

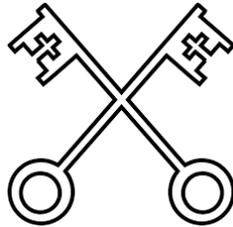
40 Days of Prayer

Bethany United Methodist Church

In the Bible, the number 40 signifies a season, often a time of trial or preparation. The number appears 146 times in Scripture. Noah's ark floated for 40 days, the Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years, Moses stayed on the mountain 40 days when God gave him the law, Jesus spent 40 days fasting in the wilderness at the beginning of his ministry, and Christ walked 40 days on earth between his resurrection and his ascension into heaven. It is likely that Jesus spent these last days preparing his disciples for what was to come, refining their mission and purpose.

Likewise, we at Bethany UMC can set aside the last 40 days of the year to discern our mission and purpose. This guide was prepared to direct our prayers.

Jesus was born into a tumultuous world, and we, too, head toward the manger in a messy time. As the light of Advent grows, may this time of prayer bring you the peace that surpasses all understanding.



DAY 1 – MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2022

PRAY FOR GUIDANCE

“Simon Peter answered and said, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.’” – Matthew 16:16-19

King of Heaven and Earth,

You are Lord of all, ever present in our lives, in our church, and in our world. Gather our spirits together as one body to seek your guidance. We want to know your heart before we move ahead in any way as a church. We want to know your will and your timing. We thank you for your unfailing faithfulness. We thank you for what you have already done and what you will continue to do in our church. Just as you gave Simon Peter the keys of your kingdom, you have given us authority to be your church and share your gospel. May we use that authority well. We trust you, knowing that the keys ultimately belong to you; you hold the future. We pray in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

DAY 2 – TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2022

CRY OUT FOR WISDOM

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will direct your paths.” - Proverbs 3:5-6

God of All Wisdom,

You know the end and the beginning. We praise you for that. We thank you for speaking wisdom in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Lead us deeper into your word so that we can know true wisdom by following in your way. Grant us a deep desire to see the will of God accomplished and show us the role you want us to play. May we do all things not for our own recognition, but for your glory. In the peace of our Shepherd, we pray. Amen.

DAY 3 – WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2022

PRAY FOR REVELATION

“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 heart 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.” – Ephesians 1:15-19

Jesus Christ, our Savior,

You came and walked among us so that we might know true love and the potential for all humanity. You came so that we might see God. We praise you and thank you for your word and for your work on earth through which you are revealed to us. We want to know and understand as much as we can as a church. Please reveal yourself to us. Show us the path. Lead us in the way. On this day when so many of us are busy preparing for Thanksgiving, keep us centered on you with eyes open. We pray in the name of the one who is the way, the truth, and the life. Amen.

DAY 4 – THANKSGIVING DAY, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2022 GIVE THANKS

“Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth. Serve the LORD with gladness; come into his presence with singing. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him; bless his name. For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever and his faithfulness to all generations.” - Psalm 100

Giver of all Good Gifts,

We praise you today for all you give us. We are grateful that you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bring us into your loving embrace. We give thanks to you for our families and for our church family. Bless us this day. We give thanks for the ministries of the church and celebrate that hundreds of families will be enjoying the turkey dinners that we provided. May they feel the love and blessing of the gift, and may we be so filled with the joy of giving that we rise above any worry or concern. In the name of the one who came as a gift to the world. Amen.

DAY 5 – FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2022 PRAY TO BE HOSPITABLE PEOPLE

“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.” – Hebrews 13:2

Merciful God who invites us to the Table,

May we be more like you, seeking the lost and sharing with generosity. May we be people of hospitality, who make sure that those who ask for only crumbs will be given the best of our table. Let us treat everyone who would come near our church as honored guests, and may we join the celebration in heaven when prodigals come home. Do not let us stop at hospitality for its own sake, but spur us to graciously invite all into saving relationship with you. Open our hearts, our homes, our workspaces to be welcoming places for everyone to experience the love of Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

