



ST. JOSEPH

Institute for Addiction



Prayers for Recovery from Addiction

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Introduction

Recovery is hard work. It requires effort on your part. Work is much easier when you are grace-filled. These prayers were designed to help you grow in grace during your recovery and to enhance your relationship with God. As you offer these prayers to God, reflect on how you can gain wisdom and insight to help you on your road to recovery.

May God bless you on your journey.

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PRAYER FOR THE COURAGE TO ADMONISH ONE ANOTHER

Admonish: to indicate duties or obligations; to express warning or disapproval in a gentle, earnest manner; or to give friendly, earnest advice or encouragement

*You yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge,
and able to admonish one another. (Romans 15:14¹)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Where Charity and Love Prevail

(9th Century, Author Unknown)

Where charity and love prevail,
There God is ever found;
Brought here together by Christ's love,
By love are we thus bound.

With grateful joy and holy fear
God's charity we learn;
Let us with heart and mind and soul
Now love Him in return.

Forgive we now each other's faults
As we our faults confess;
And let us love each other well
In Christian holiness.

Let strife among us be unknown,
Let all contention cease;
Be His the glory that we seek,
Be ours His holy peace.

Let us recall that in our midst
Dwells God's begotten Son;
As members of His body joined,
We are in Christ made one.

PSALM 95: A Call to Praise and Obedience (verses 1, 2, 6-9)

Response: If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord;
let us acclaim the rock of our salvation.

¹ All Scripture passages from the New American Standard Bible, 1995

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us joyfully sing psalms to him. **Response.**

Come, let us bow down in worship;
let us kneel before the Lord who made us.
For he is our God, and we are the people he shepherds,
the flock he guides. **Response.**

Oh, that today you would hear his voice:
harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
as in that day of Massah in the desert,
Where your fathers tempted me;
they tested me though they had seen my works. **Response.**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

James 5:19-20

My children, if anyone among you should stray from the truth and someone bring him back, he should know that whoever brings back a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

Ezekiel 33:7-9

Thus says the Lord: “You, child of God, I have appointed you to watch over the house of Israel; when you hear me say anything, you shall warn others for me. If I tell the wicked, ‘O wicked one, you shall surely die,’ and you do not speak out to dissuade the wicked from his wicked way, the wicked shall die for his guilt, but I will hold you responsible for his death. But if you warn the wicked, trying to turn him from his way, and he refuses to turn from his way, he shall die for his guilt, but you shall save yourself.”

Matthew 18:15-20

Jesus said to his disciples: “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that ‘every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If he refuses to listen to them, tell the church. If he refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as you would a Gentile or a tax collector. Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again, amen, I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

2 Timothy 2:21-25

If people cleanse themselves of [profane, idle talk], they will be a vessel for lofty use, dedicated, beneficial to the master of the house, ready for every good work. So turn from your youthful desires and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord with purity of heart. Avoid foolish and ignorant debates, for you know that they breed quarrels. A slave of the Lord should not quarrel, but should be gentle with everyone, able to teach, tolerant, correcting opponents with kindness. It may be that God will grant them repentance that leads to knowledge of the truth.

*Let the peace of Christ dwell in you richly,
as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another,
singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.
(Colossians 3:16)*

INTERCESSIONS

Since, as Christians, we have been charged ... [to] proclaim the word; [and to] be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; [to] convince, reprimand, and encourage through all patience and teaching, we ask the Lord to strengthen us in Christ so that we might respond to his call to admonish one another (2 Timothy 4:1-2).

Response: Strengthen us in Christ!

When we recognize our own faults and need to impose self-discipline, we pray ...

Response.

When we are called to admonish others who are moving away from the path of righteousness, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are afraid to speak the truth, we pray ... **Response.**

When we feel weak and powerless to admonish and correct others, we pray ... **Response.**

For our private needs and intentions, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we depend on your mercy and your justice to help us recognize our call to admonish one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. Help us understand and accept the need to correct our own faults, and gently correct the faults you call us to notice in others. Enable us to see the value of imposing healthy discipline and make us co-workers with you, cultivating the fields and making each other strong followers of Christ. We believe we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Philippians 3:14). We ask for your grace and blessing to accomplish this difficult task through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR BEING CHILDLIKE

Childlike: being filled with wonder and awe; very different from being childish – a condition that is immature and prone to misbehaving

*Come and see what God has done:
He is awesome in his deeds toward the children. (Psalm 66:5)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: All are Welcome

(Marty Haugen, 1994)

Let us build a house where love can dwell
And all can safely live,
A place where saints and children tell
How hearts learn to forgive,
Built with hopes and dreams and visions,
Rock of faith and vault of grace;
Here the love of Christ will end divisions:
All are welcome, all are welcome,
All are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where love can reach
Beyond the wood and stone
To heal and strengthen, serve and teach,
And live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger
Bear the image of God's face;
Let us bring an end to fear and danger;
All are welcome, all are welcome,
All are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where all are named,
Their songs and visions heard
And loved and treasured, taught and claimed
As words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter,
Prayers of faith and songs of grace,
Let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:
All are welcome, all are welcome,
All are welcome in this place.

PSALM 78: (verses 1-8)

Hearken, my people, to my teaching;
Incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
I will open my mouth in a parable,
I will utter mysteries from of old.

What we have heard and know,
And what our ancestors have declared to us,
We will not hide from our children;
We will declare to the generation to come
The glorious deeds of the Lord and His strength
And the wonders that He wrought.

He set it up as a decree in Jacob,
And established it as a law in Israel,
That what He commanded our fathers
They should make known to their children;
So that the generation to come might know,
Their children yet to be born,
That they too may rise and declare to their children
That they should put their hope in God,

And not forget the deeds of God
But keep His commandments,
And not be like their parents,
A generation wayward and rebellious,
A generation that did not keep its heart steadfast
Nor its spirit faithful toward God.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

The Greatest in the Kingdom

Matthew 18:1-5

At that time the disciples approached Jesus and said, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” He called a child over, placed it in their midst, and said, “Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me.”

Blessing of the Children

Matthew 19:13-14

The children were brought to Him that He might lay His hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked them, but Jesus said, “Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”

INTERCESSIONS

Those who are led by the spirit of God are children of God (Romans 8:14). This gives us the confidence to pray:

Response: *Abba, Father, hear our prayer.

Teach us to depend on the goodness of your grace, we pray ... **Response.**

Transform us in heart and mind, we pray ... **Response.**

Help us live lives that are pleasing in your sight, we pray ... **Response.**

Help us to be patient as we wait for you to answer our prayers, we pray ... **Response.**

Help us persevere on the path of recovery, we pray ... **Response.**

Help us recall that all things are possible with your help, we pray ... **Response.**

For the prayers we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

*Abba can be translated as Daddy – a term of endearment.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, we give you thanks and praise for the gift of being able to call you Father. We come to you as children, in need of your guidance and support. We struggle with hardships and temptations. Help us remain dependent on your wisdom and grace to make good choices and live lives that are pleasing to you. We pray in Jesus's name. Amen.

PRAYER FOR COMFORT AND CONSOLATION

Comfort: the easing or alleviation of a person's feelings of grief or distress

*Cast all your worries upon [God]
because he cares for you. (I Peter 5:7)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Shepherd Me, O God (Psalm 23)

(Marty Haugen, 1986)

Refrain:

Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants,
beyond my fears, from death into life.

God is my shepherd, so nothing shall I want.
I rest in the meadows of faithfulness and love.
I walk by the quiet waters of peace. *Refrain.*

Gently, you raise me and heal my weary soul.
You lead me by pathways of righteousness and truth.
My spirit shall sing the music of your name. *Refrain.*

Though I should wander the valley of death,
I fear no evil for you are at my side.
Your rod and your staff, my comfort and my hope. *Refrain.*

You have set me a banquet of love in the face of hatred,
Crowning me with love beyond my power to hold. *Refrain.*

PSALM 119: Praise of God's Law (verses 1-2, 7-8, 49-55, 62-64)

Happy are they whose way is blameless,
who walk in the law of the Lord.
Happy are they who observe his decrees,
who seek him with all their heart.

I will give you thanks with an upright heart,
when I have learned your just ordinances.
I will keep your statutes;
do not utterly forsake me.

Remember your word to your servant
since you have given me hope.
My comfort in my affliction is
that your promise gives me life.
Though the proud scoff bitterly at me,
I will not turn away from your law.
I remember your ordinances of old, O Lord,
and I am comforted.
Indignation seizes me because of the wicked
who forsake your law.
Your statutes are the theme of my song
in the place of my exile.
By night I remember your name, O Lord,
and I will keep your law.

At midnight I rise to give you thanks
because of your just ordinances.
I am the companion of all who fear you
and keep your precepts.
Of your kindness, O Lord, the earth is full;
teach me your statutes.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Promise of Salvation (Begins the Book of Consolation) **Isaiah 40:1-2**

Comfort, give comfort to my people,
says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her
that her servitude [exile] is at an end,
her guilt is expiated [removed];
Indeed, she has received from the hand of the Lord
double for all her sins.

Comfort for the Afflicted **Isaiah 57:14-21**

Build up, build up, prepare the way,
remove the stumbling blocks from my people's path.
For thus says he who is high and exalted,
living eternally, whose name is the Holy One:
On high I dwell, and in holiness,
and with the crushed and dejected in spirit,

To revive the spirits of the dejected,
to revive the hearts of the crushed.

I will not accuse forever,
nor always be angry;
For their spirits would faint before me,
the souls that I have made.
Because of their wicked avarice I was angry,
and struck them, hiding myself in wrath,
as they went their own rebellious way.
I saw their ways,
but I will heal them and lead them;
I will give full comfort to them
and to those who mourn for them,
I, the Creator, who gave them life.

Peace, peace to the far and the near,
says the Lord; and I will heal them.
But the wicked are like the tossing sea
which cannot be calmed,
And its waters cast up mud and filth.
No peace for the wicked! says my God.

Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 5:4

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”

Dependence on God

Matthew 6:31-34a

“... O you of little faith. Do not worry and say, ‘What are we to eat?’ or ‘What are we to drink?’ or ‘What are we to wear?’ All these things the pagans seek. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides. Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself.”

Paul’s Message of Thanksgiving

2 Corinthians 1:3-5,7

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and God of all comfort, who comforts us in our every affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as Christ’s sufferings overflow to us, so through Christ does our comfort also overflow. Our hope for you is firm, for we know that as you share in the sufferings, you also share in the comfort.

Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer.
(Romans 12:12)

INTERCESSIONS

Lord, help us depend on you in our time of need. Let us be filled with comfort that we may share with others, and in our affliction may we be filled with patience and joy.

Response: Lord, comfort your people.

When we are afflicted with anxiety, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are paralyzed by fear and unable to move forward, we pray ... **Response.**

When worry fills our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

When our minds are captivated by racing thoughts, we pray ... **Response.**

When distress and lack of hope tempt us to stray from the path of recovery, we pray ...
Response.

When our spirits are crushed and dejected, we pray ... **Response.**

For the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! Lord, we give you thanks and praise for the privilege of sharing in the sufferings of Christ, knowing that this suffering will make us stronger and bring us closer to you. We also know that as we share in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in his comfort, too (2 Corinthians 1:5). May we receive comfort in our affliction so that we may comfort others who are afflicted, providing the same comfort to them that we have received from God (2 Corinthians 1:4). Amen.

PRAYER FOR DISCIPLINE AND OBEDIENCE

Discipline: education or formation which dispels ignorance and corrects vice

*Jesus came in human likeness,
he humbled himself,
becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:8)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: We Have Been Told

(David Hass, 1957)

Refrain:

We have been told, we've seen his face
and heard his voice alive in our hearts;
"Live in my love with all your heart,
as the Father has loved me, so I have loved you."

"I am the vine, you are the branches,
and all who live in me will bear much fruit." *Refrain.*

"You are my friends, if you keep my commands,
no longer slaves, I call you friends." *Refrain.*

No greater love is there than this:
to lay down one's life for a friend." *Refrain.*

PROVERBS 1: Purpose of the Proverbs of Solomon (verses 2-7)

That people may appreciate wisdom and discipline,
may understand words of intelligence;
May receive training in wise conduct,
in what is right, just and honest;
That resourcefulness may be imparted to the immature and inexperienced
who are easily influenced,
to give the young knowledge and discretion.
A wise person by hearing these proverbs will advance in learning,
intelligent people will gain sound guidance,
That they may comprehend proverb and parable,
the words of the wise and their riddles.
The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge;
Wisdom and instruction fools despise.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

God our Father

Hebrews 12:2b-11

For the sake of the joy that lay before him Jesus endured the cross, despising its shame, and has taken his seat at the right of the throne of God. Consider how he endured such opposition from sinners, in order that you may not grow weary and lose heart. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood. You have also forgotten the exhortation addressed to you as children of God:

“My child, do not disdain the discipline of the Lord
or lose heart when approved by him;
for whom the Lord loves, he disciplines;
he scourges every child he acknowledges.”

Endure your trials as “discipline”; God treats you as children. For what “child” is there whom the father does not discipline? If you are without discipline, in which all have shared, you are not children but bastards. Besides this, we have had our earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them. Should we not [then] submit all the more to the Father of spirits and live? They disciplined us for a short time as seemed right to them, but he does so for our benefit, in order that we may share his holiness. At the time, all discipline seems a cause not for joy but for pain, yet later it brings the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are trained by it.

Jesus and His Family

Luke 8:19-21

Then his mother and his brothers came to him but were unable to join him because of the crowd. He was told, “Your mother and your brothers are standing outside and they wish to see you.” He said to them in reply, “My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God then act on it.”

