



40 DAYS OF PRAYER

BE STILL

a Lenten Devotional

Using this Devotion

"Fix your eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfector of your faith." (Hebrews 12:2)

The purpose of this devotion is to help you deepen your prayer life as you practice daily prayer throughout the season of Lent. Pete Greig in his book, *How to Pray: A Simple Guide for Normal People*, provides us with a framework for prayer that is easy to remember: P.R.A.Y. – Pause – Rejoice – Ask – Yield. Each week in Lent will have a different theme that focuses on one of these aspects of prayer.

In addition, the order for Daily Prayer for each week will include the following items to guide you:

1. Centering on God – Prayer time begins by pausing and reading the short verse to help you quiet your heart and mind, asking the Holy Spirit to open your heart to God's presence and his Word for you today.

2. Psalm for the Week – Read the assigned psalm every day and focus on the overall theme for that week (pausing, adoration, asking, yielding, etc.).

3. Personal Prayers - Lift up to God those joys and concerns that are on your mind as you come before the Lord in prayer. Some prompts are listed to guide you in making your requests known to God.

4. Dwelling in the Word – Each day spend some time meditating on God's Word. Slowly read the passage listed for each particular day, asking God to speak to you personally through the reading. There are also guided questions to help you further think upon the daily reading.

5. Sent Out and Blessing – Daily prayer closes with a charge and benediction to focus our hearts and mind as we go out into the world as Christ's disciples.

It is my hope that as you turn to God in prayer regularly throughout Lent, that you would grow in your relationship with the Lord and come to know him better, remembering the promise: "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you." (James 4:8 NRSV).

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you, now and always.

Rev. Greg Buell

Northbrook, February 2025

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BEGINNING OF LENT: PAUSING

*"The time has come, the Kingdom of God has come near.
Repent and believe the Good News!" (Mark 1:15)*

DAILY PRAYER FOR THE BEGINNING OF LENT

INTRODUCTION: *All of the scriptures chosen for the first four days of Lent are intended to help you pause and put your focus on God, as well as be still before the Lord and acknowledge your need for more of him in your life. Some texts also center around the Lenten theme of repentance – turning away from the ways of the world and turning toward the Lord.*

CENTERING ON GOD - *Read the following scriptures to quiet yourself, focusing on the Lenten themes of repentance and humbling yourself before the Lord.*

"The time has come, the Kingdom of God has come near.
Repent and believe the Good News!" (Mark 1:15)

The LORD says, "Turn to me now, while there is time. Give me your hearts. Come with fasting, weeping, and mourning. Don't tear your clothing in your grief, but tear your hearts instead." Return to the LORD your God, for he is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. (Joel 2:12-13)

PSALM FOR THE WEEK - *Use this psalm as your personal prayer of confession this week, lifting up those areas of your life that are in need of God's mercy, grace and forgiveness.*

Psalm 51:1-10

Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your unfailing love;
According to your great compassion
blot out my transgressions.
Wash away all my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.
For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is always before me.
Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight;
So you are right in your verdict
and justified when you judge.

Surely I was sinful at birth,
sinful from the time my mother conceived me.
Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb;
you taught me wisdom in that secret place.
Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.
Hide your face from my sins
and blot out all my iniquity.
Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

PERSONAL PRAYERS – *Spend some time making your requests known to God. The optional prompts below are suggestions for ways that you can pray for yourself and others.*

- ❖ For the day and its tasks
- ❖ For the concerns of others and yourself
- ❖ For the world and its needs
- ❖ For the Church and her life
- ❖ For those who are lost or don't yet know the Lord
- ❖ For anything else on your heart and mind

DWELLING IN THE WORD – *The daily readings, listed below under the appropriate date, were chosen to help you be still and grow in the theme of repentance. Spend some time meditating on the word or phrase that particularly stands out today and is speaking to you, and trust that it is the Holy Spirit that is bringing it to your attention. Write it down in a journal along with anything else that the Lord may have put on your heart. Use the questions to further deepen your engagement with the passage.*

SENT OUT – *As you finish your prayer time, this charge is a reminder that all disciples are sent out into the world in the name of Christ:*

Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. (Ephesians 5:1-2)

BLESSING

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

(1 Thessalonians 5:23-24)

BEGINNING LENT: PAUSING FOR PRAYER

"The time has come, the Kingdom of God has come near.

Repent and believe the Good News!" (Mark 1:15)

Wednesday, March 5th

Day 1 – Be Still. God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way, and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging ... The LORD Almighty says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

(Psalm 46:1-3,10-11)

1. What are the things in your life that make you feel like "the earth is giving way?"
2. How does being still and knowing that God is with you in the midst of any struggles or turmoil in your life help you overcome anxiety? What difference does God's presence make?

