



MESSIAH
LUTHERAN
Skidaway Island

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

LENT

2021

PRAYER GUIDE

Lent 2021 – A Call to Prayer

Dear Friends in Christ,

Let's pray! That's my vision for us as a community this Lent: a congregation who is praying together. Lent is a time when the church puts an emphasis on certain Christian disciplines: helping the poor, fasting or cutting back on food or something else, and prayer. As this Lent marks one year of living with the pandemic, we have experienced many changes and setbacks, but we can still pray. So, let's do exactly that.

At the Sunday Discipleship hour not along ago, we watched a good video that was billed as being about our Christianity and our nation.... but at the heart of what was being discussed was transformation through prayer: personal transformation and communal transformation. That is my hope for us this Lent.

Prayer is the way we communicate with God. He gives prayer as a gift for us to use, to pour our hearts out: how we are doing, what we need, what we are grateful for. But often overlooked is that prayer is also one way God speaks to us. As the words come out, God will meet us, and, if we listen carefully, we can discern his will and voice in our lives.

Prayer is not always easy or simple. Many say they have trouble finding the words, many wonder if they are praying "correctly," as if there were a right way or wrong way to reach out to God. Others feel unworthy of bothering God, and others may feel inauthentic in adapting blatant acts of holiness, given an inconsistent past of relating to God. Questions abound about prayer. Scripture gives guidance on prayer, and there are

many excellent books on prayer for those who want to go deeper into these questions.

God wants to hear from you. God is not critical of how or when that happens, be it in the car, on a walk, in bed before falling asleep, wherever and whenever you can, just open your heart to God and speak to God as if God is listening and ready to respond.

A word about the Bible translation: You will soon notice that the scriptural passages might sound different than you're accustomed to. It is a translation called "The Message" by a pastor who sought to create a more understandable translation for American ears. It is a different translation, a bit more relaxed, and different from what you would be accustomed to, but hopefully the translation will invoke new ways of hearing these ancient texts, in thought-provoking ways.

I invite you to join the rest of the congregation on praying each day this Lent. We have this guide that offers a theme for the day, some scripture. Each day I invite you to write down what you are grateful for. Then I suggest what you might pray as it relates to the theme of the day. You can also use the daily videos we will supply via YouTube as a companion in your prayer.

At Easter, we can look back on how this time of intentional prayer has shaped us.

Pastor Jason Talsness

Day 1, February 17

THEME: RENEWAL THROUGH PRAYER

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 26: 40-41 *Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? ⁴¹Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: Pray for strength and patience to wait upon the Lord and to grow in the discipline of prayer.

Day 2, February 18

THEME: TRUSTING GOD

SCRIPTURE: EXODUS 33: 14-16 God said, *“My presence will go with you. I’ll see the journey to the end.”* Moses said, *“If your presence doesn’t take the lead here, call this trip off right now. How else will it be known that you’re with me in this, with me and your people? Are you traveling with us or not? How else will we know that we’re special, I and your people, among all other people on this planet Earth?”*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: Pray for strength and patience to wait upon the Lord and to grow in the discipline of prayer.

Day 3, February 19

THEME: HELPING THE POOR

SCRIPTURE: 1 JOHN 3: 17-20 *This is how we've come to understand and experience love: Christ sacrificed his life for us. This is why we ought to live sacrificially for our fellow believers, and not just be out for ourselves. If you see some brother or sister in need and have the means to do something about it but turn a cold shoulder and do nothing, what happens to God's love? It disappears. And you made it disappear.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: For those who lack adequate income, for the hungry, the destitute, for those losing hope, living in fear...that others who have more will share with those who are in need.

Day 4, February 20

THEME: OBEDIENCE TO CHRIST'S WORD

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 7: 24-25 *These words I speak to you are not incidental additions to your life, homeowner improvements to your standard of living. They are foundational words, words to build a life on. If you work these words into your life, you are like a smart carpenter who built a house on solid rock. Rain poured down, the river flooded, a tornado hit—but nothing moved the house. It was fixed to the rock.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: For a heart that is aligned with God's, forsaking rebellion against God in exchange for a humble and compliant spirit.

Day 5, February 21

THEME: REPENTANCE

SCRIPTURE: 2 CORINTHIANS: 7-10 *Distress that drives us to God does that. It turns us around. It gets us back in the way of salvation. We never regret that kind of pain. But those who let distress drive them away from God are full of regrets, end up on a deathbed of regrets.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: For God to draw attention to any areas in your life that need adjustment, re-prioritization.