True Blessedness

Luke 11:27-28

While he was speaking, a woman from the crowd called out and said to him, “Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts at which you nursed.” He replied, “Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it.”

Futile Alliance with Egypt

Isaiah 30:1

“Woe to the rebellious children,” says the Lord,
“Who carry out plans that are not mine,
who weave webs that are not inspired by me,
adding sin upon sin.”

*Children, obey your parents in everything,
for this is pleasing to the Lord.
Fathers, do not provoke your children,
so they may not become discouraged. (Colossians 3:20-21)*

INTERCESSIONS

Let us pray for the gift of discipline and the virtue of obedience that lie in the heart of Christ.

Response: Teach us to be obedient to your discipline, Lord.

When we are tempted to act from a stubborn and rebellious heart, we pray ... **Response.**

When our immaturity and inexperience cause us to be easily influenced by poor judgment, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are foolish and irresponsible, we pray ... **Response.**

When we reject the suffering and hardship of discipline, we pray ... **Response.**

When disobedience pulls us into the darkness of our hearts where we are tempted by our disease, we pray ... **Response.**

For our private needs and intentions, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help us understand and appreciate that “all scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction and for training in righteousness so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Soften our hearts and open our minds so that we might see the benefits of appropriate discipline and feel called to live lives of obedience because of our love for you. We ask for your blessings of discipline and obedience to enable us to imitate your Son. Amen.

ADDITIONAL PASSAGES ON DISCIPLINE

Proverbs 10:17

The one who heeds discipline shows the way to life,
but whoever ignores correction leads others astray.

Proverbs 12:1

Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge,
but the one who hates correction is stupid.

Proverbs 13:18

Those who ignore discipline come to poverty and shame,
but whoever heeds correction is honored.

Proverbs 15:5

A fool spurns a father’s discipline,
but whoever heeds correction shows prudence.

PRAYER FOR FAITH

Faith: a theological virtue; an outright gift from God

*Know that the Lord does wonders for his faithful ones;
The Lord will hear you when you call on him. (Ps. 4:4)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Though the Mountains May Fall

(David Schutte, 1975)

Refrain:

Though the mountains may fall and the hills turn to dust,
Yet the love of the Lord will stand
As a shelter for all who will call on his name.
Sing the praise and the glory of God.

Could the Lord ever leave you?
Could the Lord forget his love?
Though a mother forsake her child,
He will not abandon you. *Refrain.*

Should you turn and forsake him,
He will gently call your name.
Should you wander away from him,
He will always take you back. *Refrain.*

Go to Him when you're weary;
He will give you eagle's wings.
You will run, never tire,
For your God will be your strength. *Refrain.*

HYMN: We Walk by Faith

(Henry Alford, 1844)

We walk by faith, and not by sight:
No gracious words we hear
Of him who spoke as none e'er spoke,
But we believe him near.

We may not touch his hands and side
Nor follow where he trod;
Yet in his promise we rejoice
And cry "My Lord and God!"

Help then, O Lord, our unbelief,
And may our faith abound;
To call on you when you are near,
And seek where you are found:

That when our life of faith is done
In realms of clearer light
We may behold you as you are
With full and endless sight.

PSALM 23: The Lord is My Shepherd (verses 1-6)

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
In verdant pastures he gives me repose;
Beside restful waters he leads me;
He refreshes my soul.
He guides me in right paths
For his name's sake.
Even though I walk in the dark valley
I fear no evil; for you are at my side
With your rod and your staff
That give me courage.

You spread the table before me
In the sight of my foes;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup overflows.
Only goodness and kindness follow me
All the days of my life;
And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
For years to come.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Faith of the Ancients

Hebrews 11:1-7

Brothers and sisters: Faith is the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen. Because of it the ancients were well attested. By faith we understand that the universe was ordered by the word of God, so that what is visible came into being through the invisible. By faith Abel offered to God a sacrifice greater than Cain's. Through this, he was attested to be righteous, God bearing witness to his gifts, and through this, though dead, he still speaks. By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and *he*

was found no more because God had taken him. Before he was taken up, he was attested to have pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please him, for anyone who approaches God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. By faith Noah, warned about what was not yet seen, with reverence built an ark for the salvation of his household. Through this, he condemned the world and inherited the righteousness that comes through faith.

“...think soberly, each according to the measure of faith that God has apportioned.”
(Romans 12:3)

INTERCESSIONS

Let us pray that our faith may flourish ever more (2 Thessalonians 1:3).

Response: Father, help us grow strong in faith.

When an unknown path lies ahead of us, we pray ... **Response.**

When we feel weak and afraid, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are burdened with conflict and strife, we pray ... **Response.**

When anxiety and depression threaten to call us into darkness, we pray ... **Response.**

When selfishness strikes our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are tempted to stray from the path of recovery, we pray ... **Response.**

For the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we come before you this day, asking to grow in faith through prayer. We acknowledge, with thanksgiving, the measure of faith you have given us. We ask that you give us the courage to make choices that will help our faith flourish inside us. Inspire us to read your words in sacred Scripture so we will be renewed in mind and heart through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh. Amen.

ADDITIONAL PASSAGES ON FAITH

Romans 12:3

...think soberly, each according to the measure of faith that God has apportioned.

Message: God gives each person a measure of faith to be used for his glory and our good.

2 Thessalonians 1:3

... your faith flourishes ever more...

Message: The faith given to you by God has an opportunity to grow inside you as you experience the events of your life and learn to depend on God's goodness. God calls you to "step out in faith," making choices that will help you realize things that you hope for and stand as evidence of things not seen. In this way you will live a life that is pleasing to God.

Romans 10:17

Faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.

Message: You can cultivate your faith by reading God's word and meditating on it day and night.

PRAYER FOR FAITHFUL FRIENDSHIP

Friendship: a person attached to another by feelings of affection or personal regard

*The righteous should choose friends carefully,
For the way of the wicked leads them astray. (Proverbs 12:26)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Companions on the Journey

(Carey Landry, 1985)

Refrain:

We are companions on the journey,
Breaking bread and sharing life;
And in the love we bear is the hope we share
For we believe in the love of our God,
We believe in the love of our God.

No longer strangers to each other;
No longer strangers in God's house;
We are fed and we are nourished
By the strength of those who care,
By the strength of those who care. *Refrain.*

We have been gifted with each other,
And we are called by the word of the Lord:
To act with justice, to love tenderly,
And to walk humbly with our God,
To walk humbly with our God. *Refrain.*

PSALM 16: God the Supreme Good (verses 1-3 and 7-11)

Keep me safe, O God, for in you I take refuge;
I say to the Lord, "My Lord are you.
Apart from you I have no good."
How wonderfully he has made me cherish
The holy ones who are in his land.

I bless the Lord who counsels me;
Even in the night my heart exhorts me.
I set the Lord ever before me;
With him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed.

Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices,
My body, too, abides in confidence;
Because you will not abandon
my soul to the netherworld,
nor will you suffer your faithful
one to undergo corruption.

You will show me the path to life,
Fullness of joy in your presence,
The delights at your right hand forever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Sirach 6:5-17

A kind mouth multiplies friends and appeases enemies, and gracious lips prompt friendly greetings. Let your acquaintances be many, but one in a thousand be your confidant. When you gain a friend, first test him, and be not too ready to trust him. For one sort is a friend when it suits him, but he will not be with you in time of distress. Another is a friend who becomes an enemy, and tells of the quarrel to your shame. Another is a friend, a boon companion, who will not be with you when sorrow comes. When things go well, he is your other self, and lords it over your servants. But if you are brought low, he turns against you and avoids meeting you. Keep away from your enemies; be on your guard with your friends. A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter; he who finds one finds a treasure. A faithful friend is beyond price. No sum can balance his worth. A faithful friend is a life-saving remedy, such as he who fears God finds. For he who fears God behaves accordingly, and his friends will be like himself.

John 15:12-15

This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father.

*Finally, draw your strength from the Lord and from his mighty power.
Put on the armor of God so that you may be able to stand firm
against the tactics of the devil. (Ephesians 6:10-11)*

INTERCESSIONS

With hearts and minds open to your grace, we make these prayers.

Response: Help us choose wisely, Lord.

When we are searching for new friends, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are filled with doubt and inclined to give up, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are fearful and insecure, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are weak and powerless, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are tempted by our disease and lured by the foolishness of those we once called friends, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are blind to your goodness and love, we pray ... **Response.**

For our private needs and intentions, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we depend on your wisdom and strength. We recognize the tremendous gift of your grace in the virtue of discernment. Help us choose wisely, preferring your friendship and the things of heaven. We believe we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Philippians 3:14). We ask for your blessing of discernment through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

ADDITIONAL PASSAGES ON FRIENDSHIP

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Two are better than one: they get a good wage for their labor. If the one falls, the other will lift up his companion. Woe to the solitary man! For if he should fall, he has no one to lift him up. So also, if two sleep together, they keep each other warm. How can one alone keep warm? Where a lone man may be overcome, two together can resist. A three-ply cord is not easily broken.

Sirach 6:14-17

A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter; he who finds one finds a treasure. A faithful friend is beyond price. No sum can balance his worth. A faithful friend is a life-saving remedy, such as he who fears God finds. For he who fears God behaves accordingly, and his friends will be like himself.

Proverbs 3:32

To the Lord the perverse man is an abomination, but with the upright is his friendship.

Proverbs 12:26

The righteous should choose friends carefully, for the way of the wicked leads them astray.

Proverbs 13:20

One who walks with the wise will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed.

Proverbs 14:6

A scoffer seeks wisdom and does not find it, but knowledge is easy to the one who understands it. Go from the presence of the foolish, when you do not perceive in them the lips of knowledge.

Proverbs 27:17

As iron sharpens iron, so a person sharpens the countenance of a friend.

John 15:12-15

This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father.

Romans 5:10

For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies; we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son.

Romans 16:17

Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them. For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

1 Corinthians 15:33

Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits." Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God.

2 Corinthians 6:14-16

Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God.

2 Thessalonians 3:6

But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from everyone who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition learned from us.

PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness: a conscious decision to release feelings of resentment and vengeance toward a person or group who has harmed you, regardless of whether they actually deserve your forgiveness

*Gracious and merciful is the Lord,
let us turn to Him with confidence!*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Where Charity and Love Prevail

(Clifford Evans, 1968)

Where charity and love prevail,
There God is ever found;
Brought here together by Christ's love,
By love are we thus bound.

With grateful joy and holy fear
God's charity we learn;
Let us with heart and mind and soul
Now love Him in return.

Forgive we now each other's faults
As we our faults confess;
And let us love each other well
In Christian holiness.

Let strife among us be unknown,
Let all contention cease;
Be His the glory that we seek,
Be ours His holy peace.

Let us recall that in our midst
Dwells God's begotten Son;
As members of His body joined,
We are in Christ made one.

PSALM 32: Remission of Sin (verses 1-7)

Happy is the one whose offense is forgiven,
whose sin is remitted.

O happy the one to whom the Lord

imputes no guilt,
in whose spirit is no guile.
I kept it secret and my frame was wasted.
I groaned all day long
For night and day your hand was heavy upon me.
indeed, my strength was dried up
as by the summer's heat.

But now I have acknowledged my sins;
my guilt I did not hide.
I said: "I will confess
my offense to the Lord."
And you, Lord, have forgiven
the guilt of my sin.

So let every good person pray to you
in the time of need.
The floods of water may reach high
but him they shall not reach.
You are my hiding place, O Lord;
you save me from distress.
You surround me with cries of deliverance.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Colossians 3:12-14

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and dearly beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do. And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection.

If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you.
(Matthew 6:14)

INTERCESSIONS

With joyful trust, let us own our sins before the Lord who gladly forgives.

Response: O God, be merciful to me, a sinner,

For words and deeds of impatience and anger:

- pardon us, O Lord! *Response.*

For words and deeds based on selfish motivation:

- pardon us, O Lord! *Response.*

For words and deeds that were unkind:

- pardon us, O Lord! *Response.*

For sins that cause us guilt and shame:

- pardon us, O Lord! *Response.*

For all the times we have failed to show forgiveness:

- pardon us, O Lord! *Response.*

For all the ways in which we offend You:

- pardon us, O Lord! *Response.*

For our private needs and intentions, we cry out:

- hear us, O Lord! *Response.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we depend on your mercy and compassion. We thank you for the gift of your forgiveness – a gift that opens our hearts and minds to the capacity to forgive each other and ourselves. Help us remember the weaknesses in our human nature, and recognize that we are far from perfect in our thoughts, words, and deeds. Teach us to forgive each other and ourselves from our hearts. Make us models of love and forgiveness in the world. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

ADDITIONAL PASSAGES ON FORGIVENESS

Matthew 6:11-12

Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

Matthew 6:14-15

If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.

Matthew 18:21-22

“Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?”

Jesus answered, “I say to you, not seven times but seventy times seven.”

Matthew 18:35

[Speaking of a servant who failed to forgive a fellow servant, Jesus reported that his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt.]

“So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives his brother from his heart.”

Matthew 11:25

When you stand to pray, forgive anyone against whom you have a grievance, so that your heavenly Father may in turn forgive you your transgressions.

Luke 5:20

When He saw their faith, He said, “As for you, your sins are forgiven.”

Luke 7:37

Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven.

Luke 17:3-4

Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he wrongs you seven times in one day, and returns to you seven times saying, “I am sorry,” you should forgive him.

Luke 24:34

Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.”

2 Corinthians 2:10

But one whom you forgive anything, I *forgive* also; for indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, *I did it* for your sakes in the presence of Christ.

