



CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER
United Church of Christ



Reflections from Pastor Brooke for August 21, 2020

On the day I called, you answered me, you increased my strength of soul.
~ Psalm 138:3

Each week in the Lectionary, there is a First Testament reading, a Psalm, an Epistle or something else from the New Testament, and the Gospel. This summer, there has consistently been a First Testament and Psalm, and then an alternative First Testament and Psalm. Psalm 138 is from the alternative this week and not one we will hear in worship.

When I read this, the first image that came to my mind was God as a bubble gum machine. Do those even exist anymore? I can remember when it was a big deal to put in a penny (can you buy anything for a penny these days?) and, on demand, a piece of gum came out of the machine. It might not have been the exact flavor you wanted, but you had gum and that was delightful. The psalmist kind of makes God sound like a bubble gum machine — “I called; you answered me.”

I was recently spending some time with God, listening for where God is calling me to be and what God is calling me to do. I was talking to a friend and said that I wished I would hear from God quickly, but I understand that’s not how it works. He jokingly replied, “You may have to get demanding with the Almighty.” I laughed, but so often I think we do get demanding of wanting to call on God and expecting an immediate answer. However, the psalmist doesn’t say, “And you gave me exactly what I asked for.” He says, “You increased my strength of soul.”

When we interact with God, we **will** be changed; God **will** answer us. We worship a God much bigger than a bubble-gum-machine God. We worship a God that desires a relationship with us and will work in our life — in God’s time — to provide us with answers. Thanks be to God!

Blessings,

Pastor Brooke