Day 6, February 22

THEME: FORGIVENESS

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 18: 21-22 *At that point Peter got up the nerve to ask, “Master, how many times do I forgive a brother or sister who hurts me? Seven?”*

Jesus replied, “Seven! Hardly. Try seventy times seven.”

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: Pray that we would remember and understand the depths from which we have been forgiven by Christ, and that we would extend that forgiveness to others.

Day 7, February 23

THEME: WILDERNESS

SCRIPTURE: MARK 1: 12-13 *At once, this same Spirit pushed Jesus out into the wild. For forty wilderness days and nights he was tested by Satan. Wild animals were his companions, and angels took care of him.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: Pray for more grace and endurance in those areas of your life that are challenging.

Day 8, February 24

THEME: FINDING THE RIGHT WORDS TO PRAY

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 11:1 *One day he was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said, “Master, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples.”*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: We come before God often not knowing what to say or how to say it. Let us look to Christ’s example on how to pray. We ask God’s Holy Spirit to give us the words and to intercede on our behalf as we pray this Lent.

Day 9, February 25

THEME: GOD'S BELOVED SON

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 3:17 *The moment Jesus came up out of the baptismal waters, the skies opened up and he saw God's Spirit—it looked like a dove—descending and landing on him. And along with the Spirit, a voice: "This is my Son, chosen and marked by my love, delight of my life."*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: For us to understand our identity as God's beloved children and the confidence that comes with it.

Day 10, February 26

THEME: HOLY WISDOM

SCRIPTURE: EPHESIANS 1: 15-19 *That's why, when I heard of the solid trust you have in the Master Jesus and your outpouring of love to all the followers of Jesus, I couldn't stop thanking God for you—every time I prayed, I'd think of you and give thanks. But I do more than thank. I ask—ask the God of our Master, Jesus Christ, the God of glory—to make you intelligent and discerning in knowing him personally, your eyes focused and clear, so that you can see exactly what it is he is calling you to do, grasp the immensity of this glorious way of life he has for his followers, oh, the utter extravagance of his work in us who trust him—endless energy, boundless strength.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: *Asking God “What are you calling me to do?” and for the courage and strength to do it.*

Day 11, February 27

THEME: GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE: HEBREWS 4:12 *God means what he says. What he says goes. His powerful Word is sharp as a surgeon's scalpel, cutting through everything, whether doubt or defense, laying us open to listen and obey. Nothing and no one can resist God's Word. We can't get away from it—no matter what.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: For God's word to be authoritative in our lives, that we set aside doubts and distractions and humbly trust God.

Day 12, February 28

THEME: INTIMACY

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 22: 35-40 *When the Pharisees heard how he had bested the Sadducees, they gathered their forces for an assault. One of their religion scholars spoke for them, posing a question they hoped would show him up: “Teacher, which command in God’s Law is the most important?” Jesus said, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence.’ This is the most important, the first on any list. But there is a second to set alongside it: ‘Love others as well as you love yourself.’ These two commands are pegs; everything in God’s Law and the Prophets hangs from them.”*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: To experience the love of God through Christian fellowship, for God to bless our friendships.

Day 13, March 1

THEME: LOVE ONE ANOTHER

SCRIPTURE: JOHN 13: 34-35 *"Let me give you a new command: Love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples—when they see the love you have for each other."*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: For our church to love one another like God loves us, for us to share love to our neighbors and city.

Day 14, March 2

THEME: POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

SCRIPTURE: ACTS 1: 4, 24 *Then, like a wildfire, the Holy Spirit spread through their ranks.....*

That day about three thousand took him at his word, were baptized and were signed up. They committed themselves to the teaching of the apostles, the life together, the common meal, and the prayers.

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: For the Holy Spirit's power to rise through our ranks, calling us to higher purposes and uniting us as a community of believers.

Day 15, March 3

THEME: HUMILITY

SCRIPTURE: PHILIPPIANS 2: 1-4 *If you've gotten anything at all out of following Christ, if his love has made any difference in your life, if being in a community of the Spirit means anything to you, if you have a heart, if you care—then do me a favor: Agree with each other, love each other, be deep-spirited friends. Don't push your way to the front; don't sweet-talk your way to the top. Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Don't be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: Pray for Christians to be free from self-interest and self-promotion, seeing the value and dignity in every person as being made in God's image.