1 John 2:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

PRAYER FOR FORTITUDE

Fortitude: a moral virtue that is one of the seven Cardinal Virtues; fortitude provides courage, strength, patient endurance, resourcefulness and resilience

*God is my strong fortress.
He makes my way perfect. (2 Samuel 22:33)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Your Words are Spirit and Life

(Bernadette Farrell, 1993)

Refrain:

Your words are spirit and life, O Lord:
Richer than gold, stronger than death.
Your words are spirit and life, O Lord;
Life everlasting.

God's love is perfect, refreshing the soul,
Reviving the weary spirit.
God's rule can be trusted:
Bringing us wisdom,
Bring God's wisdom to birth. *Refrain.*

Living by God's truth is holy and sure;
God's presence is everlasting.
God's truth is eternal, bringing us justice;
Bringing God's justice to earth. *Refrain.*

PSALM 27: Trust in God (verses 1, 4, 5, 7-14)

The Lord is my light and my salvation;
Whom should I fear?
The Lord is my life's refuge;
Of whom should I be afraid?

One thing I ask of the Lord;
This I seek;
To dwell in the house of the Lord
All the days of my life,
That I may gaze on the loveliness of the Lord
And contemplate his temple.
For he will hide me in his abode
In the day of trouble;

He will conceal me in the shelter of his tent,
He will set me high upon a rock.
Hear, O Lord, the sound of my call;
Have pity on me, and answer me.
Of you my heart speaks; you my glance seeks;
Your presence, O Lord, I seek.
Hide not your face from me;
Do not in anger repel your servant.
You are my helper; cast me not off;
Forsake me not, O God my savior.
Though my father and mother forsake me,
Yet will the Lord receive me.

Show me, O Lord, your way,
And lead me on a level path,
Because of my adversaries.
Give me not up to the wishes of my foes;
For false witnesses have risen up against me.
I believe that I shall see the bounty of the Lord
In the land of the living.
Wait for the Lord with courage;
Be stouthearted, and wait for the Lord.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

The Lord said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." I will rather boast most gladly of my weaknesses, in order that the power of Christ may dwell with me. Therefore, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Ephesians 3:14-19

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that he may grant you in accord with the riches of his glory to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner self, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

*Finally, draw your strength from the Lord and from his mighty power.
Put on the armor of God so that you may be able to stand firm
against the tactics of the devil. (Ephesians 6:10-11)*

INTERCESSIONS

With hearts and minds open to your grace, we make these prayers:

Response: Strengthen us in Christ!

When we are impatient, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are filled with doubt and inclined to give up, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are fearful and insecure, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are weak and powerless, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are tempted by our disease, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are exhausted and blind to your goodness and love, we pray ... **Response.**

For our private needs and intentions, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we depend on your mercy and compassion. We recognize the tremendous grace in your gift of fortitude that bestows upon us patience, perseverance, strength, courage, resourcefulness and resilience. We believe we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Philippians 3:14). We ask for your blessing of fortitude through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Prayer to Saint Michael

(Pope Leo XIII, 1884)

St. Michael the archangel, defend us in battle,
Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil.
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray.
And do thou, O prince of the heavenly host,
By the power of God, cast into hell
Satan and all evil spirits that prowl throughout the world,
Seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

PRAYER FOR FREEDOM

Definition: “Patriotism is love for everything to do with our native land: its history, its traditions, its language, its natural features. It is a love which extends also to the works of our compatriots and the fruits of their genius. Every danger that threatens the overall good of our native land becomes an occasion to demonstrate this love. . . . The native land is the common good of all citizens and as such it imposes a serious duty. . . . Whereas nationalism involves recognizing and pursuing the good of one’s own nation alone, without regard for the rights of others, patriotism, on the other hand, is a love for one’s native land that accords rights to all other nations equal to those claimed for one’s own. Patriotism, in other words, leads to a properly ordered social love.” John Paul II

*Jesus was sent to proclaim liberty to captives
And let the oppressed go free.
Let us give thanks and praise. (Luke 4:18)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: America the Beautiful

(Katharine Lee Bates, 1895)

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea.

O beautiful, for pilgrim feet,
Whose stern impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness!
America! America!
God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law.

PSALM 34: Praise of God, Protector of the Just (verses 4-11)

Glorify the Lord with me.

Together let us praise his name.

I sought the Lord and he answered me:

From all my fears he set me free.

Look toward him and be radiant with joy;
Let your faces not be ashamed.
When the poor cried out; the Lord heard
And rescued them from all their distress.

The angel of the Lord is encamped
Around those who revere him, to rescue them.
Taste and see that the Lord is good.
Happy are the ones who seek refuge in him.

Revere the Lord, you his saints.
They lack nothing, those who revere him.
Strong lions suffer want and go hungry
But those who seek the Lord lack no blessing.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Luke 4:16-21

Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring glad tidings to the poor.
He sent me to proclaim liberty to captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.

Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, "Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing."

Freedom for Service

Galatians 5:13-14

You were called for freedom. But do not use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh; rather serve one another through love. For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Be free, yet without using freedom as a pretext for evil. (1 Peter 2:16)

INTERCESSIONS

For freedom Christ set us free (Galatians 5:1). Let us honor and claim the gift of freedom from oppression, praying:

Response: Free your people, Lord!

When we are tempted to stray from the path of recovery, we pray ... **Response.**

When we consider paths of self-destruction, we pray ... **Response.**

When we experience sorrow and distress, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are burdened with conflict and strife, we pray ... **Response.**

When anxiety and depression threaten to call us into darkness, we pray ... **Response.**

When selfishness strikes our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

For the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

God of all peoples and nations, you have called those who live in this land to pursue your vision of freedom, justice, and peace for all. Keep us faithful to your gifts and help us use them for the good of all humankind. We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

◆ PRAYER FOR GRATITUDE

Gratitude: the quality of being thankful: readiness to show appreciation and return kindness

*This is the day the Lord has made,
Let us rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118:24)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Thanks Be to God

(Stephen Dean, 1994)

Thanks be to God whose love has gathered us this day;
Thanks be to God who helps and guides us on our way.
Thanks be to God who gives us voice that we might thank him:
Deo gratias, Deo gratias, thanks be to God most high.

Thanks be to God who knows our secret joys and fears;
Thanks be to God who when we call him always hears.
Thanks be to God, our rock and strength, ever sustaining:
Deo gratias, Deo gratias, thanks be to God most high.

Thanks be to God who never turns his face away;
Thanks be to God who heals and pardons all who stray.
Thanks be to God who welcomes us into the kingdom:
Deo gratias, Deo gratias, thanks be to God most high.

PSALM 100: A psalm of Thanksgiving (verses 1 – 5)

Sing joyfully to the Lord, all you lands;
Serve the Lord with gladness;
Come before him with joyful song.
Know that the Lord is God,
He made us, his we are;
His people, the flock he tends.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
His courts with praise;
Give thanks to him;
Bless his name for he is good;
The Lord whose kindness endures forever,
And his faithfulness, to all generations.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Colossians 3:15-17

And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Praise of the Father

Luke 10:21

In that same hour [Jesus] rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to the childlike. Yes, Father, for such has been your gracious will."

The Feeding of the Four Thousand

Mark 8:1-6, 8

In those days when there was a great crowd without anything to eat, Jesus summoned the disciples and said, "My heart is moved with pity for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat. If I send them away hungry to their homes, they will collapse on the way, and some of them have come a great distance." His disciples answered him, "Where can anyone get enough bread to satisfy them here in this deserted place?" Still he asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" "Seven," they replied. He ordered the crowd to sit on the ground. Then, taking the seven loaves he gave thanks, broke them, and gave them to his disciples to distribute, and they distributed them to the crowd. They ate and were satisfied. They picked up the fragments left over – seven baskets. There were about four thousand people.

*The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped;
my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him. (Psalm 28:7)*

INTERCESSIONS

Therefore, let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus, let us offer to God acceptable worship with reverence and awe (Hebrews 12:28).

Response: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

For the grace to move forward on the path of recovery, we pray ... **Response.**

For the blessings of family and friends who support us, we pray ... **Response.**

For a life filled with joy, sorrow, and glory as we follow Christ, we pray ... **Response.**

For the blessings of harmony and balance, we pray ... **Response.**

For the insight and wisdom that guide our lives, we pray ... **Response.**

For the discipline we need to live healthy lives, we pray ... *Response*

For the healing and forgiveness that has been given to us, we pray ... *Response*.

For the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... *Response*.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, keep us ever mindful of your mercy and goodness that we may give thanks to you forever; and from generation to generation recount your praise (Psalm 79:13). We make this prayer in the name of Jesus our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR HEALING

Healing: the process of making or becoming sound and healthy again

*Gracious and merciful is the Lord,
let us turn to Him with confidence!*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: You Are Mine (To be sung as if Jesus is saying these words to you.)
(David Haas, 1991)

I will come to you in the silence,
I will lift you from all your fear.
You will hear my voice,
I claim you as my choice,
Be still and know I am here.

I am hope for all who are hopeless,
I am eyes for all who long to see.
In the shadows of the night,
I will be your light,
Come and rest in me. *Refrain.*

Refrain:

Do not be afraid, I am with you.
I have called you each by name.
Come and follow me, I will bring you home;
I love you and you are mine.

I am strength for all the despairing,
Healing for the ones who dwell in shame.
All the blind will see,
The lame will all run free,
and all will know my name. *Refrain.*

I am the word that leads all to freedom,
I am the peace the world cannot give.
I will call your name,
Embracing all your pain,
Stand up, now walk, and live! *Refrain.*

PSALM 146: Trust in God Alone (verses 1-10)

Praise the Lord, O my soul;
I will praise the Lord all my life;
I will sing praise to my God while I live.

Put not your trust in princes,
in man, in whom there is no salvation.
When his spirit departs he returns to the earth;
On that day his plans perish.

Happy he whose help is the God of Jacob,
Whose hope is in the Lord, his God,
Who made heaven and earth,
The sea and all that is in them;
Who keeps faith forever,
Secures justice for the oppressed,
Gives food to the hungry.

The Lord sets captives free;
The Lord gives sight to the blind.
The Lord raises up those that were bowed down;
The Lord loves the just.
The Lord protects strangers;
The fatherless and the widow he sustains,
But the way of the wicked he thwarts.
The Lord shall reign forever;
Your God, O Zion, through all generations. Alleluia.

WORD OF GOD

Luke 4:17-19, 21

[Jesus] stood up [in the synagogue] to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah.
He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because he has anointed me
To bring glad tidings to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To let the oppressed go free,
And to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.”

He said to them, “Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.”

*Heal me, Lord, that I may be healed;
Save me, that I may be saved,
For it is You whom I praise. (Jeremiah 17:4)*

INTERCESSIONS

The Lord heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds (Psalm 147:3). Let us approach the throne of His mercy and ask for healing.

Response: Heal me, Lord, and make me whole.

For our bodies that were created in Your divine image, we pray... **Response.**

For our minds that are sometimes far from You, we pray... **Response.**

For our emotions that are suppressed or uncontrolled because they are difficult to manage, we pray... **Response.**

For our spirits that hunger and thirst for You, we pray... **Response.**

For our relationships that are misguided and broken, we pray... **Response.**

For our private needs and intentions, we pray... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we depend on your goodness and mercy. We thank you for the blessings You bestow as You place Your healing hands upon us. We are in need of healing in body, mind, emotions, and spirit. Heal our blindness and set us free. In the name of Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, heal us, Lord, and make us whole. Amen.

ADDITIONAL PASSAGES ON HEALING

Psalm 147:1&3

Praise the Lord, for He is good; sing praise to our God, for He is gracious; it is fitting to praise Him. He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

Psalm 145:13-14

The Lord is faithful in all His words and holy in all His works. The Lord lifts up all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down.

Jeremiah 14:19-20

Why have you struck us a blow that cannot be healed? We wait for peace, to no avail; for a time of healing, but terror comes instead. We recognize, O Lord, our wickedness, the guilt of our fathers; that we have sinned against you.

Deuteronomy 32:39

Learn then that I, I alone, am God, and there is no god besides Me. It is I who bring both death and life, I who inflict wounds and heal them, and from My hand there is no rescue.

Hosea 6:1

In their affliction, they shall look for Me; “Come let us return to the Lord, for it is He who has rent, but He will heal us; He has struck us, but He will bind our wounds.”

Isaiah 57:18-19

I saw [My people’s] ways, but I will heal them and lead them; I will give comfort to them and to those who mourn for them, I, the Creator, who gave them life. Peace, peace to the far and the near, says the Lord; and I will heal them.

Jeremiah 30:17

I will restore you to health; of your wounds I will heal you, says the Lord.

Hosea 14:5

I will heal their defection, I will love them freely.

Isaiah 42:16

I will lead the blind on their journey; by paths unknown I will guide them. I will turn darkness into light before them, and make crooked ways straight. These things I do for them, and I will not forsake them.

Jeremiah 17:4

Heal me, Lord, that I may be healed; save me, that I may be saved, for it is You whom I praise.

PRAYER FOR HEALING BLINDNESS

Vision: the ability to see

*Jesus is the light of our eyes and our hearts:
Come let us adore!*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Let Saints on Earth in Concert Sing

(Charles Wesley, 1759)

A blind man sat beside the road,
And begged for charity,
Until he heard a stranger's step,
And asked, "Who can this be?"

"Who can this be, and will he stop
For one as poor as I?"
Then voices pierced his darkness deep:
"The Lord is passing by."

"He must not pass me by," he cried;
"He must in pity see
These empty hands, these sightless eyes!
Have mercy, Lord, on me!"

Then Jesus stopped, in mercy spoke:
Those sightless eyes he healed
Which, open wide, by faith made whole,
The Son of God revealed.