Thursday, March 6th

Day 2 - Fixing Our Eyes on Jesus. Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. (Hebrews 12:1-3)

1. What things in your life are hindering your progress in faith? What sinful thoughts or behaviors are getting in the way of your spiritual journey?
2. What pressures or struggles in life make you grow weary and lose heart? How can knowing that Jesus persevered to the end give you strength to overcome?
3. What can you do to keep your focus on Jesus more?

BEGINNING LENT: PAUSING FOR PRAYER

"The time has come, the Kingdom of God has come near.

Repent and believe the Good News!" (Mark 1:15)

Friday, March 7th

Day 3 - Thirsting for God. You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water. I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name, I will lift up my hands. I will be fully satisfied, as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you. On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night. Because you are my help, I sing in the shadow of your wings. I cling to you; your right hand upholds me. (Psalm 63:1-8)

1. How deep is your yearning for God? What factors go into this? In what ways do you seek after other things in this world for satisfaction, rather than God?
2. What could you do to increase your hunger and thirst for God? What does the psalmist do here?

Saturday, March 8th

Day 4 – Seeking God. "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and come to me; listen, that you may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David" ... Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.

(Isaiah 55:1-3, 6)

1. How is coming to God like being invited to a rich feast? What does this banquet cost?
2. What was promised to David, and how did Jesus demonstrate this through his life and death?
3. How can knowing that the Lord is near, bring comfort and encourage you to seek him out?

1ST WEEK – REJOICING IN THE LORD

*“Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD
in the splendor of his holiness.” (Psalm 29:1 NIV)*

DAILY PRAYER FOR THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

INTRODUCTION: *All of the scriptures chosen for the first week of Lent are intended to help you to rejoice in the Lord through adoration - praising the Lord for who he is and giving thanks to him for what he has done.*

CENTERING ON GOD - *Read the following scriptures to quiet yourself and focus on the theme of worship, coming before the Lord with awe, reverence and joy.*

Your righteousness, God, reaches to the heavens, you who have done great things. Who is like you, God? (Psalm 71:19 NIV).

PSALM FOR THE WEEK - *Use this psalm as your personal prayer of praise and thanksgiving, afterwards, lift up those aspects of God's character that personally inspire your adoration and gratitude. Give thanks for the blessings in your life.*

Psalm 100:1-5

Shout for joy to the LORD,
all the earth.
Worship the LORD with gladness;
come before him with joyful songs.
Know that the LORD is God.
It is he who made us, and we are his;
We are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise;
Give thanks to him
and praise his name.
For the LORD is good
and his love endures forever;
His faithfulness continues through all generations.

PERSONAL PRAYERS – *Spend some time making your requests known to God. The optional prompts below are suggestions for ways that you can pray for yourself and others.*

- ❖ For the day and its tasks
- ❖ For the concerns of others and yourself
- ❖ For the world and its needs
- ❖ For the Church and her life
- ❖ For those who are lost or don't yet know the Lord
- ❖ For anything else on your heart and mind

DWELLING IN THE WORD - *The daily readings, listed under the appropriate date below, focus on this week's theme of rejoicing in the Lord. Spend some time meditating on what word or phrase is particularly speaking to you today, and trust that it is the Holy Spirit that is bringing it to your attention. Write it down in a journal along with anything else that the Lord may have put on your heart. Use the questions to further deepen your engagement with the passage.*

SENT OUT – *May this verse inspire you to worship God throughout the week wherever you go and wherever you may be:*

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD
in the splendor of his holiness. (Psalm 29:1)

BLESSING

May the LORD bless you from Zion,
he who is the Maker of heaven and earth. (Psalm 134:3)

Sunday, March 9th

1st Sunday in Lent - The Image of the Invisible God. The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. (Colossians 1:15-20)

1. What three claims about Christ are made in this passage, and how might they broaden your view of him and inspire awe and praise?
2. What did God accomplish through Jesus' death? How does this inspire gratitude ?

1ST WEEK: REJOICING IN THE LORD

“Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness.” (Psalm 29:1 NIV)

Monday, March 10th

Day 5 - God's Power and Greatness. Praise the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens. Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness. Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre, praise him with timbrel and dancing, praise him with the strings and pipe, praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD. (Psalm 150:1-6)

1. In the opening lines, what are the reasons given for praising God?
2. According to this psalm, how are we to praise God, and who is to praise God?
3. In addition to Sunday morning, what can you do to personally praise God throughout the week?

Tuesday, March 11th

Day 6 - The Goodness of Praise. Praise the LORD. How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise him! The LORD builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the exiles of Israel. He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name. Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit. The LORD sustains the humble but casts the wicked to the ground. Sing to the LORD with grateful praise; make music to our God on the harp. He covers the sky with clouds; he supplies the earth with rain and makes grass grow on the hills. He provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they call. His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse, nor his delight in the legs of the warrior; the LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love. (Psalm 147:1-11)

1. Spend some time meditating on all the reasons given in this psalm for praising God. How have you experienced similar blessings from him?
2. According to the last line, what does the Lord delight in? How can personal praise and thanksgiving increase your reverence and hope?