Day 16, March 4

THEME: PERSERVERANCE

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 18 7-8 *Then the Master said, “Do you hear what that judge, corrupt as he is, is saying? So, what makes you think God won’t step in and work justice for his chosen people, who continue to cry out for help? Won’t he stick up for them? I assure you, he will. He will not drag his feet. But how much of that kind of persistent faith will the Son of Man find on the earth when he returns?”*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: Help us to be persistent and unrelenting in prayer and our commitment to Christ’s kingdom. To trust in God and not lose hope even during trial and temptation.

Day 17, March 5

THEME: GOD'S WARDROBE

SCRIPTURE: COLOSSIANS 3: 12-14 *So, chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you. And regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It's your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: That we would be the qualities God wants for us: humility, kindness, and compassion, that others would see God's goodness in us.

Day 18, March 6

THEME: SPIRITUAL WARFARE

SCRIPTURE: EPHESIANS 6: 12 *God is strong, and he wants you strong. So take everything the Master has set out for you, well-made weapons of the best materials. And put them to use so you will be able to stand up to everything the Devil throws your way. This is no weekend war that we'll walk away from and forget about in a couple of hours. This is for keeps, a life-or-death fight to the finish against the Devil and all his angels.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: For us to recognize the powers of chaos and destruction around us, and for us to stand with God in the fight against the evil one.

Day 19, March 7

THEME: UNITY

SCRIPTURE: EPHESIANS 4: 1-3 *In light of all this, here's what I want you to do. While I'm locked up here, a prisoner for the Master, I want you to get out there and walk—better yet, run!—on the road God called you to travel. I don't want any of you sitting around on your hands. I don't want anyone strolling off, down some path that goes nowhere. And mark that you do this with humility and discipline—not in fits and starts, but steadily, pouring yourselves out for each other in acts of love, alert at noticing differences and quick at mending fences.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: That we would submit ourselves to one another in Christ-like love and heal the divisions around us.

Day 20, March 8

THEME: COMMITMENT TO GOD

SCRIPTURE: 2 CHRONICLES 7: 12-14 *GOD appeared to Solomon that very night and said, "I accept your prayer; yes, I have chosen this place as a temple for sacrifice, a house of worship. If I ever shut off the supply of rain from the skies or order the locusts to eat the crops or send a plague on my people, and my people, my God-defined people, respond by humbling themselves, praying, seeking my presence, and turning their backs on their wicked lives, I'll be there ready for you: I'll listen from heaven, forgive their sins, and restore their land to health.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: Whatever challenges that face us today, that we would remain steadfast in our commitment to follow Christ.

Day 21, March 9

THEME: ELIMINATING DISTRACTIONS

SCRIPTURE: ROMANS 12: 11-14 *But make sure that you don't get so absorbed and exhausted in taking care of all your day-by-day obligations that you lose track of the time and doze off, oblivious to God. The night is about over, dawn is about to break. Be up and awake to what God is doing! God is putting the finishing touches on the salvation work he began when we first believed. We can't afford to waste a minute, must not squander these precious daylight hours in frivolity and indulgence, in sleeping around and dissipation, in bickering and grabbing everything in sight. Get out of bed and get dressed! Don't loiter and linger, waiting until the very last minute. Dress yourselves in Christ and be up and about!*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: To see what matters most, ultimately, and to look past day-to-day troubles and distractions that compete for our heart and attention.

Day 22, March 10

THEME: SPIRITUAL HUNGER

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 5:6 *You're blessed when you've worked up a good appetite for God. He's food and drink in the best meal you'll ever eat.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: For a deeper hunger for the things of God. To be blessed through prayer and this season of Lent.

Day 23, March 11

THEME: APPEALING TO THE NATURE OF GOD

SCRIPTURE: EXODUS 34: 6-7 *So Moses cut two tablets of stone just like the originals. He got up early in the morning and climbed Mount Sinai as GOD had commanded him, carrying the two tablets of stone. GOD descended in the cloud and took up his position there beside him and called out the name, GOD. GOD passed in front of him and called out, “GOD, GOD, a God of mercy and grace, endlessly patient—so much love, so deeply true—loyal in love for a thousand generations, forgiving iniquity, rebellion, and sin. Still, he doesn’t ignore sin. He holds sons and grandsons responsible for a father’s sins to the third and even fourth generation.”*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: God is full of compassion and mercy, lavishing love to a thousand generations. May God’s true nature be known among us.

Day 24, March 12

THEME: THE PROMISE OF NEW LIFE

SCRIPTURE: MALACHI 4: 6 *“On that great day,” GOD says,*

*“I will round up all the hurt and homeless,
everyone I have bruised or banished.*

I will transform the battered into a company of the elite.