DAY 6 – SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2022 PRAY FOR HUMILITY

“Yes, let all be submissive to one another and be clothed with humility, for God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. Therefore, humble yourselves with the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time.” - 1 Peter 5:5-6

Almighty God,

We acknowledge that we are members of your Kingdom community with all the saints. We submit ourselves to you and to one another in love. We humble ourselves and ask that you would fill us with your spirit of compassion and grace. Help us to look upon others as more important than ourselves and to have the same mind as Christ who took on the form of a servant for humanity's sake. Remove pride from our hearts so that we may reflect Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

DAY 7 – FIRST DAY OF ADVENT, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2022 PRAY FOR HOPE

“A shoot shall come from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord.” – Isaiah 11:1-2

Source of Hope,

As we enter into the season of Advent, prepare our hearts and minds to receive you. Fill us with the hope of Christmas, the reminder that you are our God and we are your people. You promised to give us a ruler from the branch of Jesse, an eternal king. Help us to hold on to that hope. Lift us above our fears. Pour on us the same spirit that was on him. Pour out salvation. O, Come, o come, Emmanuel! Amen.

DAY 8 – MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2022 PRAY FOR REPENTANCE

“So I said, ‘Woe I me, for I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.’ Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with tongs from the altar. He touched my mouth with it and said, ‘Behold, this has touched your lips, your iniquity is taken away and your sin is purged.’” – Isaiah 6:5-7

Holy God,

The brilliance of your glory and the beauty of your holiness leaves us undone. We are not worthy to stand in your presence, but because of your great love for us, Christ died for us while we were yet sinners. Christ died for us and brought us into the light of your redeeming, cleansing love. Father, forgive us for all the ways we sin against you through backbiting, criticism, divisiveness, and unwholesome words. Place your holy coal on our lips and remove the guilt of our sin. Set a watch over our lips that we might not speak harshly to one another. Transform our speech so that we might speak words of life, blessing, and well-being. Holy Spirit, enable us to use our words to encourage and build up so that we might reflect the beauty of your light. In your holy name we pray. Amen.

DAY 9 – TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2022 A PRAYER OF CLEANSING

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” - Psalm 51:10

Forgiving Father,

Your heart is always ready to receive us when we return to you with a repentant and contrite heart. Thank you for the sacrifice of Jesus that restores us and brings us back into a right relationship with you. Create clean hearts in us. Renew our thoughts to be pure, our spirits to be joyful, and our actions to be kind. Restore us so that we might fully receive your Spirit and be steadfast and enabled to love selflessly. We offer ourselves to you as disciples, humbled to be called your beloved. In Jesus' name. Amen.

DAY 10– WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2022

ASK FOR DEEPER PRAYER

“He prayed more fervently, and he was in such agony of spirit that his sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood.” – Luke 22:44

O God who was, and is, and is to come,

The season of Advent calls us to expectant waiting, believing that you will come again. As we consider your life on earth, it is hard for us to imagine the agony you experienced as you prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. Your word tells us that you prayed to the point of sweating blood, and then you went to the cross for us. Too often, our prayers are hurried and selfish, not focused on how we can give and serve. We are your people and your church. Give us a heart of fervent prayer and willingness to partner with you in your work in the world. May our prayers be effectual as yours were. With open hearts, we ask. Amen.

DAY 11– THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2022

PRAY FOR TRANSFORMATION

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will.” - Romans 12:2

God of Steadfast Love,

You are unchanging. We find security and faithfulness in you. We are always changing, swayed by the things around us and buffeted by the things we fear. Renew our minds and transform our lives, so that we will become the people you call us to be. Help us to find the place you would have us stand, and plant our feet on the ground, so that we will stand firm in your will. We pray as a church, seeking to be transformed into a safe sanctuary, a loving spiritual home, and a launching pad for mission. Melt us and mold us, we pray. Amen.

