possible. The Imperial House of Japan, the Yamato Dynasty, is believed to be the oldest royal line in the world. They claim as their founder the Emperor Jimmu (ca. 660 B.C.) through 125 descendants to the current Emperor Akihito.

God revealed to King David, “Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever” (2 Samuel 7:16). However, shortly following the death of David’s son Solomon the kingdom was divided. In less than 500 years the direct descent of David’s line was interrupted by the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of the Jews under the Babylonians. By the time of Jesus Herod’s Hasmonean dynasty ruled in Jerusalem as puppet kings to the Roman emperor. Had God’s promise failed? No.

The angel Gabriel told Mary she would bear a son to be named Jesus, “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end,” (Luke 1:32-33). His kingdom will last forever because He lives forever!

*Joy to the world! the  
Lord is come; Let  
earth receive her  
King. Let ev’ry heart  
prepare Him room,  
And heav’n and  
nature sing.*

“Joy to the World” by Isaac  
Watts

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**“The kingdom  
of the world  
has become the  
kingdom of our  
Lord and of his  
Messiah, and  
he will reign for  
ever and ever”  
(Revelation 11:15).**

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### **Prayer Needs:**

Developing Christian  
leaders in the United States  
and Canada.

## THE LAST STANZA

DUANE C. BRUSH

Psalm 89 is a powerful hymn. The first stanza (vv. 1-18) exalts God's faithfulness, righteousness and justice. The second (vv. 19-37) rejoices in the Lord who is mighty to save. The final stanza (vv. 38-52) takes a somber turn; it begins with an indictment of those who have spurned God's "anointed one" (v. 38). It ends with a prayer for God to remember mercy.

From the human viewpoint it seems that death and the grave triumph in the end. Even God's Anointed One, Jesus Christ, tasted death. He was mocked, "Come down from the cross and save yourself!" (Mark 15:30). His body was placed in the grave. If this is truly the way life ends the cynics win! There is no justice, no mercy, no hope—only the dark oblivion of the grave.

Still, God will not be mocked. He will be found true and every human being a liar (Romans 3:4). "But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. . . . For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:20, 22). The last stanza was written by Jesus Christ. Our hope is in Him alone.

*Death cannot keep  
his prey—Jesus, my  
Savior! He tore the  
bars away—Jesus, my  
Lord!*

"Christ Arose" by Robert  
Lowry

**The journey of faith  
and hope intersect  
at Christmas  
(Debbie Salter  
Goodwin).**

**Prayer Needs:**

Many young people will  
be called into full-time  
Christian ministry in the  
United States and Canada.

## DID YOU HEAR ME?

DUANE C. BRUSH

I have arrived at the stage in life where far too many people mumble. The number of people who fail to speak up and properly enunciate is extremely alarming. I am not sure what has caused this problem. Maybe they have listened to too much loud music or follow the speaking style of their favorite TV or singing personalities. They all mumble, too. My wife has been so bold as to suggest that the problem may not be other people. She seems to think that I should get my hearing checked; at least that is what I think she said!

Thankfully, God has no hearing problem. The angel told Zechariah, “Your prayer has been heard.” Zechariah must have known immediately which prayer. “Your wife Elizabeth will bear a son.” That must have been The Prayer, the prayer they had prayed for so long and eventually abandoned as hopeless. Nevertheless, God had heard. The answer was delayed because God had a special plan for this child.

God hears each prayer. When the answer is delayed we should not assume His answer is “no,” it may be “not yet.” Are you listening?

*There’s music in my soul today, A carol to my King; And Jesus, listening, can hear The songs I cannot sing.*

“Sunshine in My Soul” by  
Eliza E. Hewitt

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**Even when we give up on our prayers, God does not (Debbie Salter Goodwin).**

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### **Prayer Needs:**

Faculty and students as they prepare for full-time Christian ministry in the United States and Canada.

