

**“Living in Gratitude”**

Psalm 16: 1-11

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**Starting your day well:** How do you start your day? Do you start your day in a place of being thankful?

**Healthy and Unhealthy Fear:** Healthy fear is fear where one is in danger and needs to ensure safety. Unhealthy fear is stimulated by a perceived or imagined danger or problem which usually does not amount to anything.

**Where do you live?** I am not asking literally where you stay, but what do you focus on in life and where do you find meaning and security?

**My choice is you, GOD, first and only.**

**And now I find I'm your choice!**

**You set me up with a house and yard.**

**And then you made me your heir! (Psalm 16: 5-6 – *The Message*).** The message here is that the Psalmist is living in peace and gratitude with his God.

**Experiencing the gift of freedom in life.** Author and theologian Henri Nouwen writes about freedom from fear. We are a fearful people. We are afraid of conflict, war, an uncertain future, illness, and death. This fear robs us of our freedom and allows our society the power to manipulate us with threats and promises.

Unhealthy fear says you are not successful unless you buy these clothes, or this car, or you have this gadget. Or, the fear which politicians plant in voters' minds that voting for their rival will destroy your wealth, or in no uncertain terms make you suffer. The goal is often to motivate voters to focus on their own needs and 'scarcity' and encourage fear of one's neighbour. Unhealthy fear limits our sense of gratitude for the gifts we receive from God. This kind of motivation is not in line with how Jesus calls us to love our neighbor. Living in the freedom and security of the love of God, helps one see clearly the difference between healthy and unhealthy fear.

**<sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8: 38-39 - NRSV)**

**What steps are you taking to live in gratitude?** How do you start your day? Let us help one another name the fears before us and name the love that will never let us go and be thankful!