



Central Lutheran
MINNEAPOLIS



2020 Lenten Devotional Booklet

Welcome

Every year in the season of Lent we return to one section of Martin Luther's *Small Catechism* for study, reflection and conversation. Martin Luther wrote his explanations for each of the central expressions of faith in 1529 after struggling with how little people knew about the essentials of faith. The catechism includes his explanations to the 10 Commandments, the Apostles Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion and the Office of the Keys. Luther's *Small Catechism* has been a standard for confirmation instruction in Lutheran Churches for centuries. Yet, Luther intended it for the home, for the daily life of the faithful at the kitchen table.

The *Small Catechism* has a progression, intentionally set up this way by Martin Luther. It begins with the 10 Commandments, which when we meditate on them reveal the depth of our sin, how we are turned in on ourselves and away from God and neighbor. The Apostles Creed follows and gives voice to faith and the promise of God, creator, savior and sustainer. Following the Creed, Luther placed the Lord's Prayer. With the gift of faith, we turn to God in prayer. Grounded in prayer, we give thanks for Baptism and taste God's love in Holy Communion.

Prayer

Prayer at its deepest level is about listening. We do offer our spoken and silent prayers to God, but like all relationships there is a time to talk and a time to listen. In the words of the Lord's Prayer, Jesus literally puts the words of faith into our mouth. More so, Jesus promises the presence of God in daily prayer, as we speak and as we listen.

Daily Devotional Meditations

In this devotional you will encounter reflections on the Lord's Prayer. Most concentrate on a specific petition that is meaningful for the author of the meditation. They reflect on why the words given in the Lord's Prayer have drawn them into the presence of God. In many ways the words opened them to God, and it is often in the silence after we pray that we are ready to listen for God's reply to our prayers, yearnings, hopes and dreams.

The Lord's Prayer

Jesus taught the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6 and in Luke 11. Along with Psalm 23 it is the central prayer of faith and life in God. Here at Central we use the "contemporary" translations, but many were raised with the traditional translation of the 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**

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Both translations differ from the original prayer recorded in Matthew and in Luke. The conclusion to the prayer is an addition by the church. In Lutheran worship the community joins in the conclusion, but if you have been to worship in a Catholic Church you may have been caught as you continued on with the conclusion. It is helpful to pause and consider the prayer in both Matthew and Luke's Gospels.

Matthew 6:

Jesus taught them: "Pray then in this way:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

¹⁰Your kingdom come.

Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹Give us this day our daily bread.

¹²And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one."

Luke 11:

Jesus was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." ²He said to them, "When you pray, say:

Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

³Give us each day our daily bread.

⁴And forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial."

Listening for God

As you turn to a time of daily prayer, it can help to light a candle and welcome the presence of God. Notice your breathing in this time of prayer. We breathe in God's love and breathe out God's peace.

As you prayerfully consider the devotionals, the insights on the Lord's Prayer or the weekend lessons, what words or images stay with you? What do you hear God saying to you in each daily reflection? How is God inviting you to a deeper awareness of love, a deeper relationship with God? How is God inviting you to a deeper love for your family, friends and neighbors?

Offer all this to God in prayer and perhaps pause for a time of silence, of listening.

Ash Wednesday, February 26

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday. Lent is the 40-day journey to Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday. Sundays in Lent always celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, and so are not counted as part of the 40 days.

Ash Wednesday Gospel Lesson

The gospel lesson for Ash Wednesday is from Matthew 6. Jesus is teaching on prayer. The section of the gospel traditionally read on Ash Wednesday is just before he gives the Lord's Prayer. As the first day of Lent arrives, pause to reflect on these insights on prayer.

Jesus said to the disciples: ¹"Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

²"So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ³But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁵"And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ⁶But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁶"And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁹"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Matthew 6

Questions to consider:

1. How do you hear Jesus' invitation to prayer?
2. Why does he invite secrecy?
3. As you begin your Lenten journey for these 40 days, what will help you to be centered on God? What alms might you consider, what commitment to silence, stillness or solitude my help you return each day to God?
4. Some people do fast, "giving up" something for Lent as a way to be aware of God and God's presence. Others add a "fast," like sending a daily thank you to connect them to gratitude, as a way to be opened to God's presence. Will you fast by "giving up" or perhaps by adding something creative that opens you to God?