1ST WEEK: REJOICING IN THE LORD

"Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness." (Psalm 29:1 NIV)

Wednesday, March 12th

Day 7 - The Glory of God. The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun. It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, like a champion rejoicing to run his course. It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is deprived of its warmth. (Psalm 19:1-6)

1. How does creation give God glory and praise him without uttering a word?
2. Unlike creation, we have a choice every day to give God glory or not. What gets in the way of your daily adoration and worship of God?

Thursday, March 13th

Day 8 - Goodness and Care. The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. (Psalm 23:1-6)

1. How does the Lord care for us like a shepherd? How does the Lord's care for you today, provide hope for tomorrow? (See last verse.)
2. Spend some time thanking God for all the ways he has cared for you throughout your life.

1ST WEEK: REJOICING IN THE LORD

“Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness.” (Psalm 29:1 NIV)

Friday, March 14th

Day 9 - None Can Compare. I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the LORD and put their trust in him. Blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods. Many, LORD my God, are the wonders you have done, the things you planned for us. None can compare with you; were I to speak and tell of your deeds, they would be too many to declare. (Psalm 40:1-5)

1. How did God answer the psalmist's prayer in the opening verses? What did the psalmist do in response?
2. Why does the psalmist say, “None can compare with you”? What are some of the “mighty deeds” has the Lord done in your life? How has he answered your prayers in the past?

Saturday, March 15th

Day 10 – Gratitude. Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits-- who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's ... The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

(Psalm 103:1-5; 8-12)

1. What reasons are given here for praising the Lord? What are some “of his benefits”?
2. How is God's character described in the latter half of this passage? Why is praising God for who he is and what he is like, just as important as thanking him for what he has done for you?

2ND WEEK: ASKING GOD

*"LORD, you are the God who saves me,
day and night I cry out to you." (Psalm 88:1)*

DAILY PRAYER FOR THE 2ND WEEK OF LENT

INTRODUCTION: *All of the scriptures chosen for the 2nd week of Lent are intended to help guide you as you think about making your requests known to God, whether you are lifting up personal concerns or praying for others.*

CENTERING ON GOD - *Read the following scriptures to quiet yourself and focus on the theme of drawing near to God to share with him the desires of your heart.*

LORD, you are the God who saves me; day and night I cry out to you.
(Psalm 88:1)

PSALM FOR THE WEEK - *Use this psalm as your personal prayer of praise and reflection on the goodness of God.*

Psalm 34:1-11, 17-22

I will extol the LORD at all times; his praise will always be on my lips.

I will glory in the LORD; let the afflicted hear and rejoice.

Glorify the LORD with me; let us exalt his name together.

I sought the LORD, and he answered me;

he delivered me from all my fears.

Those who look to him are radiant;

their faces are never covered with shame.

This poor man called, and the LORD heard him;

he saved him out of all his troubles.

The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him,

and he delivers them.

Taste and see that the LORD is good;

blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.

Fear the LORD, you his holy people,

for those who fear him lack nothing.

The lions may grow weak and hungry,

but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.

Come, my children, listen to me;

I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them;
he delivers them from all their troubles.
The LORD is close to the brokenhearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit.
The righteous person may have many troubles,
but the LORD delivers him from them all;
he protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken.
Evil will slay the wicked; the foes of the righteous will be condemned.
The LORD will rescue his servants;
no one who takes refuge in him will be condemned.

PERSONAL PRAYERS – *Spend some time making your requests known to God. The optional prompts below are suggestions for ways that you can pray for yourself and others.*

- ❖ For the day and its tasks
- ❖ For the concerns of others and yourself
- ❖ For the world and its needs
- ❖ For the Church and her life
- ❖ For those who are lost or don't yet know the Lord
- ❖ For anything else on your heart and mind

DWELLING IN THE WORD - *The daily readings, listed below under the appropriate date, center around this week's theme of asking our heavenly Father for what we need. Spend some time meditating on what word or phrase is particularly speaking to you today, and trust that it is the Holy Spirit that is bringing it to your attention. Write it down in a journal along with anything else that the Lord may have put on your heart. Use the questions to further deepen your engagement with the passage.*

SENT OUT- *May this verse help you entrust your life to God as you prepare to go out into the world in the name of Christ.*

Trust in the LORD and do good. Then you will live safely in the land and prosper. Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you your heart's desires. Commit everything you do to the LORD. Trust him, and he will help you. (Psalm 37:3-5 NLT)

BLESSING

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. (Ephesians 3:20)

2ND WEEK: ASKING GOD

*"LORD, you are the God who saves me;
day and night I cry out to you." (Psalm 88:1)*

Sunday, March 16th

2nd Sunday in Lent - Approaching the Throne of Grace. Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are-- yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16)

1. How are we encouraged to approach "God's throne of grace," and why? What's the purpose given for approaching God in prayer?
2. Pray to God about your need for God's mercy, grace and help in your life right now.