Our blindness cries for vision bright,
Our poverty for grace.
O Lord, have mercy now on us;
To us reveal your face.

PSALM 146: (verses 1b-2, 6b-10)

My soul, give praise to the Lord;
I will praise the Lord all my days,
make music to my God while I live.

It is he who keeps faith for ever,
who is just to those who are oppressed.

It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
the Lord, who sets prisoners free,

the Lord, who gives sight to the blind,
who raises up those who are bowed down,
the Lord, who protects the stranger
and upholds the widow and the orphan.

It is the Lord who loves the just
But thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for ever,
Zion's God, from age to age.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Isaiah 42:16

I will lead the blind on their journey; by paths unknown I will guide them. I will turn darkness into light before them, and make crooked ways straight. These things I do for them, and I will not forsake them.

The Gospel of the Lord

Mark 10:46-52

As Jesus was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a sizeable crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind man, the son of Timaeus, sat by the roadside begging. On hearing that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me." And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he kept calling out all the more, "Son of David, have pity on me."

Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take courage; get up, Jesus is calling you." Bartimaeus threw aside his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus. Jesus said to him in reply, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man replied to him, "Master, I want to see." Jesus told him, "Go your way; your faith has saved you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the way.

*You who are deaf, listen,
you who are blind, look and see! (Isaiah 42:18)*

He is able to deal patiently with the ignorant and the erring. (Hebrews 5:2)

INTERCESSIONS

There is more than one kind of blindness. Christ heals the blind of eye and the blind of heart. As a community we acknowledge that healing is available to each and every person. Jesus heals us of our infirmities. Let us pray that we may see.

Response: Jesus, continue to heal our blindness.

When we fail to see the light of your truth, we pray ... *Response.*

When we are lured by the temptations of our disease, we pray ... *Response.*

When we are trapped in the stubbornness of our hardness of heart, we pray ... *Response.*

When we make poor choices, we pray ... *Response.*

For the prayers we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... *Response.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil,
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we recognize that we have areas of blindness that are in need of healing. In faith and hope we turn to your Son, Jesus Christ, as the one who was "sent to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free" (Luke 4:18). Release His healing power among us and within us to help heal our areas of blindness and set us free to do your will. Amen.

PRAYER FOR HEALING THE BODY

Disease: a disorder of structure or function, especially one that produces specific signs or symptoms

*For you were bought with a price,
so glorify God in your body. (1 Corinthians 6:20)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: How Great Thou Art

(Stuart Hine, 1949)

O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds thy hands have made,
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed;

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee;
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee;
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!

When through the woods and forest glades I wander,
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
And hear the brook, and feel the gentle breeze;

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee;
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee;
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!

PSALM 139: The All-Knowing and Ever-Present God (verses 1-10, 13-18)

O Lord, you have probed me and you know me;
You know when I sit and when I stand;
You understand my thoughts from afar.
My journeys and my rest you scrutinize,
With all my ways you are familiar.

Even before a word is on my tongue,
Behold, O Lord, you know the whole of it.
Behind me and before me,
you hem me in and rest your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;

Too lofty for me to attain.
Where can I go from your Spirit?
From your presence where can I flee?
If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
If I sink to the netherworld, you are present there.

If I take the wings of the dawn,
If I settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
Even there your hand shall guide me,
And your right hand hold me fast.

Truly you have formed my inmost being;
You knit me in my mother's womb.
I give you thanks that I am fearfully, wonderfully made;
Wonderful are your works.

My soul also you knew full well;
Nor was my frame unknown to you
When I was made in secret,
When I was fashioned in the depths of the earth.

Your eyes have seen my actions;
In your book they are all written;
My days were limited before one of them existed.

How weighty are your designs, O God;
How vast the sum of them!
Were I to recount them, they would outnumber the sands;
If I reach the end of them, I shall still be with you.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever.

WORD OF GOD

1 Corinthians 6:13b-20

The body, however, is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body; God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take Christ's members and make them the members of a prostitute? Of course not! Or do you not know that anyone who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For "the two" it says, "will become one flesh." But whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Avoid immorality. Every other sin is outside the body, but the immoral person sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been purchased at a price. Therefore glorify God in your body.

*We always carry about in the body the dying of Jesus,
so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our body. (2 Corinthians 4:10)*

*We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now;
and not only that, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit,
we also groan within ourselves as we wait for adoption,
the redemption of our bodies. (Romans 8:23)*

*I will restore you to health;
of your wounds I will heal you, says the Lord. (Jeremiah 30:17)*

*He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree,
that we might die to sin and live in righteousness.
By his wounds you have been healed. (1 Peter 2:24)*

INTERCESSIONS

With gratitude for God's goodness in creating us in his image, and with sorrow for our sins against the body that was created in his image and likeness, let us offer our prayers to God.

Response: Lord, hear our prayer.

For the beauty of creation:

- We thank you, Lord! **Response.**

For our bodies and the process of human development:

- We thank you, Lord! **Response.**

For the gifts of feelings, intellect, and will:

- We thank you, Lord! **Response.**

For all the ways in which we have failed to honor your gifts:

- We ask your forgiveness, Lord! **Response.**

For all the ways we have shown disrespect to you and the body you graciously gave us:

- We ask your forgiveness, Lord! **Response.**

For our private needs and intentions: **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we declare our dependence on your goodness and strength. We are mindful that you did not call us to impurity but to holiness (1 Thessalonians 4:7). In response to that call we pray: May the God of peace make us perfectly holy and may we entirely, spirit, soul and body, be preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:23). Throughout our journey, help us to recognize and appreciate the gifts of goodness that you have imparted to us. Guide us in the proper use of these gifts. Help us awaken to the wisdom you have to offer us on this path of recovery, and guide us as we endeavor to implement the truth we are called to see. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR HOPE

Hope: a theological virtue; an outright gift from God

*My soul longs for your salvation,
I hope in your word. (Psalm 119:81)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: River of Glory

(Daniel Schutte, 1991)

Refrain:

River of glory, springs of our birth
flood of God's riches poured on the earth.
We are born from the darkness
and clothed in the light!
We are bathed in the glory of God!

Fountain of mercy,
grace flowing free,
Streams of salvation,
spilling with love from a tree! *Refrain.*

Bread for our journey
God will provide.
Hope for all ages,
Jesus, companion and guide! *Refrain.*

Darkness is banished,
night turned away.
Christ is our sunlight,
lifting and leading our way! *Refrain.*

PSALM 33: Praise of the Lord's Power and Providence (verses 1, 4-5, 8-15, 18-22)

Exult, you just, in the Lord;
praise from the upright is fitting.
For upright is the word of the Lord,
and all his works are trustworthy.
He loves justice and righteousness;
of the kindness of the Lord the earth is full.

Let all the earth fear the Lord;
let all who dwell in the world revere him.
For he spoke, and it was made;
he commanded, and it stood forth.
The Lord brings to naught the plans of nations;
he foils the designs of peoples.
But the plan of the Lord stands forever;
the design of his heart, through all generations.
Happy the nation whose God is the Lord,
the people he has chosen for his own inheritance.

From heaven the Lord looks down;
he sees all humankind.
From his fixed throne he beholds
all who dwell on the earth,
He who fashioned the heart of each,
he who knows all their works.

But see, the eyes of the Lord are upon those who fear him,
upon those who hope for his kindness,
To deliver them from death
and preserve them in spite of famine.
Our soul waits for the Lord,
who is our help and our shield.
For in him our hearts rejoice;
in his holy name we trust.
May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us
who have put our hope in you.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Vigilance

I Thessalonians 5:4-11

But you are not in darkness, for that day to overtake you like a thief. For all of you are children of the light and children of the day. We are not part of the night or of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep as the rest do, but let us stay alert and sober. Those who sleep go to sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we are of the day, let us be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love and the helmet that is hope for salvation. For God did not destine us for wrath, but to gain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live together with him. Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, as indeed you do.

*For to this end we toil and strive,
because we have our hope set on the living God,
who is the Savior of all people,
especially of those who believe. (I Timothy 4:10)*

INTERCESSIONS

Knowing that faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen, we pray with our hope fixed on the eternal things of heaven.

Response: Father, fill us with your hope.

When we fall into sorrow and distress, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are burdened with conflict and strife, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are tempted to stray from the path of recovery, we pray ... **Response.**

When selfishness strikes our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

For the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Peter 1:3). And we know that everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure (1 John 3:3). Therefore, our hearts are glad, our tongues are filled with rejoicing, and our flesh dwells in the hope of eternal life (Acts 2:26). May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may continually abound in hope (Romans 15:13). Amen.

PRAYER FOR HUMILITY

Humility: a quality by which a person considering his own defects has a lowly opinion of himself and willingly submits himself to God and to others for God's sake

Let us bow down in worship!

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Humbly Lord We Worship You

(Jeanne Frolick, 1973)

Humbly Lord we worship you,
Our eternal king.
You who died to give us life,
Hear us as we sing. *Refrain.*

Refrain:

Jesus, God and Lord of all,
Come to us, we pray.
Thus united in your love,
May we live this day.

Jesus, Lord, we offer you
Every act this day.
May we live our love for you
And your will obey. *Refrain.*

Lord, forgive us all our faults,
Others we forgive.
May we strive with all our souls,
Christian lives to live. *Refrain.*

May we love you in each soul
And each soul in you;
One in our eternal goal,
One in all we do. *Refrain.*

PSALM 138: Hymn of a Grateful Heart (verses 1-8)

I will give thanks to you, O Lord, with all my heart,
For you have heard the words of my mouth;
In the presence of the angels I will sing your praise.

I will worship at your holy temple

And give thanks to your name,
Because of your kindness and your truth;
For you have made great above all things
Your name and your promise.

When I called, you answered me;
You built up strength within me.
All the kings of the earth shall give thanks to you, O Lord,
When they hear the words of your mouth;

And they shall sing of the ways of the Lord:
“Great is the glory of the Lord.”
The Lord is exalted, yet the lowly he sees,
And the proud he knows from afar.

Though I walk amid distress, you preserve me;
Against the anger of my enemies you raise your hand;
Your right hand saves me.

The Lord will complete what he has done for me;
Your kindness, O Lord, endures forever;
Forsake not the work of your hands.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Philippians 2:5-11

Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus,
Who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
something to be grasped.
Rather, he emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
coming in human likeness;
and found in human appearance,
he humbled himself,
becoming obedient to death,
even death on a cross.
Because of this, God greatly exalted him
and bestowed on him the name
that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue confess that

Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
*But we hold this treasure in earthen vessels,
that the surpassing power may be of God and not from us. (2 Corinthians 4:7)*

INTERCESSIONS

With humble confidence in the Lord, let us offer our prayers to God:

Response: Lord, hear our prayer.

Lord, grant us an attitude of humble service, we pray ... **Response.**

Lord, make us obedient like your Son, we pray ... **Response.**

Lord, fill us with the faith that will make us whole, we pray ... **Response.**

Lord, help us forgive others as you forgive us, we pray ... **Response.**

For our private needs and intentions, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we declare our dependence on your goodness to help us grow in the humility that comes from wisdom. Help us let go of the fear and the pride that prevent us from embracing humble confidence in you. Help us awaken to the wisdom you have to offer as we walk the path of recovery, and guide us as we endeavor to implement the truth we are called to see. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

ADDITIONAL PASSAGES ON HUMILITY

Letting Go of Fear

The fear of man brings a snare,
but he who trusts in the Lord is safe. (Proverbs 29:25)

The Lord is my light and my salvation,
whom should I fear? (Psalm 27:1)

Letting Go of Pride

Pride goes before disaster,
and a haughty spirit before a fall. (Proverbs 16:18)

Therefore, whoever thinks he is standing secure
should take care not to fall. (1 Corinthians 10:12)

...knowledge inflates with pride,
but love builds up. (1 Corinthians 8:1)

The wicked, through the pride of his countenance,
will not seek after God; God is not in all his thoughts. (Psalm 10:4)

Claiming Humble Confidence in the Lord

But we hold this treasure in earthen vessels,
that the surpassing power may be of God and not from us. (2 Corinthians 4:7)

Do you suppose that Scripture speaks without meaning when it says,
“The spirit that He has made to dwell in us tends toward jealousy?”
But He bestows a greater grace; therefore, it says:
“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”
So submit yourselves to God.
Resist the devil and he will flee from you.
Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.
Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you of two minds.
Begin to lament, to mourn, to weep.
Let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy into dejection.
Humble yourselves before the Lord and He will exalt you. (James 4:5-10)

PRAYER FOR JOY

Joy: a feeling of great happiness

*Let the heavens be glad,
Let the earth rejoice. (1 Chronicles 16:31)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: All the Ends of the Earth (Psalm 98)

(Tom Booth, 1998)

Refrain:

All the ends of the earth have seen the power of God;
All the ends of the earth have seen the power of God.

Sing to the Lord a new song,
for he has done wondrous deeds;
His right hand has won the vict'ry for Him,
His holy arm. *Refrain.*

The Lord has made his salvation known,
His justice revealed to all.
Remembered his kindness and faithfulness
to Israel. *Refrain.*

All of the ends of earth
have seen salvation by our God.
Joyfully sing out all you lands,
break forth in song. *Refrain.*

PSALM 66: Praise of God, Israel's Deliverer (verses 1-10, 16-20)

Shout joyfully to God, all the earth;
Sing the glory of His name;
Make His praise glorious.
Say to God, "How awesome are your works!
Because of the greatness of your power
Your enemies will have feigned obedience to you.

All the earth will worship you,
And sing praises to you,
They will sing praises to your name."

