



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

The 13th of September 2020 A.D. – 15th 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 responses 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 103:1-12*

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!

² **Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,**

³ who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,

⁴ **who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,**

⁵ who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

⁶ **The LORD works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed.**

⁷ He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel.

⁸ **The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

⁹ He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever.

¹⁰ **He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.**

¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;

¹² **as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.**

For those who are able, you may now watch the Worship Resources video that is available on Bethany's website. All others may continue below with the Scripture Lessons and the Sermon.

Scripture Lessons *(Romans 14:1-12)*

¹As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. ²One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. ³Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

⁵One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. ⁷For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; ¹¹for it is written,

*“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall confess to God.”*

¹²So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

(Matthew 18:21-35)

Peter came up and said to [Jesus], “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” ²²Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.

²³“Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay what you owe.’ ²⁹So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. ³²Then his master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. ³⁵So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”

The Sermon – † *Belonging to the Lord* †

(A copy of the Sermon is available at the end of this resource.)

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.

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.

Bethany's Prayer List

Those suffering from the storm and the pandemic
Our medical professionals, first responders, farmers, and educators
Workers in the Church, here and throughout the world

Thanksgiving

Kay Karsten- *Stephen Leader commissioning*

Prayers for healing/comfort

Alyse (granddaughter of Janelle Dunbar)- *brain tumor*

Gary & Pearl (parents of Jeff Crow)- *recovering from COVID-19*

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

Wayne Schilling and his family – *mourning the death of his wife, Darlene*

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

O God, our refuge and strength, the author of all godliness, hear the devout prayers of Your Church, especially in times of persecution, and grant that what we ask in faith we may obtain; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Concluding Prayers

Almighty God, merciful Father, who created and completed all things, on this day when the work of our calling begins anew, we implore You to create its beginning, direct its continuance, and bless its end, that all our doings may be preserved from sin, our life sanctified, and our work this day well pleasing to You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

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.



✠ *Belonging to the Lord* ✠

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

In his book *Life Together*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer said that the church is no “wish dream”. In fact, God’s grace shatters our dreams of a church as a perfect place with perfect people. God calls us to live together in His church, not according to our personal dreams of how our fellow Christian should speak and act in matters of Christian freedom, but according to our new identity in Him. God is no fan of “wish dreams” in His church, because such dreaming makes us proud and arrogant.

Such dreaming is what the apostle Paul confronts in this week’s Epistle Lesson from Romans. When one Christian believes he can eat anything - meats, vegetables, whatever - he looks down on the brother or sister in Christ who freely decides to eat only vegetables. He wants his brother to live according to his dream. Then the veggie-only brother shoots back, “Who do you think you are to tell me how to practice my Christian freedom?” Now we have a different dream. And so, it goes. “Who do you think you are to look down on me?” “Who do you think you are to tell me how to live my life?”

St. Paul's answer in Romans is, "I will tell you who you are. You are God's own dear children, made righteous by Jesus and reborn in your Baptism." When you are tempted to criticize or look down on your neighbor, trying to make her or him fit into your wish dream, remember: Your Neighbor belongs to Jesus too!

Our Epistle Lesson from Romans 14 teaches us how to deal with debates over Christian freedom in the Christian Church. As with many things, this begins with an understanding that by His suffering, death, and resurrection, our Lord Jesus Christ has made us righteous and set us free from sin, death, and the devil - giving all of us our true identity in Him.

This is possible because of what our Lord Jesus Christ has done for us. In the Old Testament, we know that God had forbidden His people from eating certain foods, calling them unclean. But now, in the New Testament, Jesus has called them all clean. Likewise, in the Old Testament, God established ceremonial days for His people to follow, such as the Sabbath Day, the Passover, and other holy days, but Jesus is the fulfillment of those days by His life, death, and resurrection, rendering their observance obsolete. So, He has not done away with all of these dietary and ceremonial laws – He has fulfilled them, and fulfilled them for us! Therefore, the apostle Paul reminds us not to judge one another nor divide the Christian church over matters in which our Lord Jesus Christ had made us free.

If we do judge one another, if we do despise our brother or sister in Christ over matters of Christian freedom (food, drink, festival days, and so on), what we are really trying to do is identify ourselves as God over them. The story of Joseph and his brothers in the book of Genesis illustrates both this problem and the solution as God's redeemed people living together. We know how Joseph's brother mistreated him, selling him off into slavery in Egypt. Eventually, however, he rose up into a position of great power and influence. When his brothers come to Egypt seeking help many years later, Joseph forgave them for what they had done. But then, years later still, Joseph's brothers were afraid after the death of their father Jacob, thinking that Joseph would seek revenge - even though Joseph had forgiven them long ago. But Joseph comforted his brothers, saying, "*Do not fear, for am I in the place of God?*" (Gen 50:19). While God was able to use the weakness of his brothers, it was truly the strength and faithfulness of Joseph that God was able to us for his purpose "*that many people should be kept alive*" (Gen 50:20).

Jesus' parable of the unforgiving servant also illustrates the problem and solution of living together under His forgiveness. First, the king forgave the servant's enormous debt (Mt 18:23-27). The servant, then however, goes out and would not forgive his fellow servant the much smaller debt, thus angering the master when he finds out about it (Mt 18:28-34). When we pass judgment on our brother or sister in Christ, we wrongly impersonate God himself. We must remember what God has done for us. We must remember how God treats us each and every day with His mercy and grace. And we must remember one day we will stand before our Lord's judgment seat.

St. Paul tells us in Romans that both we and our neighbors have new identities in Jesus Christ, for we each belong to Him. He writes in 14:7-8, "*For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.*" Our Baptism into Jesus' death and resurrection makes all of us God's sons and daughters and thus sets us free from our sins of despising and judging our fellow Christians.

Therefore, the next time someone asks you, "Who do you think you are?", remember that you are not God to judge or despise your brother or sister in Christ, nor anyone for whom He has

given His Son to die for. Yet, you are God's own son or daughter, bought by the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross and washed by His Word and water. And so is your neighbor. Your neighbor belongs to Jesus as well. For God has made us all brothers and sisters in the family of God. And within that family there is no room for passing judgement on one another or holding each other in contempt. There is no room for dreams of how we wish others would act or be. Instead, Paul reminds us not only to have faith in Christ, but to live together in peace with our brothers and sisters underneath the cross and at the empty tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. Amen.