



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

April 9, 2023

Easter!

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.

Introit

(From Exodus 15)

I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously;
he horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.

The LORD is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation.

Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power,
your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.

You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed;
you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode.

You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain,
the place, O LORD, which you have made for your abode,
the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established.

The LORD will reign forever and ever.

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

(Colossians 3:1-4)

¹If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

(For the account of Jesus' resurrection from John's Gospel, see John 19:38-20:18.)

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

- Easter Sunday
- Shari Mehlhoff - recovered after surgery
- Lora Raymon - recovered after surgery
- Elaine Cook - recovered after hospitalization

Entrusting into God's Care

- Don (father of Angie Pfeil) - hospice 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

- Oliver (friend of Rick Heller) - ICU after car accident
- Joanne - cancer
- Stephen Stepanek - brain cancer treatment
- Mickie Sjullie - recovering after broken ankle
- Bonnie Breiholz - recovering after surgery
- Janelle Dunbar - recovering after surgery
- Donna Birkicht - recovering after surgery
- Karen Swalley - recovering after surgery
- Doug Knutson - immunotherapy treatment
- Bonnie Bubke - personal issues
- Chuck Stoelting - recovering at Garnet Place
- Kim Neuhaus - recovering at home after surgery
- Rick Foreman - recovering at home after fall
- Deb Heitland - health issues
- Ethel Doehrmann - cancer treatment
- Abi Clark - health issues

Homebound

- Del Block - the Gardens

Mourning, friends and family of

- Clarence (brother of Luci Stoelting) - died 3/8

Serving Our Country

- Devin (friend of Kroemers) - serving IA Army National Guard
- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - US Navy

Collect of the Day

Almighty God the Father, through Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, You have overcome death and opened the gate of everlasting life to us. Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of our Lord's resurrection, may be raised from the death of sin by Your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Concluding Prayers

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love You and seek the good things that are above; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord...
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.



✠ *Seeking Resurrection Lives* ✠

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

Easter is the celebration on Jesus Christ's bodily resurrection. Almost 2,000 years ago around the city of Jerusalem, Jesus was arrested, unfairly tried, and crucified. The only person who never deserved to die, laid down His life and was killed in the most brutal of ways. But three days after He was buried in a new tomb, on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and then the rest of the disciples discovered that the tomb was empty. And even more than that, they soon discovered that the body of Jesus had not been stolen or destroyed, but rather the tomb was empty and that Jesus had risen! While she first thought He was the gardener, it was the risen Jesus who appeared to Mary. And locked doors couldn't keep the risen Christ from appearing to His disciples, including Thomas who at first doubted. On Easter we remember what all of these things point to – that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who died and rose again. And this resurrection, this day of Easter, changes everything!

No longer do Christians need to fear God's anger over our sin. St. Paul says that Jesus' resurrection is proof that we have been forgiven when He wrote in Romans 4:25, "[He] was

delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.” And because Jesus has been raised, we no longer need to fear death. Jesus said in John 14:19, “*Because I live, you also will live*”. The resurrection of Jesus means that we are freed from ever having to worry about sin and death ever again. The resurrection of Jesus changes everything in a person’s life.

St. Paul knew this. After the resurrected Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus, he went from one persecuting Christians to a tireless missionary traveling thousands of miles to make Christians! But not only that, people have also noticed that many of Paul’s letters in the Bible can be divided into two parts: The first being an explanation of the Gospel, of which the resurrection takes center stage. And then the second part is how the first part changes people’s lives. This is the case for the book of Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, I Timothy, and our text for this morning – Colossians.

In the first and second chapters of Colossians you have an exposition of the Gospel of Christ. And then starting with our text, Paul begins to describe how Jesus’ resurrection changes everything for the believer. In 3:1 he writes, “*If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above...*” Now let me be very clear about this – Just as Christ has been raised from the dead, YOU HAVE BEEN raised with Christ. There is no doubt here. Earlier in Colossians Paul wrote in 2:12, “*having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the powerful working of God...*” If you have been baptized, you have been raised with Christ. And having been raised with Christ, we are to seek the things that are above.

To clarify this, Paul gives us a bit of contrast in 3:2 when he writes “*Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.*” Here, we are warned what NOT to focus on and do, the things of the earth – which just a few verses later he explains are things like anger, wrath, malice, slander, obscene talk, lying and sexual immorality. So, Paul is saying that if you have been raised with Christ, stop doing these things. Get out of the muck and mire of evil because of the resurrection. The resurrection that frees you from sin and death and is the motivation and the power to live according to God’s ways. The resurrection changes everything.

What we are to focus on in life reminds me of a farmer who came across the egg of an eagle. Not knowing what do with the egg he places it with his chickens, who when the egg hatches, raise the eagle up as their own. But they raise this eagle as a chicken. So, this mighty bird never lifts its eyes towards the sky in which it was made to soar, but rather keeps its head down, just pecking at the dust and the dirt. It eats bugs and chicken feed, instead of hunting fish and game. As time goes on and one year turns into another, this eagle never becomes the bird that God had meant it to be.

Paul says, “*If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above...*” (3:1). The resurrection of Jesus changes everything. It changes you - because you have been raised with Christ through your Baptism. So, stop pecking at the ground and feasting on the bugs. That is, stop living according to the evil ways of the world and believing the things that it tells you. Rather seek the things that are above.

This does not mean that you have to become a globe trotting missionary like St. Paul. If God has called you to that task, then praise the Lord! But just as Paul described what the things of the earth are, he also tells us what these things above are that we are to seek and do. Following our text for today, Paul tells us that that to seek the things that are above, we are to pursue compassion. We are to seek out kindness and humility. Because of the resurrection we are to put on meekness and patience. We are to bear with one another, forgive one another – love one another.

These are things that everyone one of us can do, wherever we find ourselves. And if you think that you can't seek those things above, that you can't live the resurrected life that God has called you to through your baptism, then just remember, you already have that life.

Of course, it may not seem like it. It may seem that sin still holds you captive. And death may still keep you up at night and bring you untold sorrow and grief. But Paul continues in our text saying, "*For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory*" (3:3-4). Paul reminds us that our resurrected life is hidden with Christ, just as the resurrected Christ sometimes seems hidden from us today. But He is always with us. And our lives are always there! We are living it! It is hidden with Christ, just as we might hide and protect a precious treasure to keep it safe. Your life seeking what is above is safe with Christ, and when He appears again in glory, so too will your life be seen by all, including yourself. (Notice your life won't start when Christ appears in glory, because it already started when you died and rose with Christ is baptism. But it will be clearly seen on that glorious day of His return.)

On this glorious day of Easter, we will always celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. His death and resurrection has changed the world and it changes all of those who have died and rose with Him through the waters of baptism. At times it may not seem like it. At times we may all seem to be living like chickens scratching away at the evil things of this earth. But God has made each one of you an eagle. So, keep seeking the things that are above. This isn't easy, and indeed it's impossible without God. But remember you have been baptized. You have died and risen with our Lord Jesus. And therefore, we rejoice. We rejoice not just in Jesus' resurrection and victory, but because His resurrection and victory is also yours. Amen.

