



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

Independence Day 2021 A.D. The 6th 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.

Psalm *Psalm 123*

¹To you I lift up my eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens!

²**Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master,**
as the eyes of a maidservant to the hand of her mistress,
so our eyes look to the LORD our God, till he has mercy upon us.

³Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us,
for we have had more than enough of contempt.

⁴Our soul has had more than enough of the scorn of those who are at ease,
of the contempt of the proud.

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 – Mark 6:1-13

He went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. ² And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands? ³ Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. ⁴ And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household." ⁵ And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. ⁶ And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went about among the villages teaching.

⁷ And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. ⁸ He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belts—⁹ but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics. ¹⁰ And he

said to them, “Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there. ¹¹ And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.” ¹² So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. ¹³ And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.

Sermon – † *Independence* † *(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

- America— Land of the Free, Home of the Brave
- Wanda (friend of Heitlands) - good cancer report

Entrusting into God's Care

- Those suffering after the storm and during the pandemic
- The homeless & the unemployed
- Workers in the Church, at Bethany and throughout the World

Healing

- Barb (sister of Linda Patten) - cancer
- Kim Neuhaus - recovering after surgery
- Tina Freese - recovering after hospitalization
- Deputy Halverson - recovering after injury in the line of duty
- Mary Jane (mother of Phil Hedtke) - health issues
- Dathan Hinrichs - recovering after a burn
- Nancy Owens - recovery after surgery
- Jeannine Robinson - health issues
- Darlene Eckert - recovering at Garnett Place
- Kyle Kraft - recovering after surgery
- Dale Stonewall - recovering at home after surgery
- Faye Sieck - health issues

Shut-Ins

- Nadine Wax - at home

Mourning

- Dennis (brother of Karen Pfeffer) - died 6/29
- Eugene (grandfather of Erin Heller & Matt Rinderknecht) - died 6/22
- LoAnn (relative of Bonnie Bubke) - died 6/19
- Vera (mother of Julie Elias) - died 6/6

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... O God, Your almighty power is made known chiefly in showing mercy. Grant us the fullness of Your grace that we may be called to repentance and made partakers of Your heavenly treasures; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, 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.

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.



✠ *Independence* ✠

“When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.”

These words are the beginning of the Declaration of Independence, signed by representatives of the original thirteen colonies on July 4th, 1776. It is the signing of this document that Americans across the country and indeed even around the world are celebrating this weekend. Here in the United States we celebrate our independence. We celebrate our freedom from living under a king. Freedom from paying taxes without being represented in government. Freedom to trade openly with other parts of the world. Freedom from having soldiers quartered among us during peacetime.

There are many freedoms we celebrate this weekend. And as we watch the news come in from places around the world, as well as within our borders, we should thank God that we have

this freedom He gives to us in this nation. But as Christians, we thank God for more than just the freedom we have here in America. Through our faith in Jesus Christ we may also speak of freedom that transcends taxes, trade, and government. Through our faith, we are able to speak of a freedom that conquers not just tyranny, but sin and death itself. And it is this freedom that God gives to us through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross that we should be thankful for not just today, but everyday of our lives into eternity.

Ask any school child and they should be able to tell you the reasons that the American colonists dissolved the political bands, as the Declaration of Independence puts it, with King George III of England. The king was an oppressive tyrant, who harassed and harmed the colonists. When they had enough, they signed the Declaration and revolted. After many years of war, the colonies were a new and free country. Now, most Americans know this story of how we obtained our civil freedom, but what about the story of our freedom in Christ? It too, begins with an oppressive tyrant that harms and harasses those whom it rules. And the true danger of this tyrant is that everyone lives under its' reign. For this tyrant does not sit on a throne across the ocean, but rules in our hearts, our minds, and our bodies. This evil king we call sin.

In Romans chapter 7, St. Paul tells us of a fierce battle being waged within himself. In verses 18-19 He writes, "*For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.*" All of us should know what he's talking about. Like Paul, we know what God expects from us. We know the Law and the commandments, and most of us have a sincere desire to keep them. But do we?