DAY 12– FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2022

PRAY THAT WE WOULD TURN TO GOD

“Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually.” – Psalm 105:4

Holy Spirit,

You promise that when we seek, we will find, when we ask you will give, and when we knock, you will answer. Help us to remember this and turn to you in times of trouble. When we begin to lose patience with others, enable us to see your face in them. Give us a deeper love for your church. When we are the ones frustrating others, help us to see our own faults and have hearts willing to ask forgiveness. Transform us to reflect your image, light, grace, and beauty to a world that needs you. In the power of the Spirit, we lift this prayer. Amen.

DAY 13– SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2022 PRAY TO BE A LIGHT

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” - Matthew 5:13-16

Jesus, our Light

You called us to be salt for the earth, light that shines for others. Lift us up today to rise to the call. We know that our world is in a state of decay. We need you. We breathe your spirit into our lungs, filling up with the hope that only you can give. Walk with us through this day, guiding our steps. Give us eyes to see opportunities to speak your love. Give us ears to hear the places you are calling us. May your kingdom come. May your will be done. Let your ways be known through us. Come, Lord Jesus, come. Amen.

DAY 14–SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2022 PRAY FOR THE LAW OF LOVE TO PREVAIL

“Your Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.” - Psalm 119:105

Living God,

You breathed words onto stone, papyrus, and parchment so that your creation would know your ways. Through your word, you reveal your love. Thank you for sending the Living Word, Christ Jesus, whose life and example teaches, leads, corrects, and guides. Help us to hide your word in our hearts and speak it forth to plant seeds of grace into a culture that needs you. Holy Spirit, as our church gathers this week, lead us to the table of life-giving bread. Nourish our souls, and as we go out from the gathering, may we be a blessing to the world around us, living always by your law of love. We ask this in your holy name. Amen.

DAY 15– MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2022 PRAY AGAINST UNFORGIVENESS

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.” - Colossians 3:12

Everlasting God,

You promised that you would provide for all we need. We are not to worry about what we are to eat or what we are to wear. Clothe us with righteousness so that we may be lovely to those around us. When we feel bitterness, give us the sweetness of your love. When we are hard hearted, soften us. When we are impatient, give us your peace. We want to be like you. As we face the challenges of each day, strengthen us to be your people, redeemed by your love, one in spirit. Blessed Lord, hear our prayer. Amen.

DAY 16– TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2022**REMEMBER YOUR BAPTISM**

“Therefore, we were buried with him through baptism into death, that just as Christ Jesus was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also should walk in newness of life.” – Romans 6:4

Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

You have freed us from sin and given us a new birth by water and the Spirit. You welcomed us into the family of faith. We thank you for our baptism and pause this day to ask for you to renew us by your grace. We reaffirm our vow to reject spiritual forces of weakness, resist evil and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves, and repent of our sin. Mark us in love and shape us by your sanctifying love. Transform us by grace. Help us to order our lives so that others might see you more clearly in us. In the strong name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

DAY 17– WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2022**PRAY FOR POWER**

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” – Acts 1:8

Holy Spirit,

You are the life-giving breath of God. We praise you as the gift that you are, the one who leads us into all truth and into fellowship together as the church of Jesus Christ. Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on us. Comfort, sustain, sanctify, and empower us. May we be the fragrance of Christ, spreading his love to those around us. Fill us with the power of your joy, we pray in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

DAY 18– THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2022**PRAY FOR AN UNDIVIDED HEART**

“Teach me your ways, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth. Give me an undivided heart that I may honor your name.” – Psalm 86:11

O Lord,

Your ways are higher than our ways, and your thoughts are higher than our thoughts. Draw us into your word, where we find eternal truths and life-giving treasure. Draw us toward one another. Give us one mind, one heart, and one spirit, centered on you. Grant us the clarity and confidence that comes only when our eyes are opened by your Spirit. Holy Spirit, illumine us! Amen.