Come and see the works of God,
Who is awesome in His deeds towards the sons of men.
He turned the sea into dry land;
They passed through the river on foot!
There let us rejoice in Him!

He rules by His might forever;
His eyes keep watch over the nations;
Let not the rebellious exalt themselves.

Come and hear, all who fear God,
And I will tell of what He has done for my soul.
I cried to Him with my mouth,
And He was extolled with my tongue.

If I regard wickedness in my heart,
the Lord will not hear.
But certainly God has heard;
He has given heed to the voice of my prayer.

Blessed be God,
Who has not turned away my prayer
Nor His loving kindness from me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Luke 2:6-12

While they were in [Bethlehem], the days were completed for [Mary] to give birth. And she gave birth to her first born son; and she wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. In the same region there were shepherds in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you *good news of great joy* which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.”

INTERCESSIONS

And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at His birth (Luke 1:14). In joyful anticipation of the birth of Christ that can occur daily in our hearts, we offer prayers to God.

Response: Abba, Father, hear our prayer.

Prepare our hearts to receive your Son each day of our lives as if it were Christmas, we pray ... *Response.*

By his birth within us, transform us in heart and mind, we pray ... *Response.*

Help us live lives that are pleasing in your sight, we pray ... *Response.*

Help us to be patient as we wait for you to answer our prayers, we pray ... *Response.*

Help us persevere on the path of recovery, we pray ... *Response.*

Help us recall that all things are possible with your help, we pray ... *Response.*

For the prayers we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... *Response.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope (Romans 15:13). May the blessings of Christmas live in our hearts throughout the year. Amen.

PRAYER FOR JUSTICE

Justice: a moral virtue that is one of the seven Cardinal Virtues; a very profound concern that all people should have their rights, driving you to work toward achieving equity and fairness for all, and keeping you from a tendency to harm others by making poor choices. Those who act with justice are mindful of returning to God what is due to him – gratitude and praise for his goodness and love!

*Keep the way of the Lord by doing
righteousness and justice. (Genesis 18:19)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: O God Beyond All Praising

(Michael Perry, 1982)

O God beyond all praising,
We worship you today
And sing the love amazing
That songs cannot repay;
For we can only wonder
At every gift you send,
At blessings without number
And mercies without end;
We lift our hearts before you
And wait upon your word,
We honor and adore you,
Our great and mighty Lord.

Then hear, O gracious Savior,
Accept the love we bring,
That we who know your favor
May serve you as our King;
And whether our tomorrows
Be filled with good or ill,
We'll triumph through our sorrows
And rise to bless you still:
To marvel at your beauty
And glory in your ways,
And make a joyful duty
Our sacrifice of praise.

PSALM 72: The Kingdom of the Messiah (verses 1-8, 12, 13, 17)

O God, with your judgment endow the king,
And with your justice, the king's son;
He shall govern your people with justice
And your afflicted ones with judgment,
Obtaining their rights for them.
The mountains shall yield peace for the people,
And the hills justice.
He shall defend the afflicted among the people,
Save the children of the poor,
And crush the oppressor.

May he endure as long as the sun,
And like the moon through all generations.
He shall be like rain coming down on the meadow,
Like showers watering the earth.
Justice shall flower in his days,
And profound peace, till the moon be no more.

May he rule from sea to sea,
And from the river to the ends of the earth.
For he shall rescue the poor when they cry out,
And the afflicted who have no one to help them.
He shall have pity for the lowly and the poor;
The lives of the poor he shall save.

May his name be blessed forever;
As long as the sun his name shall remain.
In him shall all the tribes of the earth be blessed;
All the nations shall proclaim his happiness.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

The Rich Official

Luke 18:18-25

An official asked Jesus this question, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery; you shall not kill; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; honor your father and your mother.'" And the official replied, "All of these I have observed from my youth." When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "There is still one thing left for you: sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." But when he heard this, he became quite sad, for he was very rich. Jesus looked at him and said, "How

hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.”

*The Lord has told you what is good;
And what he requires of you:
To do justice,
To love kindness,
And to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)*

INTERCESSIONS

The Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all who wait for him (Isaiah 30:18). Let us pray that we might receive the virtue of justice to guide us in all our affairs.

Response: Father, inspire us to act with justice.

When we are tempted to be dishonest and manipulate others, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are tempted to ignore those who are in pain, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are tempted to take advantage of the weak and the poor, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are tempted to turn away from God and from the path of recovery, we pray ...
Response.

When selfishness strikes our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

For the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! He is a God of faithfulness and all his ways are just. Lord, teach us to embrace the spirit of justice and act with righteousness in all matters that we may live lives that are pleasing in your sight. Amen.

ADDITIONAL PASSAGES ON JUSTICE

Deuteronomy 16:19

You shall not pervert justice. You shall not show partiality, and you shall not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and subverts the cause of righteousness.

Deuteronomy 32:4

The Rock! His work is perfect, for all his ways are just. A God of faithfulness and without injustice, righteous and upright is he.

2 Samuel 8:15

So David reigned over all Israel and administered justice and equity to all his people.

1 Kings 3:28

And all Israel heard of the judgment that the king had rendered, and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him to do justice.

Psalms 37:28

For the Lord loves justice;
He will not forsake his saints.
They are preserved forever,
But the children of the wicked shall be cut off.

Psalms 37:30

The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom,
And his tongue speaks justice.

Psalms 89:14

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne;
Steadfast love and faithfulness go before you.

Psalms 106:3

Blessed are they who observe justice,
Who do righteousness at all times.

Psalms 112:5

It is well with those who deal generously and lend;
Who conduct their affairs with justice.

Proverbs 2:7b-8

The Lord is a shield to those who walk in integrity,
Guarding the paths of justice,
And he preserves the way of his godly ones.

Proverbs 8:20

I walk in the way of righteousness,
In the midst of the paths of justice.

Proverbs 28:5

Those who are evil do not understand justice,
But those who seek the Lord understand it completely.

Isaiah 1:17

... learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.

Isaiah 30:18

Therefore, the Lord waits to be gracious to you, and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.

Isaiah 42:4

[The Lord] will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice on the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law.

Isaiah 56:1

Thus says the Lord: "Keep justice and do righteousness, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance will be revealed."

Isaiah 59:8

The way of peace they do not know, and there is no justice in their paths; they have made their roads crooked. No one who treads on them knows peace.

Hosea 12:6

So you, by the help of your God, return, hold fast to love and justice, and wait continually for your God.

Micah 6:8

The Lord has told you what is good; and what he requires of you: to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.

Deuteronomy 16:20

Justice, and only justice, you shall follow, that you may live and inherit the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

Psalm 82:3

Give justice to the weak and the fatherless;
Maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute.

Luke 11:42

But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.

Luke 18:7

And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry out to him day and night?

PRAYER FOR LIVING IN THE LIGHT

Word: the message of the Gospel

God is light, in him there is no darkness. (1 John 1:5)

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: I Heard the Voice of Jesus

(Horatius Bonar, 1946)

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
“Come unto me and rest;
lay down, now weary one, lay down
your head upon my breast.”
I came to Jesus as I was.
So weary, worn and sad;
I found in him a resting place,
And he has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
“I am this dark world’s light;
look unto me, your morn shall rise,
and all your day be bright.”
I looked to Jesus, and I found
In him my star, my sun;
And in that light of life I’ll walk
Till trav’ling days are done.

PSALM 27: Trust in God (verses 1, 4, 5, 7-14)

The Lord is my light and my salvation;
Whom should I fear?
The Lord is my life’s refuge;
Of whom should I be afraid?

One thing I ask of the Lord;
This I seek;
To dwell in the house of the Lord
All the days of my life,
That I may gaze on the loveliness of the Lord
And contemplate his temple.
For he will hide me in his abode
In the day of trouble;
He will conceal me in the shelter of his tent,
He will set me high upon a rock.

Hear, O Lord, the sound of my call;
Have pity on me, and answer me.
Of you my heart speaks; you my glance seeks;
Your presence, O Lord, I seek.
Hide not your face from me;
Do not in anger repel your servant.
You are my helper; cast me not off;
Forsake me not, O God my savior.
Though my father and mother forsake me,
Yet will the Lord receive me.

Show me, O Lord, your way,
And lead me on a level path,
Because of my adversaries.
Give me not up to the wishes of my foes;
For false witnesses have risen up against me.
I believe that I shall see the bounty of the Lord
In the land of the living.
Wait for the Lord with courage;
Be stouthearted, and wait for the Lord.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Jesus as the Light of the Human Race

John 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word,
And the Word was with God,
And the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God.
All things came to be through him,
And without him nothing came to be.
What came to be through him was life,
And this life was the light of the human race;
The light shines in the darkness,
And the darkness has not overcome it.

Duty to Live in the Light

Ephesians 5:6-14a

Let no one deceive you with empty arguments, for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the disobedient. So do not be associated with them. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth. Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the fruitless works of darkness; rather expose them,

for it is shameful even to mention the things done by them in secret; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light.

*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 8:12)*

INTERCESSIONS

If we walk in the light as he is in the light, then we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7). As children of the light, we offer our prayers to God.

Response: Father, keep us in your light.

When we are tempted to stray from the path of recovery, we pray ... **Response.**

When we consider paths of self-destruction, we pray ... **Response.**

When we experience sorrow and distress, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are burdened with conflict and strife, we pray ... **Response.**

When anxiety and depression threaten to call us into darkness, we pray ... **Response.**

When selfishness strikes our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

For the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we come before you this day knowing that you form the light and create the darkness; you make well-being and create woe. As the Lord you have power over all these things (Isaiah 45:7). We struggle to live as children of the light. Be with us today, teaching us to live in the light and let go of the old ways that kept us in the darkness. Let us be renewed in mind and heart through Jesus Christ, your Son, who called us out of darkness and into his marvelous light. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO ARE LOST

Lost: unable to find one's way

*God is faithful and true.
Let us give thanks and praise!*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: You Are Mine (To be sung as if Jesus is saying these words to you.)
(David Haas, 2001)

I will come to you in the silence,
I will lift you from all your fear.
You will hear my voice, I claim you as my choice,
Be still and know I am here.

I am hope for all who are hopeless,
I am eyes for all who long to see.
In the shadows of the night, I will be your light,
Come and rest in me.

Refrain:

Do not be afraid, I am with you.
I have called you each by name.
Come and follow me,
I will bring you home;
I love you and you are mine.

I am strength for all the despairing,
Healing for the ones who dwell in shame.
All the blind will see, the lame will all run free,
And all will know my name. *Refrain.*

I am the word that leads all to freedom,
I am the peace the world cannot give.
I will call your name, embracing all your pain,
Stand up, now walk, and live. *Refrain.*

PSALM 30: Thanksgiving for Deliverance from Death (verses 3-6, 9, 11-13)

O Lord, my God,
I cried out to you and you healed me.
O Lord, you brought me up from the nether world;
You preserved me from among those going down into the pit.

Sing praise to the Lord, you his faithful ones,

And give thanks to his holy name.
For his anger lasts but a moment;
A lifetime, his good will.
At nightfall, weeping enters in,
But with the dawn, rejoicing.

To you, O Lord, I cried out;
With the Lord I pleaded:
Hear, O Lord, and have pity on me;
O Lord, be my helper.

You changed my mourning into dancing;
You took off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness,
That my soul might sing praise to you without ceasing;
O Lord, my God, forever will I give you thanks.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Isaiah 49:13a-15

For the Lord comforts his people and shows mercy to his afflicted. But Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me; my Lord has forgotten me.” Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you, says the Lord.

*For my son was dead, and is alive again;
He was lost, and is found. (Luke 15:24)*

The Gospel of the Lord

Luke 15:1-7

The tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to Jesus, but the Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” So Jesus addressed this parable to them. “Who among you having a hundred sheep and losing one of them would not leave the ninety-nine in the desert and go after the lost one until he finds it? And when he does find it, he sets it on his shoulders with great joy and, upon his arrival home, he calls together his friends and neighbors and says to them, ‘Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.’ I tell you, in just the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance.”

I will seek the lost, I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak. (Ezekiel 34:16a)

Through the prophet Ezekiel the Lord promised to tend us as a good shepherd tends his flock. He sent Jesus to be an earthly model of a Good Shepherd. Jesus himself tells us that he has “come to seek and to save that which was lost.” (Luke 19:10)

INTERCESSIONS

As a faith community we acknowledge that healing is available to each and every person. Jesus heals us of our infirmities. In faith, let us pray:

Response: Jesus, Good Shepherd, bring us closer to God.

When we feel lost and abandoned, let us experience your presence, we pray... **Response.**

When our disease causes us to retreat into isolation, we pray ... **Response.**

When our hardness of heart works to destroy the intimacy that brings forgiveness and healing, we pray ... **Response.**

When we make poor choices and find it difficult to forgive ourselves and each other, we pray ... **Response.**

For the needs and intentions we hold in our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil,
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, you have sent your Son to seek and find those who are lost. Keep us ever mindful of our experience of being found by him and returned to your loving care. Guide us and guard us against going astray. Keep us always close to you through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR LOVE

Love: a theological virtue; an outright gift from God

*There is no fear in love,
But perfect love drives out fear. (1 John 4:18)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

(Charles Wesley, 1747)

Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down!
Fix in us your humble dwelling;
All your faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, source of all compassion,
Love unbounded, love all pure;
Visit us with your salvation,
Let your love in us endure.

Come, almighty to deliver;
Let us all your life receive;
Suddenly return and never,
Never more your temples leave.
Lord, we would be always blessing,
Serve you as your hosts above,
Pray and praise you without ceasing,
Glory in your precious love.