Monday, March 17th

Day 11 - Ask, Seek, Knock. Jesus said, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets. (Matthew 7:7-12.)

1. In what ways are asking, seeking, and knocking similar actions? Which ones require more energy and effort? What keeps you from making your needs and desires known to God more often?
2. How is God described in this passage and how does this encourage you to turn to him in prayer with your needs?

2ND WEEK: ASKING GOD

*"LORD, you are the God who saves me;
day and night I cry out to you." (Psalm 88:1)*

Tuesday, March 18th

Day 12 - Make your requests known to God. Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:4-7)

1. What command is repeated in the opening verse? How can anxiety hinder our praise and worship? How can rejoicing in God help?
2. According to this verse, what has the power to replace our anxieties with peace? What requests do you have for God today?

Wednesday, March 19th

Day 13 - God cares. Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. (1 Peter 5:6-7)

1. Who has the power to lift us up out of our concerns and worries? What does it mean to be humble before the Lord?
2. What do you normally do when you are anxious? What does this verse say we are to do with our anxiety? How does God's care help frame your prayers?

Thursday, March 20th

Day 14 - Crying out to God. Hasten, O God, to save me; come quickly, LORD, to help me ... But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who long for your saving help always say, "The LORD is great!" But as for me, I am poor and needy; come quickly to me, O God. You are my help and my deliverer; LORD, do not delay. (Psalm 70:1, 4-5)

1. What imperatives does the psalmist make to God in the opening and closing lines of this passage? Is being earnest with God important?
2. What is the psalmists' hope and desire in this prayer – for himself as well as God?

2ND WEEK: ASKING GOD

*“LORD, you are the God who saves me;
day and night I cry out to you.” (Psalm 88:1)*

Friday, March 21st

Day 15 - Turning to the Lord. May the LORD answer you when you are in distress; may the name of the God of Jacob protect you. May he send you help from the sanctuary and grant you support from Zion. May he remember all your sacrifices and accept your burnt offerings. May he give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed. May we shout for joy over your victory and lift up our banners in the name of our God. May the LORD grant all your requests. (Psalm 20:1-5)

1. Look at each of the 7 verses which start with “may” and summarize each prayer request.
2. What would it look like to use these verses as a framework for praying for others and yourself?

Saturday, March 22nd

Day 16 - Praying for All People. First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 2:1-15).

1. Who are we urged to pray for in this passage? What are the four outcomes highlighted in these verses?
2. Who are the people God is putting on your heart to pray for – even if normally you might not be inclined to do so?

3rd Week: Yielding to God's Presence

"You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence." (Psalm 16:11)

PRAYER TIME FOR THE 3RD WEEK OF LENT

Introduction: *All of the scriptures chosen for the 3rd week of Lent are intended to help in contemplation as you rest in the presence of God and meditate on the wonders and mysteries of the Lord and his ways.*

Centering on God - *Read the following scriptures to quiet yourself and focus on the presence of the Lord.*

You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand. (Psalm 16:11)

Psalm for the Week - *Use this psalm to guide your heart with the wisdom of God, as you seek his ways and truth for your life.*

Psalm 1:1-6

Blessed is the one who does not
walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
but whose delight is in the law of the LORD,
and who meditates on his law day and night.
That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
whatever they do prospers.

Not so the wicked!

They are like chaff that the wind blows away.
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.
For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

Personal Prayers – Spend some time making your requests known to God. The optional prompts below are suggestions for ways that you can pray for yourself and others.

- ❖ For the day and its tasks
- ❖ For the concerns of others and yourself
- ❖ For the world and its needs
- ❖ For the Church and her life
- ❖ For those who are lost or don't yet know the Lord
- ❖ For anything else on your heart and mind

Dwelling in the Word - The daily readings, listed below under the appropriate date, will help nurture your love and wonder of God. Spend some time meditating on what word or phrase is particularly speaking to you today, and trust that it is the Holy Spirit that is bringing it to your attention. Write it down in a journal along with anything else that the Lord may have put on your heart. Use the questions to further deepen your engagement with the passage.

Sent Out - May this verse center you as you finish your prayer time and prepare to go out into the world in the name of Christ.

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.

(Ephesians 3:16-19)

Blessing

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Corinthians 13:14)

Sunday, March 23rd

3rd Sunday in Lent - The Creator. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning-- the first day. (Gen. 1:1-5) [Optional: Read all of Genesis 1]

1. What parts of creation come to mind and are inspiring you today? Spend some time praising the Lord for his power and might and wisdom in creating them.
2. Where in your life might you need the light to shine in the darkness and bring order out chaos?

