



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

The 2nd Sunday After Epiphany

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.

Psalm *Psalm 139:1-10*

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 afar.**

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, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether.**

⁵ You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.

⁶ **Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.**

⁷ Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall 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 dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

¹⁰ **even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.**

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

Scripture Lesson – John 1:43-51

⁴³The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." ⁴⁴Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." ⁴⁶Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." ⁴⁷Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!" ⁴⁸Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." ⁴⁹Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" ⁵⁰Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." ⁵¹And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Sermon – † *Seeing Great Things* † (A copy is included at the end of this service.)

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 † 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.**

Bethany's Prayer List

Thanksgiving

- Newly installed church officers on 1/10
- Kenny (friend of Bonnie Bubke) - recovering from surgery

Entrusting into God's Care

- Those suffering after the storm and during the pandemic
- The homeless & the unemployed
- Dee Rose - hospice care at Meth-Wick nursing facility
- Workers in the Church, here at Bethany and throughout the world

Healing

- Ron (brother of Deb Heitland) - COVID-19
- Linda (sister-in-law of Deb Heitland) - COVID-19
- Amanda (daughter of Heitlands) - recovering after COVID-19
- Dan (nephew of Bonnie Bubke) - shoulder surgery on 1/20
- Karen (relative of Carol Grimminger) - cancer
- Cindy (mother of Amy Diers) - recovering after surgery
- Jim (uncle of Nate Ackermann) - hospitalization
- Kent Zenor - recovering after eye surgery
- Dave Johnson - healing
- Pat Krekeler - recovering after hospitalization
- Aaron Moffett - recovering after eye surgery
- Dave Christian - recovering after surgery
- Kris Dunn - health issues

Shut-Ins

- Nadine Wax - at home

Mourning

- Rick Heller - mourning the death of mother, Ramona on 1/14
- Leisa Knudson - mourning the death of father, Bud, on 12/17
- Del Block - mourning the death of wife, Dee, on 12/16

Serving Our Country

- Tailor & Charlie (grandsons of Kim Neuhaus) - serving in U.S. Armed Forces
- Harrison (son of Rob & Faye Sieck)- serving in U.S. Armed Forces

Collect of the Day

Let us pray... Almighty and everlasting God, who governs all things in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the prayers of Your people and grant us Your peace through all our days; 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

Almighty God, You have called Your Church to witness that in Christ You have reconciled us to Yourself. Grant that by Your Holy Spirit we may proclaim the good news of Your salvation so that all who hear it may receive the gift of salvation; 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.



Seeing Great Things

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

I think that it is fair to say that most of us like to see God at work. Whether we see Him working in our own lives, in our own nation, or somewhere the world – it's good when God isn't hidden and we can clearly tell that He is actively doing His gracious and merciful work in creation. Unfortunately, that doesn't always happen. For reasons that are often beyond the understanding of the faithful, there are times when it seems as if God is not paying attention to what is going on. It seems as if maybe He's turned His back on us or doesn't hear our prayers. Or maybe He does see us and does hear our prayers and can't or doesn't want to do anything about our cries for help. And with the sendoff that the world gave to the year 2020 and with the events in our nation thus far in 2021, it seems if it's been kind of hard to see God's loving work lately. With the pandemic and the storm and the protests it seems that we could all use just a glimpse of some of the great things that God can do. And our Gospel lesson today we discover exactly how this not only can happen, but in many ways already has.

Jesus tells Nathanael in John 1:50, "*Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these.*" Jesus had just found Philip and told Philip to follow Him. Philip went and found Nathanael and eventually told him to come and see that they had found the promised Messiah. When Nathaniel meets Jesus, Jesus says He had miraculously seen Nathaniel under a fig tree. This miracle causes Nathaniel to confess, "*Rabbi,*

you are the Son of God! You are the king of Israel!” And it’s at this point that Jesus tells Nathaniel and all those who are listening that they’ll see things greater than this.

