

# PRAYERS

## OF THE PEOPLE



# A NOTE

Thank you for checking out these prayers and reflections. We are happy to see you.

Throughout this summer, Trinity Reformed Church will be sending out a weekly prayer document for you to utilize. Whether it is read and practiced around the table with friends or family or done in solitude after a long day, we invite you to set aside time and sit with these reflections. You may notice some themes from the sermon series, *Stories of the Kingdom*. Our hope is that these devotionals will help you process and think through sermons, to be exposed to various written prayers, and to be built up in unity in our church body.

"I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your hearts enlightened, you may perceive what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power...And he has put all things under [Christ's] feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all" (Ephesians 1:15-19, 22-23).

# DAY ONE



Begin this time by practicing silence. For as long as it feels right, sit in the quiet and absorb the life and presence of the Spirit around you. Allow yourself to be with God, without offering anything other than your presence.

Read Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43. Read it again, speaking it aloud this time. What do you notice? Is there a phrase or a theme that sticks out to you?

This parable is about the kingdom of heaven (13:24). What are your longings as we await the fulfillment of this promise? What is most difficult about the waiting process?

Talk to God and allow yourself to be honest with him. He knows that the weeds are painful and promises to be with you as you wait.

Pray this prayer now:

"Be present in my waiting, O Lord, that I might also be present in it as a Christ-bearer to those before and behind me, who also wait.

As I am a vessel,  
let me not be like a sodden paper cup  
full of steaming frustration, carelessly  
sloshing unpleasantness on those  
around me.

Rather let me be like a communion  
chalice,  
reflecting the silvered beauty of your  
light,  
brimming with an offered grace.

*Amen."*

# DAY TWO



Begin with this prayer:

"We regularly say:

'We proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.'

In our primitiveness, we do not doubt your coming, soon, powerfully, decisively.

In our settledness, your coming is not too urgent or real,

because we are venously entitled, privileged, protected, gated.

In our rationality, the 'until' of your coming makes little sense to us, so we mumble and hope no one notices...

So we do proclaim the Lord's death until he comes,

until he comes in peace against all our violence;

until he comes in generosity midst all our parsimony;

until he comes in food midst all our hunger;

until he comes in community midst all our alienation.

We are your faithful hoppers, distracted by despair, but hoping, distracted by affluence, but hoping, distracted by sophistication, but hoping.

Come soon, come Lord Jesus, come soon

while we face afresh your death, until you come soon and again...again and soon. Amen."

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-28.

There are many instructions in this passage. Are there any that stick out to you? How can you be more constant in prayer? What do you need to address as you remain watchful for the day of the Lord?

"May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely, and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this" (5:23-24).



# DAY THREE

I WAIT FOR THE LORD,  
MY SOUL WAITS,  
AND IN HIS WORD  
I HOPE.

Begin by reading Psalm 130.  
Take a few moments pondering what  
the Psalmist is saying.

Now read it again in *The Message*  
translation:

"Help, God - I've hit rock bottom!  
Master, hear my cry for help!  
Listen hard! Open your ears!  
Listen to my cries for mercy.

If you, God, kept records on  
wrongdoings,  
who could stand a chance?  
As it turns out, forgiveness is your  
habit,  
and that's why you're worshiped.  
I pray to God - my life is a prayer -  
and wait for what he'll say and do.

My life's on the line before God, my  
Lord,  
waiting and watching till morning,  
waiting and watching till morning.

O Israel, wait and watch for God -  
with God's arrival comes love,  
with God's arrival comes generous  
redemption.  
No doubt about it - he'll redeem  
Israel,  
buy back Israel from captivity to sin."

Consider what you woke up with  
today. Is your heart heavy? Did you  
wake up with gratitude? Is there  
confusion of where God is taking  
you? Is it an ordinary day?  
Know that the Lord is with you in  
whatever is in your heart today. Offer  
that up to him.

# DAY FOUR



Take a few breaths. Be still.

Read Psalm 46.

"A carpet of white pin heads  
Flowers so perfect and small  
I would trample them if my  
View was on the horizon,  
Only taking in the sweeping  
grandeur.

But, no, I must stop.

I must stoop

I must squint my eyes

And then...

A perfect 5 petaled flower greets me

A voice that is happy and bright

Sunshine illuminating its crisp  
rounded head,

Green ground cover its bed

'Wake up!' It says.

Wake up to the wonder beneath your  
feet

Wake up to the joy in your day

Wake up to the beauty

Wake up and join in the  
celebration of small,  
Of the here and now  
Of the gift to unwrap that is  
today."

In what ways is God's kingdom  
something that is coming in the  
future, something for which we  
actively wait? In what ways is it  
present in our everyday life?

"If we pray without listening, we  
pray out of context" (Eugene  
Peterson).

Take a few moments to listen. If you  
have time, take a walk outside. If you  
are with a friend, talk about the  
tension between waiting for the  
kingdom and witnessing its near and  
clear presence now. How can we  
cultivate habits that are both hopeful  
and aware of our environments? How  
can you pray throughout the day in  
context, listening to the Spirit?



# DAY FIVE

EVERY DAY DO  
SOMETHING THAT WON'T  
COMPUTE.  
PRACTICE  
RESURRECTION.

Begin by listening to this song: "The Kingdom Is Coming" by The Porter's Gate.

"The kingdom is coming!  
We are praying for it,  
The kingdom is coming!  
We are waiting for it  
The kingdom is coming!  
We are working for it  
The kingdom is coming!  
All creation groans."

Read Romans 8:12-30. This passage connects the giving of the Spirit to the coming of the kingdom. We wait in hopeful anticipation of the return of Christ, and all of creation joins us in this waiting.

Take some moments and think about what this means - for creation to participate in our groaning.

The Spirit plays an active part in intercession (8:26). Spend a few moments in silence, opening yourself up to the Spirit's work and groanings.

Consider these words as you continue your day:

"So, friends, every day do something that won't compute. Love the Lord. Love the world. Work for nothing. Take all that you have and be poor. Love someone who does not deserve it.

Ask the questions that have no answers.

Invest in the millennium. Plant sequoias.

Expect the end of the world. Laugh. Laughter is immeasurable. Be joyful though you have considered all the facts.

Practice resurrection."

# FOOTNOTES

Much of this content is inspired by sermons at Trinity Reformed Church in Orange City, IA.

The prayer on Day One is from *Every Moment Holy* by Douglas Kaine McKelvey, "A Liturgy for Waiting in Line."

The prayer on Day Two is from *Awed to Heaven, Rooted to Earth* by Walter Brueggeman, "In these very late days," (p. 169).

The poem on Day Four is "Celebration of Small" by Sarah Penzel.

The quotation from Day Four is from Eugene Peterson, referenced in an [interview](#) with the *On Being Podcast*.

The song from Day Five is "The Kingdom Is Coming" by The Porter's Gate, and the poem is condensed from Wendell Berry's poem, "Manifesto: The Mad Farmer Liberation Front."