

# *Sleepless in Geneseo*

One of my favorite psalms is Psalm 121 (*"I lift up my eyes to the hills..."*). Verses 3 & 4 have been by refrain for the last 13 weeks. *The LORD will not let your foot be moved nor will the one who watches over you fall asleep. Behold, the keeper of Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.*

It has been a comfort to me to know that when I'm up at all hours of the night with the baby, I'm not alone. God is awake, too, keeping watch over all God's children.

Many of you have asked me, since Noah was born, "Are you getting any sleep?" or even, "Is he sleeping through the night yet?" The answer to both of those questions is "No." If you catch me yawning during one of Pastor Matt's sermons, it's simply because I'm exhausted. It's a blessed exhaustion, though, and one that I wouldn't trade for the world.

If I'm lucky, I'm only roused from sleep once in the middle of the night by hungry cries. As I feed my child, I thank God that I have what Noah needs, that I can satisfy his hunger. Soon enough, he will fall back asleep, and I will, too.

The Psalmist knew that God hears the cries of God's children all the time. And despite the fact that God is continually and consistently bestowing blessings upon us, our hungry cries never cease. There are always those among us who cry out in need – in need of food, in need of healing, in need of justice, in need of peace, in need of love. God hears our cries, at any hour of the day or night, as God keeps watch over us all.

This Lent, we have the chance to respond to the cries of our brothers and sisters with the same loving attention that God gives. We will participate in Lutheran World Relief's efforts to assemble and distribute Personal Care Kits (*see page 4 for more information*). A few simple items can bring a much-needed sense of dignity to those who are fleeing violence or recovering from natural disasters. A bar of soap and a toothbrush can be just what's needed to bring comfort after what may have been many sleepless nights for those fleeing a war zone. A clean towel and a comb provide for basic human needs in the nightmare that is the aftermath of an earthquake, wildfire, or hurricane. The recipient of these items may be able to sleep soundly, for a few hours at least, while God remains vigilant through the night.

—Pastor Laura