But before all of that even happens, earlier in chapter one John the Baptist tells two of his disciples to go and follow Jesus. And one of those men, Andrew, went to his brother, Simon-Peter, and brought him to Jesus. That all happened before Nathanael met Jesus. After that – after Jesus tells Nathanael that he will see great things, John tells us in his Gospel that Jesus turned water into wine at the wedding in Cana. That Jesus taught a teacher of Israel. That Jesus told the woman at the well all she ever did. That Jesus healed a royal official’s son and a man who could not walk for 38 years! That Jesus fed 5000 and that He walked on water! And that is only up through John 6! Jesus would go on to give sight to the blind and raise Lazarus back from the dead. He would go on to enter Jerusalem triumphantly on Sunday, be crucified on Friday, and most amazingly - rise again in glory only three days later on Easter.

Those are all some pretty awesome things that Nathaniel and the rest of Jesus’s disciples saw. They were all like little slices of Heaven that had come down into what can be, at times, an awful world. Glimpses of heaven where the blind see, the lame dance and the dead live once again. But in the midst of all of these great things, did you notice what they all had in common? Did you notice the one common factor that all of the disciples had experienced when they were called? The answer is of course, “Jesus”. All of the disciples who would see these great things from Heaven all encountered Jesus when they were called. Whenever those disciples saw something great from Heaven being done, it was Jesus who was doing it. Jesus, true God and true Man, therefore is the link between Heaven and the fallen creation. Even today, if someone wants to see something great that is truly from Heaven, if they want to be closer to our loving and gracious God, they will be with Jesus.

Being with Jesus does not mean that a person won’t have their share of his or her trouble in life. In fact, sometimes being with Jesus will bring about persecution from the world. Nor does this mean that those who are with Jesus are guaranteed to see miracles of healing or those that defy the laws of nature. But when someone is with Jesus, when they have that relationship with Him as their Lord and Savior, we do know that they will see, and in fact have already seen, the greatest gifts from Heaven of forgiveness, eternal life, and the power and strength to live lives that are pleasing to God.

Jesus Himself shows us this in our text. It is almost certain that those around Him though of experience of Jacob and his dream in the Old Testament when Jesus promised them that they would see Heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man. Reading Genesis, Jacob was running away from his brother Esau whom he had deceived. Jacob stopped to sleep and dreamed of angels ascending and descending upon a ladder that joined Heaven and earth. And at the top of the ladder was God, who revealed His plans to Jacob. Genesis 28:16-17 says, *“Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it.” And he was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”*

For Jacob, that place (Bethel) was “the gate of Heaven”, the place where he encountered God and saw the plans that God had for him. But where Jacob saw the angels of God ascending and descending on a ladder, Jesus tells us that those angels will ascend and descend upon the Son of Man – that is, Himself. Therefore Jesus, is the gate into Heaven. He is the one through whom all of God’s blessings and great works come down from Heaven and into the earth. By His side and with Him as our Lord and Savior we have already seen our sins forgiven and ourselves brought

into His Kingdom. And one that great and glorious day we will also see all of His promises fulfilled.

For Philip and Nathaniel, Simon Peter and Andrew and the rest of Jesus' disciples, being with Jesus meant literally walking with Him and seeing the miracles He performed. But most importantly the disciples of Jesus listened to His Word and His teaching. This is how the Samaritans to whom the woman at the well talked to came to Jesus. We read in John 4:40-41, "*So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days.* ⁴¹ *And many more believed because of his word.*"

God continues to bring disciples to Himself and into the His Kingdom today through the work of the Holy Spirit. And though we as His disciples may see pandemics, tragedies and other trouble; and though we may struggle at times to be in the world but not "of the world" (Romans 12), we must never forget Jesus' promise to see the "greater things" of Heaven through Him. Greater than seeing a disciple under a tree. Greater than water turning into wine or healing this or that disease, we have seen our sins forgiven, and look forward to eternal life, and even Heaven itself. And so, as we live here in this moment, we continue in His Word – being with Jesus as we read and study the Holy Scriptures. For this is always how Jesus has worked among His disciples and continues to work today. And God working through the Good News to fulfill His promises is not only something that we all would like to see these days, it's what we have seen and something that God always wants to do in Jesus' name. Amen.

And now may the peace of God that surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and minds forever in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

