



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

April 11th, 2021 A.D. – Second Sunday of Easter

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.

Psalm

(Psalm 148)

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights!

Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts!

Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars!

Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the Lord! For he commanded and they were created.

And he established them forever and ever; he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.

Praise the Lord from the earth, you great sea creatures and all deeps,

fire and hail, snow and mist, stormy wind fulfilling his word!

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!

Beasts and all livestock, creeping things and flying birds!

Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!

Young men and maidens together, old men and children!

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his majesty is above earth and heaven.

He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his saints, for the people of Israel who are near to him. Praise the Lord!

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 Apostles' Creed. Everyone else may continue the service as printed....

Scripture Lesson – John 20:19-31

¹⁹On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples

were glad when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” ²²And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld.”

²⁴Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.”

²⁶Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.” ²⁸Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” ²⁹Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Sermon – † *Moving Toward Forgiveness* † (*A copy is included at the end of this service.*)

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

Entrusting into God's Care

- Darrel (father of Janet Hoech) - hospice care
- Barbara (mother of Jim Heitland) - hospice care
- Those suffering after the storm and during the pandemic
- The homeless & the unemployed
- Workers in the Church, here at Bethany and throughout the world

Healing

- Phil Hoppe - upcoming surgery on 4/13
- Rose (friend of Kay Karsten) - chemo and radiation treatment
- Kim Neuhaus - health issues
- Nancy Owens - health issues
- Elaine Cook - recovering after surgery
- Dale Stonewall - recovering at home after surgery
- Faye Sieck - health issues
- Dave Christian - recovering after surgery
- Kris Dunn - health issues

Shut-Ins

- Wayne Schilling - at home

Mourning

- Betty Hein - mourning the death of her brother, Harold, 3/6

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 God, grant that we who have celebrated the Lord's resurrection may by Your grace confess in our life and conversation that Jesus is Lord and God; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Concluding Prayers

Almighty and most merciful God, in this earthly life we endure sufferings and death before we enter into eternal glory. Grant us grace at all times to subject ourselves to Your holy will and continue steadfast in the true faith to the end of our lives that we may know the peace and joy of the blessed hope of the resurrection of the dead and of the glory of the world to come, 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.



✠ *Moving Toward Forgiveness* ✠

Today, many people think that the church should be about the business of a whole bunch of different things. But when the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus at His Baptism, from that time on, anyone who listened to Jesus teach at all knew that Jesus was about the business of fulfilling all righteousness (Mt 3:15). In this fulfilling of all righteousness, every sinner would be justified, that is – declared righteous. As John the Baptist proclaims, Jesus is “*the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world*” (Jn 1:29).

Everything about Jesus, therefore - His teaching, His miracles, His eating and drinking with sinners, His suffering and death – is all ordered toward the forgiveness of sins. When Jesus enters a town or a room, it is to give His gifts to the sinner. This would even be true when Jesus enters a room to overturn tables; His desire is to cast down all self-justification (the work of the Law) in order that the sinner may hear His sweet and comforting word of the cleansing Gospel. And it's certainly true in our text today. In that room where the disciples were hiding in fear, Jesus came among them to forgive sins, give the Holy Spirit, and strengthen their faith.

In our text, it is the evening of Easter Sunday and Jesus had risen from the grave! But the apostles cower in a locked room. They belong to the Lord. They bear his name. They are already clean because of the word Jesus has spoken to them (Jn 15:3). They should rejoice! Yet they live at the same time in their sinful flesh. They are at the same time sinners and saints. As Luther notes, “A Christian man is righteous and a sinner at the same time, holy and profane, an enemy of God and a child of God”.

Of course, the apostles are in the locked room for fear of the Jews, meaning the established religious leaders of the day. These are the teachers of the Law. The Law that locks people in fear because it exposes our sinful flesh. The Law shows how evil we truly are. The Law accuses the old Adam in us and locks us in fear of punishment for our sin.

Even in the Church - since we are all living as saints and sinners, far too often the old Adam inside of us, our sinful nature, desires to use the Law against other people. Instead of loving others and treating others as we would want to be treated, we simply hold on to their sins, keeping people locked in fear.

And while we are in our sinful flesh (which is at all times, until the end of this life when we're parted from it and with our Lord), we are, according to our old Adam, living in a locked room of fear. Fear is brought about by the teaching of the Law. And our sinful flesh, the old Adam, controls that room, and the doors are locked.

But in our text, Jesus enters into the room. (There is really no need to speculate about how Jesus entered into the room. He is in the flesh, and He is at the same time true God. As the Athanasian Creed puts it, “He is not two, but one Christ: one, however, not by the conversion of the divinity into flesh, but by the assumption of the humanity into God”.) So, when Jesus enters the room, when His Word is spoken, the room that was once ordered toward fear is now ordered toward the forgiveness of sins.

And there, with Christ working toward the forgiveness of sins, is the gift of peace. This peace originates and flows from the verdict of justification spoken at the very throne of heaven itself. The verdict by which the sinner is justified in heaven is now spoken by the mouth of the Lord on earth: “*Peace to you.*” Jesus has been given all authority in heaven and on earth, and for the sinner, that is the good news of the Gospel brought to earth.

With Christ working toward the forgiveness of sins there is also the gift of the Holy Spirit, who “*calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith*” (Small Catechism, Third Article).

There is the gift of the forgiveness of sins. The forgiveness is a spoken and accomplished fact, delivered into the ears of the sinner. The sin is sent away; it is no more.

Faith is, in this room, the negation of fear. The fear brought by the Law (which accuses of sin) is now replaced by the faith wrought by the Gospel (which frees from sin).

It might be noted that seeing Jesus in the resurrected flesh as victor over death would not yet chase away fear. For what if He is in the flesh, victorious, but looking for revenge? The resurrection is not good news simply in that it shows God has this power. But Scripture tells us, “*For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him*” (John 3:17). He was resurrected for us. He came into the room to speak forgiveness to us. He came bearing gifts that are joyfully received by faith.

The apostles did not stay in the room. Jesus sent them out: “*As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you*” (v 21). The gift of the forgiveness of sins (and thus the gift of the Holy Spirit and of faith) is sent out from the Church into the world of sinners. The word of Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection is proclaimed. Sinners are gathered back into the Church. And the Church is built up in the Gospel.

Our Lutheran Confessions explain, “*God is superabundantly generous in His grace: First, through the spoken Word, by which the forgiveness of sins is preached in the whole world. This is the particular office of the Gospel. Second, through Baptism. Third, through the holy Sacrament of the Altar. Fourth, through the Power of the Keys. Also through the mutual conversation and consolation of brethren*” (Smalcald Articles II IV).

Where this Gospel is preached, where sins are forgiven by the crucified, resurrected Lord, there is resurrection for the sinner. As Luther wrote, “*For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation*” (Small Catechism, Sacrament of the Altar).

So, “*Everything, therefore, in the Christian Church is ordered toward this goal: we shall daily receive in the Church nothing but the forgiveness of sin. . . . For we are in the Christian Church, where there is nothing but continuous, uninterrupted forgiveness of sin*” (Large Catechism II 55). Amen.

