



# Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

**January 14, 2024 A.D. - 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany**

*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 40)

I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart;  
**I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;**  
I waited patiently for the LORD;  
**he inclined to me and heard my cry.**  
He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog,  
**and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.**  
He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.  
**Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the LORD.**  
Blessèd is the man who makes the LORD his trust,  
**who does not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after a lie!**  
You have multiplied, O LORD my God, your wondrous deeds and  
your thoughts toward us; none can compare with you!  
**I will proclaim and tell of them, yet they are more than can be told.**

*For those with access to the internet, you may now play today's worship video, located on Bethany's website ([www.bethanycr.org](http://www.bethanycr.org)) under the Worship Resources tab and then continue with the Apostles' Creed. Everyone else may continue the service as printed....*

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## Scripture Lesson

(I Corinthians 6:12-20)

<sup>12</sup>“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be enslaved by anything. <sup>13</sup>“Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food”—and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. <sup>14</sup>And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. <sup>15</sup>Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! <sup>16</sup>Or do you not know that he

who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.” <sup>17</sup>But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. <sup>18</sup>Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. <sup>19</sup>Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, <sup>20</sup>for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

**Sermon** – ✠ *Physical Religion* ✠ *(A copy is included at the end of this service.)*

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### **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 Kierra Penney, DCE
- Martin (friend of Hedtkes) - health issues

#### **Entrusting into God’s Care**

- Perry School shooting victims
- Persecuted Christians and refugees
- Peace in Europe and throughout the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

**Healing**

- Jen (relative of Mary Nanke) - recovering after surgery
- Poppy (relative of Mary Nanke) - recovering after hospitalization
- Luci Stoelting - recovering after hospitalization
- Emily Kroemer - health issues
- Luke (relative of Knutsons) - hospitalization
- Mary (mother of Ken Zenor) - hospitalized
- Kim Neuhaus - recovering after surgery
- Derek (son of Hackbards) - recovering after hospitalization
- Ruth (relative of Karl Hoech) - hospice care
- Lora Raymon - recovering after surgery
- Carolyn Johnson - recovering after surgery
- Cindy Broadwater - recovering after hospitalization
- Lee Heims - recovering after surgery
- Kelly Johnson - healing
- Philip Hackbardt - recovering after surgery
- Ron Prescott - recovering after surgery
- Ethel Doehrmann - immunotherapy treatment
- Doug Knutson - immunotherapy treatment
- Deb Heitland - health issues
- Abi Clark - health issues

**Homebound**

- Verlyn & Paul LeFevere - at home

**Mourning, friends and family of**

- Todd (friend of Rick Foreman) - died 12/23
- Del Block - died 12/21
- Lee Rathje - died 12/19
- Shirley Kellogg (mother of Lynn Kellogg) - died 12/17

**Serving Our Country**

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

**Collect of the Day**

Almighty and everlasting God, who governs all things in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the prayers of Your people and grant us Your peace through all our days; 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.**



✝ *Physical Religion* ✝

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

There is a tendency today to think of Christianity, and perhaps religion in general, as only a spiritual endeavor. But, if you have ever gone to the cemetery after a Christian funeral you may have heard the pastor or priest say, “*May God the Father, who created this body; may God the Son, who by his blood redeemed this body; may God the Holy Spirit, who by Holy Baptism sanctified this body to be his temple, keep these remains to the day of the resurrection of all flesh. Amen.*” These words, spoken at the Committal in the Service of Christian Burial proclaim the truth about the body of the believer in this sober moment. They remind us that there is much more to our faith than just the spiritual - that our physical bodies are created by the Maker of heaven and earth, purchased back from sin with the blood of Christ, and made holy once again through the power of God’s Word and Sacraments. The bodies of our deceased loved ones are not mere corpses to be discarded and forgotten. On the contrary, our bodies are given to us by God.

Our bodies are our bodies. Yours is uniquely you. But nevertheless, Scripture tells us that it does not belong to you. You did not create yourself. And while we know of, and perhaps benefit from all sorts of medical breakthroughs today, we still must ultimately face the reality that we are flesh and blood and will perish.

As we live our lives, there are those in the world who want to deny the biblical truth that we are not our own. They view the body as simply a vehicle that houses our spirit. They will tell us to treat our bodies as instruments to obtain as many physical pleasures or avoid as much pain, as we can before we die. If we think like this, than should we be surprised that once the flesh begins to break down we seek ways to be relieved of this burden? This is where euthanasia and assisted suicide enter in. If we can’t finally master the body and control the suffering of disease and old age, we will put an end to it at the time and place of our own choosing. Proponents of

euthanasia will speak of people “dying with dignity” or “taking their own lives” as though dignity were a god that we would want to cling to at death or their lives were theirs to take.

And so what do we do with our bodies? That’s a question faced not just at the time of death but here and now as we live in the body. This was the case with the Corinthians, who apparently thought that something as physical as their bodies could not affect life in the Spirit. Christian Freedom in the Spirit translated into a life unhampered by rules, boundaries, and limitations. Homosexual practice, prostitution, and even incest were now all fair game to the Corinthians, as long as it felt right and didn’t “hurt anyone”.

Perhaps the ancient Corinthians reasoned that the bounds of Christian liberty were wide and expansive since even St. Paul wrote, “*Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food – and God will destroy both*”. Or it could be that the Corinthians fell into the trap of ancient Gnosticism, believing that the Gospel was a teaching of liberation from the body – that the spirit and spiritual things are good, while the body and physical things are bad. Death was then viewed as a good thing since it liberated the spirit from the physical world.

Even amongst Christians today we hear that something as mundane as sexual ethics should not get in the way of the Gospel and the Mission of the Church! The Church, some will say, needs a vision that is more relational and spiritual and less physical. This was the very same argument that led a Lutheran church body to adopt policies that run counter to God’s Word.

Yet the apostle Paul takes a position and asserts a vision for the church and for each individual Christian that is very physical indeed. He writes, “*The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body*”. What you do with your body does matter! Paul again says, “*Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?*” For Paul it is a matter of ownership. You simply cannot take the body that belongs to Christ - bought with His blood and washed by His Spirit in Baptism – and join that body to a prostitute. To do so, Paul says, is to sin against your own body. Hence, he says, “Flee from sexual immorality”. Flee from the pornography on your computers and phones. Flee from the strip clubs and shows on television and in the movies that promote and condone sexual promiscuity. If you have fallen into these traps, or even if you have walked into them with your eyes wide open, turn away from them now and seek God’s forgiveness in Christ - He will forgive you. But don’t continue walking in this sinful way, thinking that it is normal or harmless. For every other sin a person commits is outside of his or her body – but this sin is against your body – the very same body that God has created, redeemed, and sanctified.

And Christ Jesus will not have the body that belongs to Him rendered unclean, desecrated by fornication, and enslaved to a fleshly union to one who is not your spouse. Christ Jesus would not have you live in bondage to another lord, for He has made you His own. As Luther says in his explanation to the Second Article of the Apostles’ Creed: Christ has “*purchased and won you from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His innocent suffering and death, that you may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness.*”

Therefore your body will never be discarded, even at death. God has paid the ultimate price for it, the life of His Son Jesus Christ. Your body is neither evil nor irrelevant, but will be raised again to live in glory for all eternity, with the same Christ who purchased you. Then as now, your body belongs to the Lord, so that for this life already the apostle says “glorify God in your body”. Your body is the place of the Spirit, and it is destined for the resurrection of the flesh.

So now, present your bodies as the living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. For this, Paul says, is your spiritual worship (Romans 12:1). Amen.