

A
Prayer Guide
for
Good Friday
2020

Welcome to a prayer Guide aimed to help you spend the day with God praying, worshipping and interceding for our nation and our world. A number of men have come together to prepare this guide, and we have referenced other guides as well if you need or would like more guidance as you spend Good Friday in Prayer and Fasting for our community, nation and world.

John Calvin in his Institutes in sections 4.12.14-18 gives the Church some wonderful teaching and instruction on the place of prayer and fasting. He notes that times of calamity, pestilence, war and famine are times when the people of God must gather corporately to pray and fast and seek the face of God. Given the current ban on corporate gatherings, the CRC has asked her members and attenders to commit to a common day of prayer on Good Friday. Though we are not able to come together, we are able to join with one another in spirit before the throne of God and seek his mercy for our world.

As you begin, to spend this time in prayer, we are including the above section of the Institutes for your reflection and preparation. For many, this may be the first time that prayer and fasting has been practiced. For others, this is but another day in a long list of days where these twin practices have been utilized. Either way, all will be well served by properly understanding the place of prayer and fasting.

After the section from the Institutes, there follows a series of shorter prayer guides that may aid you in using your time effectively and efficiently. These guides are not meant to be exhaustive, but are rather an aid for you to consider things about life which may have eluded your prayer time with God so far. Consider this like a visit to a buffet. As far as the guides are beneficial in your conversations with God, utilize them. As far as they are not, move on. There are a variety of things included for just this purpose.

May God grant our world his grace as his people humble themselves and pray and turn from their wicked ways.

The Pastors and Elders of Classis North Cascades, CRCNA.

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Calvin's Institutes 4.12.14-18

4.12.14. The remaining part of discipline, which is not, strictly speaking, included in the power of the keys, is when pastors, according to the necessity of the times, exhort the people either to fasting and solemn prayer, or to other exercises of humiliation, repentance, and faith, the time, mode, and form of these not being prescribed by the Word of God, but left to the judgement of the Church. As the observance of this part of discipline is useful, so it was always used in the Church, even from the days of the apostles. Indeed, the apostles themselves were not its first authors, but borrowed the example from the Law and Prophets. For we there see, that as often as any weighty matter occurred the people were assembled and supplication and fasting appointed. In this, therefore, the apostles followed a course which was not new to the people of God, and which they foresaw would be useful. A similar account is to be given of the other exercises by which the people may either be aroused to duty, or kept in duty and obedience. We every where meet with examples in Sacred History, and it is unnecessary to collect them. In general, we must hold that whenever any religious controversy arises, which either a council or ecclesiastical tribunal behaves to decide; whenever a minister is to be chosen; whenever, in short, any matter of difficulty and great importance is under consideration: on the other hand, when manifestations of the divine anger appear, as pestilence, war, and famine, the sacred and salutary custom of all ages has been for pastors to exhort the people to public fasting and extraordinary prayer. Should any one refuse to admit the passages which are adduced from the Old Testament, as being less applicable to the Christian Church, it is clear that the apostles also acted thus; although, in regard to prayer, I scarcely think any one will be bold to stir the question. Let us, therefore, make some observations on fastings since very many, not understanding what utility there can be in it, judge it not to be very necessary, while others reject it altogether as superfluous. Where its use is not well known it is easy to fall into superstition.

4.12.15. A holy and lawful fast has three ends in view. We use it either to mortify and subdue the flesh, that it may not wanton, or to prepare the better for prayer and holy meditation; or to give evidence of humbling ourselves before God, when we would confess our guilt before him. The first end is not very often regarded in public fasting, because all have not the same bodily constitution, nor the same state of health, and hence it is more applicable to private fasting. The second end is common to both, for this preparation for prayer is requisite for the whole Church, as well as for each individual member. The same thing may be said of the third. For it sometimes happens that God smites a nation with war or pestilence, or some kind of calamity. In this common chastisement it behoves the whole people to plead guilty, and confess their guilt. Should the hand of the Lord strike any one in private, then the same thing is to be done by himself alone, or by his family. The thing, indeed, is properly a feeling of the mind. But when the mind is affected as it ought, it cannot but give vent to itself in external manifestation, especially when it tends to the common edification, that all, by openly

confessing their sin, may render praise to the divine justice, and by their example mutually encourage each other.

4.12.16. Hence fasting, as it is a sign of humiliation, has a more frequent use in public than among private individuals, although, as we have said, it is common to both. In regard, then, to the discipline of which we now treat, whenever supplication is to be made to God on any important occasion, it is befitting to appoint a period for fasting and prayer. Thus when the Christians of Antioch laid hands on Barnabas and Paul, that they might the better recommend their ministry, which was of so great importance, they joined fasting and prayer, (Acts 13:3). Thus these two apostles afterwards, when they appointed ministers to churches, were wont to use prayer and fasting, (Acts 14:23). In general, the only object which they had in fasting was to render themselves more alert and disencumbered for prayer. We certainly experience that after a full meal the mind does not so rise toward God as to be borne along by an earnest and fervent longing for prayer, and perseverance in prayer. In this sense is to be understood the saying of Luke concerning Anna, that she “served God with fastings and prayers, night and day,” (Luke 2:37). For he does not place the worship of God in fasting, but intimates that in this way the holy woman trained herself to assiduity in prayer. Such was the fast of Nehemiah, when with more intense zeal he prayed to God for the deliverance of his people, (Neh. 1:4). For this reason Paul says, that married believers do well to abstain for a season, (1Cor. 7:5), that they may have greater freedom for prayer and fasting, when by joining prayer to fasting, by way of help, he reminds us it is of no importance in itself, save in so far as it refers to this end. Again, when in the same place he enjoins spouses to render due benevolence to each other, it is clear that he is not referring to daily prayers but prayers which require more than ordinary attention.