I will make a strong nation out of the long lost,

A showcase exhibit of GOD’s rule in action,

as I rule from Mount Zion, from here to eternity.”

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: For those who are hurting, downtrodden, or poor in spirit, that they will see new life and resurrection.

Day 25, March 13

THEME: WITNESS

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 24: 45-49 *He went on to open their understanding of the Word of God, showing them how to read their Bibles this way. He said, “You can see now how it is written that the Messiah suffers, rises from the dead on the third day, and then a total life-change through the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed in his name to all nations—starting from here, from Jerusalem! You’re the first to hear and see it. You’re the witnesses. What comes next is very important: I am sending what my Father promised to you, so stay here in the city until he arrives, until you’re equipped with power from on high.”*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: That Christ’s sacrificial love is revealed to us in new ways, that Jesus will open our eyes to his goodness, and for us to be witnesses to his goodness in our lives.

Day 26, March 14

THEME: FOR OUR NATION

SCRIPTURE: JONAH 3: 4-10 *Jonah entered the city, went one day's walk and preached, "In forty days Nineveh will be smashed."*

The people of Nineveh listened, and trusted God. They proclaimed a citywide fast and dressed in burlap to show their repentance. Everyone did it—rich and poor, famous and obscure, leaders and followers...

God saw what they had done, that they had turned away from their evil lives. He did change his mind about them. What he said he would do to them he didn't do

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: We pray for the well-being of our nation, for healing where there is division.

Day 27, March 15

THEME: PATIENCE WITH GOD

SCRIPTURE: 2 PETER 3: 8-9 *Don't overlook the obvious here, friends. With God, one day is as good as a thousand years, a thousand years as a day. God isn't late with his promise as some measure lateness. He is restraining himself on account of you, holding back the End because he doesn't want anyone lost. He's giving everyone space and time to change.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: We give God thanks for how patient God is with each of us, and we ask for patience among us for God to act.

Day 28, March 16

THEME: FOR THOSE WHO ARE ESTRANGED FROM GOD

SCRIPTURE: ROMANS 10: 13-14 *Scripture reassures us, “No one who trusts God like this—heart and soul—will ever regret it.” It’s exactly the same no matter what a person’s religious background may be: the same God for all of us, acting the same incredibly generous way to everyone who calls out for help. “Everyone who calls, ‘Help, God!’ gets help.”*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: We remember those to whom God is a stranger, for those who think God is distant and uncaring. May they know the comfort of God’s love should they call upon God or meet someone who helps them in God’s name.

Day 29, March 17

THEME: SERVICE TO OTHERS

SCRIPTURE: MARK 10:45 *When the other ten heard of this conversation, they lost their tempers with James and John. Jesus got them together to settle things down. “You’ve observed how godless rulers throw their weight around,” he said, “and when people get a little power how quickly it goes to their heads. It’s not going to be that way with you. Whoever wants to be great must become a servant. Whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave. That is what the Son of Man has done: He came to serve, not to be served—and then to give away his life in exchange for many who are held hostage.”*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: *For an increase in compassion for those in need and a heart to serve in Jesus’ name.*

Day 30, March 18

THEME: RACIAL RECONCILIATION

SCRIPTURE: JOHN 17: 20-23 *I'm praying not only for them; But also for those who will believe in me. Because of them and their witness about me. The goal is for all of them to become one heart and mind—Just as you, Father, are in me and I in you,
So they might be one heart and mind with us. Then the world might believe that you, in fact, sent me.
The same glory you gave me, I gave them,
So they'll be as unified and together as we are—I in them and you in me.
Then they'll be mature in this oneness,
And give the godless world evidence
That you've sent me and loved them
In the same way you've loved me*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: For healing in our cities, states, and nations, that barriers to unity based on race would be removed, that systems that unjustly oppress others be dismantled, and that our nation could be united.

Day 31, March 19

**THEME: THANKSGIVING FOR THOSE WHO HAVE GONE
BEFORE US**

SCRIPTURE: HEBREW 12: 1-2 *Do you see what this means—all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It means we'd better get on with it. Strip down, start running—and never quit! No extra spiritual fat, no parasitic sins. Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. We give thanks for those who have gone before us, may they inspire us to be faithful.

Day 32, March 20

THEME: THOSE WHO ARE HURTING

SCRIPTURE: MATHEW 5: 3 *You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: For those who are desperate, suffering from despair, or losing hope, that God would come to their aid.

