

## Introduction

Christian practices (hospitality, social justice, Bible study, generosity, etc.) are ultimately practices of, growing in our awareness of, the presence of God. During the season of Lent, you are invited to engage intentionally and creatively the practice of prayer to grow in God's presence. Each day, a new prayer will appear here from many sources including the Bible, church members, saints who have lived before us and saints who are living the Christian faith right now. I am thankful to our church members for sharing their prayers that we may learn from their life with God.

Before you read the prayer, I would suggest preparing yourself for how God will use prayer to speak to you. Are you sitting well? Are there distractions that will keep you from focusing? Center yourself with our theme prayer from the disciples in Luke 11:1, "Lord, teach us to pray." The prayer you read may be short or long or in between. The time you have to read/pray it is up to you. Read it once. Read it again. Come back to it many times during the day. Engage this practice as you are able with the goal that 40 days of prayer will make you more aware of God's presence in your life and what God is doing in you and through you.

God is preparing us for the good news of resurrection through these 40 days. May the practice of prayer open you up to the new life that God intends.

~Chip

## Ash Wednesday, February 17, 2010

Ash Wednesday begins today. We begin our journey with a prayer of confession and renewal.

### Psalm 51

[1] Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your steadfast love;  
according to your abundant mercy  
blot out my transgressions.

[2] Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin.

[3] For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is ever before me.

[4] Against you, you alone, have I sinned,  
and done what is evil in your sight,  
so that you are justified in your sentence  
and blameless when you pass judgment.

[5] Indeed, I was born guilty,  
a sinner when my mother conceived me.

[6] You desire truth in the inward being;  
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

[7] Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

[8] Let me hear joy and gladness;  
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

[9] Hide your face from my sins,  
and blot out all my iniquities.

[10] Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and put a new and right spirit within me.

[11] Do not cast me away from your presence,  
and do not take your holy spirit from me.

[12] Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and sustain in me a willing spirit.

[13] Then I will teach transgressors your ways,

and sinners will return to you.

[14] Deliver me from bloodshed, O God,  
O God of my salvation,  
and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

[15] O Lord, open my lips,  
and my mouth will declare your praise.

[16] For you have no delight in sacrifice;  
if I were to give a burnt-offering, you would not be pleased.

[17] The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

[18] Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;  
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, [19] then you will delight in right sacrifices,  
in burnt-offerings and whole burnt-offerings;  
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

**Join us today at 11:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. for our Ash Wednesday  
worship service of ashes and communion. All are welcome.**

Thursday, February 18, 2010

Thanks to Christie Virtue-Herman for sharing this prayer for today.

MY LORD GOD, I have no idea where I am going.  
I do not see the road ahead of me.  
I cannot know for certain where it will end.  
Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that  
I think that I am following your will  
does not mean that I am actually doing so.  
But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you.  
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.  
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.  
And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road  
though I may know nothing about it.  
Therefore will I trust you always  
though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.  
I will not fear, for you are ever with me,  
and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

~Thomas Merton, "Thoughts in Solitude"

Friday, February 19, 2010

## Psalm 66

1 Shout with joy to God, all the earth!  
2 Sing the glory of his name;  
make his praise glorious!  
3 Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds!  
So great is your power that your enemies cringe before you.  
4 All the earth bows down to you;  
they sing praise to you,  
they sing praise to your name." Selah.

5 Come and see what God has done,  
how awesome his works in man's behalf!  
6 He turned the sea into dry land,  
they passed through the waters on foot—  
come, let us rejoice in him.  
7 He rules forever by his power, his eyes watch the nations—  
let not the rebellious rise up against him. Selah.

8 Praise our God, O peoples,  
let the sound of his praise be heard;  
9 he has preserved our lives and kept our feet from slipping.  
10 For you, O God, tested us; you refined us like silver.  
11 You brought us into prison and laid burdens on our backs.  
12 You let men ride over our heads;  
we went through fire and water,  
but you brought us to a place of abundance.

13 I will come to your temple with burnt offerings  
and fulfill my vows to you—  
14 vows my lips promised and my mouth spoke when I was in trouble.  
15 I will sacrifice fat animals to you and an offering of rams;  
I will offer bulls and goats. Selah.

16 Come and listen, all you who fear God;  
let me tell you what he has done for me.  
17 I cried out to him with my mouth;  
his praise was on my tongue.  
18 If I had cherished sin in my heart,  
the Lord would not have listened;

19 but God has surely listened and heard my voice in prayer.  
20 Praise be to God,  
who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me!