4.12.17. On the other hand, when pestilence begins to stalk abroad, or famine or war, or when any other disaster seems to impend over a province and people, (Esther 4:16), then also it is the duty of pastors to exhort the Church to fasting, that she may suppliantly deprecate the Lord’s anger. For when he makes danger appear, he declares that he is prepared and in a manner armed for vengeance. In like manner, therefore, as persons accused were anciently wont, in order to excite the commiseration of the judge, to humble themselves suppliantly with long beard, dishevelled hair, and coarse garments, so when we are charged before the divine tribunal, to deprecate his severity in humble raiment is equally for his glory and the public edification, and useful and salutary to ourselves. And that this was common among the Israelites we may infer from the words of Joel. For when he says, “Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly,” &c., (Joel 2:15), he speaks as of things received by common custom. A little before he had said that the people were to be tried for their wickedness, and that the day of judgement was at hand, and he had summoned them as criminals to plead their cause; then he exclaims that they should hasten to sackcloth and ashes, to weeping and fasting; that is humble themselves before God with external manifestations. The sackcloth and ashes, indeed, were perhaps more suitable for those times, but the assembly, and weeping

and fasting, and the like, undoubtedly belong, in an equal degrees to our age, whenever the condition of our affairs so requires. For seeing it is a holy exercise both for men to humble themselves, and confess their humility, why should we in similar necessity use this less than did those of old? We read not only that the Israelitish Church, formed and constituted by the word of God, fasted in token of sadness, but the Ninevites also, whose only teaching had been the preaching of Jonah. Why, therefore should not we do the same? But it is an external ceremony, which, like other ceremonies terminated in Christ. Nay, in the present day it is an admirable help to believers, as it always was, and a useful admonition to arouse them, lest by too great security and sloth they provoke the Lord more and more when they are chastened by his rod. Accordingly, when our Saviour excuses his apostles for not fasting, he does not say that fasting was abrogated, but reserves it for calamitous times, and conjoins it with mourning. “The days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken from them,” (Matth. 9:35; Luke 5:34).

4.12.18. But that there may be no error in the name, let us define what fasting is; for we do not understand by it simply a restrained and sparing use of food, but something else. The life of the pious should be tempered with frugality and sobriety, so as to exhibit, as much as may be, a kind of fasting during the whole course of life. But there is another temporary fast, when we retrench somewhat from our accustomed mode of living, either for one day or a certain period, and prescribe to ourselves a stricter and severer restraint in the use of that ordinary food. This consists in three things, viz., the time, the quality of food, and the sparing use of it. By the time I mean, that while fasting we are to perform those actions for the sake of which the fast is instituted. For example, when a man fasts because of solemn prayer, he should engage in it without having taken food. The quality consists in putting all luxury aside, and, being contented with common and meaner food, so as not to excite our palate by dainties. In regard to quantity, we must eat more lightly and sparingly only for necessity and not for pleasure.¹

¹John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge; Accordance electronic ed. (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1845), paragraph 2809.
<https://accordance.bible/link/read/Institutes#2809>

Thinking And Praying Biblically About Plague

by Aaron De Boer (Sumas, WA)

People of the Reformed Confession are usually well grounded in the reality and security of God's superintendence over heaven and earth, and all His creatures therein, even confessing confidently in Heidelberg twenty seven that, "...*health and sickness, prosperity and poverty—all things in fact, come to us not by chance, but from His Fatherly hand*". We seem to have an underlying stoicism from our firm grasp of God's providence and this is good, and yet, when sudden, painful and austere times befall us as has happened in recent weeks, even the stoicism of our confessional confidence begins to stretch at the seams. Let us lean into that which undergirds our confession, that which quickens any perseverance we may feebly muster, that resource by which heaven and earth were created and are upheld, the very Word of God.

God's Word reveals the doctrine of providence over events, and even human responses, the important thing to remember when we examine the many instances of plague, or pestilence in the Scriptures, is that in every case, these things come down as part of God's judgment because His people have turned away from Him.

Many people, even many Christians, are bewildered right now as to the "why?", the "how?", the relation of these things between Old Testamental events and the New, even wondering if these events are signaling the last times. God's Word addresses all of this, and, perhaps most importantly, illustrates to us the proper response.

Read Amos chapter 4 (written during the reign of Jeroboam, a time of great prosperity, but also serious spiritual decay).

- Note the description of some of the women in verse one.
- Reflect and pray regarding the nature your own comfort, affluence and priorities.

- Note the sarcasm in verses 4 and 5 regarding Israel's attitude and acts of giving, actually seen by God as multiplying her transgressions.
- Reflect and pray regarding the nature of your heart and giving to the Lord.

- Note the judgements handed down by the Lord in verses 6-11, particularly verse 10, *pestilence* harkening Israel back to the manner of great judgement and wonderful working in the exodus from Egypt. Note the rebuke of verse 11 likened to that of Sodom and Gomorrah. Note the repeated refrain in each of the stanzas; *yet you did not return to me, declares the LORD*.
- Reflect and pray for a turning, and a returning to the Lord, personally and globally.

Meditate upon, or Sing “God Be Merciful to Me”

Accompaniment found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bhcL32AQd9Q>

My transgressions I confess, Grief and guilt my soul oppress;
I have sinned against Thy grace and provoked Thee to Thy face;
I confess Thy judgement just, speechless, I Thy mercy trust.

Broken, humbled to the dust by Thy wrath and judgement just,
Let my contrite heart rejoice and in gladness hear Thy voice;
From my sins O hide Thy face, blot them out in boundless grace.

