

Column

We rightly celebrate God's hand in the great things of life. I am thinking of such things as putting the planets and stars in place, giving life to both man and beasts and ordering the seasons. Those things are important and should be celebrated, but God's hand can also be seen in the small things of life, if our eyes are open.

An example of what I am talking about occurred during our recent snow days in North Georgia. By the time this incident took place, only patches of snow remained on the ground, mainly in areas where the sun did not strike directly. However, driveways, walkways and steps remained treacherous as the snow began to melt during the day and then refreeze at night when temperatures dipped into the teens and 20s. More than that, by this time, many had let their guard down and were attempting to go about their business as usual.

Returning to my story, I was visiting a member of our church at an assisted living facility one town south of where I live. After finishing the visit, before

I had left the building, I received a text from a fellow clergyman saying that he had broken his ankle while getting to his car at home and that he was at an urgent care facility. As it turned out, the clinic was just down the hill. In less than five minutes, I was there.

When I arrived, the technicians were just finishing up putting a boot on his affected foot and fitting him for crutches. Needless to say, he was more than surprised when the staff told him that there was someone out front waiting to assist in getting him home.

To round off the story, he was able to drive but needed help getting in and out of his car and up the steps into his house. More than that, his dog needed to be walked, which I was glad to do.

One could say my being so close and available was a happy coincidence, or you could say it was providential. I prefer the latter. God provided.

Perhaps you have had times in your life where something similar took place, a need arose and before you sent up a prayer, God provided.

I remember another incident. A lady who lived around the corner from our church used a mechanical, battery-powered chair to get around town. On one occasion her chair stopped working. A passing motorist was able to get her back to her apartment. I was called and asked to take charge of dealing with her abandoned chair on the roadside.

Walking to where it was, I soon realized I was not able to push it, and the battery was completely drained. Lowering my head, I breathed a prayer, "God, you are going to have to take care of this one. It's out of my league." No sooner than I had raised my head and looked up, I saw a pickup truck coming down the road with a trailer. The man driving the truck was a member of our church. Together, we were able to push the chair onto the trailer and get it back to the lady's apartment where it could be recharged.

As in the more recent incident, God not only provided, but with remarkable speed. Some might call it chance. I call it grace.

We do right in celebrating all that the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe does on the big scale, but we also need to thank and praise Him for His power and presence in small things. No matter is too great or too small for the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father in Him. Open my eyes to both, Lord, and keep them open!

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our infirmities, and in all our dangers and necessities stretch forth thy right hand to help and defend us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
(Collect for the Third Sunday after Epiphany, Book of Common Prayer)

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