Saturday, February 20, 2010

Prayer for Those Seeking Meaning in Their Life

Eternal Wisdom,  
source of life and grace,  
bless all who are seeking  
the meaning of life.  
Endow them with courage to risk the unknown.  
Bless them with wonder  
to be still and rejoice.  
Anoint them with wisdom  
to understand the potential of their dreams.  
Blessed is your name, now and ever more.  
Amen.

- Vienna Cobb Anderson  
[www.beliefnet.net](http://www.beliefnet.net)

Sunday, February 21, 2010

Luke 11:1-13

1 One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."

2 He said to them, "When you pray, say: "

'Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come.

3 Give us each day our daily bread.

4 Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.

And lead us not into temptation. ' "

5 Then he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, 6 because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.' 7 Then the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' 8 I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man's boldness he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

9 "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

11 "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Monday, February 22, 2010

The Prayer of St. Francis is a favorite of Louise Fang.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
Where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy;

O Divine Master, grant that I may not  
so much seek to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood as to understand;  
to be loved as to love.  
For it is in giving that we receive;  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Tuesday, February 23, 2010

Psalm 84

[1] How lovely is your dwelling place,  
O LORD of hosts!

[2] My soul longs, indeed it faints  
for the courts of the LORD;  
my heart and my flesh sing for joy  
to the living God.

[3] Even the sparrow finds a home,  
and the swallow a nest for herself,  
where she may lay her young,  
at your altars, O LORD of hosts,  
my King and my God.

[4] Happy are those who live in your house,  
ever singing your praise. Selah

[5] Happy are those whose strength is in you,  
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.

[6] As they go through the valley of Baca  
they make it a place of springs;  
the early rain also covers it with pools.

[7] They go from strength to strength;  
the God of gods will be seen in Zion.

[8] O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer;  
give ear, O God of Jacob! Selah [9] Behold our shield, O God;  
look on the face of your anointed.

[10] For a day in your courts is better  
than a thousand elsewhere.

I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God  
than live in the tents of wickedness.

[11] For the LORD God is a sun and shield;  
he bestows favor and honor.

No good thing does the LORD withhold  
from those who walk uprightly.

[12] O LORD of hosts,  
happy is everyone who trusts in you.

Wednesday, February 24, 2010

*I Cannot Do This Alone*

O God, early in the morning I cry to you.  
Help me to pray  
And to concentrate my thoughts on you:  
I cannot do this alone.  
In me there is darkness,  
But with you there is light;  
I am lonely, but you do not leave me;  
I am feeble in heart, but with you there is help;  
I am restless, but with you there is peace.  
In me there is bitterness, but with you there is patience;  
I do not understand your ways,  
But you know the way for me...  
Restore me to liberty,  
And enable me to live now  
That I may answer before you and before me.  
Lord, whatever this day may bring,  
Your name be praised...Amen.

~Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Thursday, February 25, 2010

Nancy Caswell invites us to pray Psalm 23 slowly.

Psalm 23

1 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
he leads me beside still waters;

3 he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley,  
I fear no evil;

for you are with me;

your rod and your staff— they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me

in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

Friday, February 26, 2010

Deliver me, O Jesus,  
From the desire of being loved,  
From the desire of being extolled,  
From the desire to being honored,  
From the desire of being praised,  
From the desire of being preferred,  
From the desire of being consulted,  
From the desire of being approved,  
From the desire of being popular,  
From the fear of being humiliated,  
From the fear of being despised,  
From the fear of suffering rebukes,  
From the fear of being calumniated,  
From the fear of being forgotten,  
From the fear of being wronged,  
From the fear of being ridiculed,  
From the fear of being suspected.  
Amen.

~Mother Teresa

Saturday, February 27, 2010

Oh, God, when I have food  
help me to remember the hungry;  
When I have work, help me  
to remember the jobless;  
When I have a warm home,  
help me to remember the homeless;  
When I am without pain,  
help me to remember those who suffer;  
And remembering, help me  
to destroy my complacency  
and bestir my compassion.  
Make me concerned enough  
to help, by word and deed,  
those who cry out  
for what we take for granted.  
~ Samuel. F. Pugh

Sunday, February 28, 2010

Luke 18:9-14

9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: 10 “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

11 The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men--robbers, evildoers, adulterers--or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’

13 But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’

14 I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Monday, March 1, 2010

Psalm 143

[1] Hear my prayer, O LORD;  
give ear to my supplications in your faithfulness;  
answer me in your righteousness.

[2] Do not enter into judgment with your servant,  
for no one living is righteous before you.

[3] For the enemy has pursued me,  
crushing my life to the ground,  
making me sit in darkness like those long dead.

