



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

The Second Sunday in Lent

March 5, 2023

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 105)

He remembers his covenant forever,
the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations.

Seek the LORD and his strength;

seek his presence continually!

Remember the wondrous works that he has done,

his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,

O offspring of Abraham, his servant,

children of Jacob, his chosen ones!

He is the LORD our God;

his judgments are in all the earth.

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

(Romans 4:1-8, 13-17)

¹What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh?
²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness."
⁴Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. ⁵And to the one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness,
⁶just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:

⁷“Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven,
and whose sins are covered;
⁸blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.” . . .

¹³For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

¹⁶That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, ¹⁷as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

Sermon ✠ *By Faith* ✠ *(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

- Carol Grimminger - recovered after surgery

Entrusting into God's Care

- Persecuted Christians and refugees
- Those suffering after storms and during the pandemic
- Peace in Europe and throughout the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

Healing

- Dave Johnson - upcoming surgery 3/13
- Karen Swalley - recovering after surgery
- Lora Raymon - recovering after surgery
- Doug Knutson - immunotherapy treatment
- Bonnie Bubke - personal issues
- Mary Jean (mother of Greg Dunn) - recovering after surgery
- Jill (cousin of Karen Pfeffer) - recovering after heart transplant
- Elaine Cook - recovering after hospitalization
- Kathy (sister of Mark Holt) - recovering after lung transplant
- Philip Hackbardt - back pain
- Del Block - health issues
- Chuck Stoelting - recovering at Cottage Grove after fall
- Kim Neuhaus - recovering at home after surgery
- Rick Foreman - recovering at home after fall
- Pat Krekeler - recovering at home after hospitalization
- Deb Heitland - health issues
- Ethel Dohrmann - cancer treatment
- Candi Engel - recovering at Heritage Care Center
- Stephen Stepanek - brain cancer treatment
- Abi Clark - health issues

Homebound

- Shirley Kellogg - Terrace Glen Village, Marion

Mourning, friends and family of

- Melba Davison - died 2/28

- Jerry (father of Missy Gingrich) - died 2/12

- Mike (brother-in-law of Rick Foreman) - died 2/1

Serving Our Country

- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - US Navy

- Harrison (son of Siecks) - US Army, deployed to Poland

- Jordan (grandson of Kim Neuhaus) - National Guard, deployed

Collect of the Day

O God, You see that of ourselves we have no strength. By Your mighty power defend us from all adversities that may happen to the body and from all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul; 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

Ever-present Lord, You have promised never to leave us nor forsake us but to abide with us to the end of time. Grant that those who live alone may not be lonely but find both comfort from Your promises and fulfillment in loving You and their neighbors all their days; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

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.



✠ *By Faith* ✠

Grace, mercy, & peace from God – the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit. Amen.

During the Lenten season we are encouraged to take a good, long, hard look at ourselves in the mirror of God’s Law. Anyone who is honest with themselves, when they do this will discover or reaffirm that they are a sinner. John reminds us in his first letter, “*If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us*”. This sin, or disobedience to God, breaks what God wanted to be a close and loving relationship between Him and all of us. And so the question has been asked for as long people have sinned, “How do we fix this relationship?”

Many years ago a reporter for a Christian radio station in Chicago took his microphone out into the city to ask people, “How does a person go to heaven”? He was in essence asking people how do we fix this problem of sin, so that we can regain that relationship with God that He wants us to have and have eternal life. Well, for half an hour a steady stream of people answered the question with responses like: “Obey the Golden Rule,” “Be good to your neighbor,” “Go to church,” “Do good,” and even “Pay your bills”! While these answers may sound different, they are all basically saying the same thing, that is, “We go to heaven by keeping the Law”. We are justified, or the relationship between God and ourselves is repaired, when we do good things. Answers like this basically say salvation is something that we have to do.

I don’t know why thinking like this is so widespread today, even in the church. I used to believe that it had something to do with what some people call “rugged individualism”. This is the idea that we all kind of want to be that cowboy or cowgirl riding off into the sunset by ourselves; That no one can tell us what to do; and that we certainly don’t need anyone’s help to get things done.

Now however, I believe that so many people trust in themselves for their salvation because of the high opinion they have of themselves. When we are financially secure it is because we have worked hard and made wise decisions. But when we fall on hard times it always seems to be someone else’s fault. Now to be sure, sometimes it is, but very often we love to take the credit and push the blame to others.

Add to this the sad notion that should we do something wrong, we can somehow make up for it, and quickly we’ll see more and more people trying to live under the Law to make God happy and earn salvation. But God warns us in His Word that this cannot be the case, as He says that no one is justified by works of the Law.

St. Paul show us this important teaching in our Scripture lesson today. Writing to the Romans, he lifts up Abraham before their eyes as an example. Now if anyone could boast about all of the good works that they had done, it seems that Abraham would be at the top of the list. At an age where most men today are simply thinking of living out the last of their years on the golf course or over their favorite fishing hole, Abraham was called by God to leave his family and home to journey hundreds of miles to a new land. In Genesis we see that Abraham didn’t ask any questions when God told him to go, he simply went. And arriving in Canaan, Abraham did not just walk right into this land and establish a new home, because it was already occupied by the Canaanites. Nevertheless, God promised that this land would be given to his descendents. And so, Abraham built an altar at that place, not only to thank God for the promise, but also because Abraham believed God and believed that the promises God made to Him would come true.

Now you may know that Abraham and his wife Sarah at times wavered in their faith: telling lies down in Egypt and getting Hager and Ishmael involved in the whole making a great nation

process. But for the most part, everyone can see that Abraham's good works far outweighed his bad. His going to the promised land when God called him, his treatment and rescue of his nephew Lot, his willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac are all examples of incredible works that Abraham had done that he could have boasted or bragged about. But St. Paul in Romans 4:2 says that Abraham could have done this before men, but not before God.

Because what made Abraham's actions pleasing to God were not the actions themselves, but rather the faith and trust that Abraham had in God that caused him to do them. If you don't believe this listen to Paul in Romans 4:3: "*What do the Scriptures say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.'*" Abraham didn't earn this righteousness, Abraham didn't do the work in repairing his relationship with God. It was given to him by God through his faith. God promises all of His creation that we don't need to fix our relationship with Him, because He already has done this through the work of His Son Jesus Christ.

Doing what He would not let Abraham do, God sent His Son Jesus to die as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. Therefore, we don't have to work to take away our sin, nor do we have to somehow pay God back. Christ paid the price when He died on the cross. And God promises that all those who believe that Jesus is the Savior who takes away their sin, will indeed be forgiven and have this faith counted to them as righteousness. St Paul writes in 4:16, "*That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring – not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham...*"

If Abraham and St. Paul could not be justified before God by their own works, let's not kid ourselves into thinking that we can. But rather let us put our high opinions of ourselves aside for a moment. Let us admit that we need help in our lives and believe the promises that God had made to us through Christ. There is no shame in relying upon God for salvation, but rather an incredible sense of pride that God would become one of us to save us all. That God does not leave us to go it alone, but has come down from heaven to make sure that we can go to be with Him. Let us believe the promise of God that we don't have to fix our relationship with Him - because He has already done it, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

