



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

The 9th Sunday after Pentecost

August 7, 2022 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

From Psalm 147

Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;
make melody to our God on the lyre!
He covers the heavens with clouds; he prepares rain for the earth;
he makes grass grow on the hills.
He gives to the beasts their food,
and to the young ravens that cry.
His delight is not in the strength of the horse,
nor his pleasure in the legs of a man,
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

(Hebrews 11:1-16)

¹Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ²For by it the people of old received their commendation. ³**By faith** we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

⁴**By faith** Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks. ⁵**By faith** Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God. ⁶And **without faith** it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. ⁷**By faith** Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the

saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

⁸**By faith** Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹**By faith** he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. ¹¹**By faith** Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. ¹²Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.

¹³These all died **in faith**, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. ¹⁴For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

Sermon – † *Forward* † (*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

- Toilet paper challenge, collected 535 rolls for the food pantry

Entrusting into God's Care

- Maureen (aunt of Janet Hoech) - hospice care
- Persecuted Christians and refugees
- Those suffering after the storm and during the pandemic
- Peace in Europe and throughout the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

Healing

- Natalie Heller - upcoming surgery on 8/10
- Wade Ramsey - back pain
- Derek (son of Hackbardts) - health issues
- Faye Sieck - relief from pain
- Elaine Cook - health issues
- Abi Clark - health issues
- Norm Rutz - cancer treatment
- Joyce Fritz - recovering at home after surgery
- Angela Yuza - recovering after surgery
- Emily Kroemer - recovering after broken ankle
- Doug Knutson - cancer treatment
- Lee Rathje - health issues
- Cindy Broadwater - relief of foot pain
- Dave Christian - recovering at home after surgery

Homebound

- Candi Engel - Garnett Place

Mourning, friends and family of

- Tami (friend of Becky Thur) - died 7/12
- John Siebenmann - died 7/10

Serving Our Country

- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - US Navy
- Harrison (son of Rob & Faye Sieck) - US Army

Collect of the Day

Almighty and merciful God, it is by Your grace that we live as Your people who offer acceptable service. Grant that we may walk by faith, and not by sight, in the way that leads to eternal life; 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.



✠ *Forward* ✠

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

The great Christian theologian Origen, who died in 253 A.D. once said in a sermon that only God knows who wrote the book of Hebrews, from which our text comes today. Since then, the Church doesn't have any more clarity on that matter and, just as we don't know who wrote this letter, we also don't really know to whom this letter was written. The final greetings of the letter in chapter 13 seem to indicate that the recipients had known St. Timothy and were perhaps from Italy. It also indicates that this letter was a "word of exhortation" or encouragement to the readers, with many thinking this letter was actually a written sermon meant to be read to a congregation of Jewish Christians – hence the name of the book – Hebrews. However, if we do not know whom

the Spirit inspired to write Hebrews and we are not really sure who the Hebrews are to whom this letter or sermon was written, we are certain that the author wants every Christian to completely trust in God's promises and have a sure and certain hope for the good things to come.

To see this meaning in our text today, we actually need to begin before our text. In Hebrews 10:32-33 we read, "*But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated.*" Here the author reminds the people that after they had received the promises of the Gospel – they still struggled in their lives. They received the promise that the righteous will live by faith, but after they were brought to faith, they suffered for their faith. It seems they may have been beaten or physically harmed, like Paul says he was in II Corinthians 11. They also seemed to have been publicly reproached, like Peter was in Acts 4 by the priests, Sadducees and the Captain of the Temple. Some even had their possession unjustly taken from them. And so, the people to whom Hebrews was written, perhaps like many of us when we face trouble, or hardship, or heartbreak, were at least in danger of losing the confidence they once had in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. And so, they are urged not to lose their confidence. They are urged to remain faithful because, despite of the difficulties they might see in front of them right now, the end result of their faith in Jesus is so incredibly great.

Our text today tells us that this faith is the "*assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen*" (v.1). And so Abel joyfully offered his sacrifices to God because he had this faith. He said, "I will give to the Lord the best that I have, assured that the Lord has already given me something far better, even though I may not have it now." Enoch had this same faith, that enabled him to lead a God-pleasing life. Noah had this faith, that allowed him to build an ark even though the sun was still shining. And of course, Abraham had this faith, leaving the comfort and security of his homeland, for a place that he had no idea where it would be. But God promised it, and Abraham had faith.

But like the Hebrews who came to faith in Christ and still struggled in their lives, Abraham and the other great saints listed in Hebrews 11 died before they received the things that were promised to them (v.13). Does this mean they lost their faith? Does this mean that Abraham wanted to go back to his homeland? Absolutely not! Instead we read that Abraham and the other saints "*...died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth*" (11:13). Yet their desire to live as strangers and exiles didn't come from any nostalgia of their old lives. We read in v.15 and 16, "*If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one...*"

With all of the promises God had given him, the goal of Abraham's lifelong journey was not a strip of land along the eastern Mediterranean Sea. Instead, with the promises of God, the author of Hebrews tells us that Abraham longed for something better - a heavenly home that God had prepared for him. So, Abraham didn't look back, he looked forward into eternity to keep his eyes fixed on the great things God would give him. And with this faith, God wasn't "ashamed to be called their God." In fact, God delighted in the faith of Abraham so much that God often referred to Himself as the God of Abraham (Exodus 3:16)!

Without knowing to whom this book of the Bible was written it is hard to say if we face the same hardships as they did. But one thing that we can say, is that we share the same faith and look forward to the same promises. After all, in this chapter 11 of Hebrews, that is often called the "Hall of Faith", we not only see the likes of the great saints like Noah and Abraham, but we

also see ourselves. This is because before the author mentions Abel, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham, he mentions those who have faith in God as the Creator. He says in 11:3, “*By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible*”. This is not referring to anyone in the Old Testament. This is referring to those to whom Hebrews was written. And it is referring to you and me, who have come to faith by believing in the Word of God.

And while we are included with all of the great saints in the Old Testament at the **beginning** of our reading for today, the author and goal of the faith of **all** of us is revealed **after** our reading. In Hebrews 12:1-2 we read, “*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God*”.

All Christians, including you and me, have received wonderful promises from God having been called to faith in Jesus Christ. But all Christians, including you and me, have and continue to face all of the problems of living in this sinful world. Perhaps it is facing some form of persecution like the first readers of Hebrews did. Perhaps our hardship is family problems like Abel had, or leaving the comfort of what is known like Abraham. But whatever hardship it is that we face, we don’t look back at what used to be, but instead we look forward with all of God’s saints. And we look forward in faith to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We do this because there are many times when the promises of God through Jesus will bless us right here and right now. We can face persecution because we know that God is with us through the crucified Christ. We can make it through a divorce, the death of a spouse, problems with our children or problems with our parents because Jesus is risen and is with us. We can leave our house, we can lose our job, we can go to a new school because Jesus is seated at the right hand of God and is control of it all. But more than these blessings of right now and right here that may or may not come, we have the sure promises of eternal blessings through Christ. His death and resurrection guarantees that no matter what we face here and now, a heavenly home is waiting for us in the end when Jesus returns. Therefore, we don’t look back. We look to Christ. We don’t lose hope in the midst of what we face, we live in confidence with what God has given us – His Son Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith. Amen.