[4] Therefore my spirit faints within me;  
my heart within me is appalled.

[5] I remember the days of old,  
I think about all your deeds,  
I meditate on the works of your hands.

[6] I stretch out my hands to you;  
my soul thirsts for you like a parched land. Selah

[7] Answer me quickly, O LORD;  
my spirit fails.

Do not hide your face from me,  
or I shall be like those who go down to the Pit.

[8] Let me hear of your steadfast love in the morning,  
for in you I put my trust.

Teach me the way I should go,  
for to you I lift up my soul.

[9] Save me, O LORD, from my enemies;  
I have fled to you for refuge.

[10] Teach me to do your will,  
for you are my God.

Let your good spirit lead me  
on a level path.

[11] For your name's sake, O LORD, preserve my life.  
In your righteousness bring me out of trouble.

[12] In your steadfast love cut off my enemies,  
and destroy all my adversaries,  
for I am your servant.

Tuesday, March 2, 2010

**Prayer For Elders in the Church**

God of righteousness and truth,  
You brought us into your church  
to show in our life together  
something of the orderliness of your creation,  
and the love of Jesus Christ.  
Bless those called to be elders,  
that they may govern wisely and fairly.  
give them full measure of your Spirit,  
that they may refresh your people  
along the journey of faith,  
discerning, teaching, and sharing the Word of life,  
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our elders meet tonight at 7:30 p.m. at the church.

Wednesday, March 3, 2010

Table prayers from Carl Anderson

I Jesu namn till bords vi gå  
Välsigna Gud den Mat vi få  
Gud till ära, oss till gagn  
Så få vi mat I Jesu namn. Amen.

In Jesus' name to the table we go  
God bless the food we receive  
To God the honor, Us the gain,  
So we have food in Jesus' name.  
Amen.

Dear God,  
We thank you for food, and remember the hungry  
We thank you for health, and remember the sick  
We thank you for friends, and remember the friendless.

Gracious God,  
Keep us always in thy sight,  
And ever mindful of the needs of others.  
Amen

Thursday, March 4, 2010

Psalm 63

[1] O God, you are my God, I seek you,  
my soul thirsts for you;  
my flesh faints for you,  
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

[2] So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,  
beholding your power and glory.

[3] Because your steadfast love is better than life,  
my lips will praise you.

[4] So I will bless you as long as I live;  
I will lift up my hands and call on your name.

[5] My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast,  
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips

[6] when I think of you on my bed,  
and meditate on you in the watches of the night;

[7] for you have been my help,  
and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.

[8] My soul clings to you;  
your right hand upholds me.

[9] But those who seek to destroy my life  
shall go down into the depths of the earth;

[10] they shall be given over to the power of the sword,  
they shall be prey for jackals.

[11] But the king shall rejoice in God;  
all who swear by him shall exult,  
for the mouths of liars will be stopped.

Friday, March 5, 2010

*A prayer for Darfur* by Archbishop Desmond Tutu

We pray for the people of Darfur who have been terrorized and forced from their homes — for those who have fled to refugee camps, and who still live in fear;

We pray for those who have died, and for their families;

We pray for the women in Darfur who face danger every day as they leave their camps for firewood — may You watch over Your daughters;

We pray for the children of Darfur, especially those who face a frightening world without one or both of their parents — may they be protected and comforted;

We pray for the safety of the humanitarian aid workers as they feed and care for the people of Darfur;

We pray for the safety of the African Union's Mission in Darfur as they work in difficult circumstances;

We pray for the safety of the United Nations' Peacekeepers when they begin their duties in Darfur;

We pray that the world's leaders will be guided by You in their quest for justice and safety for Darfur's people — may they be inspired by Your humanity;

Remind us that we are all your children, and teach us to listen;

We pray that those who are causing death and misery in Darfur will turn away from racism and violence — may they be forgiven when they turn to You for guidance instead;

Teach us to rejoice in all the things we have in common and respect each others' differences;

We pray that people everywhere will strive to live in peace, tolerance, and respect, no matter what their faith or race — may we gain the wisdom, grace, and generosity of spirit to overcome our differences and live as one.

This is one of the prayers written for the September 17, 2006 Global Day for Darfur. The date was set aside as a day to pray for the Darfuri people and to advocate for the protection of civilians.