Yielding to God's Presence

"You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence." (Psalm 16:11)

Monday, March 24th

Day 17 - Abiding in Christ. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends (John 15:5-13)

1. Why is it important to have an abiding relationship with the Lord, what are the dangers? What spiritual practices could you practice in order to abide more authentically?
2. How are loving, obedient, and fruitful lives signs of abiding in Christ? Where might you need to grow in your relationship with the Lord?

Tuesday, March 25th

Day 18 – The Love of God. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 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 8:35,37-39)

1. What are the things in your life that can make you despair and feel as though God were far off?
2. Rather than being victims in this world and in our sufferings, what is your true identity according to this passage? How does reflecting on the Lord's saving love in Christ give you strength to endure the struggles in life?

Yielding to God's Presence

"You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence." (Psalm 16:11)

Wednesday, March 26th

Day 19 – The Mind of Christ. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:5-11)

1. How did Jesus demonstrate humility before God? What would it look like to “have the same mindset” as Christ in your relationship with God?
2. Why was Jesus exalted? What steps can you take to acknowledge him daily as the Lord over your life?

Thursday, March 27th

Day 20 - The Word Made Flesh. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it ... Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-5, 12- 14).

1. In this passage, how is Jesus Christ, the Word of God, described? What achievements are highlighted?
2. What right is given to all who put their trust in Jesus and receive him into their life? Spend some time giving thanks to the Word who chose to come near you and offers himself to you even now.

Yielding to God's Presence

*"You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy
in your presence." (Psalm 16:11)*

Friday, March 28th

Day 21- Worthy is the Lamb. After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven ... At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and ruby. A rainbow that shone like an emerald encircled the throne. Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God. Also in front of the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures ... Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying: "'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,' who was, and is, and is to come." Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being." (Rev 4:1, 2-6, 8-11)

1. What about this vision of heaven inspires you or sparks your imagination?
2. How is the Lord described here? How does this worship compare to your personal worship of God throughout the week?

Saturday, March 29th

Day 22 – Think upon These Things. Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable-- if anything is excellent or praiseworthy-- think about such things. (Phil. 4:8-11)

1. When you use the qualities listed in his verse to think about God, what comes to mind?
2. Use this list to reflect on the good things in your life today.

4th Week of Lent: Yielding to God's Will

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." (Proverbs 3:5-6)

DAILY PRAYER FOR THE 4th WEEK OF LENT

Introduction - All of the scriptures chosen for the 4th week of Lent are intended to help you to entrust your life to the will of God, as well as provide strength and encouragement during times of unanswered prayer.

Centering on God - Read the following scriptures to quiet yourself and focus on the Lenten theme of surrendering your will to the will of God.

Jesus said, "Abba, Father, everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." (Mark 14:33-36)

Psalm for the Week - Use this psalm as a guide for seeking out the ways of the Lord and submitting to God's will.

Psalm 25:1-22

In you, LORD my God, I put my trust. I trust in you; do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me.

No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame, but shame will come on those who are treacherous without cause.

Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.

Remember, LORD, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you, LORD, are good.

Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways. He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.

All the ways of the LORD are loving and faithful toward those who keep the demands of his covenant.

For the sake of your name, LORD, forgive my iniquity, though it is great.

Who, then, are those who fear the LORD?

He will instruct them in the ways they should choose. They will spend their days in prosperity, and their descendants will inherit the land. The LORD confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them. My eyes are ever on the LORD, for only he will release my feet from the snare.

Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. Relieve the troubles of my heart and free me from my anguish. Look on my affliction and my distress and take away all my sins.

See how numerous are my enemies and how fiercely they hate me! Guard my life and rescue me; do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.

May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope, LORD, is in you. Deliver Israel, O God, from all their troubles!

PERSONAL PRAYERS – *Spend some time making your requests known to God. The optional prompts below are suggestions for ways that you can pray for yourself and others.*

- ❖ For the day and its tasks
- ❖ For the concerns of others and yourself
- ❖ For the world and its needs
- ❖ For the Church and her life
- ❖ For those who are lost or don't yet know the Lord
- ❖ For anything else on your heart and mind

DWELLING IN THE WORD - *The daily readings, listed below under the appropriate date, highlight different aspects of what it means to submit to God's will. Spend some time meditating on what word or phrase is particularly speaking to you today, and trust that it is the Holy Spirit that is bringing it to your attention. Write it down in a journal along with anything else that the Lord may have put on your heart. Use the questions to further deepen your engagement with the passage.*

SENT OUT – *May this verse guide you as you finish your prayer time and prepare to go out into the world in the name of Christ.*

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

BLESSING

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 15:5-6)

4th Week: Yielding to God's Will

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Sunday, March 30th

4th Sunday in Lent – The Obedience of Christ. During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him (Hebrews 5:7)

1. How did Jesus demonstrate his obedience to God and submission to God's will? How did God ultimately answer Jesus' prayer?
2. How does knowing that Jesus endured suffering, help you persevere during difficult times?