PSALM 63: Ardent Longing for God (verses 2-9)

O God, you are my God whom I seek;
For you my flesh pines and my soul thirsts
Like the earth, parched, lifeless and without water.

Thus have I gazed toward you in the sanctuary
To see your power and your glory,
For your kindness is a greater good than life;
My lips shall glorify you.

Thus will I bless you while I live;
Lifting up my hands, I will call upon your name.
As with the riches of a banquet shall my soul be satisfied,
And with exultant lips my mouth shall praise you.

I will remember you upon my couch,
And through the night watches I will meditate on you;
That you are my help,
And in the shadow of your wings I shout for joy.
My soul clings fast to you;
Your right hand upholds me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

God's Love and Christian Life

1 John 4:7-12

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love. In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him. In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another. No one has ever seen God. Yet, if we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us.

*Above all, let your love for one another be intense,
because love covers a multitude of sins. (1 Peter 4:8)*

INTERCESSIONS

God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him (1 John 4:16b). In joyful celebration of the birth of Christ, love incarnate, we offer our prayers to God, inviting his love to dwell within us richly each and every day.

Response: Father, fill us with your love.

Prepare our hearts to receive your Son, we pray ... **Response.**

By His birth, transform us in heart and mind, and make us living examples of the Word made flesh, we pray ... **Response.**

When we fall into sorrow and distress, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are burdened with conflict and strife, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are tempted to stray from the path of recovery, we pray ... **Response.**

When selfishness strikes our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

For the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we come before you this day knowing that you have called us to love based on the words of the Great Commandment: You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:37-39). Father, you are the source of all love; fill us with your love so that we can obey your commandments, and manifest your love in this world. In Jesus's name we pray. Amen.

PRAYER FOR PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE

Patience: the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble or suffering without getting angry or upset

*Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation,
Be constant in prayer. (Romans 12:12)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Hosea

(Gregory Norbert, 1972)

Come back to me
With all your heart.
Don't let fear keep us apart.
Trees do bend,
Though straight and tall;
So must we to others' call.

Refrain:

Long have I waited for your coming home to me
and living deeply our new life.

The wilderness
Will lead you
To your heart
Where I will speak.
Integrity and justice
With tenderness
You shall know. *Refrain.*

You shall sleep
Secure with peace;
Faithfulness
Will be your joy. *Refrain.*

PSALM 40: Gratitude and Prayer for Help (verses 2-9, 17-18)

I have waited, waited for the Lord,
And he stooped toward me and heard my cry.
He drew me out of the pit of destruction,
Out of the mud of the swamp;
He set my feet upon a crag;
He made firm my steps.

And he put a new song into my mouth,
A hymn to our God.
Many shall look on in awe
and trust in the Lord.
Happy the one who makes the Lord his trust;
Who turns not to idolatry
Or to those who stray after falsehood.
How numerous have you made,
O Lord, my God, your wondrous deeds!
In your plans for us
There is none to equal you;
Should I wish to declare or to tell them,
There would be too many to recount.

Sacrifice or oblation you wished not,
But ears open to obedience you gave me.
Holocausts or sin offerings you sought not;
Then said I, "Behold, I come;
In the written scroll it is prescribed for me.
To do your will is my delight,
And your law is within my heart!"

May all who seek you
Exult and be glad in you,
And may those who love your salvation
Say ever, "The Lord be glorified."
Though I am afflicted and poor,
Yet the Lord thinks of me.
You are my help and my deliverer;
O my God, hold not back!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Patience and Oaths

James 5:7-11

Be patient, therefore, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and late rains. You too must be patient. Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not complain about one another, that you may not be judged. Behold, the Judge is standing before the gates. Take as an example of hardship and patience the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Indeed, we call blest those who have persevered. You have heard of the perseverance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, because "the Lord is compassionate and merciful."

*But the one who looks into the perfect law,
The law of liberty, and perseveres,
Being no hearer who forgets
But a doer who acts,
That one will be blessed. (James 1:25)*

INTERCESSIONS

Let us pray for discernment in our actions, asking God to make it clear to us when we are to be patient and wait for his grace, and when we are to be perseverant and move forward in the face of difficulty or opposition.

Response: Help us choose wisely, Lord.

When we face difficult situations in which we have a lack of clarity, we pray ...

Response.

When our minds are conflicted and confused, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are tempted to act impulsively, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are tempted to avoid making decisions and taking action, we pray ...

Response.

When we feel lazy or frightened, we pray ... **Response.**

For the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, help us appreciate the gift of patience, knowing that by waiting and calm we will be saved. Help us recognize that quiet trust in you will provide the strength we need to move forward and overcome hardship. Teach us to depend on your grace and learn to recognize the signs you provide to help us know when to wait and when to move forward. Bless us with the grace of being patient and being perseverant through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ADDITIONAL PASSAGES ON PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE

Isaiah 30:15

For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: By waiting and by calm you shall be saved, in quiet and in trust your strength lies.

2 Peter 3:8-9

But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day. The Lord does not delay his promise, as some regard delay, but he is patient with you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Romans 8:24-25

For in hope we were saved. Now hope that sees for itself is not hope. For who hopes for what one sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait with endurance.

Romans 15:1-2

We who are strong ought to put up with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves; let each of us please our neighbor for the good, for building up.

1 Thessalonians 5:14

We urge you to admonish the idle, cheer the fainthearted, support the weak, be patient with all.

Luke 21:19

By your perseverance you will secure your lives.

Romans 5:3-5

Not only that, but we even boast of our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope, and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

James 1:3-4

...for you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. And let perseverance be perfect, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Hebrews 10:36

You need endurance to do the will of God and receive what he has promised.

PRAYER FOR PEACE AND UNITY

Peace: a state of tranquility or quiet when there is harmony in relationships

The peace of the Lord be with you!

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Let There Be Peace on Earth

(Jill Jackson Miller & Sy Miller, 1955)

Let there be peace on earth
And let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on earth,
The peace that was meant to be.

With God as our Father,
We are family.
Let us walk with each other
In perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me,
Let this be the moment now.
With every step I take
Let this be my solemn vow:

To take each moment and live each moment
In peace eternally.
Let there be peace on earth
And let it begin with me.

PSALM 72: The Kingdom of the Messiah (verses 1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17)

O God, with your judgment endow the king,
And with your justice, the king's son;
He shall govern your people with justice
And your afflicted ones with judgment.

Justice shall flower in his days,
And profound peace, till the moon be no more.
May he rule from sea to sea,
And from the river to the ends of the earth.

For he shall rescue the poor when they cry out,
And the afflicted ones who have no one to help them.

He shall have pity for the lowly and the poor;
The lives of the poor he shall save.

May his name be blessed forever;
As long as the sun his name shall remain.
In him shall all the tribes of the earth be blessed;
All the nations shall proclaim his happiness.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Live in Concord

Philippians 4:2, 4-7, 9

I urge you to come to a mutual understanding in the Lord. Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near. Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Then the God of peace will be with you.

*Jesus said to the disciples, "Peace be with you.
As the Father has sent me, so I send you." (John 20:21)*

INTERCESSIONS

As ambassadors for Christ, let us impart his Spirit to all, knowing that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

Response: Make me a channel of your peace.

When conflict and strife threaten to pull us apart, we pray... **Response.**

When we need to find harmony and cooperation, we pray... **Response.**

When our minds are filled with anguish and torment, we pray... **Response.**

When our emotions feel out of control, we pray... **Response.**

When our hearts are far from you, we pray... **Response.**

When we are tempted by our disease, we pray... **Response.**

When we are trapped in self-destructive behavior, we pray... *Response.*

For our private needs and intentions, we pray... *Response.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help us live “with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:2-3). We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR PROTECTION

Protection: being kept from harm

*May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble!
May the name of the God of Jacob protect you! (Psalm 20:1)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: On Eagle's Wings

(Michael Joncas, 1975)

You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord,
Who abide in his shadow for life,
Say to the Lord: "My refuge,
My rock in whom I trust."

Refrain:

And he will raise you up on eagle's wings,
Bear you on the breath of dawn,
Make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of his hand.

The snare of the fowler will never capture you,
And famine will bring you no fear:
Under his wings your refuge,
His faithfulness your shield. *Refrain.*

For to his angels he's given a command
To guard you in all of your ways;
Upon their hands they will bear you up,
Lest your dash you foot against a stone. *Refrain.*

PSALM 91: Security under God's Protection (verses 1-5, 7-12)

You who dwell in the shelter of the Most High,
Who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,
Say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress,
My God in whom I trust."
For he will rescue you from the snare of the fowler,
From the destroying pestilence.
With his pinions he will cover you,
And under his wings you shall take refuge;
His faithfulness is a buckler and a shield.
You shall not fear the terror of the night

Nor the arrow that flies by day;
Though a thousand fall at your side,
Ten thousand at your right side,
Near you it shall not come.
Rather with your eyes shall you behold
And see the requital of the wicked,
Because you have the Lord for your refuge;
You have made the Most High your stronghold.
No evil shall befall you,
Nor shall affliction come near your tent,
For to his angels he has given command about you,
That they guard you in all your ways.
Upon their hands they shall bear you up,
Lest you dash your foot against a stone.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

The Blessings of Wisdom

Proverbs 2:6-8

For the Lord gives wisdom,
From his mouth come knowledge and understanding;
He has counsel in store for the upright,
He is the shield of those who walk with integrity,
Guarding the paths of justice,
Protecting the way of his holy ones.

The Protection of Jesus in Infancy

Matthew 2:9-16

After their audience with King Herod, the Magi set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. The Magi were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, the Magi departed for their country by another way. When they had departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him." Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt. He stayed there until the death of Herod, that what the Lord had said through the prophet might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt I called my son." When Herod realized that he had been deceived by the Magi, he became furious. He ordered the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had ascertained from the Magi. [God's protection allowed Jesus to escape harm, according to his plan.]

The Agony in the Garden

Matthew 26:36-46

[Before Jesus' arrest and crucifixion, he took his disciples to the garden at Gethsemane where he prayed, asking God the Father to protect him from the suffering he was called to endure and at the same time declaring his willingness to accept God's will.]

Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress. Then he said to them, "My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch with me." He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will." When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep. He said to Peter, "So you could not keep watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Withdrawing a second time, he prayed again, "My Father, if it is not possible that this cup pass without my drinking it, your will be done!" Then he returned once more and found them asleep, for they could not keep their eyes open. He left them and withdrew again and prayed a third time, saying the same thing again. Then he returned to his disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand when the Son of Man is to be handed over to sinners. Get up, let us go. Look, my betrayer is at hand."

[God's protection allowed Jesus to accept and surrender to the will of God and endure suffering through God's grace.]

*O guard my soul, and deliver me!
Let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you. (Psalm 25:20)*

INTERCESSIONS

Let us pray to trust in God's protection, whether it be for our escape or for our ability to endure hardship and work through temptation.

Response: Thy will be done.

When we face difficult situations, let us recall the words of Jesus and pray ... **Response.**

When our minds are filled with worry, let us recall the words of Jesus and pray ...
Response.

When our souls are burdened with hopelessness and despair, let us recall the words of Jesus and pray ... **Response.**

When our disease threatens our recovery, let us trust the goodness of God and pray ...
Response.

For the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

May the peace of God, that surpasses all understanding, guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:7). Amen.

PRAYER FOR PRUDENCE

Prudence: a moral virtue that is one of the seven Cardinal Virtues; an ability to see the truth clearly and, considering all things, make good choices that are just and pleasing to God

*Prudence is a fountain of life
to one who has it. (Proverbs 16:22)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Center of My Life

(Paul Inwood, 1985)

Refrain:

O Lord, you are the center of my life:
I will always praise you,
I will always serve you,
I will always keep you in my sight.

Keep me safe, O God, I take refuge in you.
I say to the Lord, "You are my God.
My happiness lies in you alone;
My happiness lies in you alone." *Refrain.*

I will bless the Lord, who gives me counsel,
Who even at night directs my heart.
I keep the Lord ever in my sight:
Since he is at my right hand, I shall stand firm. *Refrain.*

PSALM 84: Desire for the Sanctuary (verses 2-3, 5, 9-13)

How lovely is your dwelling place,
O Lord of hosts!
My soul yearns and pines
for the courts of the Lord.
My heart and my flesh
cry out for the living God.
Happy are they who dwell in your house!
Continually they praise you.

O Lord of hosts, hear my prayer;
Hearken, O God of Jacob!
O God, behold our shield,

and look upon the face of your anointed.
I had rather one day in your courts
than a thousand elsewhere;

I had rather lie at the threshold of the house of my God
than dwell in the tents of the wicked.
For a sun and a shield is the Lord God;
grace and glory he bestows;
The Lord withholds no good thing
from those who walk in sincerity.
O Lord of hosts,
happy are those who trust in you.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

The Blessings of Wisdom

My child, if you will receive my words
And treasure my commandments within you
Make your ear attentive to wisdom,
Incline your heart to understanding;
For if you cry for discernment,
Lift your voice for understanding;
If you seek her as silver
And search for her as for hidden treasures;
Then you will discern the fear of the Lord
And discover the knowledge of God.
For the Lord gives wisdom;
From his mouth come knowledge and understanding.
He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
He is a shield to those who walk in integrity,
Guarding the paths of justice,
And he preserves the way of his godly ones.
Then you will discern righteousness and justice
And equity and every good course.
For wisdom will enter your heart
And knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.
Discretion will guard you,
Understanding will watch over you,
To deliver you from the way of evil,
From those who speak perverse things;
From those who leave the paths of uprightness
To walk in the ways of darkness;
For the upright will dwell in the land,

Proverbs 2:1-13, 21-22

The honest will remain in it;
But the wicked will be cut off from the land,
The faithless will be uprooted from it.