Saturday, March 6, 2010

Another Sunday morning comes  
And I resume the standing Sabbath  
Of the woods, where the finest blooms  
Of time return, and where no path

Is worn but wears its makers out  
At last, and disappears in leaves  
Of fallen seasons. The tracked rut  
Fills and levels; here nothing grieves

In the risen season. Past life  
Lives in the living. Resurrection  
Is in the way each maple leaf  
Commemorates its kind, by connection

Outreaching understanding. What rises  
Rises into comprehension  
And beyond. Even falling raises  
In praise of light. What is begun

Is unfinished. And so the mind  
That comes to rest among the bluebells  
Comes to rest in motion, refined  
By alteration. The bud swells,

Opens, makes seed, falls, is well,  
Being becoming what it is:  
Miracle and parable  
Exceeding thought, because it is

Immeasurable; the understander  
Encloses understanding, thus  
Darkens the light. We can stand under  
No ray that is not dimmed by us.

The mind that comes to rest is tended  
In ways that it cannot intend:  
Is borne, preserved, and comprehended  
By what it cannot comprehend.

Your Sabbath, Lord, thus keeps us by  
Your will, not ours. And it is fit  
Our only choice should be to die  
Into that rest, or out of it.

Wendell Berry

Sunday, March 7, 2010

Luke 18:1-8

1 Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. 2 He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. 3 And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' 4 For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men, 5 yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!'" 6 And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. 7 And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? 8 I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

Monday, March 8, 2010

A prayer from Marianna Sherman.

“You Love Me”

By Ruth Harms Calkin

From “Lord I Keep Running Back To You”

Yesterday, God, I was soaring  
Like a graceful eagle  
And You loved me

Today, I feel like a blob  
And You love me

Tomorrow I may ask  
“Whatever happened  
To disturb me yesterday?”  
And You’ll love me

God there are innumerable things  
I cannot begin to comprehend  
But the one great certainty  
In all my life is this

I KNOW THAT YOU LOVE ME.

Tuesday, March 9, 2010

“Going to Work” by John Calvin

My God, Father and Saviour, since you have commanded us to work in order to meet our needs, sanctify our labour that it may bring nourishment to our souls as well as to our bodies. Make us constantly aware that our efforts are worthless unless guided by your light and strengthened by your hand. Make us faithful to the particular tasks for which you have bestowed upon us the necessary gifts, taking from us any envy or jealousy at the vocations of others.

Give us a good heart to supply the needs of the poor, saving us from any desire to exalt ourselves over those who receive our bounty. And if you should call us into greater poverty than we humanly desire, save us from any spirit of defiance or resentment, but rather let us graciously and humbly receive the bounty of others. Above all may every temporal grace be matched by spiritual grace, that in both body and soul we may live to your glory.

Wednesday, March 10, 2010

A favorite prayer of Ann Timmons

Have No Fear  
for tomorrow may bring.  
The same loving God  
who cares for you today  
will take care of you  
tomorrow and every day.  
God will either shield you  
from suffering or give  
you unfailing strength to  
bear it. Be at peace  
then, and put aside all  
anxious thoughts and  
Imaginations.

~Francis de Sales

Thursday, March 11, 2010

Psalm 119:73-80

[73] Your hands have made and fashioned me;  
give me understanding that I may learn your commandments.

[74] Those who fear you shall see me and rejoice,  
because I have hoped in your word.

[75] I know, O LORD, that your judgments are right,  
and that in faithfulness you have humbled me.

[76] Let your steadfast love become my comfort  
according to your promise to your servant.

[77] Let your mercy come to me, that I may live;  
for your law is my delight.

[78] Let the arrogant be put to shame,  
because they have subverted me with guile;  
as for me, I will meditate on your precepts.

[79] Let those who fear you turn to me,  
so that they may know your decrees.

[80] May my heart be blameless in your statutes,  
so that I may not be put to shame.

Friday, March 12, 2010

Prayer for Victims Everywhere

O God of grace, we come before you with hurting hearts to plead for those who are the victims of injury, displacement and destruction. We grieve for those who have lost their lives. May angels surround them and welcome them in peace. We grieve for those who have lost their loved ones and feel as if the ground has disappeared not only from under their feet, but from their innermost hearts. Surround them with your love and tenderness that their pain may not lead to despair. As we watch from afar, good God, and feel the burning question "Why?" scream through our souls, descend with your loving presence and unfaltering assurance that even in life's darkest moments you are always there. Even pain and questioning are held in the eternity of your embrace. In the time of fear remind us that, in You, nothing is ever lost. We ask this for the sake of your love. Amen.

