



## Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

Adopted from *The Lutheran Service Book* (p. 294)

**The 6<sup>th</sup> of September 2020 A.D. – 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

*This brief service is intended as a simple form of daily prayer for individuals and families. When more than one person is present, the Psalm and other parts of the service may be spoken responsively, with one person reading the words in regular type and the others responding with the words in bold type. The Creed and Prayers that are in bold type are to be said by all.*

*The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

### Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

### Opening Psalm    *Psalm 32:1-7*

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

<sup>2</sup> **Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity,**  
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

<sup>3</sup> **For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.**

<sup>4</sup> For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;

**my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.**

<sup>5</sup> I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity;

**I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,”**

**and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

<sup>6</sup> Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found;  
**surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him.**

<sup>7</sup> You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble;

**you surround me with shouts of deliverance.**

*For those with access to the internet, you may now play today's worship video, located on Bethany's website ([www.bethanycr.org](http://www.bethanycr.org)) under the Worship Resources tab and then continue with the Nicene Creed. Everyone else may continue the service as printed....*

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### Scripture Lessons

*Matthew 18:1-20*

<sup>1</sup>At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” <sup>2</sup>And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them <sup>3</sup>and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup>Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>5</sup>“Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, <sup>6</sup>but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

<sup>7</sup>“Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! <sup>8</sup>And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. <sup>9</sup>And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.

<sup>10</sup>“See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven. <sup>11</sup>For the Son of Man came to save the lost. <sup>12</sup>What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? <sup>13</sup>And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. <sup>14</sup>So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

<sup>15</sup>“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. <sup>16</sup>But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup>If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. <sup>18</sup>Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup>Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”

**Sermon – † *Greatness is Depending on Dependence* †**

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**The Nicene' Creed**

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,**

**begotten of His Father before all worlds,**

**God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,**

**begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father,**

**by whom all things were made;**

**who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven**

**and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary**

**and was made man;**

**and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.**

**He suffered and was buried.**

**And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father.**



**And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.**

**And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life  $\dagger$  of the world to come. Amen.**

### **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.**

### **Prayers for Others and Ourselves**

#### **Bethany's Prayer List**

Those suffering after the storm and during the pandemic.  
The homeless, unemployed, poor, and outcast.  
Medical professionals and other first responders.  
Workers in the Church - here and throughout the world.

#### **Thanksgiving:**

Bethany's volunteers during the storm recovery.

#### **Prayers for healing/comfort:**

Kristi Montague- *vision issues*

Kent Zenor- *recovering after second eye surgery*

Candi Engel- *recovering at Westridge Care Center after hospitalization*

Darlene Eckert- *recovering after broken leg*

Aaron Moffett- *recovering after eye surgery*

Dee Rose- *hospice care at home*

Jeff, Angela & Wes Keslar- *recovering after COVID-19*

Dave Christian - *recovering after surgery*

Ron Prescott - *recovering after eye surgery*

Kris Dunn - *health issues*

Stephanie Macke - *recovering after radiation treatments*

Nadine Wax - *recovering at home*

**Mourning:**

Steve Wilson- *mourning the death of his father, Raymond*

Larsons- *mourning the death of a friend, LeAnn*

**Serving Our Country:**

Taylor & Charlie (*grandsons of Kim Neuhaus*) – *serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.*

**Collect of the Day**

Let us pray... O God, from whom all good proceeds, grant to us, Your humble servants, Your holy inspiration, that we may set our minds on the things that are right and, by Your merciful guiding, accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**Concluding Prayers**

Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**The Lord's Prayer**

Together we pray... **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.**

Let us bless the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



✠ *Greatness is Depending on Dependence* ✠

In our Gospel lesson for today, Jesus teaches His disciples that true greatness in the Kingdom of God does not rely on one's wisdom, strength, or deeds. But rather greatness depends on acknowledging our utter dependence upon God for everything that we have in this life and the next.