Day 33, March 21

THEME: HOLY CONFIDENCE

SCRIPTURE: HEBREWS 10: 19-22 *So, friends, we can now—without hesitation—walk right up to God, into “the Holy Place.” Jesus has cleared the way by the blood of his sacrifice, acting as our priest before God. The “curtain” into God’s presence is his body.*

So let’s do it—full of belief, confident that we’re presentable inside and out. Let’s keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going. He always keeps his word. Let’s see how inventive we can be in encouraging love and helping out, not avoiding worshipping together as some do but spurring each other on, especially as we see the big Day approaching.

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: For God to strengthen our faith, to renounce unbelief and declare confidence in God’s power through Christ’s sacrifice, which allows us to stand before God’s throne.

Day 34, March 22

THEME: HOLY IS YOUR NAME

SCRIPTURE: MALACHI 1: 11 *“I am honored all over the world. And there are people who know how to worship me all over the world, who honor me by bringing their best to me. They’re saying it everywhere: ‘God is greater, this GOD-of-the-Angel-Armies’”.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: We join our voice to others around the earth who know God’s name to be holy, calling upon God in times of need and in times of blessing.

Day 35, March 23

THEME: BREAD FROM HEAVEN

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 4: 4 *Jesus answered by quoting Deuteronomy: “It takes more than bread to stay alive. It takes a steady stream of words from God’s mouth.”*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: For a spiritual hunger that only God can satisfy, gratitude for daily bread.

Day 36, March 24

THEME: TURNING TOWARD GOD

SCRIPTURE: ACTS 3: 19 *Now it's time to change your ways! Turn to face God so he can wipe away your sins, pour out showers of blessing to refresh you, and send you the Messiah he prepared for you, namely, Jesus.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: That we would lead holy, consecrated lives, resisting temptation.

Day 37, March 25

THEME: WANTING THE RIGHT THINGS

SCRIPTURE: HEBREWS 12: 14-17 *Work at getting along with each other and with God. Otherwise you'll never get so much as a glimpse of God. Make sure no one gets left out of God's generosity. Keep a sharp eye out for weeds of bitter discontent. A thistle or two gone to seed can ruin a whole garden in no time. Watch out for the Esau syndrome: trading away God's lifelong gift in order to satisfy a short-term appetite. You well know how Esau later regretted that impulsive act and wanted God's blessing—but by then it was too late, tears or no tears.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: Give us a desire for God's goodness, rejecting the false assurances of security that the world offers and embracing God's holy path of righteousness.

Day 38, March 26

THEME: SOWING THE SEEDS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

SCRIPTURE: HOSEA 10:12 *Sow righteousness,
reap love.*

*It's time to till the ready earth,
it's time to dig in with GOD,
Until he arrives
with righteousness ripe for harvest.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: As we continue through this time of Lent, we pray for God to tend to us as a farmer tends the fields, preparing for the bountiful harvest of righteousness and new life in Christ, found in the promise of Easter.

Day 39, March 27

THEME: OVERCOMING GREAT OBSTACLES

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 21: 21-22 *But Jesus was matter-of-fact: “Yes—and if you embrace this kingdom life and don’t doubt God, you’ll not only do minor feats like I did to the fig tree, but also triumph over huge obstacles. This mountain, for instance, you’ll tell, ‘Go jump in the lake,’ and it will jump. Absolutely everything, ranging from small to large, as you make it a part of your believing prayer, gets included as you lay hold of God.”*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: Today we pray for those who are facing great obstacles, facing a challenge so large that only God’s power can overcome it. We ask God to move mountains.

Day 40, March 28, PALM SUNDAY

THEME: JESUS TRIUMPHANT ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

SCRIPTURE: JOHN 12: 12-13 *The next day the huge crowd that had arrived for the Feast heard that Jesus was entering Jerusalem. They broke off palm branches and went out to meet him. And they cheered:*

Hosanna!

Blessed is he who comes in God's name!

Yes! The King of Israel!

Jesus got a young donkey and rode it, just as the Scripture has it:

No fear, Daughter Zion:

*See how your king comes,
riding a donkey's colt.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: Pray for joyful hearts to receiving God as we again observe the story of Jesus during Holy Week.

Day 41, March 29, MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK

THEME: BEARING FRUIT

SCRIPTURE: JOHN 12: 24-25 *Jesus said: Listen carefully: Unless a grain of wheat is buried in the ground, dead to the world, it is never any more than a grain of wheat. But if it is buried, it sprouts and reproduces itself many times over. In the same way, anyone who holds on to life just as it is destroys that life. But if you let it go, reckless in your love, you'll have it forever, real and eternal.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: We ask God for help in shedding the old habits that interfere with our relationship with him and for the trust to let go and boldly share God's love with others.