Thursday, February 27

(Pastor Melissa Pohlman)

The Lord's Prayer is easily one of the first bits of text I ever memorized. While I can remember many songs from childhood, most of the plays and poems I remember come from when I was already at least ten years old. The Lord's Prayer has been with me much longer. I remember being young and in the pews of my home church in Upper Michigan and yawning each time we said the Lord's Prayer. My little child-like worry was concerned that this was the devil trying to get in between God and I and the prayer his

Son gave us. No matter how hard I tried I still yawned, and it took me years of reminding myself there was nothing magical about the prayer, I was just a tired little human. Once I believed it was ok to yawn, I stopped yawning during the Lord's Prayer.

Many, many, many years later I found myself at the bedside of one of our dear folks who was struggling with yet another hospital visit. Often when I visit folks I ask them which version of the Lord's Prayer they use and then we pray it together. No matter how many times we tried that day we could not remember the whole prayer and pray it together. I was just a bit horrified as this was the man who taught me everything I learned about worship as a seminarian. We both looked at each other quite sheepishly and then devolved into laughter. We reminded each other that day there was nothing magical about the prayer, but that two of us were gathered in God's name and asking for healing and wholeness was fulfillment of God's will for us that day.

Friday, February 28

(Karin Abel)

Over 15 years ago, I noticed that every time I recited The Lord's Prayer in the sanctuary, about two thirds of the way through, I would yawn! I was very embarrassed and would sneak a peek at my pew neighbors hoping to see their eyes still closed. (They were.)

On my way home, I would try to figure out why I yawned during the prayer. There was no consistent explanation. I was not physically tired, and I was not yawning randomly or inappropriately at work. It continued to be a mystery for many years.

One day, at the Sabbath Retreat, led by Pastor Dick Beckman, and held on Saturdays once a month to take a deeper look at practicing different forms of prayer, I summoned my courage. I approached Pastor Beckman and explained that I had a question for him that might sound weird but that I've been puzzled about it for years. I told him about yawning every time I prayed The Lord's Prayer out loud. I asked him, "Why do you think this happens? He laughed and said quite matter-of-factly, "That's the Holy Spirit!"

I couldn't believe it! I was so relieved and at the same time, excited and delighted. After reflecting on his answer, I thought about how we hear all the time that God is in us and aren't really sure what that means. Then to feel the yawn and experience it as an expression of the Holy Spirit's presence, is humbling.

For me, it was comforting to accept Pastor Beckman's explanation of the yawn. I felt blessed. The mystery of feeling God's presence continues for us whether in centering prayer, nature, or "The Lord's Prayer yawn." It is apparent to me that God never stops giving his love and blessings—even in a yawn!

Saturday, February 29

It is leap year and so today is that once-every-four years day. The season of Lent is just beginning and so too our intentional reflection on the Lord's Prayer. Every Saturday we will turn to the *Small Catechism* and Martin Luther's explanations to the petitions of the Lord's Prayer that will be at the center of this week's class on Sunday or Wednesday. They will also be the petitions that will shape the meditation at the 12:00 p.m. worship on Wednesday.

The Lord's Prayer and Martin Luther's Explanations in the *Small Catechism*

This translation of Luther's explanations is from the ELW, our cranberry hymnal, pages 1163-1164.

Introduction: Our Father in heaven.

What is this? or What does this mean?

With these words God wants to attract us, so that we come to believe he is truly our Father and we are truly his children, in order that we may ask him boldly and with complete confidence, just as loving children ask their loving father.

The First Petition: Hallowed be your name.

What is this? or What does this mean?

It is true that God's name is holy in itself, but we ask in this prayer that it may also become holy in and among us.

Questions to consider:

1. Which petition are you drawn to today and why?
2. How does Martin Luther's explanation to the petition invite you to deeper reflection?
3. Begin or end your day with the Lord's Prayer.

Sunday, March 1

Every Sunday in Lent is a day to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. The Lord's Prayer is our guide for the 40 days of Lent. On Sundays in Lent our devotional reflection will turn to the gospel lessons. In this season of Lent there are remarkable lessons to ponder, moments that reveal God's love for you.

Lent 1: February 29/March 1

Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus experiences anew the temptations that Israel faced in the wilderness. As the Son of God, he endures the testing of the evil one.

