



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

The Fifth Sunday After Epiphany – February 7th, 2021 A.D.

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 147:1-11*

Praise the LORD! For it is good to sing praises to our God;

for it is pleasant, and a song of praise is fitting.

²The LORD builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the outcasts of Israel.

³**He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.**

⁴He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names.

⁵**Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.**

⁶The LORD lifts up the humble; he casts the wicked to the ground.

⁷**Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; make melody to our God on the lyre!**

⁸He covers the heavens with clouds; he prepares rain for the earth; he makes grass grow on the hills.

⁹**He gives to the beasts their food, and to the young ravens that cry.**

¹⁰His delight is not in the strength of the horse, nor his pleasure in the legs of a man,

¹¹**but the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love.**

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 – I Corinthians 9:16-27

For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! ¹⁷For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward, but if not of my own will, I am still entrusted with a stewardship. ¹⁸What then is my reward? That in my preaching I may present the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel.

¹⁹ For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. ²⁰ To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. ²¹ To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. ²² To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. ²³ I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

²⁴ Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. ²⁵ Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. ²⁶ So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. ²⁷ But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

Sermon – † *Faithfully Running* † (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.



Bethany's Prayer List

Thanksgiving

Ron, Linda, Amanda (relatives of Heitlands) - recovered after COVID-19

Gerard - recovered after COVID-19

Entrusting Into God's Care

Those suffering after the storm and during the pandemic

Dee Rose - hospice care at Meth-Wick nursing facility

Workers in the Church, here at Bethany and throughout the world

Healing

Dale Stonewall— recovering at home after surgery

Pat Krekeler— recovering after hospitalization

Linda Patten - recovering after surgery

Brenda Heims - recovering after surgery

Elaine Cook - surgery on 2/10

Jill (sister of Bridget Rinderknecht) - health issues

Faye Sieck - health issues

Dan (nephew of Bonnie Bubke) - recovering after surgery

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

Aaron Moffett - recovering after eye surgery

Dave Christian - recovering after surgery

Kris Dunn - health issues

Shut-Ins

Larry & Sharon Easler – Summit Pointe

Mourning

Loved ones of Ann Meyer - mourning her death on 1/23

Rick Heller - mourning the death of mother, Ramona on 1/14

Serving Our Country

Taylor & 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... O Lord, keep Your family the Church continually in the true faith that, relying on the hope of Your heavenly grace, we may ever be defended by Your mighty power; 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



**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.**

Concluding Prayers

Almighty God, You have promised to hear the petitions of those who ask in Your Son's name. Mercifully incline Your ears to us who have now made our prayers and supplications to You, and grant that those things that we have faithfully asked according to Your will we may receive to meet our need and bring glory 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.



✠ *Faithfully Running* ✠

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

If everything goes according to plan, this year on July 24th thousands for runners will “put their toe to the starting line” to run and compete in the Quad Cities Bix7 road race. Almost all of the runners will have spent dozens, if not hundreds, of hours training for the race. Some will have run hundreds of miles in the weeks leading up to the event, watched what they ate, and nursed their bodies through all of the injuries that come about from training to compete in a running race. But of all the thousands of runners who will begin began the race there will only be one winner.

Also, this weekend, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers will play the Kansas City Chiefs in the Superbowl. According to the National Football League of the 100,000 football players who graduate high school every year, only 0.2% of them, or about 215 of those 100,000 will ever play for one of the 32 professional NFL teams. And of those 32 teams, only one will lift the Lombardi Trophy at the end of Superbowl Sunday. Despite all of the years training in the weight room, all

of the time spent on the practice field and watching film, only one team will win the championship this year.

These stats and figures can be discouraging – maybe causing anyone hoping to play in the NFL or to win a big race to throw their hands up in frustration and say, “What’s the point?” But this is not the intention of St. Paul in our reading today when he writes that while all runners compete in a race, only one takes the prize. He’s not telling the Corinthians to give up, saying that they’ll never be able to win the race. He’s saying that it is not easy to win. So the Christians in Corinth, and indeed all Christians even in the church today, need to run, they need to train and prepare, so that they might be the ones to take the prize home.