Saturday, March 13, 2010

John 17

1 After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, ...6 "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; 8 for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. 9 I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. 11 And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 15 I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. 16 They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

Sunday, March 14, 2010

Luke 9:28-36

28 About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. 29 As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. 30 Two men, Moses and Elijah, 31 appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. 32 Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. 33 As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, "Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters--one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." (He did not know what he was saying.) 34 While he was speaking, a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. 35 A voice came from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him." 36 When the voice had spoken, they found that Jesus was alone. The disciples kept this to themselves, and told no one at that time what they had seen.

Installation of New Pastor Prayer

We praise you, gracious Lord, for you alone are God. You have made us, and we are your people, the sheep of your pasture. You have led us to green meadows by cool waters, satisfying our every need with your love. You have shown us paths that are right. Through shadowed valleys of despair, you have been our comfort and our hope. Over long generations, your presence has sustained your people. In your good time, you sent Jesus, your only Beloved, to be our shepherd. He knew and loved your own, calling all who would hear to follow him. The Good Shepherd laid down his life for us, risking the cross for the hope of resurrection. By the power of the risen Christ you gathered the church together to live for you in newness of life, a holy nation, a priestly family, a people chosen as your own and called to proclaim your marvelous love.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us, that we may be faithful as your people and fruitful in the ministries you have given us. Grant diligence to those who lead, faith to those who teach, truth to all who speak, compassion to all who heal, wisdom to those who counsel, generosity to those who give, and cheerfulness to all who serve. To your servant Chip, and to all who tend your flock as pastors among your people, give vision and strength, hospitality, humility, and peace. Bless the common ministry of this pastor and people with joy and power in the gospel. Strengthen us to live out the grace of our baptism and to serve you with the gifts of your Holy Spirit; for the sake of Jesus Christ, our only shepherd and Lord. Amen.

Join us at 4:00 p.m. for the Installation of Rev. Chip Low as our next pastor.

Monday, March 15, 2010

Dear Lord, help me keep my eyes on you. You are the incarnation of Divine Love, you are the expression of God's infinite compassion, you are the visible manifestation of the Father's holiness. You are beauty, goodness, gentleness, forgiveness, and mercy. In you all can be found. Outside of you nothing can be found. Why should I look elsewhere or go elsewhere? You have the words of eternal life, you are food and drink, you are the Way, the Truth, and the Life. You are the light that shines in the darkness, the lamp on the lampstand, the house on the hilltop. You are the perfect Icon of God. In and through you I can see and find my way to the Heavenly Father. O Holy One, Beautiful One, Glorious One, be my Lord, my Saviour, my Redeemer, my Guide, my Consoler, my Comforter, my Hope, my Joy, and my Peace. To you I want to give all that I am. Let me be generous, not stingy or hesitant. Let me give you all - all I have, think, do, and feel. It is yours, O Lord. Please accept it and make it fully your own.

~Henri Nouwen

Tuesday, March 16, 2010

Shawn Cribari's own version of an ancient Celtic prayer that is attributed to St. Patrick and/or St. Brigid. Its origin probably pre-dates Christianity in Ireland.

God to enfold me,  
God to surround me,  
God in my speaking,  
God in my thinking.  
God in my sleeping,  
God in my waking,  
God in my watching,  
God in my hoping.  
God in my life,  
God in my lips,  
God in my soul,  
God in my heart.

Christ to enfold me,  
Christ to surround me,  
Christ in my speaking,  
Christ in my thinking.  
Christ in my sleeping,  
Christ in my waking,  
Christ in my watching,  
Christ in my hoping.  
Christ in my life,  
Christ in my lips,  
Christ in my soul,  
Christ in my heart.

Amen.

Wednesday, March 17, 2010

I bind unto myself today  
your power, O God, to hold and lead,  
your eye to watch, your might to stay,  
your ear to hearken to my need,  
your wisdom, O my God, to teach,  
your hand to guide, your shield to ward,  
your living Word to give me speech,  
your heavenly host to be my guard.  
~The Breastplate of St. Patrick

Thursday, March 18, 2010

West Point Cadet Prayer

O God, our Father, Thou Searcher of human hearts, help us to draw near to Thee in sincerity and truth. May our religion be filled with gladness and may our worship of Thee be natural. Strengthen and increase our admiration for honest dealing and clean thinking, and suffer not our hatred of hypocrisy and pretence ever to diminish.

Encourage us in our endeavor to live above the common level of life. Make us to choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong, and never to be content with a half truth when the whole can be won. Endow us with courage that is born of loyalty to all that is noble and worthy, that scorns to compromise with vice and injustice and knows no fear when truth and right are in jeopardy.