*Whoever has prudence loves his own soul,
the one who honors understanding will discover good. (Proverbs 19:8)*

INTERCESSIONS

Let us pray that discretion will watch over us and understanding will guard us (Proverbs 2:11).

Response: Father, help us grow wise through prudence.

Teach us to depend on your goodness; when an unknown path lies ahead of us, we pray
... *Response.*

Teach us to trust in you; when we feel weak and afraid, we pray ... *Response.*

Teach us to find peace; when we are burdened with conflict and strife, we pray ...
Response.

Keep us in the light; when anxiety and depression threaten to call us into darkness, we
pray ... *Response.*

Teach us to find generosity; when selfishness threatens our hearts, we pray ...
Response.

Teach us to be steadfast in righteousness; when we are tempted to stray from the path of
recovery, we pray ... *Response.*

For the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... *Response.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we come before you this day, asking to grow in prudence through prayer. We acknowledge, with thanksgiving, the wisdom you offer to enable us to grow in this virtue. Soften our hearts and open them to receiving the understanding that will help us seek the truth and make good choices that are pleasing in your eyes. Amen.

PRAYER FOR A PURE HEART

Purity: freedom from sin or guilt

A pure heart create for me, O God. (Psalm 51:12a)

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Create in Me

(Keith Green, 2006)

Refrain:

Create in me a clean heart, oh God
And renew a right spirit within me
Create in me a clean heart, oh God
And renew a right spirit within me

Cast me not away from Thy presence, oh Lord
And take not Thy holy spirit from me
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation
And renew a right spirit within me

Create in me a clean heart, oh God
And renew a right spirit within me
Create in me a clean heart, oh God
And renew a right spirit within me

Cast me not away from Thy presence, oh Lord
Take not Thy holy spirit from me
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation
And renew a right spirit within me

Create in me a clean heart, oh God
And renew a right spirit within me
Create in me a clean heart, oh God
And renew a right spirit within me

Cast me not away from Thy presence, oh Lord
Take not Thy holy spirit from me
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation
And renew a right spirit within me

EZEKIEL 36: Canticle of Ezekiel (verses 24-28)

I will take you away from among the nations,

gather you from among the foreign lands,
and bring you back to your own land.

I will sprinkle clean water upon you
to cleanse you from all your impurities,
and from all your idols I will cleanse you.

I will give you a new heart
and place a new spirit within you,
taking from your bodies your stony hearts
and giving you natural hearts.

You shall live in the land I gave your fathers;
you shall be my people,
and I shall be your God.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

The Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13:3-9, 13, 16

Jesus spoke to the crowds at length in parables, saying: “A sower went out to sow. As he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky ground, where it had little soil. It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep, and when the sun rose it was scorched, and it withered for lack of roots. Some seed fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it. But some seed fell on rich soil, and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirty-fold. Whoever has ears ought to hear.” Jesus explained to the disciples: “This is why I speak to them in parables, because they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand. ... But blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear.”

The Explanation of the Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13:18-23

Jesus explained: “Hear then the parable of the sower. The seed sown on the path is the one who hears the word of the kingdom without understanding it, and the evil one comes and steals away what was sown in his heart. The seed sown on rocky ground is the one who hears the word and receives it at once with joy. But he has no root and it lasts only for a time. When some tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, he immediately falls away. The seed sown among thorns is the one who hears the word, but then worldly anxiety and the lure of riches choke the word and it bears no fruit. But the seed sown on rich soil is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields a hundred or sixty or thirty-fold.”

*Thus says the Lord: “My word shall not return to me void,
But shall do my will, achieving the end for which I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:11b)*

*Thus says the Lord: "I will place my law within them,
and write it upon their hearts;
I will be their God, and they shall be my people." (Jeremiah 31:33b)*

*You are our letter ... written not in ink but by the Spirit of the living God,
not on tablets of stone but on tablets that are hearts of flesh. (2 Corinthians 3:2-3)*

Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart. (Luke 2:19)

INTERCESSIONS

Let us pray for the gift to love with the heart of Christ.

Response: Give us a new heart, O Lord.

When our love has faded or grown cold, we pray ... **Response.**

When our love has been overgrown by anger, resentment, or lack of forgiveness, we pray ... **Response.**

When our hearts are fearful and insecure, we pray ... **Response.**

When our hearts are impatient, we pray ... **Response.**

When the darkness of our hearts causes us to be tempted by our disease, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are blind to your goodness and love, we pray ... **Response.**

For our private needs and intentions, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, you commanded us to love you with all our mind, heart, and soul, and to love our neighbor as Christ has loved us. Sin hardens our hearts inside a shell of self-centeredness. Renew our hearts so we may live lives that are pleasing in your sight. We ask for your blessing of purity of heart through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR FINDING PURPOSE THROUGH WORK

Purpose: the reason for which something is done

*We must consider how to rouse one another
to love and good works. (Hebrews 10:24)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Seek Ye First

(Karen Lafferty, 1974)

Seek ye first the kingdom of God
And his righteousness,
And all these things will be added unto you.
Allelu, alleluia.

Ask and it shall be given unto you;
Seek, and ye shall find;
Knock, and the door shall be opened unto you.
Allelu, alleluia.

You do not live by bread alone,
But by every word
That proceeds from the mouth of God.
Allelu, alleluia.

PSALM 90: God's Eternity and Man's Frailty (verses 1, 2, 12-17)

O Lord, you have been our refuge
through all generations.
Before the mountains were begotten
and the earth and the world brought forth,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Teach us to number our days aright,
that we may gain wisdom of heart.
Return, O Lord, how long?
Have pity on your servants!
Fill us with daybreak with your kindness,
that we may shout for joy and gladness all our days.
Make us glad for the days when you afflicted us,
for the years when we saw evil.
Let your work be seen by your servants
and your glory by their children;

And may the gracious care of the Lord, our God, be ours;
Prosper the work of our hands for us!
Prosper the work of our hands!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Tobit 4:5-6

Perform good works all the days of your life, and do not tread the paths of wrongdoing. For if you are steadfast in your service, your good works will bring success, not only to you, but also to those who live uprightly.

The Role of God's Ministers

I Corinthians 3:7-9

What is Apollos, after all, and what is Paul? Ministers through whom you became believers, just as the Lord assigned each one. I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth. Therefore, neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who causes the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters are equal, and each will receive wages in proportion to his labor. For we are God's co-workers; you are God's field, God's building.

I Corinthians 15:57-58

But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved, be firm, steadfast, always devoted to the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

Stand and consider the wondrous works of God! (Job 37:14)

*Eternal life to those who seek
glory, honor, and immortality
through perseverance and good works. (Ephesians 6:10-11)*

*Whatever you do, in word or in deed,
do everything in the Name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Colossians 3:17)*

*Jesus said: "Amen, amen, I say to you,
whoever believes in me will do the works that I do
and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father. (John 14:12)*

INTERCESSIONS

Recognizing the wondrous works of God, we praise him and ask for his blessing. We ask that we might be eager to present [ourselves] as acceptable to God, workers who cause no disgrace, imparting the word of truth without deviation (2 Timothy 2:15).

Response: Help us understand your purpose for our lives!

When we are confused and lack understanding, we pray ... *Response.*

When we need to recognize and engage in the good works of faith and love, we pray ...
Response.

When we have difficult decisions to make, we pray ... *Response.*

When we lack the motivation to move forward, we pray ... *Response.*

For our private needs and intentions, we pray ... *Response.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we depend on your mercy and goodness. We recognize the tremendous value of your gift of being able to work and make a contribution to your family by using the talents you have given us. We ask you to help us honor those gifts, to help us find our purpose, and to bless the work of our hands through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR SILENCE

Silence: a time without speech or noise

*Be still before the Lord
and wait patiently for him. (Psalm 37:7a)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: You Are Mine (To be sung as if Jesus is saying these words to you.)
(David Haas, 2001)

I will come to you in the silence,
I will lift you from all your fear.
You will hear my voice, I claim you as my choice,
Be still and know I am here.

I am hope for all who are hopeless,
I am eyes for all who long to see.
In the shadows of the night, I will be your light,
Come and rest in me.

Refrain:

Do not be afraid, I am with you.
I have called you each by name.
Come and follow me,
I will bring you home;
I love you and you are mine.

I am strength for all the despairing,
Healing for the ones who dwell in shame.
All the blind will see, the lame will all run free,
And all will know my name. *Refrain.*

I am the word that leads all to freedom,
I am the peace the world cannot give.
I will call your name, embracing all your pain,
Stand up, now walk, and live. *Refrain.*

PSALM 37: The Fate of Sinners and the Reward of the Just (verses 3-11)

Trust in the Lord and do good,
that you may dwell in the land and enjoy security.
Take delight in the Lord,
and he will grant you your heart's requests.

Commit to the Lord your way;
trust in him and he will act.
He will make justice dawn for you like the light;
bright as the noonday shall be your vindication.

Be still before the Lord
and wait patiently for him.
Be not vexed at the successful path
of the ones who do malicious deeds.

Give up your anger, and forsake wrath;
be not vexed, it will only harm you.
For evil doers shall be cut off,
but those who wait for the Lord
shall possess the land.

Yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more;
though you mark his place he will not be there.
But the meek shall possess the land,
they shall delight in abounding peace.

The Lord watches over the lives of the wholehearted;
their inheritance lasts forever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

The Calming of a Storm at Sea

Mark 4:36-39

Leaving the crowd, they took Jesus with them on the boat. A violent squall came up and waves were breaking over the boat, so that it was already filling up. Jesus was in the stern, asleep on a cushion. They woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" He woke up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Quiet! Be still!" The wind ceased and there was great calm.

Be still and know that I am God. (Psalm 46:10a)

Humble Trust in God

Psalm 131

O Lord, my heart is not proud,
nor are my eyes haughty;
I busy not myself with great things,
nor with things too sublime for me.

Nay rather, I have stilled and quieted
my soul like a weaned child.

Like a weaned child on its mother's lap,
so is my soul within me.
O Israel, hope in the Lord,
Both now and forever.

INTERCESSIONS

Let us be filled with the wisdom that comes from being silent and still before the Lord (Job 13:5).

Response: Lord, calm us as you quieted the wind and the sea.

When our hearts are heavy with emotion, we pray ... **Response.**

When our minds are filled with worry and troublesome thoughts, we pray ... **Response.**

When our disease intrudes on our awareness and threatens our recovery, we pray ...
Response.

When our souls are burdened with hopelessness and despair, we pray ... **Response.**

For the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, we know you have the power to help us learn to be silent so that we can hear the wisdom coming from the still, small voice that speaks from within. Command the storms of our hearts as you commanded that wind and the sea. Speak to our souls, saying: "Quiet! Be still!" Amen.

PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Spiritual growth: for Christian, the effort to become more like Jesus

*Gracious and merciful is the Lord,
let us turn to Him with confidence!*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: We Are Called

(David Haas, 1995)

Come! Live in the light!
Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord
We are called to be light for the kingdom
to live in the freedom of the city of God!

Refrain:

We are called to act with justice,
We are called to love tenderly,
We are called to serve one another;
To walk humbly with God.

Come! Open your heart!
Show your mercy to all those in fear!
We are called to be hope for the hopeless,
So all hatred and blindness will be no more! *Refrain.*

Sing! Sing a new song!
Sing of that great day when all will be one!
God will reign, and we'll walk with each other
As sisters and brothers united in love! *Refrain.*

PSALM 25: Prayer for Guidance and Help (verses 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12-14, 20, & 21)

To You, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
O my God, in You I trust.

Make me know Your ways, O Lord;
Teach me Your paths.
Lead me in Your truth and teach me,
For You are the God of my salvation;
For You I wait all the day.

Good and upright is the Lord;
Therefore He instructs sinners in the way.
He leads the humble in justice,
And He teaches the humble His way.

If anyone fears the Lord
He will show Him the path he should choose.
His soul shall live in happiness
And his children shall possess the land.
The Lord's friendship is for those who revere Him;
To them He reveals His covenant.

Guard my soul and deliver me;
Do not let me be ashamed, for I take refuge in You.
Let integrity and uprightness preserve me,
For I wait for You.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Renunciation of Vice

Colossians 3:5-10

Put to death, then, the parts of you that are earthly: immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and the greed that is idolatry. Because of these the wrath of God is coming [upon the disobedient]. By these you, too, once conducted yourselves, when you lived in that way. But now you must put them all away: anger, fury, malice, slander and obscene language out of your mouths. Stop lying to one another, since you have taken off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed, for knowledge, in the image of its Creator.

Renewal in Christ

Ephesians 4:17-24

So I declare and testify in the Lord that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds; darkened in understanding, alienated from the life of God because of their ignorance, because of their hardness of heart, they have become callous and have handed themselves over to licentiousness for the practice of every kind of impurity to excess. That is not how you learned Christ, assuming that you have heard of him and were taught in him, as truth is in Jesus, that you should put away the old self of your former way of life, corrupted through deceitful desires, and be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new self, created in God's way in righteousness and holiness of truth.

Impure Vessel

Matthew 23:25

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You cleanse the outside of cup and dish, but inside they are full of plunder and self-indulgence.

A Vessel of Purity

2 Timothy 2:21

Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself of what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful for the master of the house, ready for every good work.

*But we hold this treasure in earthen vessels,
that the surpassing power may be of God and not from us. (2 Corinthians 4:7)*

INTERCESSIONS

Let us pray for the desire to seek the ways of the Lord, trusting in His plan.

Response: Fill us with the power of your grace.