Read Jeremiah chapter 21

- Note the predisposition to assume God will orchestrate persons and events in our favor, but in fact, by verse 5 God declares that His control over a world leader will indeed be to intensify the consequences of the judgement, even in verse 7 that *pestilence* will be followed by war, and famine.
- Reflect and pray for world leadership, in America, China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere, and that the people whom God is calling would see and understand the gospel declared in verse 8, *Thus says the LORD: Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death.*

Meditate upon, or Sing “Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah”

Accompaniment found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hC-R8_ETho&list=PL2VxzxZQux_t2wyA8m3qVjG8MHbjuDerm

Hallelujah, praise Jehovah, O my soul, Jehovah praise,
I will sing the glorious praises of my God through all my days.
Put no confidence in princes, nor for help in man depend;
He shall die, to dust returning, and his purposes shall end.

Happy is the man that chooses Israel's God to be his aid,
He is blest whose hope of blessing on the Lord his God is stayed.
Heaven and earth the Lord created, seas and all that they contain;
He delivers from oppression, righteousness He will maintain.

Read Luke 21:10-19

- Note Jesus's declaration, *There will be...pestilences*. He then describes the things that will befall His Apostles, but that in all calamity, verse 13, *This will be your opportunity to bear witness.*
- Reflect and pray for yourself, your family, your church, and the Church universal, to have the right response, *to bear witness!*

Read Revelation 15:14

-Note that the wrath revealed to John is called *plagues*, yet, in this passage, we also see the Church, and she is singing!

*Great and amazing are Your deeds, O Lord God Almighty!
Just and true are Your ways, O King of the nations!
Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name?
For You alone are holy. All nations will come
and worship You, for Your righteous
acts have been revealed.*

Read Psalm 78

-Note the mandate to recall and retell the long history of human unfaithfulness, and God's gracious faithfulness.

-Note in verse 1-8 the covenant responsibility of families to make this understanding a regular part of educating covenant children, that they might not forget and turn away from the Lord.

-Reflect and pray, that particularly in this time, God's covenant family would grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ's gospel, the once and for all reconciliation between God and man, and the only salvation at the final judgment of God Most High. That in this time, like olden times, calamity would prompt a turning and a returning to the Lord.

Meditate upon this Psalter by Theodore P. Ferris, 1941

*Let children hear the mighty deeds
which God performed of old,
which in our younger years we saw
and which our fathers told.
He bids us make his glories known,
the works of pow'r and grace,
that we convey his wonders down
through ev'ry rising race.*

*Our lips shall tell them to our sons,
and they again to theirs,
and generations yet unborn
must teach them to their heirs.
Thus shall they learn, in God alone
their hope securely stands,
that they may ne'er forget his works,
but practice his commands.*

Meditate upon, or Sing “Praise Ye the Lord, for it Is Good”

Accompaniment found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=goG3sjAE4OY>

O praise the LORD, for it is good
to sing unto our God;
'tis right and pleasant for His saints
to tell His praise abroad.
The LORD our God builds up His church,
He seeks her wandering sons;
He binds their wounds and gently
heals the broken hearted ones.

No human might, no earthly pride
delights the LORD above;
in them that fear Him He delights,
in them that trust His love.
O Zion, praise the LORD thy God,
His wondrous love confess;
He is thy glory and thy strength,
He will thy children bless.

False Gods and the True God

by Dr. Matthew Smith, Project 92 (Lynden, WA)

FOCUS - Let's take some time to focus on God: on who He is and what He has done. This gets our eyes off of ourselves and the problems around us, and helps us to focus UP, on HIM!

Please Read Psalm 145. And Worship God for who He is and what He does.

HUMBLE - Humbling ourselves before God reflects an attitude of the heart; a posture of acknowledging our need for God, our inadequacies and shortfalls, our weakness, and is in itself an expression of our need for Him.

Key Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:13-14.

CONFESS - Let's take time to confess to God our sins: sins that we as individuals are guilty of, sins that our families are guilty of, sins that we as the Church are guilty of, sins that our nations are guilty of.

Special reflection recommended on Exodus 20:1-17, especially verses 3-5.

ACKNOWLEDGE - Who, or what, are we looking to for "salvation" from the current pestilence that is affecting our world?

Please read 2 Chronicles 20:5-12, focusing especially on verses 6, 9, and 12.

PRAY - "If my people, who are called by my Name, will humble themselves and pray..." (2 Chr. 7:14). Let us now take time to pray to the Lord specifically about the coronavirus pandemic.

First, let us pray for His will to be done (see Matt 6:10), and for His purposes to be accomplished.

What purposes does God want to accomplish through this plague?

Does He want to turn the hearts of men, women, and children back to Himself?

Does He want to purify the Church?

Does He want to reveal to the peoples of the earth that the gods of materialism or other idols are NOT gods, but that only HE is God, and that only HE can save (see Isaiah 43:11-12)? What is His will and what are His purposes in, and for, this plague? May His will be done, and may His purposes be accomplished!

Second, let us pray for mercy. In Psalm 28:9 David writes, "Praise be to the LORD, for he has heard my cry for mercy." We have acknowledged God's sovereignty over all things, to include this virus. Now, let us pray for mercy, that He will - with a Word from His mouth - halt the plague that is increasingly ravaging the nations. He can do that!

Third, let us pray specifically for the world as a whole, and then specifically for the nations that are close to our hearts.

Let us pray that God will give wisdom to the leaders, that they will seek His guidance, and that they will navigate these difficult times in a way that honors God and helps the people.

Let us pray for those who are sick, for protection for the healthy, and for the healthcare workers.

Let us pray for the protection of the economic engines of each country that is affected.