Monday, March 31st

Day 23 – Hope in God's Plan. For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11)

1. According to this verse, what are God's plans for you? How can this promise help you overcome fear or despair?
2. Lift up your struggles to God, entrusting them to his plan, and holding on to the hope and future that he alone offers.

Tuesday, April 1st

Day 24 - Whom Shall I Fear? The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? ... I am still confident of this, I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; Wait for the LORD! (Psalm 27:1,13-14)

1. According to this verse, why do we have nothing to fear? In the face of trials, what promise is given in his passage? When will this be fulfilled?
2. Take courage and spend some time praying to God about any unanswered prayers in your life.

4th Week: Yielding to God's Will

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." (Proverbs 3:5-6))

Wednesday, April 2nd

Day 25 – Persevering through Trying Times. Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do. (James 1:2-8)

1. Why should we consider it joy when we face trials? How have you seen God grow your faith through difficulties in the past?
2. Why is seeking God's wisdom in the midst of unanswered prayer so important? How can God's wisdom guide our requests?

Thursday, April 3rd

Day 26 - The Love of God. What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. (Romans 8:31-35,37)

1. Why is it so easy to assume that God is against us when difficulties come our way? When have you had this feeling?
2. What did God do to demonstrate his love and concern for us? What has Jesus done for us in past, and what is he doing for us even now in the midst of our challenges?

4th Week: Yielding to God's Will

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Friday, April 4th

Day 27 – Growing in Love. May your love abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ – to the glory and praise of God! (Philippians 1:9-11)

1. Why do we need discernment in life and what helps us grow in knowledge and insight?
2. What steps can you take to grow in your love for God and others?

Saturday, April 5th

Day 28 - Peace with God. Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God, and we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, given to us. (Rom. 5:1-5)

1. What are the blessings of faith highlighted in the opening verses of this passage?
2. How does knowing that we have the love of God in our hearts through the Holy Spirit give us hope to persevere and wait upon God in times of unanswered prayer?
3. Pray that you would grow in your experience of God's love more deeply as you draw near to him.

5th Week of Lent

Yielding to God's Voice

"One shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4)

DAILY PRAYER FOR THE 5th WEEK OF LENT

Introduction – *Prayer is a conversation with God. Through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Lord is always speaking to us, but we are not always listening. All of the scriptures chosen for the 5th week of Lent are intended to help you to pause and listen for the Lord's voice through his word and to broaden your understanding in how God speaks.*

CENTERING ON GOD – *Read the following scripture to prepare your heart to hear God's voice through the reading and reflection on his Word.*

Jesus said, "One shall not live on bread alone,
but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4)

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. (Psalm 119:105)

PSALM FOR THE WEEK – *Use this psalm to praise God and to express your desire to hear the Lord speak to you personally.*

Psalm 95

Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD;
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before him with thanksgiving
and extol him with music and song.
For the LORD is the great God,
the great King above all gods.
In his hand are the depths of the earth,
and the mountain peaks belong to him.
The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.
Come, let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;
for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture,
the flock under his care.
Today, if only you would hear his voice,

“Do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah,
as you did that day at Massah in the wilderness,
where your ancestors tested me; they tried me,
though they had seen what I did.

For forty years I was angry with that generation;
I said, ‘They are a people whose hearts go astray,
and they have not known my ways.’

So I declared on oath in my anger,
‘They shall never enter my rest.’”

PERSONAL PRAYERS – *Spend some time making your requests known to God. The optional prompts below are suggestions for ways that you can pray for yourself and others.*

- ❖ For the day and its tasks
- ❖ For the concerns of others and yourself
- ❖ For the world and its needs
- ❖ For the Church and her life
- ❖ For those who are lost or don’t yet know the Lord
- ❖ For anything else on your heart and mind

DWELLING IN THE WORD - *The daily reading, listed below under the appropriate date, were chosen to help broaden your sense of what it means to hear God’s voice. Spend some time meditating on what word or phrase is particularly speaking to you today, and trust that it is the Holy Spirit that is bringing it to your attention. Write it down in a journal along with anything else that the Lord may have put on your heart. Use the questions to further deepen your engagement with the passage.*

SENT OUT - *May this charge inspire you as you finish your prayer time, and prepare to go out into the world in the name of Christ.*

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Colossians 3:16-17)

BLESSING

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen. (Romans 11:33, 11:36)

5th WEEK: Yielding to God's Voice

"One shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4)

Sunday, April 6th

5th Sunday in Lent – The Law of the Lord. The law of the LORD is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The decrees of the LORD are firm, and all of them are righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb. By them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward. (Psalm 19:7-11)

1. What are the different words used for the law of the Lord? How is God's law described?
2. How does God's law reflect his best intentions for you? How would reading God's commands as a sign of his loving care, transform how you think about them?