Day 42, March 30, TUESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

THEME: GOD'S LOVE FOR THE WORLD

SCRIPTURE: ISAIAH 49: 5-6 *"And now," GOD says,*

this God who took me in hand

from the moment of birth to be his servant,

To bring Jacob back home to him,

to set a reunion for Israel—

What an honor for me in GOD's eyes!

That God should be my strength!

He says, "But that's not a big enough job for my servant—

just to recover the tribes of Jacob,

merely to round up the strays of Israel.

I'm setting you up as a light for the nations

so that my salvation becomes global!

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: We pray that all would honor Christ as servant and savior of the world, that we all would realize we were saved by grace through faith to serve others in Christ's name.

Day 43, March 31, WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

THEME: DEVOTION TO CHRIST

SCRIPTURE: JOHN 13: 21-27 *After he said these things, Jesus became visibly upset, and then he told them why. "One of you is going to betray me."*

The disciples looked around at one another, wondering who on earth he was talking about. One of the disciples, the one Jesus loved dearly, was reclining against him, his head on his shoulder. Peter motioned to him to ask who Jesus might be talking about. So, being the closest, he said, "Master, who?"

Jesus said, "The one to whom I give this crust of bread after I've dipped it." Then he dipped the crust and gave it to Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot. As soon as the bread was in his hand, Satan entered him.

"What you must do," said Jesus, "do. Do it and get it over with."

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: That we remain true to Jesus, that he would find us faithful to the end.

Day 44, April 1, MAUNDY THURSDAY

THEME: HOLY COMMUNION

SCRIPTURE: FIRST CORINTHIANS 11: 26 *What you must solemnly realize is that every time you eat this bread and every time you drink this cup, you reenact in your words and actions the death of the Master. You will be drawn back to this meal again and again until the Master returns. You must never let familiarity breed contempt.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: We give thanks for the sacrament of Holy Communion, and we ask God to prepare our hearts to receive Christ in bread and wine, be it this night or on Easter Sunday.

Day 45, April 2, GOOD FRIDAY

THEME: THE CROSS

SCRIPTURE: JOHN 19: 30 *A jug of sour wine was standing by. Someone put a sponge soaked with the wine on a javelin and lifted it to his mouth. After he took the wine, Jesus said, "It's done...complete." Bowing his head, he offered up his spirit.*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: Today we remember the pain and suffering Jesus endured on the cross. Christ paid the ultimate price of his own life for the remission of sin and our redemption to everlasting life.

Day 46, April 3, HOLY SATURDAY

THEME: CHRIST PREACHED TO THE DEAD ON THE DAY BETWEEN HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION

SCRIPTURE: FIRST PETER 4: 6-11 *Listen to the Message. It was preached to those believers who are now dead, and yet even though they died (just as all people must), they will still get in on the life that God has given in Jesus.*

Everything in the world is about to be wrapped up, so take nothing for granted. Stay wide-awake in prayer. Most of all, love each other as if your life depended on it. Love makes up for practically anything. Be quick to give a meal to the hungry, a bed to the homeless—cheerfully. Be generous with the different things God gave you, passing them around so all get in on it: if words, let it be God's words; if help, let it be God's hearty help. That way, God's bright presence will be evident in everything through Jesus and he'll get all the credit as the One mighty in everything—encores to the end of time. Oh, yes!

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: As we grieve Christ's crucifixion we wait, trusting that God will triumph over death, and witnessing to his goodness through service to others.

Day 47, April 4, EASTER SUNDAY

THEME: RESURRECTION

SCRIPTURE: ACTS 10: 39-43 *“And we saw it, saw it all, everything he did in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem where they killed him, hung him from a cross. But in three days God had him up, alive, and out where he could be seen. Not everyone saw him—he wasn’t put on public display. Witnesses had been carefully handpicked by God beforehand—us! We were the ones, there to eat and drink with him after he came back from the dead. He commissioned us to announce this in public, to bear solemn witness that he is in fact the One whom God destined as Judge of the living and dead. But we’re not alone in this. Our witness that he is the means to forgiveness of sins is backed up by the witness of all the prophets.”:*

NOTES:

What are you grateful for today?

What are your prayer requests and concerns?

Other prayer notes.

PRAYER FOCUS: God has taken away the sting of death in the resurrection of his son. May our lives be filled with the joy and power of new life in Christ.