¹Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ²He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. ³The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." ⁴But he answered, "It is written,

'One does not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "

⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written,

'He will command his angels concerning you,'
and 'On their hands they will bear you up,

so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.' "

⁷Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' "

⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; ⁹and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." ¹⁰Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

'Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.' "

¹¹Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

Monday, March 2

(Ann Oyen)

Our Father in heaven

The prayer Jesus gives us begins with the word OUR. We pray in concert with others, in a cacophony of languages, to a God of many names and images.

- We pray in community with all the people sitting beside us in the pews on Sunday morning, with family members encircling the bed of a dying loved one, with worshippers gathering in congregations all around the world.
- In just our part of the world, Minnesota, if we could listen as God listens, we would hear people praying in over 100 languages*—including Spanish, Hmong, Cushite, Chinese, French, Russian, Hindi, Swahili, Ojibwe, Dakota, Norwegian, German and English. God understands them all.
- We pray to a God of many roles, many actions, many faces—creator, sustainer, restorer and healer; a mother hen who gathers us in; a wise grandmother who tells stories of faith; a moonlit path through the dark forest of night; a siren song that calls us through all the days of our lives; and finally a soaring eagle that lifts us up and takes us home.

In this prayer that Jesus taught us, we ask in later petitions that his Kingdom come, his will be done, our bodies fed, our sins forgiven, and our temptations resisted; but we begin by acknowledging that we are treading on holy, heavenly ground. We are praying to the God of all creation and all eternity. How very humbling that this God cares for me and all the other sparrows nesting in the pews beside me.

As I pray those first four simple words, Our father in heaven, I'm reminded of the expansive, beautiful language of Psalm 8:3-5.

*When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
The moon and stars that you have established;
What are human beings that you are mindful of them,
Mortals that you care for them?
Yet you have made them a little lower than God,
And crowned them with glory and honor.*

Those are definitely “heady” words, but before we get too comfortable basking in the glory and honor with which we have been crowned, we need to read on and pray on. In verse 6 the psalmist reminds us that God has given us a huge responsibility: dominion over the works of his hands. How we exercise that responsibility will require being bread with and for others. Inevitably it will mean making mistakes and needing forgiveness.

*US Census Bureau data as cited by Hirsi, Ibrahim. MinnPost. 11/05/2015.

Tuesday, March 3

(Sara Klomp)

The prayer begins with the words: **Our Father.**

The church gets quiet and the congregation hits a cadence. Most people say it from memory and we follow together.

Have you ever thought about the phrase: Our Father? It states Our Father, not My Father. These words connect and tie us together.

When we say it alone, we don't change the word our to my. It ties me to many people and times in life, today and the past. I remember saying those words as a child in my Grandmother's church, with my parents while my Dad held my hand, at family and friend's funerals, weddings and baptisms. I remember saying in with my mother before she passed away. I even remember standing in a hallway one day at work with a Catholic priest and a student returning to classes from a bad injury and saying it together. (He insisted we do it as a blessing.) I've said it at countless services in other Christian and Catholic churches; with people who worship in different ways. And every time we started it just the same: Our Father, Ours.

To me it says: stop. Be still. And remember that our Father is with each of us, wherever we are on this journey. He is ours. He belongs to all of us.

Those two words set the stage. They bring us together. He is there for me and for you; for us. And that gives me peace.

Wednesday, March 4

(Marie Wiegert)

Hallowed be thy name

Hallowed is the past participle of the verb "hallow," which descends from Middle English "halowen." In which the word can be traced back to "halig." An Old English word for *holy*. Oh, God you must get very sad at some of the language you hear. Yet, it is difficult to understand your unconditional love toward us when our language and attitudes are not reflectively *holy*. Then we become absurd....not listening!! Thus, our physical, emotional, and spiritual responses do not become "holy-like." Thank you for your continuous love and patience in your mysteriousness.

Thursday, March 5

(Pastor Stephanie Friesen)

Hallowed be your name

"It is true that God's name is holy in itself, but we ask in this prayer that it may also become holy in and among us." - Luther's Small Catechism

We acknowledge the holiness of God in all of God's forms. And, through baptism, we are claimed by God—the one who is holy—giving us possibility and opportunity to experience the sacred and the holy in our daily lives.