Guard us against flippancy and irreverence in the sacred things of life. Grant us new ties of friendship and new opportunities of service. Kindle our hearts in fellowship with those of a cheerful countenance, and soften our hearts with sympathy for those who sorrow and suffer. Help us to maintain the honor of the Corps untarnished and unsullied and to show forth in our lives the ideals of West Point in doing our duty to Thee and to our Country. All of which we ask in the name of the Great Father and Master of all.

Amen.

Friday, March 19, 2010

Psalm 34

- [1] I will bless the LORD at all times;  
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
- [2] My soul makes its boast in the LORD;  
let the humble hear and be glad.
- [3] O magnify the LORD with me,  
and let us exalt his name together.
- [4] I sought the LORD, and he answered me,  
and delivered me from all my fears.
- [5] Look to him, and be radiant;  
so your faces shall never be ashamed.
- [6] This poor soul cried, and was heard by the LORD,  
and was saved from every trouble.
- [7] The angel of the LORD encamps  
around those who fear him, and delivers them.
- [8] O taste and see that the LORD is good;  
happy are those who take refuge in him.
- [9] O fear the LORD, you his holy ones,  
for those who fear him have no want.
- [10] The young lions suffer want and hunger,  
but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.
- [11] Come, O children, listen to me;  
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
- [12] Which of you desires life,  
and covets many days to enjoy good?
- [13] Keep your tongue from evil,  
and your lips from speaking deceit.
- [14] Depart from evil, and do good;  
seek peace, and pursue it.
- [15] The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous,  
and his ears are open to their cry.
- [16] The face of the LORD is against evildoers,  
to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.
- [17] When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears,  
and rescues them from all their troubles.
- [18] The LORD is near to the brokenhearted,  
and saves the crushed in spirit.
- [19] Many are the afflictions of the righteous,  
but the LORD rescues them from them all.
- [20] He keeps all their bones;

not one of them will be broken.

[21] Evil brings death to the wicked,  
and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.

[22] The LORD redeems the life of his servants;  
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

Saturday, March 20, 2010

A prayer from Kathy Anderson by John Cotter

Give to each of us a candle of the Spirit, O God,  
as we go down into the depths of our being.

Show us the hidden things, the creatures of our dreams,  
the storehouse of forgotten memories and hurts.

Take us down to the spring of life,  
and tell each of us our nature and our name.

Give us the freedom to grow in order that we may each  
become that self the seed of which you planted in us at our making.

Out of the depths we cry to you, O God.

Sunday, March 21, 2010

Luke 18:31-43

31 Then he took the twelve aside and said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. 32 For he will be handed over to the Gentiles; and he will be mocked and insulted and spat upon. 33 After they have flogged him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise again." 34 But they understood nothing about all these things; in fact, what he said was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said. 35 As he approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. 36 When he heard a crowd going by, he asked what was happening. 37 They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." 38 Then he shouted, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" 39 Those who were in front sternly ordered him to be quiet; but he shouted even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 40 Jesus stood still and ordered the man to be brought to him; and when he came near, he asked him, 41 "What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me see again." 42 Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has saved you." 43 Immediately he regained his sight and followed him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, praised God.

### **Prayer for Deacons in the Church**

God of love and compassion,  
Your poured out your life in service  
in your Son, Jesus Christ.  
By word and example he taught us  
to find fulfillment in giving ourselves,  
and greatness in serving ourselves,  
and greatness in serving others.  
Bless those called to be deacons,  
who lead us in service and caring.  
Empower them by the grace of your Spirit,  
that your whole church may give  
its life for the sake of the world,  
in the name of Jesus Christ,  
who came not to be served, but to serve.  
Amen.

Monday, March 22, 2010

### **A Prayer Walk**

In an attempt to loose weight and lower my blood pressure I had committed to walking one hour everyday. A friend sent me a very simple 2 line prayer that I used as a mantra. I do not know who actually wrote it, but I enjoyed using it. Sometimes I would try to think of all the things I have to be thankful for and it was humbling other times I would think of what I *"need"* and that brought me up short on thinking of the difference between wants and needs.

THANK GOD FOR WHAT YOU HAVE.  
TRUST GOD FOR WHAT YOU NEED.

There was something comforting, calming and reassuring about repeating it.

~Lynda Spring

Tuesday, March 23, 2010

**Two prayers from Larry Konig**

"Lord, as you will, and as you know, have mercy."

For the Victims of Addiction

O blessed Lord, you ministered to all who came to you: Look with compassion upon all who through addiction have lost their health and freedom. Restore to them the assurance of your unfailing mercy; remove from them the fears that beset them; strengthen them in the work of their recovery ; and to those who care for them, give patient understanding and persevering love. Amen.