DAY 19– FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2022

PRAY THAT WE CAN BE PRESENT

“Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.” – Romans 12:15-16

Loving God,

You meet us where we are, in brokenness, sorrow, and pain, as well as in our joys and celebrations. Likewise, you call us to meet people where they are, in the highs and lows of life. Your presence is a gift we can offer to those we encounter each day. Let us not shy away from difficulty or stay focused on our own situations, but help us to see those who feel lost, unheard, and alone. May we hear the whispers of the Holy Spirit and be fully present to those who need your peace. Amen.

DAY 20– SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2022

PRAY FOR HARMONY

“May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” - Romans 15:5-6

Creating God,

You made us to be instruments of praise and love. Too often, we are a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal instead. Bring us into harmony with one another. Elevate our assumptions about others' motives. Push aside our suspicion of one another. Help us to see the beauty and passion in those around us. Tune our hearts to sing your grace. Turn us to you, Jesus, head of our church. Amen.

DAY 21– SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2022

PRAY FOR JOY

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”- 1 Peter 2:9-10

Source of All Joy,

You show us great mercy. You call us into your light, forgive us, and make us a holy people. Not only that - you give us a purpose – to declare your praise to the nations. Bring us back into the joy of our salvation, singing, praising, dancing, and rejoicing so that others may be drawn into the song. Remind us that there is no greater work. May our voices be a sweet, sweet sound in your ear. Amen.

DAY 22– MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2022

PRAY FOR HEALING

“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” - 2 Chronicles 7:14

God our Father,

We are your people. You are our God. You offer us forgiveness and our sins are as far off as the east is from the west. It is beyond our comprehension. O God, pour out your mercy on us and heal our church. Heal the divisions. Heal the regret. Heal the resentment. Heal the scars. All of us have sinned and gone astray. All of us have misunderstood and been misunderstood. Give us a view to the future and a willingness to be healed. We know that if we ask, you will answer. We wait for you. Amen.

DAY 23– TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2022

PRAISE CHRIST THE KING

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything.” – Colossians 1:15-18

Lord Jesus,

You are the Word made flesh, begotten of the Father, fully man and fully God. You came as a servant to show us the heart of the Father. You loved the lost, healed the sick, comforted the lonely, welcomed the outcast, drove out the demons, and ultimately died so that we might experience life. Through your death and resurrection, we are lifted up. You are the head of the church, Jesus. May we, your body, bring honor to you. They will know we are Christians by our love. Grant that we would live lives worthy of this calling. Amen.

DAY 24– WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2022 A PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

“And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?’ Then I said, ‘Here I am! Send me!’” – Isaiah 6:8

Sending God,

Your eyes look to and fro, seeking a heart that is fully surrendered to you. Because of Christ’s redeeming love, we are released from the grip of sin and free to go where you send us. Like Isaiah, we say, “Here we are! Send us!” As Christmas draws near, we know many are seeking a spiritual home. Empower us to spread the news of the home we find in Christ. Anoint us to be agents of your healing love and comforting grace to a world that is in pain. Send us to the least, the last, and the lost. Send us to the poor, marginalized, and forgotten. Send us in Christ’s name and for his glory alone. Amen.

DAY 25– THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2022

PRAY FOR JUSTICE

“The Lord executes acts of righteousness and justice for the oppressed. He revealed his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel. The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.” – Psalm 103:6-8

Loving God,

You seek out the defeated and pour out justice for the oppressed. We look around and see how unloving people can be. Thank you for forgiving us far beyond what we deserve. Thank you for offering us salvation and sanctification so we can be righteous people and stewards of your grace. May we, your redeemed people, be your hands and feet, administering justice and speaking out for the oppressed. Keep us faithful until you come again to make all things right. Amen.

DAY 26– FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2022

WAIT UPON THE LORD

“I remain confident in this: that I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord, be strong and take heart. Wait for the Lord.” – Psalm 27:13-14

All-Knowing God,

You hold the universe in your hand. Even though we know this, we find ourselves worried that things will not work out for the best. Give us strength when our hearts are weak, wisdom when we wander outside of your will, and patience when we struggle to wait for your timing to be revealed. We want to be part of the good work you seek to do through our church, not stumbling blocks to grace. Help us to stand firm and watch for you in the land of the living. Amen.