Let us pray that this time of fear and instability will open doors for the sharing of the Gospel with family members, friends, co-workers, neighbors, and others who do not yet know Jesus.

Let us pray that the Name of Jesus will be lifted up during this pandemic, and that He will be recognized for Who He Is.

THANK - In Luke 17:11-19 we read the story of 10 lepers. They asked Jesus to have mercy on them. He did. And yet, in verses 15-16 we read that only one returned to thank Him. Friends, God is at work! Let's not forget to thank Him for what He has already done, for what He is doing, and for what He will do!

WORSHIP - In 2 Chronicles 20, subsequent to seeking the Lord, and hearing from Him, we read in verse 18 that "Jehoshaphat bowed with his face to the ground, and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem fell down in worship before the LORD." In following verses we read about the Levites and Kohathites standing up and praising God, and then of the men who led the army out with singing, praising the Lord for the splendor of His holiness. THEN, in verse 22, it says, "As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated." God *brought about ultimate victory* when *His people praised Him*.

Praying the Words of the Cross in a Season of Pandemic

This resource, based on a prayer originally published in the The Worship Sourcebook provides prayer language to correspond with the words of Christ from the cross. It is adapted here in light of COVID 19. It would be suitable for congregational, household or private prayer. Use each time of silent prayer to expand the prayer in your own language, or simply listen quietly for God's Word. -Rev. Sean Baker, Pastor Church Resources

Opening

Holy and Living God,

As this pandemic continues to awaken our fears, to disrupt our lives, and to reduce the health and lives of those we love, we struggle to find words to say to you. And so, in this dark hour we join with your Son, in praying the words he spoke in the very darkest hour.

The First Word

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Loving Father, we are uncertain and afraid. In our fear, we look for someone or something to blame: institutions, leaders, neighbors, and even family members are all easy targets of our resentment. As our frustration toward others grows, we ask that you forgive them, and then we ask you to forgive us, also. Make us aware of the ways, small and big, that our own sin makes this situation harder for us and others, and forgive us.

Silent Prayer

Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

The Second Word

"Truly I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

Eternal God, as this pandemic brings our mortality and the consequences of sin into sharper relief, we thank you that you have made a way by your death and resurrection that we may repent and receive your grace to save us in life and in death. We thank you that, in Christ, you make all things new.

Silent Prayer

Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

The Third Word

“Woman, behold your son. . . . Behold your mother.”

Son of God, even as you changed the course of history on the cross, you took time to notice and make arrangements to care for the very tangible needs of someone you loved. As we find ourselves caught up in a moment that feels historic and unprecedented, direct our attention to notice and make arrangements to care for the very tangible needs of those around us.

Silent Prayer

Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

The Fourth Word

“Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?” (“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”)

Holy Spirit, your Word describes you as our comforter and counselor, but for some of us, you have never seemed so far away.
We feel abandoned, exposed, and left to fend for ourselves.
The most vulnerable among us seem to be most affected by this disease.
Our churches are empty while our hospitals are overrun.
We struggle to see your hand at work amidst the suffering.
We join with the Psalmist in crying out,
“How long, O Lord, will you forget us forever?”
“We are overwhelmed with troubles, and our lives draw near to death.”
“Do you show your wonders to the dead?”
“Do not be far from us, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.”
“Do not hide your face from us. But listen to our cry for help.”
“You have taken from us friend and neighbor--darkness is our closest friend.”

Silent Prayer

Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

The Fifth Word

“I thirst.”

Blessed Savior, who faced death thirsty and alone,
reveal yourself to those who face their death
in both physical agony and at social distance.
Heal their bodies and save their souls.
May those overwhelmed by physical and emotional pain, turn to you

and find that you are not distant from our suffering,
but find that you are a man of sorrows who is familiar with suffering.
By your wounds, may we experience healing unto eternal life.

Silent Prayer

Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

The Sixth Word

"It is finished."

King of Kings, as we reach the end of ourselves,
and feel we cannot go any further,
we thank you that you finished the work you were sent to do:
that your kingdom is secure and not even death can now separate us from the love
of God in you, our Lord.
Enable us by your Spirit to be faithful to our call in the confidence that you have
and will accomplish all that you have promised.
Grant us strength to endure our suffering, bear our crosses, deny ourselves and live
for you, even unto death.
By your Spirit, empower us to live and love so faithfully and selflessly that the
good news of your kingdom may be proclaimed through our lives.

Silent Prayer

Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

The Seventh Word

"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."

Holy Spirit, when our lives reach their earthly end,
Help us entrust our deaths, as you have helped us entrust our lives, into your
faithful hands.

Silent Prayer

Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

Adapted from The Worship Sourcebook (Grand Rapids, CRC Publications, 2004,
pp. 619-22.)

Devotional for Day of Prayer and Fasting

by Rev. Robert Woodyard (First CRC Lynden, Lynden, WA)

Colossians 3:16 *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.*

Following the outline of the text above, read and meditate on God's Word, then read and sing and reflect on the hymn, and then turn what you have read and sung into a prayer for yourself, those you love, and for our nation and world.

Scripture

Isaiah 43:1-5 *But now thus says the Lord,
he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel:
"Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.
2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.
3 For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
I give Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in exchange for you.
4 Because you are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you,
I give men in return for you, peoples in exchange for your life.
5 Fear not, for I am with you.*

Song

Psalms 59:16 *But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning. For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress.*

[You can [Google the hymn](#) to hear it if you would like to sing along.]

How Firm a Foundation (based in part on Isaiah 43)

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!
What more can He say than to you He hath said,
You, who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?

In every condition, in sickness, in health;
In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth;
At home and abroad, on the land, on the sea,
As thy days may demand, shall thy strength ever be.

Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,
For I am thy God and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen and help thee, and cause thee to stand
Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand.

When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

When through fiery trials thy pathways shall lie,
My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

Even down to old age all My people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in My bosom be borne.

The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake.

Prayer

Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Scripture

*Psalms 46:1-11 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
2 Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way,
though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,*

3 *though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble at its swelling. Selah*
4 *There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.*
5 *God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved;
God will help her when morning dawns.*
6 *The nations rage, the kingdoms totter;
he utters his voice, the earth melts.*
7 *The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah*
8 *Come, behold the works of the Lord,
how he has brought desolations on the earth.*
9 *He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
he breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the chariots with fire.*
10 *“Be still, and know that I am God.
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!”*
11 *The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah*

Song

Psalm 59:16 *But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning. For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress.*

[You can [Google the hymn](#) to hear it if you would like to sing along.]

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God (based on Psalm 46)

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
Our helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and pow'r are great, and, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing,
Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choosing.
You ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord Sabaoth his name, from age to age the same;
And he must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to triumph through us;
The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure,
One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly pow'rs, no thanks to them, abideth;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours through Him Who with us sideth;
Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;
The body they may kill: God's truth abideth still,
His kingdom is forever.

Prayer

Colossians 4:2 Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.

Pray for those who are sick and infected by virus, for mercy and healing for those suffering.

Pray for those who are most vulnerable, the least of these.

Pray for the young and strong, for caution and that they not unwittingly spread the virus.

Pray for families with young children at home for the foreseeable future: God, help mothers and fathers to partner together creatively for the care and flourishing of their children. For single parents and parents who cannot stay home from work but must find care for their children.

Pray for the media, that they communicate with appropriate seriousness without causing panic.

Pray for consumers of media to keep balance, not be over saturated and kept from anxiety.

Pray for employers and employees, facing layoffs and financial hardship.

Pray for those on the frontlines, medical personnel and staff of hospital and care facilities.

Pray for pastors and church leaders trying to minister through social distancing.

Pray for our local, state, and federal governments, for wisdom and compassion.

Pray for a cure and that the virus will end soon.

Pray for a national and global awakening, that there would be more of a fear of God than a fear of the virus, that people would turn to the one true living God in repentance and faith.

Pray God will be glorified and many will find salvation in the name of Jesus.

John 19:1-11 Lectio Divina

by Regent College, Vancouver, BC

Scriptural Meditation

John 19:1-11

As in past weeks, you can spend time meditating on this week's scriptural passage alone with the Lord, but we also suggest holding a time of communal *lectio divina* with your household or with some friends over Zoom. Here is the framework we've used in *lectio divina* meditations over the past few weeks:

1. What is a word or phrase that stands out to you in the reading?

(Read the passage twice; contemplate in silence for 1 minute; respond)

2. How does this passage connect to the whole of Scripture?

(Read twice; silence for 2 minutes; respond)

3. What is the Holy Spirit's invitation to you through this reading today?

(Read twice; silence for 5 minutes; respond)

May the Holy Spirit speak to you as you contemplate this passage.

John 19:1-11 (NRSV)

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him." So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

Pray and speak with God about the items that He has brought to mind through your time of meditation and reading.

Judgment

by Rev. Scott Roberts, Hope in Christ Church, Bellingham, WA

Short commentary: Judgement is a sobering reality to live through. But God has clearly declared from the beginning to the end that sin will be met with judgment. Yet in all of this God has provided a way out of judgment via his mercy and our repentance. These two hymns are lesser known, but even as works of poetry they declare marvelous truths which must be reflected upon. As you read the passages of scripture, meditate upon them, compare their truths with one another. Look for the ways God judges and the reasons why he judges. Don't rush to Jesus too quickly. After working through the passages and the prayer points, read the final Scripture and take comfort in its truth for the Christian.

Near the end

(William Schell)

[The full score is available here.](#)

Time moves on with solemn footsteps
As it nears the final shore;
Fast the sun of earth is sinking,
Soon our world shall be no more.
The sixth trumpet now is sounding
To prepare the holy bride—
Many on the golden altar,
“Purified, made white, and tried.”

Lo! the angel now is standing
On the sea and on the land;
How His voice the air is rending,
As to God He lifts His hand!
What an awful, awful message!
Help us, Lord, this truth to see;
When the seventh trumpet thunders,
Then shall time no longer be.

One more trumpet yet to summon
Us before the judgment seat,
Then the time of our frail planet
Will be said to be complete.
How the wicked will be wailing,
And the righteous overjoyed,
When with fire the heav'ns are burning,
And the earth shall be destroyed.

While false prophets are confiding
In a foolish, erring dream
Of millennial enjoyments,
They neglect the cleansing stream.
Oh, poor sinner, don't believe them,
There will be no age to come;
If in life you find not Jesus,
Death will seal your awful doom.

The Hand of God upon the Wall

(Daniel Warner)

The full [score](#) and an [audio recording](#) are available.

See the great king of Babel in these latter days of time,
Make a feast that's universal, all the nations drink her wine;
As they eat, drink, and revel in her lofty steeple hall,
God proclaims her desolation by His hand upon the wall.

Refrain:

'Tis the hand of God on the wall,
'Tis the hand of God on the wall;
Babylon the great is fallen, and we're fully saved in Jesus,
While that hand is writing on the wall.

All deceived and deceiving, see the city and her lords
Riot in their carnal pleasure, heeding not Jehovah's words;
For He speaks, now revealing mystic Babel's utter fall,
And the holy read the writing of their God upon the wall.