Prayer No. 56 from the *Episcopal Book of Common Prayer*

Wednesday, March 24, 2010

Psalm 139

1 O Lord, you have searched me and known me.  
2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up;  
you discern my thoughts from far away.  
3 You search out my path and my lying down,  
and are acquainted with all my ways.  
4 Even before a word is on my tongue,  
O Lord, you know it completely.  
5 You hem me in, behind and before,  
and lay your hand upon me.  
6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;  
it is so high that I cannot attain it.  
7 Where can I go from your spirit?  
Or where can I flee from your presence?  
8 If I ascend to heaven, you are there;  
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.  
9 If I take the wings of the morning  
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,  
10 even there your hand shall lead me,  
and your right hand shall hold me fast.  
11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,  
and the light around me become night,"  
12 even the darkness is not dark to you;  
the night is as bright as the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.  
13 For it was you who formed my inward parts;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.  
14 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.  
15 My frame was not hidden from you,  
when I was being made in secret,  
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.  
16 Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.  
In your book were written  
all the days that were formed for me,  
when none of them as yet existed.  
17 How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!  
How vast is the sum of them!  
18 I try to count them—they are more than the sand;  
I come to the end—I am still with you.  
19 O that you would kill the wicked, O God,  
and that the bloodthirsty would depart from me—  
20 those who speak of you maliciously,  
and lift themselves up against you for evil!

21 Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord?  
And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?

22 I hate them with perfect hatred;  
I count them my enemies.

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my thoughts.

24 See if there is any wicked way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting.

Thursday, March 25, 2010

**A prayer written by Angelyn Forbes-Freeze**

Mother/Father God:

“Here I am.” (Yes, that is a song, and it makes me cry with emotion, and) ... it is true.

I know that you place me in situations where I am to be your instrument. Often I do not know what you want, and I ask that you open my eyes and my ears and my heart to your plan. Teach me to do your bidding to the best of my human ability.

Help me to open myself and just be .....  
available ...  
helping ...  
healing ... whatever you want me to be.

Most of all, please give me the patience to listen to you ..... and to always remember that you are there ..... always.

Thank you.

Friday, March 26, 2010

**Mark Linehan's favorite prayer in the Bible.**

Numbers 6:24-27:

The Lord bless you, and keep you;

The Lord make His face shine on you,

And be gracious to you;

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you,

And give you peace.

Saturday, March 27, 2010

**Prayer for the Hungry**

God, we pray for the children who die from hunger every day. We pray for wisdom for government leaders who are seeking effective means to address the food crisis. We pray for greater efforts to urge Congress to expand programs that address hunger, child nutrition, and agricultural development, to eradicate child hunger worldwide. And we pray for your guidance in showing us how we can help others to break the cycle of hunger. Amen.

*Source: World Vision Day of Prayer and Action on [www.sojo.net](http://www.sojo.net)*

Our food pantry is open today from 9:00-11:00 a.m.

# Sunday, March 28, 2010

## Palm Sunday

### Luke 9:18-22

18 Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say I am?" 19 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life." 20 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "The Christ of God." 21 Jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone. 22 And he said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life."

### Luke 19:28-40

28 After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. 29 When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, 30 saying, "Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. 31 If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it.'" 32 So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. 33 As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" 34 They said, "The Lord needs it." 35 Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. 36 As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. 37 As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, 38 saying, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!" 39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." 40 He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."

Monday, March 29, 2010

A prayer from Karen Mack that she carries with her. It was given to her by her mother who received it from her great aunt who lived to be 103 years old.

"Prayer of Protection"

The light of God surrounds us  
The love of God enfolds us  
The power of God protects us  
The presence of God watches over us  
Wherever we are, God is!

Tuesday, March 30, 2010

Christ's Infinite Patience

Through your whole life, O Lord Jesus Christ, you suffered that I might be saved. And yet your suffering is not at an end. For still you have to bear with me, stumbling as I walk along the path, and constantly going astray. How often have I become impatient, wanting to give up your way! And how often have you given me the encouragement and helping hand that I need. Every day I increase the burden that you must bear; but just as I am impatient so you are infinitely patient. Amen.

~Soren Kierkegaard

Wednesday, March 31, 2010

Who Will Help Me?

Where am I? How did I get here? Who can I ask to comfort me? How will I break these chains of sin that enslave me? Whose eye can bear to look at these ugly spiritual wounds that disfigure me? Whose hands will anoint me with oil that I may be healed? Who will help me unless it is you, O God?