DAY 27– SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2022

PRAY FOR OUR PASTORS

“Give me now wisdom and knowledge to go out and come in before this people, for who can rule this great people of yours?” – 2 Chronicles 1:10

Great Shepherd of our Souls,

You lead us beside the still waters to pastures of grace. We humble our hearts before you and acknowledging the grace of Jesus Christ that makes a way for us to come before you. We thank you for our pastors today. Pour out your Holy Spirit on Pastors Tom, Thomas, Don, Stella, and Dave. Just as Solomon prayed for the wisdom and knowledge to lead, we pray for our pastors to have the gifts of the Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge, power, and fear of the Lord. Shepherd their hearts and guard their way as they shepherd the flock to the place of your leading. May they be mindful to make time and space to meet with you daily. Thank you for choosing them “for such a time as this.”

DAY 28– SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2022

PRAY FOR PEACE

“You have heard it said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy,’ but I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” -Matthew 5:43-44

Prince of Peace,

We give you thanks and praise for the promise of peace on earth. Give us eyes to see it breaking through. Give us feet to run to the places where we can bring healing and build bridges to understanding. May we be peacemakers, reflecting your goodness and turning the angry ones away from divisiveness and harm. As we await the coming of our Savior, let us find you in the small, quiet moments of our day, and may the peace which surpasses all understanding settle into our hearts. Amen.

Day 29– MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2022

PRAY TO BE KEPT FROM EVIL

“But the Lord is faithful and will give you strength to protect you from the evil one. We are confident about you in the Lord – that you are doing and will keep doing what we tell you to do. May the Lord lead your hearts to express God’s love and Christ’s endurance.”

– 2 Thessalonians 3:3-5

Jesus our High Priest,

Before you died for us, you prayed for us. We are in awe of your love for us. Keep us from evil. Protect us from the traps that we so often fall into, and guide us in the way that leads to life everlasting. May our anxieties and fears have no foothold in us. We receive the prayer lifted for us in Scripture - may we share your love and be granted your endurance. Amen.

DAY 30– TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2022

PRAY FOR WORDS OF GRACE

“Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful in building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.” - Ephesians 4: 29-32

God, our Rock and our Redeemer,

We trust you to lead us. In all of our formal and informal conversations, may we be kindhearted to one another. Quench any anger or defensiveness that may rise in us and give us words of grace, mercy, love, and respect. Guard us from choosing sides and retreating into corners, but instead help us to see a way forward together. May we emerge not as winners and losers, but as the Body of Christ, strengthened in mission and full of the

joy of the Lord. May this decision-making process be filled with words of grace, love, and respect. We thank you for the space you have graced us with do this work. Amen.

DAY 31– WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2022 PRAY FOR THOSE WHO MOURN

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” – Matthew 5:4

Lord of Heaven and Earth,

You made the moon and the stars that shine forth their light. Today is winter solstice, the longest night of the year. On this day in particular, we remember those who are living though long nights and dark days. Comfort those who mourn. Replace their sorrow with joy. Help us to stay focused on our call to walk with them through the dark valleys, especially when we are surrounded by joyful Christmas carols that not everyone has the heart to sing. Comfort those who are worried about the future of the church and heartbroken by division. Turn us to the new things you are doing and the places where there is resurrection. May we find peace in the path you have for us. Amen.

DAY 32– THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2022 PRAY AGAINST FEAR

“Do not be afraid, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God.” – Isaiah 41:10a

Lord of Hosts,

If you are for us, who can be against us? You have established your church and filled your people with your grace. Help us to believe that you are always with us. Help us to stand against any fear that may be taking root. Do not let it settle in among us. Instead, let your love radiate and let praises sing out. Fill us with the confidence of children of the most high. We pray to you, our strong tower. Amen.