Monday, April 7th

Day 29 – The Holy Scriptures. Continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:14-17)

1. How do the Scriptures guide us in our spiritual journey? What are the benefits of learning and applying God's word to our lives?
2. What's the relationship between the Word of God and spiritual maturity? How well do you know and understand the Bible and what steps can you take to grow spiritually?

5th WEEK: Yielding to God's Voice

"One shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4)

Tuesday, April 8th

Day 30 - God Speaks through the Son. In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs. (Hebrews 1:1-4)

1. How did God communicate and reveal himself to people before Jesus Christ? How did God reveal himself and speak through Jesus?
2. How does the depiction of Jesus in this verse broaden your understanding of who he is? What can you do pay more attention to his teachings and his will for your life?

Wednesday, April 9th

Day 31 - The Light of the World. In him was life and that life was the light of all people... the Light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it ... Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 1:4-5,12; 8:12).

1. What does it mean to walk in darkness? What about walking in the light?
2. In what ways can you let Jesus shine light into your life? Is there an area in your life where you particularly need his light right now?

Thursday, April 10th

Day 32 - Guided by the Spirit. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace, I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (John 14:26)

1. Why was the Holy Spirit sent?
2. Where are you troubled and or confused and in need of the Spirit's guidance?

5th WEEK: Yielding to God's Voice

"One shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4)

Friday, April 11th

Day 33 – Following Christ's Teachings. Jesus said, "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." (Matthew 7:24-27)

1. What storms of life are you encountering these days? Why is it important to practice what Jesus' teaches, both before troubles rise, as well as in the midst of difficulties?
2. What steps could you take to deepen your understanding and application of Christ's teachings?

Saturday, April 12th

Day 34 - You Are Chosen. But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us. (1 Peter 2:9-12)

1. According to the opening sentence, how is the Church described, and what is the purpose or mission of the Church?
2. How are we called to live in response to the calling and mercy we've received through Christ?
3. How is our faithfulness to Christ a witness to the world? Why is our witness to those outside the Church so important?

Holy Week – Devoted to Christ

“Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” (Hebrews 12:3)

DAILY PRAYER FOR HOLY WEEK

Introduction - *During Holy Week we remember the final week of Jesus's life, from of Palm Sunday, to the Lord's Supper, to his Crucifixion and burial. This week's scriptures are intended to help you respond to the suffering sacrifice of Jesus Christ for your sake, and to encourage you to live in grateful response for all that he's done for you.*

Centering on God - *Read the following scriptures to quiet yourself and focus your mind and heart and your salvation through Christ.*

Jesus then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. (Mk. 8:31)

PSALM FOR THE WEEK - *Use this psalm as your personal prayer of praise, noticing the many ways that it prophetically points to Christ's death and resurrection.*

Psalm 118:14-29

The LORD is my strength and my defense;
he has become my salvation.

Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous:

"The LORD's right hand has done mighty things!

The LORD's right hand is lifted high;

the LORD's right hand has done mighty things!"

I will not die but live,

and will proclaim what the LORD has done.

The LORD has chastened me severely,

but he has not given me over to death.

Open for me the gates of the righteous;

I will enter and give thanks to the LORD.

This is the gate of the LORD

through which the righteous may enter.

I will give you thanks, for you answered me;

you have become my salvation.

The stone the builders rejected

has become the cornerstone;
The LORD has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes.
The LORD has done it this very day; let us rejoice today and be glad.
Hosanna! LORD, save us! LORD, grant us success!
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD.
From the house of the LORD we bless you.
The LORD is God, and he has made his light shine on us.
With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession
up to the horns of the altar.
You are my God, and I will praise you;
you are my God, and I will exalt you.
Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his love endures forever.

PERSONAL PRAYERS – *Spend some time making your requests known to God. The optional prompts below are suggestions for ways that you can pray for yourself and others.*

- ❖ For the day and its tasks
- ❖ For the concerns of others and yourself
- ❖ For the world and its needs
- ❖ For the Church and her life
- ❖ For those who are lost or don't yet know the Lord
- ❖ For anything else on your heart and mind

DWELLING IN THE WORD - *The daily readings for the appropriate date are listed below. Spend some time meditating on what word or phrase is particularly speaking to you today, and trust that it is the Holy Spirit that is bringing it to your attention. Write it down in a journal along with anything else that the Lord may have put on your heart. Use the questions to further deepen your engagement with the passage.*

SENT OUT - *May this verse strengthen you as you prepare to go out into the world in the name of Jesus Christ.*

Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners,
so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. (Hebrews 12:3)

BLESSING

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. (Jude 24-25)

HOLY WEEK: Devoted to Christ

"Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." (Hebrews 12:3)

Palm Sunday - April 13th

6th Sunday in Lent - Christ Suffered for You. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed." For "you were like sheep going astray," but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. (1 Peter 2:21-25)

1. When he entered Jerusalem, Jesus knew his purpose. How did Jesus suffer? Why was he willing to do so? What was the result?
2. How are we to follow Christ's example? What does it mean to suffer for the sake of others?