How the nations are drunken, and are sporting in their shame,
Even scoffing at our Savior, and profane His holy name;
Far more blind than Belshazzar, who so trembled with appal,
They still riot on to judgment, with their doom upon the wall.

Oh, the sin and confusion, oh, the vanity and pride,
Of the multitude of Sodom who in Babylon abide!
But all honor to Jesus! we have heard His angel's call,
And escaped the sure destruction that is written on the wall.

Hear the loud voice from heaven, "Come, my people, gather home!"
For to you the signs are given, that the Lord is near to come;

Now He shakes every nation, heed the warning, great and small,
For the wicked soon shall perish, say the hand upon the wall.

See the saints come to Zion and possess the holy land!
Hallelujah! shout the freedom! in the living God we stand;
Since we follow the Savior, love and serve Him Lord of all,
Babel's kingdom now is finished, says the hand upon the wall.

Read and Meditate upon the following Scripture Passages:

Scripture Passage #1: Deuteronomy 27:1-26 & 28:15-29:1

Scripture Passage #2: Daniel 5:1-31

Scripture Passage #3: Daniel 9:1-20

Scripture Passage #4: Revelation 9:1-21 & 15:1-16:21

Praise Points:

1. Praise God that he is the Almighty Judge of all sin.
2. Adore God for his grand power.

Confession Points:

1. Confess the ways that sin, money, power, and sexual depravity have snared you.
2. Acknowledge the ways our nation has rejected God and his covenant teachings.

Thanksgiving Points:

1. Thank God for sending judgment as a way of turning people from sin to repentance.
2. Thank God that there will be a final judgment of all sin.

Intercession Points:

1. Ask God to turn the hearts of everyone in America back to Him.
2. Request God to end his judgment upon the world once every repent soul that is destined to repent through this epidemic has repented.

Finally, read these scriptures and give thanks to God for Jesus Christ and his work in relation to judgment for the Christian:

1. Romans 5:1, 8:1
2. 1Corinthians 11:32
3. John 9:39-41
4. 1 Peter 2:24

Business

by Rev. Scott Roberts, Hope in Christ Church, Bellingham, WA

Short commentary: Business is essential to our life. It provides for our needs and enables innovation, creativity and benefit for people in every culture. But business can also become an idol or engage in idolatry. We must praise God for business and pray for its purity and willingness to stay God honoring.

My Business is here

(by F.E. Hthaway)

It may be on the rugged plain
Where lurks the treacherous foe,
Or out across the rolling sea
My King will bid me go.

Refrain:

My business here is very clear
In palace or in home so drear.
I'm work to do, I've news to bring;
I'm here on business for my King.

It may be in the valley low
Or on the mountain peak,
But ev'ry where that I may go,
For Jesus I will speak. [Refrain]

So anywhere my lot is cast
He may depend on me,
For I'm commissioned by His word,
And faithful I will be. [Refrain]

All who love and serve your city

(Erik Routley, ©1966)

Google the hymn to hear it sung.

All who love and serve your city,
all who bear its daily stress,
all who cry for peace and justice,
all who curse and all who bless,

In your day of loss and sorrow,
in your day of helpless strife,
honor, peace, and love retreating,
seek the Lord, who is your life.

In your day of wrath and plenty,
wasted work and wasted play,
call to mind the word of Jesus,
"I must work while it is day."

For all days are days of judgment,
and the Lord is waiting still,
drawing near a world that spurns him,
offering peace from Calvary's hill.

Risen Lord! shall yet the city
be the city of despair?
Come today, our Judge, our Glory;
be its name, "The Lord is there!"

Read and Meditate upon the following Scripture Passages:

Scripture Passage #1: Ezekiel 27:1-28:10

Scripture Passage #2: Acts 19:21-25

Scripture Passage #3: Colossians 3:22-4:1

Scripture Passage #4: Jeremiah 29:1-7

Praise Points:

1. Declare God's lordship over business. What attributes of his relate to our labors?
2. Rejoice that God is concerned about our economic, family and social lives.
3. Praise God for his creative spirit that gives us the material world and the capacity to make things to benefit others.

Confession Points:

1. Confess the ways that businesses exchange dependence upon God for dependence upon wealth.
2. In what ways does business destroy the earth and destroy people?
3. Confess the ungodly business that exist in our nation.

Thanksgiving Points:

1. Thank God for specific businesses that you frequent.
2. List the ways that business brings benefit to our community. Thank God for these benefits.
3. List the gifts of your employees, employer and thank God for them.

Intercession Points:

1. Pray for business persons to keep their eyes fixed on God and not to become proud.
2. Make a list of ungodly and immoral businesses and pray for God to shut them down by the proclamation of the Word and the conversion of people.
3. Pray for Christian workers to view their employment as service to God and to accurately represent Christ in every act of business they engage in.
4. Ask God to sustain businesses in our land in the midst of this epidemic.

Alvin Vander Griend's 31 Day Prayer Team Guide

(which can be used all in one day as well)

How to Use This Prayer Guide

- Pray one Scripture passage, if possible, every day for 31 days. [Start at the day of the month on which you were born and move forward.] Repeat every month.
- Review and pray either the Scripture passage itself or the bullet points below each passage. The bullet points are intended to help us focus key ideas in each text.
- Let the “me/our pastor/us all” insert remind you to pray the Scripture for yourself: for our pastor, and for your personal & Church family.

1. Blessings of the Word

Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left. that you may have good success wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Joshua 1: 7-8

Pray:

- Thank you God for your Word so full of directions for our lives.
- Give me/our pastor/us all the strength and courage to always live by the Word and to be responsive to all of your commands.
- Help us to meditate on the Word day and night.
- Make our way prosperous and grant us good success in accord with your promise.

