



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

May 7, 2023 A.D.

Confirmation Sunday (Easter 5)

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

Psalm 149 and 30

Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song,
his praise in the assembly of the godly!
I will extol you, O LORD, for you have drawn me up
and have not let my foes rejoice over me.
O LORD my God, I cried to you for help,
and you have healed me.
O LORD, you have brought up my soul from Sheol;
you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.
Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints,
and give thanks to his holy name.
For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime.
Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

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

(I Peter 2:2-10)

²Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation—³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

⁴As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶For it stands in Scripture:

*“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious,
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”*

⁷So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,
“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,”

⁸and

“A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.”

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Sermon – † Chosen † (*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

- Eight students Rite of Confirmation
- Kierra Penney - Concordia University graduation

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

- Larry Easler - recovering after fall at Hiawatha Care Center
- Tom Stock - health issues
- Margaret (relative of Karl Hoech) - recovering after fall
- Karen Schmidt - recovering after surgery
- Lee Rathje - recovering after surgery
- Colton Kelgord - recovering after surgery
- Dave Johnson - recovering after surgery
- Stephen Stepanek - brain cancer treatment
- Mickie Sjullie - recovering after broken ankle
- Janelle Dunbar - recovering after surgery
- Doug Knutson - immunotherapy treatment
- Bonnie Bubke - personal issues
- Chuck Stoelting - recovering at Garnet Place
- Rick Foreman - recovering at home after fall
- Deb Heitland - health issues
- Ethel Doehrmann - cancer treatment
- Abi Clark - health issues

Homebound

- Shirley Kellogg - Terrace Glen Village, Marion

Mourning, friends and family of

- Marj (sister of Luci Stoelting) - died 5/1
- Hellen (relative of Karl Hoech) - died 4/28
- Aiden (cousin of Kierra Penney) - died 4/16
- Michele (sister of Melissa Loney) - died 4/10
- Glen (brother of Rob Sieck)- died 3/30

Serving Our Country

- Ben (son of Kroemers) - serving IA National Guard
- Devin (friend of Kroemers) - serving IA Army National Guard
- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - US Navy
- Harrison (son of Siecks) - US Army, deployed to Poland

Collect of the Day

O God, You make the minds of Your faithful to be of one will. Grant that we may love what You have commanded and desire what You promise, that among the many changes of this world our hearts may be fixed where true joys are found; 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.



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

One of my favorite inside games to play is Jenga. In this game you start with a tower of wooden blocks. When it's your turn, each player takes one of the blocks from the tower and places it on top. This of course makes the tower taller and taller as the game goes on, but also more and more unstable. The game ends when one player finally knocks the tower over.

When I'm playing Jenga, I think the trick is to find a block that is easily removed from the lower levels. If you can easily slide a block out, then chances are it's not an essential piece of the structure and can be removed without worrying about things falling over. But there are always a few blocks, especially as the game goes on, that seem to be essential to the structure. They seem to be holding everything up. Take one of these pieces away, and you'll soon be picking up others off of the floor.

In today's reading from I Peter, we find that Jesus is not just one of those blocks – He is the block that holds everything up in our lives. Like any good preacher, Peter quotes Scripture in making his argument. He mentions Isaiah 28:16 saying, "*Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.*" Peter says that the promise that God made through the prophet Isaiah has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. He is the precious cornerstone, the one Jenga block that you can't take out of the tower if you don't want the shame and dishonor of everything falling apart before God.

But for those who believe in Jesus – those whose lives are built with Him as the cornerstone in the foundation, there is no shame or dishonor before God. But Peter says there is honor and respect from God. He says that God looks at us now as having value - that with Christ as our cornerstone our lives are worth something in God's eyes. It doesn't matter who we are. It doesn't matter what sins we have done, how many times we have disobeyed God, how many times our lives have fallen apart and crumbled to the ground – with Christ, God sees us and says, "You're important."

When something is important to someone, when something is valuable, then by definition people are willing to pay a high price for it. We know how important we are to God when we look at the price He paid to save us from our sin. Before our text in his letter Peter wrote, "*...you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as gold or silver, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.*" Each one of us here today is valuable, so precious to God that despite our sin, He was willing to sacrifice His Son Jesus so that we could be forgiven. We have no worth or honor by ourselves, but because of what God has paid for us, all of the honor and glory of heaven and earth now belong to us.

There are of course, those who reject this. They want their value to reside in themselves and their own works. They want to stand before God and say, "Look what I can do! Look at what I have done! Do you know who I am?" When we trust in ourselves for our salvation and not in Christ, we reject everything that Christ is about and has done. And we know this happens because we see people rejecting Christ all of the time. We know this because at times we have not made Christ the cornerstone in our lives. We know this because Peter quotes from Psalm 118 saying, "*The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone*" and from Isaiah 8 that Jesus is "*A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense*". And they, like Judas, are destined for destruction.

But today we rejoice, not because of God's anger and wrath over those who have rejected Him, but because God has acted and in His actions we see His love. God choose us, just as He choose Israel in the OT to be His people. And it feels great to be chosen.

I know this because I can remember back to recess in elementary school. Everyday at recess we either played soccer or baseball. And what's the first thing you have to do when your getting ready to play a team sport like these? You have to choose teams. So, what would happen is two of my classmates would somehow be designated captains, who would then stand next to each other looking down at the rest of us. And then one by one they would pick who they would want on their team. Of course, in elementary school the captains wouldn't pick the best players per se, but rather their...friends. So, often it would become a little popularity contest before the athletic contest of the day. And I remember how bad I wanted to be chosen for a team. Of course as time and the picking went on, it only got worse. You'd look around to see who was left, wondering if you would ever get picked. And the absolute worst thing that could happen was if one of the captains made their last pick and said to the other, "You can have the rest". Ugh. That meant that you weren't chosen. No one wanted you. No one thought that you were good enough or had any value to their team. In fact this usually happened when the captain thought everyone left would actually hurt the team!

But if somewhere in this whole process you were picked, everything changed! You went from feeling unwanted, to almost loved. And sometimes from being a beggar, to almost being arrogant. You'd sort of strut over to your captain and new team and turn around to look down at all of those who weren't picked. And you might mention to your captain that now all of the good players had been picked. There wasn't anyone worthwhile left, so it didn't matter anymore. "Maybe we should tell the other team they can have the rest."

But God never tells the other team that they can have anyone. Peter writes, "*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of the darkness into his marvelous light.*"

And now that we know we are chosen, we don't strut on over to God and look down at all of those whom we have left, and say the devil can have the rest. But rather we turn around and we say, "You've been chosen too! God loves you and He wants you to be with Him as well. That's why Christ died for us."

So congratulations to all of you - because you have been chosen. Chosen to receive God's mercy, God's forgiveness, God's eternal life – all through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

