



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

June 11, 2023 A.D.

2nd Sunday after Pentecost

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 50)

☐ The Mighty One, God the LORD, speaks and summons the earth
☑ **from the rising of the sun to its setting.**
Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, I will testify against you.
I am God, your God.
Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you;
your burnt offerings are continually before me.
I will not accept a bull from your house
or goats from your folds.
For every beast of the forest is mine,
the cattle on a thousand hills.

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

(Matthew 9:9-13)

⁹As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him.

¹⁰And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹²But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

Sermon – † *Mercy For the Proud* † (A copy is included at the end of this service.)

Apostles' Creed

☩ 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

Thanksgiving

- Installation of LWML Officers
- Elaine Cook - recovering after surgery
- Kurt (son of Larry & Sue Kroemer) - Safely Home after Davenport search/rescue mission

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

- Prudy Petersen - recovering at Cottage Grove after fall
- Nancy (sister of Julie Elias) - recovering after fall
- Joel Knutson - recovering after surgery
- Lucas McCarley - recovering after surgery

- Ethel Doehrmann - recovering after hospitalization
- Larry Easler - recovering after fall at Hiawatha Care Center
- Tom Stock - health issues
- Lee Rathje - recovering after surgery
- Dave Johnson - recovering after surgery
- Janelle Dunbar - recovering after surgery
- Doug Knutson - immunotherapy treatment
- Bonnie Bubke - personal issues
- Rick Foreman - recovering at home after fall
- Deb Heitland - health issues
- Abi Clark - health issues

Homebound

- Nadine Wax - at home

Mourning, friends and family of

- Ivan Grimm (brother of Brenda Heims) - died 5/29
- Norma Sirotiak - died 5/26
- Stephen Stepanek - died 5/20

Serving Our Country

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

Collect of the Day

Let us pray... Almighty and most merciful God, You sent Your Son, Jesus Christ, to seek and to save the lost. Graciously open our ears and our hearts to hear His call and to follow Him by faith that we may feast with Him forever in His kingdom; through the same Jesus Christ, 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.



✠ *Mercy for the Proud* ✠

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

In the early morning hours of June 28, 1969, New York City Police conducted a raid on a local night club in lower Manhattan. This club was called the Stonewall Inn, as was know to the local residents as a club for members of the LGBT community. During the police raid and for several days that followed, members of that community resisted the police in what has now become known as the Stonewall Riots or Protests. Every year after 1969, members of the LGBT community celebrated the anniversary of these protests, with the celebrations growing and gaining popularity every year. Then in 1999 President Bill Clinton declared that every June would be Gay and Lesbian Pride Month, in recognition to the events at the Stonewall Inn in 1969. In 2011, President Barrak Obama expanded this to include the whole LGBT community.

All of this leads us to where we are today. A few years ago I went to Gettysburg, Pa for our summer vacation and pulling into town I was surprised to see, not the battle flags of the North and South, but hundreds of rainbow gay pride flags flying in this historic Civil War town because we were there in June. Likewise, the other day I went into one of my favorite stores here in Cedar Rapids and there in the window was the rainbow pride flag hanging in the window and the counter. And then, just last week, when I sat down to watch a game of my new favorite soccer team, St. Louis City S.C., I noticed that Team Captain, Roman Bürki, was wearing a rainbow captain's armband, again apparently for Pride Month.

Now, it will probably not come as a surprise to any of you that the Bible is very clear on homosexuality. From Leviticus 18:22 that reads, "*You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination*" to I Corinthians 6:9-10 that says, "*Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God*" God's Word clearly teaches that homosexual acts and desires are nothing to be proud of, but something to repent of and find forgiveness through Jesus' atoning work.

Of course, some people don't care what the Bible says, and some others who do, will try to explain away the parts of the Bible that say things they don't like. And so many Christians, like myself, when we go shopping, when we watch our favorite teams, when we go on vacation, or do anything in the month of June are confronted time and time again with people and symbols invoking pride over the sin of homosexuality. Which leads, at least myself to ask, "How do we

live in this type of culture? Can I visit a town that lines its streets with pride flags? Can I shop at a store that supports people committing sin? Can I just sit down and watch a soccer game without facing a moral dilemma!?!?”

