Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

February 13th 2022 A.D. – 6th 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 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 *(From Psalm 119)*

P I will praise you with an upright heart,
C **when I learn your just and righteous decrees.**
Blessèd are those whose way is blameless,
who walk in the law of the LORD!
Blessèd are those who keep his testimonies,
who seek him with their whole heart.
You have commanded your precepts
to be kept diligently.
Oh that my ways may be steadfast
in keeping your statutes!

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 *(Luke 6:17-26)*

17 [Jesus] came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his
disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre
and Sidon, 18 who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. And those who were troubled
with unclean spirits were cured. 19 And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power came out from
him and healed them all.
20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said:
"Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.
21 "Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.
"Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.

[22]"Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! [23]Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.

[24]"But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

[25]"Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry.

"Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.

[26]"Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.

Sermon – ✢ ***Blessed are the Disciples*** ✢ *(A copy is included at the end of this service.)*

Apostles' Creed

C 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
- The Kroemer family as they help a friend
- Persecuted Christians and refugees
- Those suffering after the storm and during the pandemic
- The homeless & the unemployed
- Workers in the Church, at Bethany and the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

Healing
- Carol Grimminger - hospitalization
- Wayne Schilling - hospice
- Emily Kroemer - recovering after surgery
- Joel Knutson - recovering after surgery
- Donna Birkicht - recovering after surgery
- Don Hein - recovering after surgery
- Elaine Cook - recovering after surgery
- Sharon Ramsey - recovering after surgery
- Ron Prescott - back pain
- Dave Christian - recovering at home after cardiac surgery
- Marlys Jaspersen - recovering after surgery
- Cindy Broadwater - recovering after surgery
- Lee Rathje - broken wrist, recovering after fall

Shut-Ins
- Candi Engel - Garnet Place

Mourning
- Harlan (brother of Joann Strang) - died 2/10
- Scott (brother-in-law of Eliases) - died 2/6
- Melvin (uncle of Deb Heitland) - died 2/6
- Austin (grandson of Fran Struck) - died 1/21

Serving Our Country
- Ben - serving in the Iowa National Guard
- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - U.S. Navy
- Harrison (son of Rob & Faye Sieck) - U.S. Armed Forces

Collect of the Day

P Let us pray…. O Lord, graciously hear the prayers of Your people that we who justly suffer the consequence of our sin may be mercifully delivered by Your goodness to the glory of Your name; 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

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.

✢ ***Blessed are the Disciples*** ✢

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

Today there are a ton of opinions concerning what it means to be a Christian. Drive around town and you can see numerous churches that all have their own take on the topic. Go online and an infinite amount of more opinions about what it means to be a Christian are only a mouse click or a screen tap away. And as if all that weren't enough, Christians themselves with their sinful natures, like to muddy these waters by picking and choosing what to believe and what teachings of Jesus they will follow. We'll forgive others, as long as what they did doesn't make us too mad. We'll help others, as long as they deserve it and it doesn't interfere with my schedule. And we'll follow Jesus to the cross, just as long as we don't have to carry our own along the way. I'm afraid all of these factors may have created a Christian Faith among us that Jesus Himself might not recognize and might not be all that Christian.

So, what does Jesus say about all of this to His disciples? In our Gospel Lesson, Jesus lifts His eyes up to His disciples and says: "Blessed are the Christians who are poor, hungry, and who weep now. And blessed are you when people hate you, exclude you, revile and spurn you – not because you're acting like a fool – but because you are a disciple of Christ. And woe to the rich, the full, those who laugh and those who are spoken well of." Amen.

Now being that there is a rather important football game on this weekend, perhaps some would be happy to end our message right here. But I think that it is worthwhile to go a bir further because if we look carefully at what Jesus says, His teaching here might seem to not only go against what we experience, but also Scripture itself.

What I mean is that if you have any experience with genuine poverty, you'll know that it is a humiliating experience. If money is power, then the poor are powerless, and their powerlessness is regularly exploited. Ask any of the world's poverty-stricken if it is a blessed state and see what they say. Likewise, about being hungry. This is not the, "I didn't have time to eat breakfast this morning" hungry. This is the, "My body is eating itself and is shutting down and I have no idea where my next meal is coming from" hungry. This hungry and our experience or what we see tells us that this seems to be pretty far from being blessed.

And then Scripturally Jesus' teaching might seem strange, as we also know that God at times gave wealth to Israel as a blessing. When He delivered His people from Egypt, He blessed them with the Egyptians' willing plunder and then he brought them to a land "flowing with milk and honey". By the time of King David and King Solomon, national wealth was seen as a sign of

divine blessing. And so what are disciples today suppose to make out of Jesus' blessings and woes?

Well, what we don't do is think that Jesus wants us to make sacrifices in our lives right now to pay dividends later on. "Be poor, be hungry, and weep" so you can get the good stuff later at some future date. If we should think like this we leave the Kingdom of God where we rest securely in the Gospel of Christ and fall back into the wretched state of living under the Law. Thinking that we must be poor or that we must not laugh to receive the blessings of God once again puts the emphasis on what we need to do to be blessed, when the Kingdom of God is always first and foremost about what Christ Himself has done.

And speaking of what Christ has done, who has become poorer than the One who left the very throne of heaven to be born a virgin in a stable. Who has been more hungry than He who fasted for 40 days in the desert, when He could have made rocks become bread? Who was hated more than the One for whom the crowds screamed, "crucify Him!"? And who has wept, like the One who has been rejected by Jerusalem and people all over the world, despite having died for them so that they might live? No one! No one has done these things like Jesus Christ – the very Son of God. And today, as He sits at the right hand of God, having ascended into Heaven and waits to return to us again, He is truly blessed in everyway that we can and even cannot imagine.

"But Pastor" you may say, "you said Jesus' words were about His disciples. Now it seems you telling us Jesus is speaking of Himself. Which is it?" Well its' both! For these blessing come to Jesus' disciples because they have been united with Christ through Faith. St. Paul reminds us in Romans that, "*all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his."* The theology of the beatitudes are the theology of the cross and they are about disciples, but always centered on Christ. As Christ Himself has suffered, so too will His disciples in this world. But just as Christ has been glorified, so too will every disciple who has been united to Him through faith alone.

Now, should God bless us with riches and material possessions and a joyful life don't despair. This doesn't mean you are cursed or can't be a Christian. Rather give thanks to God and keep what God has given to you in this life in perspective. May we never become so obsessed and satisfied with the things of this world that we stop hungering for the things of God! So that if we are rich or poor, well fed or hungry, laughing or weeping – we might not only understand what it means to be a disciple of Christ, but rather through our faith in Him be one and always be blessed. Amen.