2. Trust in the Lord

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Prov. 3:5-6

Pray:

- We praise you God as totally trustworthy. We trust you to always keep us on track.
- Give us the humility to rely on you all the time and not simply on our own understanding.
- Give me/our pastor/us all the ability to hear your voice in every situation of life.
- Help me/our pastor/us all to discover your ways and to always acknowledge.

3. A Servant Heart

But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Matthew 20:26-28

Pray:

- Thank you Jesus for modeling a humble, servant spirit so perfectly for us.
- Give me/our pastor/us all a servant spirit like that of Jesus.

4. An Eye for Spiritual Harvest

Do you not say, here are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. John 4:35-36 (Gal. 6:7)

Pray:

- Thank you, Jesus, for the harvest you are preparing right here in Lynden.
- Lord, give me/our pastor/us all eyes to see the ripe spiritual harvest that you see.
- Give us all an eagerness to gather fruit that's ripe for eternal life.
- Let us all rejoice together in reaping the harvest that you are preparing.

5. The Power of Prayer

"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will a/so do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. John 14:12-14

Pray:

- Thank you, Jesus, for hearing and answering our prayers and enabling us to do great works in and for the kingdom.
- Give us an awareness, Jesus, of the immense power you wield from your throne when it comes to answering our prayers.
- Give me/our pastor/us all the faith to persistently ask “in your name” so that we may do the great works you want done on earth, and bring glory to the Father.

6. Devoted to Prayer and Preaching

Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn... responsibility over to them. But we (the apostles) will devote ourselves to prayer and to the “ministry of the word.”

Acts 6:3-4

Pray:

- Thanks you, Jesus, for showing your disciples and us the two key factors in effective ministry.
- Give our pastor a whole-hearted devotion to prayer and the ministry of your Word.
- Give our pastor a readiness, when necessary, to hand off ministries to other gifted, Spirit-filled leaders in order to keep the prayer/Word focus.

7. Preaching Christ

But we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 1 Corinthians 1:23-25

Pray:

- We praise you Father for Jesus Christ your Son – “the power of God and wisdom of God.”
- Anoint our pastor to faithfully and powerfully preach Christ crucified.
- Release your power and wisdom, God, in convincing ways to peoples of all colors and races.

8. The Marks of Love

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Pray:

- Thank you, Jesus, for showing us, by your life and in your teaching, what real love is like.
- Give me/our pastor/us all a love that doesn't keep score of the love-failures of others.
- Give me/our pastor/us all this kind of love that rejoices in the truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.
- Show us our shortcomings whenever we fail to love as you intended, and give us repentant hearts for every failure.

9. Abounding in the Lord's Work

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15:58

Pray:

- Thank you, Lord for making our spiritual labors fruitful so that nothing we do for you is a waste of time or energy.
- Give to me/our pastor/us all steadiness and dependability in all aspects of life and ministry.
- Give me/our pastor/us all devotion and fruitfulness as we pursue the work of the Lord.

10. Abounding Grace

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. 2 Corinthians 9:8

Pray:

- Thank you God for your promise of abounding grace.
- Help me/our pastor/us all to rest in the confidence that you are willing and able to supply everything we need in any and every situation.
- Provide me/our pastor/us all many different ways to bless others with what you have given us.

11. Fruit of the Spirit

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23

Pray:

- Thank you, Father, for your Spirit, who produces the rich fruit of spiritual graces in our hearts and lives.

- May your Spirit so fill me/our pastor/us all that the fruits of the Spirit may “load the tree” of our lives.
- Lord, help us to bless the lives of many others through the fruit we bear.

12. Not Weary in Well-Doing

And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. Galatians 6:9-11

Pray:

- Lord, let us not become tired of doing good. Help us to press on until the harvest is brought in.
- Help me/our pastor/us all, Lord, to work for the benefit of all kinds of people, especially fellow Christ-followers.
- Open many doors of opportunity for us to be a blessing to others.

13. Riches of Grace

According to the riches of his glory may he (God) grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith-that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:16-19

Pray:

- Thank you God for your mighty Spirit who accomplishes his work from within our hearts.
- Thank you, Jesus, for dwelling in our hearts through faith.
- Grant that I/our pastor/we all may be rooted and grounded in your love.
- May I/our pastor/we all come to know how wide, and long, and high, and deep Christ’s love is.
- Fill us all with the very nature of God.

14. Equipping the Saints

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-13

Pray:

- Thank you, Lord, for providing competent leaders to equip us for the work of ministry.

- Give our pastor/teacher strong gifts to prepare us for the work of ministry.
- Build up the body of Christ at Third Church so that we may” attain unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God” arriving at real spiritual maturity, fully alive in Christ.

15. Wise Use of Time

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Ephesians 5:15-17

Pray:

- Lord, help me/our pastor/us all to live wisely, making good use of every opportunity you give us.
- Protect us from the problems and difficulties that the evil one tries to foist on us.
- Help us always to discern what it is that you want us to do.

16. Pray in the Spirit

Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.

Ephesians 6:18

Pray:

- Thank you, Lord, that your Spirit is always there to help us pray as we ought.
- Make me/our pastor/us all persons of prayer who are able to pray at all times... with all prayer and supplication.”
- Help us to be alert to the devils wiles as we persistently pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

17. Guarded by God’s Peace

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7

Pray:

- Forgive us, Lord, when we allow worries and anxieties to crowd in and rob us of your peace.
- Help me/our pastor/us all to conquer anxiety by means of earnest and thankful prayer.
- Give us your peace, Lord, to keep our hearts and minds safe in union with Christ.