Of course St. Paul is not acting as a running coach in our text. He is acting as an Apostle, whom Jesus used to preach the Gospel and begin a church in the city of Corinth. Paul uses the illustration of competing in a race to show how Christians must be concerned about how they conduct their lives. A runner training for a race cannot just run around aimlessly. A boxer training for a fight cannot just wave his arms around, beating the air. Thought and concern must be given to how we live as we head towards the glory of eternal life.

Now St. Paul knows better than almost anyone, that the forgiveness of our sins and eternal life is not something that we work for or earn. Paul was an apostle of Jesus who preached the Gospel or the Good News. The Holy Spirit used Paul to tell the Romans, as well as us today, that every person is a sinner who has fallen short of the glory of God. Therefore no one, will ever be forgiven or saved by the works that they themselves do. Rather, the world is saved by the grace of God that comes to us as a free gift through Jesus Christ. Those who believe, those who have faith that Christ is their Savior, receive this gift of forgiveness and eternal life as their own. Thus we are justified apart from the good works of the law.

This justification or forgiveness frees us from sin and death. No longer are we held in terrifying captivity over what we have done in the past or what might await for us in the future. Christ has died for us and now we are free. But notice what St. Paul says in v.19 of our text. He writes, “*For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them.*” He goes on to say in v.22 “*...I have become ALL things to ALL people, that by ALL means I might save some.*” Paul writes that the freedom that God has given to us through Jesus’ death on the cross, is never to be used just for ourselves. Rather, Paul says that because Christ has freed him, he has made himself a slave to all so that others might be saved as well. Martin Luther echoes Paul when he pondered the freedom that Christ gave to him saying, “*A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all subject to none. And a Christian is a dutiful servant of all, subject to all.*” For Luther, and of course for Paul as well, they knew that their faith in Christ made them free, but because this freedom is such a wonderful gift, they were willing to live as servants to their fellow man. And it did not make a difference if he or she was a Jew or a Gentile. It made no difference if he was a prince or a peasant. Because they knew how much God loved them, they were willing to love those around them, even if it meant giving up their rights and freedoms as those who were saved.

This is the logical conclusion of what Paul previously wrote in I Corinthians. In Chapter 8, Paul said that our knowledge of the Gospel of Christ must be coupled with love for our neighbor, or our knowledge is incomplete. Paul is so serious about this, that his faith must have love along side of it, that he disciplines his body to keep it under control. This discipline that Paul speaks of is not just denying oneself of certain rights and pleasures when it is convenient. But rather it is a violent term, literally meaning to punch someone under the eye to knock them out cold. Paul sees

his own body and its' desires as the enemy who would lead him away from faith in Christ and love for his neighbor, and so he punches his enemy out and subdues it – even if it is his own self!

Today, we as Christians, enjoy the same freedom from all of our sins and from death that Paul and Luther had because Christ has died for us, just as He did for them. But what do we do with this freedom now? Do we use the freedom of the Gospel only for ourselves, saying, “I have faith, I’m a good member of the church, or even I’m a pastor, I can do whatever I want without concern for those around me?” As those who have been redeemed from sin with the suffering and death of Christ, should we just go through life aimlessly, without any concern for how we act or behave?

Paul warns us against this way of thinking. He knows that even as an apostle of Christ, perhaps the greatest apostle of all, he still must work to live as Christian. Not to be a Christian, but to live as one. So he tells the Corinthians, he tells us this morning, don’t run the race aimlessly. Don’t box the air. Don’t use your Christian freedom just for yourselves. You have the knowledge that Christ has set you free. Use your faith to train yourselves and your desires away from caring only about yourself and to loving your family, your friends, your neighbor – and yes, even your enemies. Is this easy? Of course not. It’s also hard to win the Bix7 or the Superbowl. But just as those athletes train themselves to win a temporary trophy or prize, God wants us to work and train to live lives of faith and love so that we will never loose what Christ has given to us. Amen.