DAY 33– FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2022 PRAY FOR CHILDREN

“Jesus said, “Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.” – Matthew 19:14

Dear Jesus,

You radiate kindness and gentleness. We long to be like you. This time of year, we love to hear the laughter of children and give them treats and toys. We love to feel like joyful children ourselves. Bless the children among us and help us to be attentive to their needs. Make us patient, understanding, and willing to sacrifice for their good. Bless our church as a safe and welcoming place for children. Strengthen us to teach and guide them well. May all our decisions lead to a brighter future for the church they will inherit. We thank you for the gift of our children. Amen.

DAY 34– CHRISTMAS EVE, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2022

LISTEN TO THE ANGELS SING

“But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.’” – Luke 2:10-11

Emmanuel,

Heaven and earth are filled with your glory. As we have prayed through these days, we have lifted our voices to you. On this Christmas Eve, let us fall silent in the mystery that holiness became human. May we listen to the angels as they herald your coming. Glory to God in the Highest! Amen.

DAY 35– CHRISTMAS DAY, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2022

REJOICE

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.” – John 1:1-5

Living Word,

You spoke our world into being and gave us the ultimate statement of love in the birth of a child in a manger. You speak into the silence with a still small voice that settles deep in our souls. We praise you and thank you for the gift of yourself. May we be filled with joy at the awareness of who you are and what you have given. The darkness will never overcome us. Amen.

DAY 36– MONDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2022

GIVE GLORY TO GOD

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.” – Titus 2:11-14

Savior God,

Joy to the World! You have come bringing us salvation! As we walk in the joy of Christmas, we praise you for your grace that trains us to walk in the light. Purify us this day and make us zealous to do good deeds, sharing our gifts with the world around us. Bless us with your continuing presence throughout our days. Amen.

DAY 37– TUESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2022

A PRAYER FOR FAITHFULNESS

“If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God and walking in his ways and observing his commandments, decrees and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess...Choose life so that you and your descendants shall live.” – Deuteronomy 30:16, 19

Heavenly God,

We long to be faithful as you are faithful, loving you with our whole heart, soul, and mind, and loving our neighbors as ourselves. We know that this is your path, the path that leads us to life everlasting. Help us to choose life, to claim our great inheritance that you have promised and set aside for us. Keep us on the path. To you, our light and our path, we pray. Amen.

DAY 38– WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2022 PRAY FOR VISION

“Since then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also shall appear with him in glory.” – Colossians 3:1-4

Creator God,

You have given us eyes and ears, but the prophets and Jesus reminded us that we often only see what we want to see and hear what we want to hear. We ignore those we don't like, turn away from that which makes us uncomfortable, and prioritize the things of earth over the things of heaven. Forgive us, we pray. Help us rise above and see a vision of the best that can be. Help us discern our role in bringing your will to be. Free us from our human limitations, by the power of your Spirit so that your will may be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

DAY 39– THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2022

PRAYER OF RETURN

“Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning. Rend your hearts and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and relenting from punishment.” – Joel 2:12-13

Merciful Lord,

We praise you and thank you for your loving-kindness toward us. You do not deal with us according to what we deserve, but according to your great mercy in Jesus Christ. Holy Spirit, reveal the parts of our hearts that we have not surrendered completely to you. Illuminate the sins we often choose to ignore. Renew a right spirit in us. Restore us into your covenant of steadfast love. In thankfulness we pray. Amen.

DAY 40– FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2022 PRAY TO SEE A NEW THING

“I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” – Isaiah 43:19

God of New Life,

Tomorrow is the last day of the year. As we prepare to ring in 2023 and turn the page on 2022, help us to release the past and look to the future. You created a beautiful world filled with light and wonder. Focus us on the good around us. Give us eyes to see the new things you are creating even now. Build our trust as you build your kingdom, holy God. Amen.



Worship with us this weekend! We will have Chrismon prayer stations on Saturday, December 31 from 5-6 PM, and one worship service at 10 AM on New Year's Day.

As we enter into the new year, we will “Carry the Light” into 2023 and continue seeking ways to pray together as a congregation.

May God bless you and keep you!