

5 PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK **Isaiah 40:20, Psalm 66:1, 17, 19-20**

With a voice of singing, declare, proclaim this, utter it to the end of the earth. Alle- | luia.*

The Lord has redeemed His servant Jacob! Alle- | luia.

Make a joyful shout to God, | all the earth!*

Sing out the honor | of His name.

I cried to Him | with my mouth,*

and He was extolled | with my tongue.

Certainly God has | heard me:*

He has attended to the voice | of my prayer.

Blessed be God, who has not turned a- | way my prayer,*

nor His mer- | cy from me!

6 SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK **Romans 8:26**

“Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.”

7 READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DEVOTION (OTHER SIDE OF THE PAGE)

8 PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK

O heavenly Father, as You gladden our hearts again to celebrate the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, mercifully bestow on us the joy to receive Him as our Redeemer and so welcome Him when He comes again to be our judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

9 PRAYER FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

10 SING OR SAY THE HYMN OF THE WEEK
Our Father, Thou in Heaven Above

TLH 103

Martin Luther



1. Our Father, Thou in heaven above,
Who biddest us to dwell in love,
As brethren of one family,
To cry in every need to Thee,
Teach us no thoughtless word to say,
But from our inmost heart to pray.

2. Thy name be hallowed. Help us, Lord,
In purity to keep Thy Word,
That to the glory of thy name
We walk before Thee free from blame.
Let no false doctrine us pervert;
All poor, deluded souls convert.

8. From evil, Lord, deliver us:
The times and days are perilous.
Redeem us from eternal death,
And when we yield our dying breath,
Console us, grant us calm release,
And take our souls to Thee in peace.

9. Amen, that is, So shall it be.
Confirm our faith and hope in Thee
That we may doubt not, but believe
What here we ask we shall receive.
Thus in Thy name and at Thy word
We say: Amen. Oh, hear us, Lord!
Amen.



“He is Risen to Carry the Prayers of Believers to God”

1 BLESS YOURSELF WITH THE HOLY CROSS AND SAY:
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

2 SAY THE APOSTLES' CREED
I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our
Lord, who was conceived by the Holy
Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered
under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died
and was buried. He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the
dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at
the right hand of God, the Father
Almighty. From thence He will come to
judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy
Christian church, the communion of
saints, the forgiveness of sins, the
resurrection of the body, and the life
everlasting. Amen.

3 PRAY 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.

4 PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

Morning. I thank You, my
heavenly Father, through Jesus
Christ, Your dear Son, that You
have kept me this night from all
harm and danger; and I pray that
You would keep me this day also
from sin and every evil, that all my
doings and life may please You.
For into Your hands I commend
myself, my body and soul, and all
things. Let Your holy angel be with
me, that the evil foe may have no
power over me. Amen.

Evening. I thank you, my
heavenly Father, through Jesus
Christ, Your dear Son, that You
have graciously kept me this day;
and I pray that You would forgive
me all my sins where I have done
wrong, and graciously keep me this
night. For into Your hands, I
commend myself, my body and
soul, and all things. Let Your holy
angel be with me, that the evil foe
may have no power over me. Amen.

THEME OF THE WEEK: He is Risen to Carry the Prayers of Believers to God

This week we take some time to consider the gift of prayer that we have received from our Lord. In keeping with this theme, the prayers may be a bit longer than they sometimes are for Around the Word. Nonetheless, I encourage you to use these devotions and prayers as a jumping off point for more introspection and meditation upon the Word and inspiration to devote ever more time in the presence of God through prayer. May the Lord bless your devotions this week and all weeks, as we seek always be to be ever closer to Him.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: John 16:23-30 – Asking In His Name

In truth, prayer is one of the most difficult aspects of the Christian life. Why do many prayers appear to go unanswered? Why pray at all if God knows what we need? But in this text, Jesus cuts through our hesitations and doubts. He tells us that the prayers of believers are heard by the Father directly. All Christians have access to the Father. We don't treat Him as a vending machine to put in our prayer and get what we want, but because He loves us. Prayer does not begin with us. It begins with God. Our gracious Father invites us to come to Him with all our needs, cares, and worries. He has graciously promised to hear us. Through this promise, our faith is strengthened. *Almighty God, bless me that my faith may grow as I come before You with all my cares and concerns. Hear me as I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 84 – A Day in His Courts