I remember the last time I left our cabin with my dad. We had spent a wonderful week together doing cabin chores and having fun on the water as we often did at Green Lake. It was just the two of us that Friday because the rest of our family had gone home to go back to work. As we were getting ready to leave, I was having trouble locking a sliding glass door, so my dad got a screwdriver and brought it into the kitchen. He showed me how to loosen the screw and move the latch so it would catch the lock. He made sure I made the repair so that in the event it happened again when I was there without him, I could

fix it myself. As we shared this strangely tender father-daughter moment, I'm unusually aware of how lucky I was to have a dad like mine. It was a sacred and holy moment and I knew it.

We left the cabin on Friday and unexpectedly, my dad died on Monday.

The latch in that door still slips. And every time it does, I find that same screwdriver and feel blessed by my dad and grateful to our God who binds us in something as simple and holy as a broken latch and a screwdriver. God is indeed holy in and among us.

Friday, March 6

(Dick Hilden)

Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven

I have, over the years, prayed the Lord's prayer so very many times. Lately, I have been drawn particularly to the plea "your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven." This has always been meaningful for me. But of late, I have felt a sense of the utter joy that we and all of creation would experience if this were to fully come to pass. I can only imagine what this might look like. Maybe it would mean peace with justice ...the full inclusion of all persons...loving more... of all persons, creatures and the creation.

I am glad that we, here at Central, are involved in studies and empowering conversations relating to our openness to the mysteries of God! I am appreciative of the Central Lutheran congregation as a loving community with a ministry that, while not always perfect, works to bring God's loving kingdom to pass, here in this time and place.

Prayer:

Loving God, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Amen.

Saturday, March 7

The season of Lent continues and so too our intentional reflection on the Lord's Prayer. Every Saturday we will turn to the *Small Catechism* and Martin Luther's explanations to the petitions of the Lord's Prayer that will be at the center of this week's class on Sunday or Wednesday. They will also be the petitions that will shape the meditation at the 12:00 p.m. worship on Wednesday.

The Lord's Prayer and Martin Luther's Explanations in *the Small Catechism*

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The Second Petition: Your kingdom come.

What is this? or What does this mean?

In fact, God's kingdom comes on its own without our prayer, but we ask in this prayer that it may also come to us.

The Third Petition: Your will be done on earth as in heaven.

What is this? or What does this mean?

In fact, God's good and gracious will comes about without our prayer, but we ask in this prayer that it may also come about in and among us.

Questions to consider:

1. Which petition are you drawn to today and why?
2. How does Martin Luther's explanation to the petition invite you to deeper reflection?
3. Begin or end your day with the Lord's Prayer.

Sunday, March 8

Every Sunday in Lent is a day to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. The Lord's Prayer is our guide for the 40 days of Lent. On Sundays in Lent our devotional reflection will turn to the gospel lessons. In this season of Lent there are remarkable lessons to ponder, moments that reveal God's love for you.

Lent 2: March 7/8

Gospel: John 3:1-17

A curious Pharisee visits Jesus by night to learn from the teacher his friends reject. Jesus speaks to him about life in the Spirit and the kingdom of God.

¹Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ²He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." ³Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." ⁴Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" ⁵Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' ⁸The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." ⁹Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" ¹⁰Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

¹¹"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹²If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."

Monday, March 9

(Louise Griffin)

“Your kingdom come. . .”

Jesus made reference to the kingdom of heaven again and again from the very beginning of his ministry. He called the kingdom of God a mystery and so used a metaphor to explain it: the kingdom of heaven is like leaven, like hidden treasure, like a merchant, a net, or a householder. Then he asked his listeners, “Have you understood all this?”

When he was instructing his listeners on how to pray, Jesus placed the kingdom at the very beginning of the prayer, immediately after calling upon the Father. Centuries of liturgical practice have brought to us the rendition that closes with “the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours forever,” so that the concept of kingdom circles back to enfold the entire prayer.

Kingdom may seem an archaic word to 21st Century ears, so it’s interesting to note that the gospels’ Greek word for kingdom is *basileia*, source of our word basilica, which speaks to us of things ecclesiastical. To me this is a clue that the kingdom is already being realized in the life of the church. Neither political nor geographical, the kingdom is an inward reality, one already present. Yet because its realization is not accomplished fully, we pray, “Your kingdom come.”