How many of us struggle with relationships within our families, our jobs or schools, or even in our church? We know that we are to forgive one another as God forgives us. We know that God wants us to put others' needs before our own. But even though we might "know" this, the flesh fights back. This body of death fights back, because it ruled by the tyrant sin.

Every time we come up short of God's Law; every time we do not keep His commandments we sin. And we sin because we are sinners. You want to talk about tyranny and oppression? Don't go to the history books. You don't have to read or watch the news. Just go look in the mirror. Look at yourselves, look at your lives. Remember the loved ones whom we have loss and see the domination of sin in this world.

Under oppression the American colonists took up arms against King George and his army. They fought and won their independence. Sadly, many under the burden of sin try to do this as well. They try to fight back themselves. But no one can win that battle. Sin is too powerful, too pervasive. The very fact that one might think this way shows the power of sin in people's lives. And so, what can we do? Can we win this war against sin? Is there anyone who can fight for our freedom? "*Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?*" (Romans 7:24) as Paul says.

St. Mark writes in his Gospel "*And on the Sabbath Jesus began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished saying, 'Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands'*" (Mark 6:2), Mark tells us there is someone who can fight against the sin that reigns in this world and within us. Someone with more wisdom than Satan. Someone more powerful than death. And thanks be to God that the battle has already been fought. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came down from heaven and crushed Satan and sin. His death on the cross, despite having lived a sinless life Himself, was the perfect sacrifice that takes away our sin and its power over us. We don't fight this War of Independence ourselves, because we don't have to. For Jesus has already fought it and won. Sin

and death had no power over him. He came out of the grave, and now offers you and everyone the freedom that He won. He offers you and everyone rest from your burdens.

The Lutheran Reformers of the 16th century wrote in their version of the Declaration of Independence *“To come to Christ is to believe that on account of what He did on the cross, your sins are forgiven. When we believe our hearts are made alive by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God”* (Apol. XII). When we are honest with ourselves, when we stop making excuses for our sin and go to Christ for forgiveness, we can be set free of the burdens and suffering in this life. When we come to Christ, Satan’s binding chains are taken away and our hearts are lifted up in joy. It’s as if parents have found a missing child, soldiers have come home from war, or the deathly ill have been cured. Thanks be to God – through Jesus Christ our Lord, for this freedom He gives.

Now, after the Revolutionary War, and Americans were relieved from the burdens of living under a king, there was work to be done. There was a new government to establish, a frontier to explore and secure, and an economy to get started. At times they failed, (think of the Articles of Confederation), and their labor was never easy. They could by no means simply sit back and ride the laurels of past accomplishments. Nor did they think their new freedom was a freedom to do whatever they wanted.

For Christians, who have their freedom from sin through Christ, we too are not free from all work and responsibility. Quite the contrary. Mark 6:7 says, *“And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits.”* Jesus not only taught His disciples and showed them incredible miracles, but He also sent them out to do work – His work – teaching, healing the sick and casting out demons.

Being a disciple of Christ today, being a forgiven sinner living under the cross, means that there is work to do as well. And I have a hunch that just as you know your sin, you know the work God has prepared for you as well. There are plenty of people around us who need God’s love and peace shared with them. There are plenty of people who are looking for their daily bread. Plenty of people who need to be lifted up in prayer. Loving God above all and loving our neighbors as ourselves are the things Christians do with the freedom Christ gives. They are not just more items to add to our “To-Do” lists, nor another burden placed upon us. These things are the natural result of our forgiveness and salvation. For Christ is certainly no tyrant. And as scholar and author Leon Morris wrote, *“For what can be lighter than a burden that unburdens us and a yoke which bears its bearer?”*

Let all of us pray this weekend that Americans truly do celebrate living in this great nation that God has blessed in so many ways and pray that these blessings might be enjoyed by every person here in this country and around the globe. But as Christians, let us also thank God for the freedoms we enjoy as citizens in His Kingdom. As citizens of that nation, we live in freedom of sin and death and use that freedom to love and serve God and those around us. This true and eternal independence is therefore a cause to celebrate every day of our lives. Amen.