If prayer begins not with us but with God, this Psalm opens our eyes to see the richness of what prayer offers to us. Prayer is the chance to simply 'be' before God. Lutherans are often uncomfortable with this spiritual kind of thinking, but this is what prayer offers to us. It is a chance for God's people to come before Him and to benefit from His strength. We belong in the presence of our God and He blesses us as we abide in His Word that nourishes us and strengthens us. It is a wonderful practice to read Scripture and then use those words as the basis for meditation and prayer. *Almighty God, You are my dwelling place. You are the source of my strength and my shield from trouble. Bless me with peace this day and into tomorrow. Hear me as I pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: James 4:1-7 – Need and Want

Were you ever told by your parents that you needed to learn the difference between "need" and "want?" It is a lesson that all people must learn. It is a lesson that even needs to be taught in the Church. On the one hand, some prayers we speak are for things that we do not need but come from our own sense of covetousness or greed. On the other hand, there are things that we need but we don't ask for them. Consider the content of your prayers. What are you asking for? From where does your desire to pray come? May we keep our eyes focused on Christ Who grants us His mercy and Who gives us the one thing truly needful: forgiveness. *Almighty God, forgive me for my weakness and selfish sinful nature. Bless me that I may turn only to You in all things. Hear me in the name of Jesus, Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 29:11-14 – Plans for Whom?

This passage contains one of the most abused Old Testament texts. This message of God's promised plan is for the Israelites living in exile. It is a promise for the restoration of Israel, not a promise that you will get a promotion at work or that you will get a good mortgage rate. It is a promise from God that He will restore Israel. Why? Because it is through Israel that the Messiah has come. God has given the fortune of salvation and forgiveness to His people – to all people who trust in Jesus Christ. This text can serve as an important reminder for us to not put ourselves at the center of Scripture, but Jesus Christ is the center. *Merciful Lord, I thank You for sending Jesus to be the fulfillment of all Your promises in the Scriptures. Bless me and keep me in Him. Hear me as I pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: Mark 16:14-20 – He Sat Down at the Right Hand of God

Today we rejoice and remember the Ascension of our Lord. This text reminds us that the ascension isn't the end of Jesus' ministry. He didn't return to the Father and simply put His feet up and wait for the end of the world. No, Jesus continued to work through the ministry of His apostles as they did as He commanded, taking the Gospel out into the world. In the same way, Jesus today continues to work amongst His people through the Word and the Sacraments. Our Lord is ascended, but He is not far removed from us. Nonetheless, we look forward to the day when our prayers to Him can be delivered face to face. *Almighty God, thank You for sending Your son to redeem me and give me life. Keep me in this true faith. Hear me as I pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: Romans 8:24-28 – Prayer Assistant

This text reminds us of one of the Holy Spirit's greatest gifts to us. He prays for us when we do not know what to pray for or how to pray. Not that this excuses us from prayer or makes our prayers worthless. Rather, it is a great comfort to know that our prayers are bolstered, and our weaknesses and foolish sinfulness do not turn the Father from us because the Holy Spirit helps us in our prayers. Truly God does not leave us alone to figure things out for ourselves even when it comes to prayer. *Almighty and merciful God, thank You for giving me the Holy Spirit Who assists me and intercedes for me before You. Grant that my prayers may not be found wanting in Your sight. Hear me as I pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 124 – If God is For Us

How does a life of prayer benefit us? This whole week we have looked at prayer and been reminded of the many ways that God works through prayer. But what simple benefit does it give? It gives us the certainty that God is for us. We don't need to cast out our desires into the universe in the vain hope that it might be heard. We don't have to do certain things to earn God's attention or favor. Rather, God's attention and favor is upon us because we have the blessing of the Son. We have Jesus Who promises that not only does He hear our prayer, but that the Father hears us for the sake of the Son. Thanks be to God for this certainty and comfort that God grants to His people! *Almighty God, I know that You are for me because You sent Your only Son to win my salvation. Grant me this eternal and lasting comfort that is only found in You. Hear me as I pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.*

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