So the kingdom is a work in progress, and by grace we dwell within it as the kingdom dwells in the midst of us.

Our Father in heaven, strengthen us in faith that we may comprehend the mystery of life in your kingdom.

Tuesday, March 10

(Pastor Melissa Pohlman)

Your kingdom come.

Jesus talks quite a bit about the Kingdom of God. Occasionally he even says that the Kingdom of God has come near. Most of those times he is referring to himself and the justice Jesus brings for those on the margins of society. The Kingdom most often looks like the reversal of all the ways we think the world works. The Kingdom comes and the first are last and the last are first, the lowly are lifted up and the high are brought low. And still, every time we pray the Lord’s Prayer we ask God to bring his Kingdom close, here and now. We should probably shake a little bit in our boots when we pray this boldly. If God’s Kingdom came tomorrow it would probably mean our lives would change quite a bit. In the United States we are often the first in the world for wealth and food consumption and discretionary spending. We are also often the last in parental leave for new parents, healthy living and happiness. Maybe turning over the tables wouldn’t be all bad. What we often forget is that it’s not all up to God to bring about the Kingdom. We are called to work with God every day to bring about the kingdom of heaven on earth, here and now. Jesus is with us, the Kingdom has come near.

Wednesday, March 11

(Ben Longman)

Thy will be done

Sometimes when I think about God's will, I think about God's love. At other times, I think about peace and justice in the world. And then, at other times, I'm just casting all my cares on God through this little petition hoping that, if God's will is done, my day will be easier.

Maybe there are times when it's not as basic as these things. Maybe, instead, God is teaching us something new about God's mothering love, justice, and peace. A new perspective that we haven't seen before.

And, finally, maybe there are times when it's not 'Thy will be done' but "God be God."

There is also another way to look at it. When my dad and I play music on Mondays at Central, sometimes my dad plays rhythm guitar and I play harmonica. And maybe God's will can be like a song where the guitar plays the rhythm which is ebbing and flowing while the harmonica's notes are tossing and turning, going up and down, smoothing out, joining with the rhythm and then going into a low drone. I've heard Central's organ do something like all this beautifully too. That rhythm holds the same pace as a cradle holds a baby—full of excitement, emotions, energy and rest.

Maybe God is like that rhythm—while we're tossing and turning, going up and down, God is always there for us, supporting, carrying and holding the songs of our lives together.

There are times in our life songs when there is just us in silence, where if we listen deeply, we can hear a whisper that travels through time, space and all of stuff right to our hearts to tell us we are loved.

Loving God, thank you for showing us yourself and your supporting, loving will in the songs and silence of our lives. Amen.

Thursday, March 12

(Bonnie Weisenburger)

Your Will Be Done, on Earth

God's will on earth started at creation. From the parting of the waters to forming humans, God saw that it was good!! His creation came from love and order. But then the human free will thing got in the way and God decided to start over and give his will another chance, through humans, starting with Noah. That didn't work out so well either, so he willed the perfect plan. He sent his son Jesus to earth, whose only purpose throughout his life was to do his father's will: "For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me." (John 6:38)

Then Paul says in his 1st letter to Timothy 2:3-4, "This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." But he muddies it up by saying in verse 8, "I desire then..." and goes on to list innumerable ways that people should live in order to be in God's graces. So even though Paul was chosen by God, he still let his own will take over.

Albert Einstein once said, "I want to know God's thoughts." If you know the thoughts of God, you know his will for you. In order to get to know the thoughts of God, one must be in communication with him. The ways to do that are through prayer, through listening to God in silence and through mediating on his Word. We have God's Word! We can all get to know God's thoughts. Micah 6:8 says it all for me, "What does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God."

Friday, March 13

(Vicki Bierlein)

1968 was a turbulent year in the USA. It was also the year my eldest sister graduated from high school. My gifted, beautiful, and brilliant sister whose fingers tickled the ivories in classical, jazz, and rock classics; whose voice carried eloquently and confidently from the theatrical stage to the back row of the audience, whose jewelry creations exuded graceful beauty. I, an awkward seventh grader that year, idolized her and did absolutely everything I could to try to be like her.

Time passed, and somehow during those passing decades, her life journey took an unexpected turn from a successful career path to a mysterious and frequently rocky road of powerful medications and harrowing hospitalizations for serious mental illness.

