

## Tuesday, March 24

*Scripture reading: Galatians 6:2*

This is a Scripture passage Stephen Ministry uses to affirm that the ministry is God-pleasing. Perhaps it was even behind the inception of this ministry. At this time in the church calendar, the word "burdens" reminds me of the burdens Jesus carried to his crucifixion; granted, no human being could carry the weight of the sins of the world, but Jesus also carried his cross as he walked to the site where he would be crucified. This was a burden that someone else could carry.

Scripture tells us that a man named Simon carried Jesus's cross for him. Simon didn't choose to carry the cross. Instead, he was forced to carry the cross. In my mind, I think -- ah, to be given the opportunity to carry the cross of Christ! What an honor that would be! How could Simon not have volunteered? I truthfully don't know if I had been there, if I would have had the courage or the strength to do what Simon did, but I think it would certainly be a story to tell the grandkids about the day I walked beside Jesus, the Son of God, and carried his cross for him.

You and I weren't there when Jesus carried his cross to Golgotha, but nevertheless, we have been given our own modern-day opportunity to carry burdens for Jesus. You see, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me" (Matt. 25:40).

There are many different ways in which we can carry each other's burdens. Here at St. John's, in addition to the Stephen Ministry, there are meals to prepare, flowers to deliver, and shut-ins to visit, as well as prison ministries and mission trips. The opportunities to carry each other's burdens are numerous and varied. What an honor and a joy to carry other's burdens because when we do, we do it also for Jesus.

*Prayer: Dearest Lord Jesus, thank you for your obedience to our heavenly Father and for dying for my sins. There is nothing I can do to repay what you have done, but I thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you by carrying another's burdens. Help me find joy in service to others.*

Written by Bev Rogers