Well, if today’s Gospel/Scripture lesson doesn’t give us all the answers to these questions, I believe that it at least gives us some things to think about as we, as Jesus’ disciples, interact with an increasingly sinful world. In our text from Matthew 9, Jesus calls Matthew to be His disciple and then goes to Matthew’s house for a meal. These events may not seem like much to our modern ears, but those who witnessed them all of this was highly unusual. First, Matthew was a tax collector. This meant that he was more or less supporting the Roman empire that was occupying the Holy Land, which not only made him unpopular, but in the eyes of many – sinful. And note here Jesus did not call Matthew after he had stopped this dubious vocation. Jesus called Matthew while he was still actively a tax collector.

Secondly, it is worth saying something about table fellowship in biblical times. While eating a meal with someone would not necessarily imply everyone was being treated as equals, it did imply a certain level of agreement and acceptance with one another. Simply put, you would not eat with your enemies. So, while we might say that Jesus was eating at Matthew’s house because after being called, Matthew got his act together, repented, and was reconciled to God, note that the Pharisees didn’t complain that Jesus was eating at this particular house. It was that he was eating with “tax collectors and sinners”, more than likely Matthew’s friends and associates.

So that fact that Jesus called Matthew while he was still collecting taxes, and that Jesus was eating with those who were still indeed tax collectors and other types of sinners, shows us that we don’t have to run away or boycott those who don’t live according to God’s law. Now it is true that Paul writes, “*God judges those outside. ‘Purge the evil person from among you’*” (I Cor. 5:13). But this is dealing with church discipline within the congregation, not the church’s dealing with the rest of the world. And while some may say that Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners, but didn’t support them by patronizing their businesses, it is true that Jesus doesn’t support people sinning, but when asked if it is lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, Jesus does not say “no”. Rather He replies, “*Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s*” (Matthew 22:21). This implies that Jesus does indeed say pay your taxes to these greedy and evil tax collectors and sinners, regardless of how that money might be used.

Looking at our text today, I don’t think it is necessary to avoid shopping at a store that has a rainbow flag in the front window or root against teams that wears a LGBT pride gear. While always calling people to repentance and never condoning sin, Jesus engages with the sinful world, eats with sinners, and tells people to pay their taxes to evil people working for an evil empire. And there doesn’t seem to be any kind of purity test for anyone to pass before Jesus’ disciples can interact with them.

What there is however, is a very clear call from Jesus for Christians to show mercy to everyone. When the Pharisees complained about who Jesus was eating with, Jesus quotes the prophet Hosea, who spoke out against people who were outwardly religious, but failed to see the purpose of God’s merciful and gracious work. Like the Pharisees and some people today, the people Hosea spoke against let their outward observance of their own laws puff up their ego, so that they forget about how God would have us act and behave.

Today, some do this by making God’s command to love our neighbors into their own command to accept everything that our neighbor does. They become their own law giver as they forget what God clearly teaches us in His Word. On the other hand, some claiming to be Christians believe that it is OK to threaten and lie about those who they disagree with! So while one may n

not like Target's pride displays in their stores this month and may rightfully believe that this promotes sinful behavior, one certainly cannot lie about what products are being marketed to children. Woe to them who lie and deceive and fail to show Christ's mercy and love. Because the fact of the matter is, is that no one will ever come to faith in Christ because you didn't buy your groceries at Target this month.

Now does shopping there give an impression of agreement with their LGBT pride displays? Perhaps. But if we're really concerned about God's kingdom growing; if we're really concerned about ALL people (including ourselves) repenting of their sin and finding God's forgiveness through faith in Jesus – then we would do well to remember that it is the Gospel that does these things. It is the Good News that Jesus died on the cross for all sinners. Paul writes in Romans 1:16, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*" And how can people believe in the Gospel unless they hear the Gospel. Again, Paul says, "*So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ*" (Romans 10:17).

So, this month, and whenever I see the LGBT pride stuff, I'll be a little sad. I'm thankful that the LGBT community no longer faces persecution and violence as it once did in this country and will pray that they never face that again. But I will be disappointed that some take pride in sin, and that so many in our society support that today. However, I will try, and I would encourage you to try, to not let your disappointment lead you into sinful behavior and actions. Instead, show mercy. Show people their sin if you must, but always show them Christ, their Savior. Jesus Christ, your Savior and mine. So that all, no matter what sins we may or may not have done, may never have pride in ourselves, but can rejoice in God's love and forgiveness through Christ our Lord. Amen.