18. Think These Things

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Philippians 4:8

Pray:

- Thank you, Lord, for your gift of good thoughts to think— things true, noble, honorable, just, pure, lovely and praiseworthy.
- Help me/our pastor/us all to fill our minds with godly thoughts and avoid the evil and shameful thoughts with which the evil one tempts us.

19. Spiritual Fullness

We have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyful give thanks to the Father. Colossians 1:9-11

Pray:

- • Thank you, Lord, for making your will known to us through the wisdom and knowledge given by the Holy Spirit.
- Send your Spirit to fill me/our pastor/us all with the knowledge of your will so that we can live as you want us to live and do what pleases you.
- So strengthen me/our pastor/us all, Father, that we will bear much fruit, grow in our knowledge of you, endure trials with patience and live joyful, thankful lives.

20. The Indwelling Word

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

Pray:

- Thank you Father for the message you gave us through your Son, Jesus Christ.
- Let your Word, God, dwell richly in me/our pastor/us all as we are taught and instructed in godly wisdom.

- Give us wonderful times of private and public worship, full of joyful songs and thanksgiving.
- Make it possible, Lord, for us to think, talk and act in accord with your will and to give thanks to you every step of the way.

21. Serving Wholeheartedly

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. Colossians 3:23-24

Pray:

- Help me/our pastor/us all, in everything we do, to put our whole heart and soul into serving you, knowing that we are really serving you, not simply the people around us.
- Thank you, Lord, for the privilege of serving you, our real master.
- Thanks for the heavenly reward that you reserve for us and for all your people.

22. Worthy of His Calling

To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

Pray:

- Lord, make me/our pastor/us all worthy of the life you have called us to live.
- Fulfill, Lord, by your power every one of our “resolves for good” and every act of faith.
- Father, make your name more and more glorious through what you give us to do.
- Thank you for honoring us, as we give our lives to honor you.

23. Prayer First of All

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

1 Timothy 2:1-4

Pray:

- Help me/our pastor/us all, Lord, to make prayer a priority and to make petitions, prayers, request and thanksgiving for all people.
- We pray for rulers and governments to rule well so that we can live quiet and peaceful lives.
- God our Savior, we commit to pray faithfully knowing that it is a means by which people come to be saved and to know the truth.

24. Pursue and Fight

But as for you, O man of God, flee these things (false teaching, unhealthy desires, and love of money). Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 1 Timothy 6:11-12

Pray:

- Help me/our pastor/us all to strive for “righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, and gentleness,” and to “fight the good fight of faith.”
- Thank you, Lord, for the call you made on our lives that ended in our taking hold of eternal life.
- Thank you for all the members of Third Church who have professed their faith before others.
- Give us many more professions of faith in the future.

25. Value of Scripture

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Pray:

- Thank you, God, for the Holy Scriptures that you breathed out for us.
- Grant that, through your word, I/our pastor/all of us may be shown the truth, rebuked if in error, corrected when mistaken and instructed for right living.
- Qualify us and equip us for every kind of good work you call us to do.

26. Preach the Word

Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching . . . As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. 2 Timothy 4:2, 5

Pray:

- Inspire our pastor to “preach the Word” with a sense of urgency; to challenge, warn, and encourage us, and yet to always be patient.

- Give our pastor the grace to be self-controlled, to accept hard times along with good times, to proclaim the good news clearly, and to fulfill his duty as a servant of God.

27. A Steward for God

For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

Titus 1:7-9

Pray:

- Lord, help me/our pastor/us all to be without fault, not arrogant, or quick-tempered, not drugged, violent or greedy.
- Help me/our pastor/us all to be hospitable, a lover of what is good, self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.
- Continue to keep our pastor's doctrine sound as he uses the Word of God to spur people on in knowledge and to correct erroneous ways of thinking.

28. Fully Equipped

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

13:20-21

Pray:

- Thank you God of peace for raising your Son Jesus from the dead to be our faithful Shepherd in all of life.
- Lord, equip me/our pastor/us all with every grace that we need in order to live in accord with your will.
- Continue to do in me/our pastor/us all "that which is pleasing in your sight" through Jesus Christ our Lord.

29. Gifted for Service

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies-in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. 1 Peter 4:10-11

Pray:

- Thank you, Lord, for giving us spiritual gifts that enable us to serve others.
- Help me/our pastor/us all to be good managers of our gifts using our speaking gifts to bring your message to the world, using our serving gifts in the strength that you give us.
- Give us the grace to glorify you in all ways at all times through Jesus Christ.

30. Shepherd God's Flock

Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. "And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. 1 Peter 5:2-4

Pray:

- Thank you, Lord, for the shepherd that you have given us at Third Church in Lynden.
- Help our shepherd to take good care of this flock willingly and joyfully, and out of genuine concern for the well-being of the sheep.
- Give our pastor the ability to lead, not simply by telling people what they have to do, but also by showing them through godly example.
- On a day when the Chief Shepherd appears, give Pastor Young the glorious crown that will never lose its sheen.

31. Add to Your Faith

For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For all these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 1:5-8

Pray:

- Lord, help me/our pastor/us all to do our best to add to our faith goodness, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, brotherly affection and love.
- Help us, Lord, to be effective and fruitful in our knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Thank you for making it possible for us to be effective and fruitful as your grace works in us.

Other Prayer Guides

The Gospel Coalition distributed a wonderful prayer guide last week on April 4. You can access it here: <https://tgc-documents.s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/A%20Day%20to%20Fast%20and%20Pray%20-%20Prayer%20Booklet.pdf>

There is a men's prayer meeting online with Dr. Tony Evans, on Good Friday at 6 pm Pacific Time, which can be accessed here:
<http://t.email1.lifeway.com/r/?id=h2e05f3f8,2791c88a,27cf749c&ecid=663865482&bid=772142072>