## CAN I GET A TESTIMONY?

DUANE C. BRUSH

“Let me tell you what the Lord has done for me!” Her voice was clear and her aged face was radiant. She couldn’t wait until the usual time for testimonies. For five months, according to the custom, she had remained in seclusion. What had been kept hidden could now be given glad expression. God had met her need, prayer had been answered, and she just wanted to give God all the glory. Joy seemed to pour out of her and over the whole community. The whole mood of the village was lifted.

Zechariah, her husband, was silent. He had expressed doubt. “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well on in years.” Zechariah, who was a priest after all, had focused on their human insufficiency rather than God’s unlimited sufficiency. He would not speak again until he affirmed the will of God.

How often are our voices silenced because we fail to give God the glory He is due? “Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name” (Hebrews 13:15).

*I sing, for I cannot be  
silent; His love is the  
theme of my song.*

“Redeemed” by Fanny J.  
Crosby

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**“As for us, we  
cannot help  
speaking about  
what we have seen  
and heard” (Acts  
4:20).**

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### **Prayer Needs:**

For Christians coordinating cross-cultural ministries and evangelistic outreach in the United States and Canada.

## COMFORT YE, MY PEOPLE

DUANE C. BRUSH

If you have attended a performance of George F. Handel's *Messiah* you may remember how it begins. Following a brief string overture a single tenor voice sings "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God," (Isaiah 40:1, KJV). The first three selections are all taken from Isaiah 40:1-5.

A friend and patron of Handel's, Charles Jennens, is believed to have arranged the libretto (the text) on which the *Messiah* is based. Jennens was a supporter of the biblical view that God is redemptively involved in the world. He opposed the uninvolved Creator proposed by the popular deists of his day. Jennen's expressed his view powerfully in the scriptures he selected. Even today they remind us that a Savior, the Messiah, has come.

The glory revealed at Christmas is Immanuel, God with us. In the manger of Bethlehem we observe, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). Lift up your voice and do not be afraid, say to cities and people near and far, "Behold, your God!" (Isaiah 40:9, KJV). Hallelujah!

*Publish glad tidings,  
Tidings of peace;  
Tidings of Jesus,  
Redemption, and  
release.*

"O Christians, Haste" by  
Mary Ann Thomson

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**Whatever God  
wants to say [to  
you] will bring  
joy, your own very  
special, uniquely  
designed tidings of  
joy (Debbie Salter  
Goodwin).**

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**Prayer Needs:**

For Christians who minister through disaster relief programs after natural and human-made disasters in the United States and Canada.

SUN.

December

1

Malachi

4

But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays (Mal. 4:2a).

## THE SUN THAT NEVER SETS

DUANE C. BRUSH

Akhenaten, Egyptian pharaoh during the 14th century B.C., is remembered as a religious reformer who promoted a brand of monotheism. His god was the “Aten” (literally the disk of the sun). He is attributed with “The Great Hymn to the Aten,” an outstanding example of ancient Egyptian literature. Some scholars note parallels between Akhenaten’s hymn and Psalm 104. The object of Akhenaten’s worship was very different from the God of the Bible. In Akhenaten’s belief the sun was the greatest of the other gods. He compared Aten to the sun among the stars. Akhenaten considered himself the son of the Aten. His self-chosen name means “living spirit of the Aten.” It was only through him that Aten communicated. The God of the Bible, on the other hand, has no rival (Deuteronomy 4:32-40), and has spoken once and for all through His Son, Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1).

Jesus is the “sun of righteousness.” The healing in His rays (or “wings”) is for all living under sin’s oppression. He proclaimed, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life,” (John 8:12). That sun will never set.

*Hail, the heav’n born  
Prince of Peace!*

*Hail the Sun of  
Righteousness! Light  
and life to all He  
brings, Ris’n with  
healing in His wings.*

“Hark! the Herald Angels  
Sing” by Charles Wesley

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**“Wake up, sleeper,  
rise from the dead,  
and Christ will  
shine on you”  
(Ephesians 5:14).**

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### **Prayer Needs:**

For young people to be involved in ministries to the poor, homeless and needy in the United States and Canada.