In times of darkness and despair, we pray ... **Response.**

In times of conflict and strife, we pray ... **Response.**

In times of doubt and indecision, we pray ... **Response.**

In times of weakness and temptation, we pray ... **Response.**

In times of joy and hope, we pray ... **Response.**

For the needs and intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we depend on your knowledge and wisdom as the source of our spiritual growth. By remaining open to your inspiration we become vessels that can be filled with truth and compassion for us to share with others. Make us vessels of your grace that through us your light may shine in the darkness. Amen.

PRAYER FOR TEMPERANCE

Temperance: a moral virtue that is one of the seven Cardinal Virtues; moderation or self-control; helps the will avoid the irresistible attractions that could damage the soul by helping you stay away from triggers that lead you to drink or use or overeat; helps you manage cravings and embrace appropriate self-denial; guards against self-indulgence and excess

*For God gave us a spirit not of fear
but of power and love and self-control. (2 Timothy 1:7)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Out of Darkness

(Christopher Walker, 1998)

Refrain:

Out of darkness God has called us,
Claimed by Christ as his own people.
Holy nation, royal priesthood;
Walking in God's marvelous light.

Let us take the words you give.
Strong and faithful words you give.
Words that in our hearts are sown;
Words that bind us as your own. *Refrain.*

Let us take the Christ you give.
Broken Body, Christ we live.
Christ the risen from the tomb;
Christ who calls us as your own. *Refrain.*

Let us take the love you give,
That the way of love we live.
Love to bring your people home;
Love to make us all your own. *Refrain.*

PSALM 130: Prayer for Pardon and Mercy (verses 1-8)

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord;
Lord, hear my voice!
Let your ears be attentive
to my voice in supplication:
If you, O Lord, mark iniquities,
Lord who can stand?
But with you is forgiveness

that you may be revered.
I trust in the Lord;
my soul trusts in his word.
My soul waits for the Lord
more than sentinels wait for the dawn.

More than sentinels wait for the dawn,
let Israel wait for the Lord,
For with the Lord is kindness
and with him is plenteous redemption;
And he will pardon Israel
from all their wickedness and sin.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Freedom for Service

Galatians 5:19-25

Now the works of the flesh are obvious: immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, rivalry, jealousy, outbursts of fury, acts of selfishness, dissensions, factions, occasions of envy, drinking bouts, orgies and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ [Jesus] have crucified their flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also follow the Spirit.

The Power of God's Promise

2 Peter 1:3-11

His divine power has bestowed upon us everything that makes for life and devotion, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and power. Through these, he has bestowed on us the precious and very great promises, so that through them you may come to share in the divine nature, after escaping the corruption that is in the world because of evil desire. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, virtue with knowledge, knowledge with self-control, self-control with endurance, endurance with devotion, devotion with mutual affection, and mutual affection with love. If these are yours and increase in abundance, they will keep you from being idle or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Anyone who lacks them is blind and short-sighted, forgetful of the cleansing of his past sins. Therefore, be all the more eager to make your call and election firm, for, in so doing, you will never stumble. For, in this way, entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you.

*A person without self-control is like a city broken into
and left without walls. (Proverbs 25:28)*

INTERCESSIONS

Knowing that faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen, we pray with our hope fixed on the eternal things of heaven.

Response: Father, inspire us to live with self-control and trust in you.

When we are overcome with sadness and self-pity, we pray ... *Response.*

When we are tempted to strike out with anger or resentment, we pray ... *Response.*

When we are tempted to stray from the path of recovery, we pray ... *Response.*

When greed and wicked desires strike our hearts, we pray ... *Response.*

For the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... *Response.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Peter 1:3). And we know that everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure (1 John 3:3). Therefore, our hearts are glad, our tongues are filled with rejoicing, and our flesh dwells in the hope of eternal life (Acts 2:26). May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may continually abound in hope (Romans 15:13). Amen.

PRAYER FOR TRUTH

Truth: sincerity in action, character, utterance

*The Lord is near to all who call upon him,
to all who call on him in truth. (Psalm 145:18)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Lead Me, Lord

(John Becker, 1987)

Refrain:

Lead me, Lord, lead me, Lord,
By the light of truth
To seek and to find the narrow way.
Be my way; be my truth; be my life, my Lord,
And lead me, Lord, today.

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
longing for their Lord,
For God's coming kingdom shall be theirs.
Blessed are the sorrowing
For they shall be consoled,
And the meek shall come to rule the world. *Refrain.*

Blessed are the merciful,
for mercy shall be theirs.
Blessed are they whose hunger
only holiness can fill,
For I say they shall be satisfied. *Refrain.*

Blessed are they who through their lifetimes
Sow the seeds of peace,
All will call them children of the Lord.
Blessed are you, though persecuted
in your holy life
for in heaven great is your reward! *Refrain.*

PSALM 51: The Miserere: Prayer of Repentance (verses 1-19)

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness;
in the greatness of your compassion
wipe out my offense.

Thoroughly wash me from my guilt
and of my sin cleanse me.
For I acknowledge my offense,
and my sin is before me always:
“Against you only have I sinned,
and done what is evil in your sight” –
That you may be justified in your sentence,
vindicated when you condemn.
Indeed, in guilt was I born,
and in sin my mother conceived me;
Behold, you delight with truth in the inward being,
and you teach me wisdom in the depths of my heart.

Cleanse me of sin with hyssop, that I may be purified;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
Let me hear the sounds of joy and gladness;
the bones you have crushed shall rejoice.
Turn away your face from my sins,
and blot out all my guilt.

A clean heart create for me, O God,
and a steadfast spirit renew within me.
Cast me not out from your presence,
and your Holy Spirit take not from me.
Give me back the joy of your salvation,
and a willing spirit sustain in me.

I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners shall return to you.
Free me from blood guilt, O God, my saving God;
then my tongue shall revel in your justice.
O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
For you are not pleased with sacrifices;
should I offer a holocaust, you would not accept it.
My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite spirit;
a heart contrite and humbled, O God,
you will not spurn.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Jesus's Trial before Pilate

John 18:28a, 29-31, 33-38

Then they brought Jesus from Caiaphas to the praetorium. It was morning. So Pilate came out to them and said, "What charge do you bring against this man?" They answered and said to him, "If he were not a criminal, we would not have handed him to you." At this, Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law." The Jews answered him, "We do not have the right to execute anyone." So Pilate went back into the praetorium and summoned Jesus and said to him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you say this on your own, or have others told you about me?" Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and chief priest handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom did belong to this world, my attendants [would] be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not here." So Pilate said to him, "Then you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

*Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth and the life.
No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6)*

INTERCESSIONS

Teach us your ways, O Lord, that we may walk in your truth (Psalm 86:11). Hear us as we pray, and help us learn to worship you in Spirit and in truth (John 4:24).

Response: Lord, lead us in your truth and teach us.

When we are blinded by emotion, we pray ... **Response.**

When our minds are filled with distortions and misguided thoughts, we pray ...
Response.

When our disease creates confusion and temptation, we pray ... **Response.**

When our souls are oriented toward a worldly existence and lose sight of our eternal purpose, we pray ... **Response.**

When our hearts are stubborn and selfish, we pray ... **Response.**

For the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Grace, mercy, and peace be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love (2 John 1:3). Lord, send us the Spirit of truth to sanctify us in the truth. Help us to be immersed in your Word – the Source of all Truth – that we may learn to worship you in Spirit and in truth (John 4:24). Amen.

ADDITIONAL PASSAGES ON TRUTH

Psalm 25:5

Lead me in your truth and teach me,
For you are the God of my salvation;
For you I wait all the day long.

Psalm 43:3

Send out your light and your truth;
Let them lead me;
Let them bring me to your holy mountain
And to your dwelling!

Psalm 86:11

Teach me your way, O Lord,
That I may walk in your truth;
Unite my heart to fear your name.

Psalm 145:18

The Lord is near to all who call upon him,
to all who call on him in truth.

Daniel 9:13

As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us; yet we have not entreated the favor of the Lord our God, turning from our sins and gaining insight by your truth.

Isaiah 45:19

The Lord says: "I did not speak in secret, in a land of darkness; I did not say to the offspring of Jacob, 'Seek me in vain.' I, the Lord, speak the truth; I declare what is right."

John 8:31-32

Jesus said to the Jews who believed in him: "If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Romans 1:18

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of those, who by their unrighteousness, suppress the truth.

Romans 1:24-25

Therefore, God handed them over to impurity through the lusts of their hearts for the mutual degradation of their bodies, since they had exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and revered and worshipped the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

1 John 1:6

If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

John 4:23-24

But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth.

John 16:13

When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you to all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

John 17:17&19

Jesus prayed to the Father for us, saying: "Sanctify them in truth; Your word is truth. And for their sakes I consecrate myself that they also may be sanctified in truth."

Romans 2:8

... but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.

1 Corinthians 13:6

[Love] does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.

Galatians 5:7

You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?

2 Thessalonians 2:11-12

Therefore, God is sending them a deceiving power so that they may believe the lie, that all who have not believed the truth, but have approved wrongdoing, may be condemned.

1 John 3:18

Little children, let us not love in word or in talk, but in deed and in truth.

2 John 1:3

Grace, mercy and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love.

3 John 1:4

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

John 1:14

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 15:26

Jesus said: "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness about me."

2 Corinthians 13:8

For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.

2 Thessalonians 2:8-10

And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and render powerless by the manifestation of his coming, the one whose coming springs from the power of Satan in every mighty deed and in signs and wonders that lie, and in every wicked deceit for those who are perishing because they have not accepted the love of truth so that they may be saved.

2 Thessalonians 2:13

But we ought to give thanks to God for you, those who are beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.

1 Timothy 2:2b-4

... that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life in all devotion and dignity. This is good and pleasing to God our Savior, who wills everyone to be saved and come to knowledge of the truth.

1 Peter 1:22

Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth and sincerity in love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart.

1 John 4:6

We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

John 14:6

Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Galatians 4:16

Have I then become your enemy by telling the truth?

Ephesians 4:15

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.

John 17:8

Jesus prayed to the Father: "For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me."

John 14:17

You know [the Spirit of truth] for he dwells with you and will be in you.

2 Timothy 2:15

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

PRAYER FOR WISDOM

Wisdom: the quality of having experience, knowledge and good judgment

*My mouth shall speak wisdom;
the meditation of my heart shall be understanding. (Psalm 43:3)*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

HYMN: Eye Has Not Seen

(Marty Haugen, 1982)

Refrain:

Eye has not seen, ear has not heard
What God has ready for those who love him;
Spirit of love, come, give us the mind of Jesus,
Teach us the wisdom of God.

When pain and sorrow weigh us down,
Be near to us, O Lord,
Forgive the weakness of our faith,
And bear us up within your peaceful word. *Refrain.*

Our lives are but a single breath,
We flower and we fade,
Yet all our days are in your hands,
So we return in love what love has made. *Refrain.*

To those who see with eyes of faith,
The Lord is ever near,
Reflected in the faces
Of all the poor and lowly of the world. *Refrain.*

PSALM 90: God's Eternity and Man's Frailty (verses 1-2, 12-17)

O Lord, you have been our refuge
through all generations.
Before the mountains were begotten
And the earth and the world were brought forth,
From everlasting to everlasting you are God.
Teach us to number our days aright,
That we may gain wisdom of heart.
Return, O Lord! How long?
Have pity on your servants!
Fill us at daybreak with your kindness,
That we may shout for joy and gladness all our days.

Make us glad for the days when you afflicted us,
For the years when we saw evil.

Let your work be seen by your servants
And your glory by their children;
And may the gracious care of the Lord our God be ours;
Prosper the work of our hands for us!
Prosper the work of our hands!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
Is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

Nature and Incomparable Dignity of Wisdom

Wisdom 7:24-28

For wisdom is mobile beyond all motion,
she penetrates and pervades all things
by reason of her purity.
For she is an aura of the might of God
and a pure effusion of the glory of the Almighty;
therefore nothing that is tainted enters into her.
For she is the refulgence of eternal light,
the spotless mirror of the power of God,
the image of his goodness.
And she, who is one, can do all things,
and renews everything while herself enduring;
And passing into holy souls from age to age,
she produces friends of God and prophets.
For there is nothing God loves,
if not the one who dwells with wisdom.

Wisdom, the Source of Blessings

Wisdom 8:3-7

Wisdom adds to nobility the splendor of
companionship with God;
even the Lord of all loved her.
For she is instructress in the understanding of God,
the selector of his works.
And if riches be a desirable possession in life,
what is richer than Wisdom, who produces all things?
And if prudence renders service,
who in the world is a better craftsman than she?
Or if one loves justice,
the fruits of her works are virtues;
For she teaches moderation and prudence,
justice and fortitude,
and nothing in life is more useful than these.

*You are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God,
as well as righteousness, sanctification and redemption. (1 Corinthians 1:30)*

INTERCESSIONS

Let us pray to the Lord Jesus in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3).

Response: Inspire us with wisdom, Lord.

When we face difficult situations in which we have a lack of clarity, we pray ...

Response.

When our minds are conflicted and confused, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are tempted to act impulsively, we pray ... **Response.**

When we have difficulty in relationships, we pray ... **Response.**

When we are overwhelmed with emotion, we pray ... **Response.**

For the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray ... **Response.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we realize that we are lacking in wisdom, and we trust that by our request you will generously bestow this precious gift on us simply by our asking for it (James 1:5). Help us demonstrate our appreciation for this gift by living with meekness and good conduct – the outgrowths of wisdom that are pleasing in your eyes (James 3:13). We ask this prayer through Christ our Lord, the source of all wisdom. Amen.