Just before our text today, Jesus asks Peter if earthly kings tax their own sons. He does this to show the disciples that as true children of God, they are not required to pay the Jewish tax

to support the temple. This shows the disciples, and every Christian since that time, that they are to be considered as God's children. (Something everyone who has ever prayed "Our Father..." already knows). Unfortunately, telling the disciples that they are sons of God, seems to have stirred up an old, reoccurring debate among them. If they are sons of God, they want to know who is the greatest son among them. They ask, "*Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?*" What Jesus does next to answer their question would have shocked everyone around at the time, as well as first readers of St. Matthew's Gospel. He calls a small child over to them and tells the disciples, "*...unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.*"

To understand what Jesus is saying here, we would do well to understand how children were viewed at this time. It's popular among many to say that children had no value whatsoever in the ancient world, but that's not quite true. Children were loved and cared for by parents, extended family, and society much the same way that they are today. This is especially true in the Jewish culture of Jesus' time. Because Jews of all ages were members of the covenant God made with Abraham, (Jewish boys often brought into that covenant when they were only 8 days old), and because things like the 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Commandments protected people of all ages from being killed or having their possessions stolen, Jewish culture held children in high esteem. However, even among the Jews, a person's value in society was often measured in things like wisdom, wealth, strength, or accomplishments. So being that children almost always have very little of any of these things, for Jesus to say that whoever humbles themselves to be like a child would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven would be shocking.

But this is exactly what Jesus says because He knows how God is, how we are, and how we relate to God as He graciously rules over all of creation. He knows, despite what we might want to believe in our society today, that we are utterly dependent on God for everything that we need in this life and the next. Just as in Jesus' time, we like to think that we are independent of others, even of God. We like to think that we can be "self-made" people. That because we are particularly wise or strong or hard working that we have earned what we have. That we have earned our homes, our families, our education, our jobs and our lifestyles. We have tended to believe that if there is something that we want, all that we need to do is go out and get it. I saw this mentality watching the recent political conventions. Donald Trump Jr. speaking at the Republican National Convention was concluding his speech by drawing distinctions between the world views of his father and his opponent. There he said, "Imagine the life you want to have, one with a great job, a beautiful home, a perfect family. You can have it. Imagine the country you want to live in, one with true equal opportunity, where hard work pays off and justice is served with compassion and without partiality. You can have it...That is the life. That is the country.... And yes, you can have it because....our party is open to everyone."

That sounds good. The idea that whatever level of greatness you desire in life is yours to achieve if only you vote for this or that person is inspiring and very patriotic. But is it true? Depending on your political affiliation you may believe that is more true for one party than it is another. But I would argue, that if we have learned anything over the last few months with the pandemic and now the August 10<sup>th</sup> storm in our area, it is how little we actually control in our lives regardless of how we're registered as voters, or our education, or our net worth, or our work ethic. For in the matter of just a few days last Spring, we saw the world's greatest economies brought to their knees because of the Coronavirus. Likewise, in a matter of minutes almost all of our lives changed back on August 10. 140 mph winds made our communities lose electricity and other utilities, damaged or destroyed billions of dollars in

property, and injured and even killed some. Who among us has not been affected or had our plans changed because of these things? Why they happen may remain a mystery to us. But one thing that is certain, is that they remind us of how dependent we truly are upon God.

Therefore we should not be surprised that Jesus doesn't tell the disciples that to be great, they must study more or work harder. These things are good and can be profitable. But to be great in the kingdom of God, one must humble themselves and, like a child does with her parents, acknowledge their dependency upon God. For if we can't take care of a virus, or the fallout from it, or a storm blowing across our region, how can we handle the temptations of the evil one? How can we possibly deal with sin? Or with death?

We simply can't. And so to help us in all of these situations, Jesus tells us to put away the prideful attitudes, and become like children who trust their loving parent. But as Christians, we are to trust in our loving God. Who, like a shepherd going after one straying sheep, Jesus tells us, has done the unimaginable to buy back every single sinner from sin - He has given His Son Jesus to die on the cross. We cannot save ourselves, but along with all others, who put away their pride and their own deeds, are already saved through Jesus' death and resurrection.

This does not mean that we should be lazy in life or in good works. Rather it means that we should let the love that God has shown to us through His Son, shine in our own lives so that Spirit may call others to humble repentance and faith. For God wants everyone to be saved and there are terrible consequences for anyone who causes another to stumble and fall into sin. But when we rely upon God, and God alone, for everything that we need including our forgiveness, we will be great. Maybe not in this life according to what the world considers to be great, but certainly great in the kingdom of heaven, just as our Lord Jesus promises. Amen.

