



# Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

**December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021 A.D. – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent**

*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.**

## Introit

*From Philippians 4 and Psalm 146*

**P** Rejoice in the Lord always;

**C** **again I will say, Rejoice.**

Blessèd is he whose help is the God of Jacob,

**whose hope is in the LORD his God,**

who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them,

**who keeps faith forever;**

who executes justice for the oppressed,

**who gives food to the hungry.**

The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.

**The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;**

**as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

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

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## Scripture Lesson – Luke 7:18-28

<sup>18</sup>The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, <sup>19</sup>calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" <sup>20</sup>And when the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'" <sup>21</sup>In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. <sup>22</sup>And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised

up, the poor have good news preached to them. <sup>23</sup>And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

<sup>24</sup>When John’s messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>25</sup>What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings’ courts. <sup>26</sup>What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>27</sup>This is he of whom it is written,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,  
who will prepare your way before you.”

<sup>28</sup>I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”

**Sermon** – ✠ *Don’t Look For Another* ✠ (A copy is included at the end of this service.)

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### **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**

**Thanksgiving**  
- Advent Season

### **Entrusting into God's Care**

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

### **Healing**

- Fred Schuchmann - hospitalization
- Burt & Jan (friends of Bonnie Bubke) - health issues
- Randy (friend of John Hamm) - hospitalization
- Charlotte (granddaughter of Karen Swalley) - health issues
- Cindy Broadwater - recovering after surgery
- Tracy Donels - recovering after surgery
- Emily Kroemer - back pain
- Ryan Urban - recovering after surgery
- Marcia (mother of M Rinderknecht & E Heller) - health issues
- Lee Rathje - broken wrist, recovering after fall
- Sharon Ramsey - recovering after surgery
- Faye Sieck - recovering after hospitalization
- Dale Stonewall - recovering at home after surgery

### **Shut-Ins**

- Wayne Schilling - Linn Manor Care, Marion

### **Mourning**

- Pastor Dana (brother of Melissa Loney) - died 11/25
- Bob (relative of Luci Stoelting & Melinda Crow) - died 11/13

### **Serving Our Country**

- Ben - serving in the Iowa National Guard
- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Amy Smith)- serving in the U.S. Navy
- 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...Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father 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.**



*✠ Don't Look For Another ✠*

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

Before I became a pastor, my favorite that I ever had was that of a security guard at our seminary down in St. Louis. With a set of keys to the entire campus, a flashlight, and a two way radio the security guards on campus would walk or drive around in a white Ford Ranger in four hour shifts from 6pm to 6am every day of the year. Of course part of the job entailed keeping an eye out for trouble and locking buildings up for the night and unlocking them for classes and events. But I think my favorite part of the job was helping people. Whether it was helping visitors find a parking spot; helping with emergency plumbing repairs in faculty housing; or evacuating students in the middle of the night during a cockroach invasion that was right out of a horror movie, I thoroughly enjoyed being the person that showed up when help was needed. Unfortunately however, the job wasn't always enjoyable and in fact, the worse day of that job, and perhaps of my life, happened when I was working security and couldn't help.

It was June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2000 and I was about an hour into my shift having just finished rounds inside all of the buildings. Around 7pm I was driving around outside in the truck when a young lady waved me down and said there was a suspicious man parked in a car behind the library. That was where faculty parked and at that time of day, the lot should have been empty. So, I drove over and found a lone car in the parking lot with what appeared to be a strange man sleeping in the driver seat. Out of the truck, I tapped on the window with my flashlight, but the man didn't move. After tapping a few more times, I finally pulled on the door handle and the man still did not move. I still remember the feeling of putting my hand on the man's shoulder and suddenly realizing that he was not sleeping, but dead.

The next few moments were a blur, but I remember calling for an ambulance and attempting to begin CPR, only stopping when a police officer pulled me away and attempted it himself. Of course, with all of the emergency lights and sirens a crowd soon began to gather, including the Dean of Students and other faculty members. Thinking that I had some idea of what was happening, the Dean asked me who the man was – none of us had any idea. But wanting to know myself I opened the glove box of the car and pulled out the registration. Everyone from the seminary community was shocked when I read the name of the owner of the car, the man who had died in that car – Dr. Wayne Schmidt.

Dr. Schmidt was a beloved professor of the seminary, respected by students and his peers. I never had Dr. Schmidt as a teacher, but like thousands I benefitted from him serving the church, especially as the seminary's carillonneur for 25 years. His death was shocking, sad, and to be quite honest, seemingly rather unfair that a faithful servant of the church should die in such a way.

Thinking of that summer evening, I can relate to John the Baptist in our text today. John was a faithful servant of the Lord. While in his mother's womb he leaped for joy when the pregnant Mary greeted Elizabeth. Luke tells us (1:80) that John was "strong in spirit" and that he boldly preached and baptized in the region of the Jordan River. John truly was the last of the Old Testament prophets who would prepare the way for the coming of the Lord.

But by the time we get to our text for today, things aren't going very well for John. He spoke out against the powerful Herod the tetrarch and because of it, he was now in prison. And while we can only speculate what must have been going through John's mind while he was rotting away in that terrible place, I think most of us can offer a fairly good guess. We can give a good guess because not only would most of us be tempted to doubt all of the things we know about Jesus, but also because John sends two of his disciples to Jesus asking, "*Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?*" (Luke 7:20).

When faithful servants of God are imprisoned or die suddenly and unexpectedly it is natural for us to ask, "Shall we look for another?" When we trust in God with our plans that have the best of intentions and they don't work out the way that we think they should, it is understandable if we ask, "Shall we look for another?" When beloved family and friends, who have been blessings to us and their communities become sick and die, are we surprised when the question is asked, "Shall we look for another?" Another way. Another helper. Another Savior. Another God?

Looking at our text today we see that even the greatest of the prophets can have their doubts when the going gets tough. John the Baptist shows us this. But more importantly, what he also shows us is that when the going gets tough for Christians, they don't go away from Jesus, but rather they go to Him.

It would be a mistake to point out John's doubts and miss the fact that he nevertheless sent his disciple to Jesus Himself. When we ourselves face the difficult times in our lives and find the doubts creeping into our minds, we might have questions, but let us be like John and only go to God in prayer and in study God's Word with those questions.

When John's disciples asked Jesus should they look for another, Jesus replied, "*Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them*" (Lk. 7:22) Notice that Jesus doesn't minimize John's problems. He doesn't try to explain them away. He knows that John is suffering and his doubts and pain are real. So what Jesus does do is remind John that the Kingdom of God is living and active with Him present. When Jesus is around amazing things happen. Yes, there is still trouble in the world, but God reigning through His Son has begun to right the wrongs that have come about in this world because of sin. And because

Jesus will come again in glory, we know that our final and complete victory over sin is just a matter of time.

So when we ourselves face trouble and doubts in life today, don't run after the latest fads or the wisdom of this world. Be like John, and go to Christ Himself. Offer up your prayers that He will hear. And read His Word, through which He comes to you and speaks to you, even today. And there you might not find the reasons for your troubles. But as He'll remind you that He is still living and reigning, you'll find forgiveness. You'll find salvation. And even in the midst of our frustration and sadness in this world, you will find peace and hope and joy in His name. Amen.