Monday, April 14th

Day 35 – Keep on Your Guard. Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. (1 Peter 5:8-9)

1. Why are followers of Jesus warned in this passage? What is the danger? Why would the devil want to shake the faith of believers?
2. How are you living for the Kingdom and why would the evil one want to stop that?
3. In what ways are you being tempted to give up and not stand firm in the faith?

HOLY WEEK: Devoted to Christ

“Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” (Hebrews 12:3)

Tuesday, April 15th

Day 36 - Submit yourselves to God. Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

(James 4:7-10)

1. In the opening lines, what result will submitting and coming near to God have in your life?
2. What are some ways that you can show signs of repentance and humble yourself before God? Why is “grieving, mourning, and wailing” a greater sign of repentance than merely saying to God that you are sorry for the ways that you turned from him?

Wednesday, April 16th

Day 37 – The Armor of God. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. (Ephesians 6:11-18)

1. What is the purpose of putting on the armor of God? Who does it protect us from?
2. What are the various pieces of armor described in this passage? Which pieces do you need to put on more regularly?

HOLY WEEK: Devoted to Christ

“Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” (Hebrews 12:3)

Maundy Thursday, April 17th

Day 38 – Being Honest with God. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

(1 John 1:8-9)

1. Why is it important to acknowledge your own sinfulness? What is the benefit of confessing our sins to God?
2. What aspects of your own brokenness do you feel particularly convicted to pray to God about today?

Good Friday, April 18th

Day 39 - Deny Yourself. Jesus called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.” (Mark 8:34b-38)

1. In light of Jesus’ crucifixion, what does it mean to deny yourself and take up your cross? How does this passage encourage you to live your life today in light of the “long view” when Jesus returns?
2. Personally, what’s most challenging about denying yourself? In what ways might you be seeking to gain more from the world, rather than seeking out eternal life?

HOLY WEEK: Devoted to Christ

“Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” (Hebrews 12:3)

Holy Saturday, April 19th

Day 40 - Living Sacrifices. Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God - this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-- his good, pleasing and perfect will. For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophecy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. (Romans 12:1-12)

1. What is a “living sacrifice,” and how does it demonstrate true worship?
2. In what ways do you see yourself conforming to the ways of the world? What steps can you take to live for the Kingdom instead?
3. How are we to live as part of the Body of Christ? What is your unique contribution? What are your gifts for serving for others?
4. Of the final admonitions in this passage, which one speaks to you the most right now? Why?

Easter Sunday

"I Am the Resurrection and the Life"

DAILY PRAYER FOR EASTER SUNDAY

Centering on God - *Read the following scriptures to quiet yourself and focus on the wonder of Christ's resurrection from the dead.*

"I am the resurrection and the life; The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die" (John 11:25-26)

PSALM FOR THE WEEK - *Use this psalm as your personal prayer of praise for your salvation and the hope that you have received through Jesus Christ.*

Psalm 96

Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.
Sing to the LORD, praise his name;
proclaim his salvation day after day.
Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.
For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;
he is to be feared above all gods.
For all the gods of the nations are idols,
but the LORD made the heavens.
Splendor and majesty are before him;
strength and glory are in his sanctuary.
Ascribe to the LORD, all you families of nations,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
bring an offering and come into his courts.
Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth.
Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns."
The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity.
Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;
let the sea resound, and all that is in it.

Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them;
let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.
Let all creation rejoice before the LORD,
for he comes, he comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the world in righteousness
and the peoples in his faithfulness.

PERSONAL PRAYERS—*Spend some time making your requests known to God. The optional prompts below are suggestions for ways that you can pray for yourself and others.*

- ❖ For the day and its tasks
- ❖ For the concerns of others and yourself
- ❖ For the world and its needs
- ❖ For the Church and her life
- ❖ For those who are lost or don't yet know the Lord
- ❖ For anything else on your heart and mind

DWELLING IN THE WORD—*Meditate and reflect on which word or phrase is particularly speaking to you today, and trust that it is the Holy Spirit that is bringing it to your attention. Write it down in a journal along with anything else that the Lord may have put on your heart. Use the questions to further deepen your engagement with the passage.*

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, ⁹ he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰ to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment-- to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ. ¹¹ In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, ¹² in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. ¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our

inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--
to the praise of his glory.

SENT OUT - *May this verse strengthen and inspire you as you go out into the world in the name of our Risen Lord, Jesus Christ.*

"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

(1 Corinthians 15:55-58)

BLESSING

Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. (Hebrews 13:20-21)

BE STILL: 40 Days of Prayer
By Rev. Greg Buell
Northbrook, Illinois, February 2025