Whenever I think of the glorious freedom which you promise, my slavery to sin seems even more oppressive. Whenever I think of the beauty of your Son, my spiritual ugliness seems even more terrible. Whenever I think of the joyful music of your love, my soul sinks into despair.

Dear God, what will become of me?

~Hildegard of Bingen

Thursday, April 1, 2010

Join us for the Maundy Thursday service at 8:00 p.m. at the church.

Luke 22:39-46

39 Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. 40 On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." 41 He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed,

42 "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."

43 An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. 44 And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. 45 When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. 46 "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation."

Friday, April 2, 2010

The sanctuary will be open for prayer today from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Psalm 22

[1] My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?  
Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my  
groaning?

[2] O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;  
and by night, but find no rest.

[3] Yet you are holy,  
enthroned on the praises of Israel.

[4] In you our ancestors trusted;  
they trusted, and you delivered them.

[5] To you they cried, and were saved;  
in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.

[6] But I am a worm, and not human;  
scorned by others, and despised by the people.

[7] All who see me mock at me;  
they make mouths at me, they shake their heads;

[8] "Commit your cause to the LORD; let him deliver --  
let him rescue the one in whom he delights!"

[9] Yet it was you who took me from the womb;  
you kept me safe on my mother's breast.

[10] On you I was cast from my birth,  
and since my mother bore me you have been my God.

[11] Do not be far from me,  
for trouble is near  
and there is no one to help.

[12] Many bulls encircle me,  
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;

[13] they open wide their mouths at me,  
like a ravening and roaring lion.

[14] I am poured out like water,  
and all my bones are out of joint;  
my heart is like wax;

it is melted within my breast;  
[15] my mouth is dried up like a potsherd,  
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;  
you lay me in the dust of death.

[16] For dogs are all around me;  
a company of evildoers encircles me.  
My hands and feet have shriveled;  
[17] I can count all my bones.  
They stare and gloat over me;  
[18] they divide my clothes among themselves,  
and for my clothing they cast lots.

[19] But you, O LORD, do not be far away!  
O my help, come quickly to my aid!  
[20] Deliver my soul from the sword,  
my life from the power of the dog!  
[21] Save me from the mouth of the lion!

From the horns of the wild oxen you have rescued me.  
[22] I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters;  
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:  
[23] You who fear the LORD, praise him!  
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him;  
stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!  
[24] For he did not despise or abhor  
the affliction of the afflicted;  
he did not hide his face from me,  
but heard when I cried to him.

[25] From you comes my praise in the great congregation;  
my vows I will pay before those who fear him.  
[26] The poor shall eat and be satisfied;  
those who seek him shall praise the LORD.  
May your hearts live forever!

[27] All the ends of the earth shall remember  
and turn to the LORD;  
and all the families of the nations  
shall worship before him.  
[28] For dominion belongs to the LORD,  
and he rules over the nations.

[29] To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;  
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,  
and I shall live for him.  
[30] Posterity will serve him;  
future generations will be told about the Lord,  
[31] and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,  
saying that he has done it.

Saturday, April 3, 2010

Psalm 130

1 Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord;

2 O Lord, hear my voice.

Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy.

3 If you, O Lord, kept a record of sins,

O Lord, who could stand?

4 But with you there is forgiveness;

therefore you are feared.

5 I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,

and in his word I put my hope.

6 My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning,

more than watchmen wait for the morning.

7 O Israel, put your hope in the Lord,

for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full redemption.

8 He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins.

Sunday, April 4, 2010

Hallelujah! He is risen. He is risen indeed!

Sunrise Service: 6:20 a.m. @ Wilkens' Farm  
8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. @ FPC Yorktown

Lord Jesus Christ, we come to you with a deep sense of gratitude, care, concern, devotion, love for you, and desire to live responsively to you. We sense that we're with friends in your company of follower and friends who share the life of resurrection and want others to get in on it, notice it, and begin participating at the center of what you're doing rather than on the periphery. We pray for strength and discernment to understand the culture we are in and the deadening effects, the seductive lures...We ask your blessing on the church, scattered and dispersed and so much of it in despair. We pray that wherever we are and whatever places we go back into, whether it's pew or pulpit, we may be part of this resurrection life, knowing that you are present and doing your work. You're not anxious about what is going to happen or whether this is going to work or not. It's worked a long, long time and will continue working. Mostly, keep us faithful, attentive, adorational, sacrificial, and personal. In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

~Eugene Peterson, "Living the Resurrection"

Join us starting Wednesday, April 14th for a weekly look at "Practice Resurrection: A Conversation on Growing Up in Christ" by Eugene Peterson