When life doesn't go the way we expect, it's natural and tempting to ask, Why is this happening to this good person? Why aren't our prayers for this lovely person answered in the way we hope? We trust that God is holding us close in trying times, yet it can be challenging to face and understand the internal confusion implicit in trying situations and times.

What does it really mean when we pray "save us from the time of trial?" And "Thy will be done?"

Saturday, March 14

The season of Lent continues and so too our intentional reflection on the Lord's Prayer. Every Saturday we will turn to the *Small Catechism* and Martin Luther's explanations to the petitions of the Lord's Prayer that will be at the center of this week's class on Sunday or Wednesday. They will also be the petitions that will shape the meditation at the 12:00 p.m. worship on Wednesday.

The Lord's Prayer and Martin Luther's Explanations in the Small Catechism

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The Fourth Petition: Give us today our daily bread.

What is this? or What does this mean?

In fact, God gives daily bread without our prayer, even to all evil people, but we ask in this prayer that God cause us to recognize what our daily bread is and to receive it with thanksgiving. What then does "daily bread" mean? Everything included in the necessities and nourishment for our bodies, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, farm, fields, livestock, money, property, an upright spouse, upright children, upright members of the household, upright and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, decency, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.

Questions to consider:

1. Which petition are you drawn to today and why?
2. How does Martin Luther's explanation to the petition invite you to deeper reflection?
3. Begin or end your day with the Lord's Prayer.

Sunday, March 15

Every Sunday in Lent is a day to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. The Lord's Prayer is our guide for the 40 days of Lent. On Sundays in Lent our devotional reflection will turn to the Gospel lessons. In this season of Lent there are remarkable lessons to ponder, moments that reveal God's love for you.

Lent 3: March 14/15

Gospel: John 4:5-42

Jesus defies convention to engage a Samaritan woman in conversation. Her testimony, in turn, leads many others to faith.

⁵[Jesus] came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.⁶Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

⁷A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." ⁸(His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) ⁹The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) ¹⁰Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." ¹¹The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? ¹²Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" ¹³Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." ¹⁵The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." ¹⁷The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; ¹⁸for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" ¹⁹The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. ²⁰Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." ²¹Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. ²⁴God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." ²⁵The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." ²⁶Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

²⁷Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her?" ²⁸Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, ²⁹"Come and see a man who told me everything I have

ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" ³⁰They left the city and were on their way to him.

³¹Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something." ³²But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." ³³So the disciples said to one another, "Surely no one has brought him something to eat?" ³⁴Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. ³⁵Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. ³⁶The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. ³⁷For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' ³⁸I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

³⁹Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done." ⁴⁰So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹And many more believed because of his word. ⁴²They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world."

Monday, March 16

(Gayle Dustrud)

Give us this day our daily bread

Give reminds us that everything we have has been given to us by God. No matter how hard we've worked and how much we've tried to live a good life, our resources, our abilities, our lives themselves, are still all loving, unconditional gifts from God.

Us and *our* reveal that we are not just praying for our own daily bread, but for the needs of the entire human community. We are invited to take a closer look at how we might share our gifts and stand for justice alongside victims of systems blocking the abundant life God has in store for them.

This day is a reminder that we are not asking God to help us stockpile for the future. Satisfied with enough, we trust that God and the Christian community praying with us will have our backs if our time of need should arise.

Daily bread, as defined by Luther, is "everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like." Our personal lists could go on and on, inspiring our hearts to sing with praise for these many blessings and opportunities to be a conduit of God's love.

Tuesday, March 17

(Lois Wolff)

Give us this day our daily bread

Bread. Oh, the memories of how divine even peanut butter sandwiches tasted on home baked bread.

I'm a p.k. [preacher's kid, #4 out of 5 in my family] and our meals usually started with all of us saying the prayer "Come Lord Jesus, be our guest and let these gifts to us be blest. "

When dessert was finished, Dad would say a prayer of thanks: "Thank you Jesus for this food, thank you Jesus, you are good. Amen."

But this 4th petition is not just about my needs. It is about asking God to give us our bread. Us and our community. Food is a great attraction for bringing people into community with each other whether friends, colleagues, or perfect strangers. The offering of food and drink helps me welcome the stranger or newcomer.

But bread or food is not the only thing which sustains life. What about the nourishment we receive from our church community, our family get togethers, our friends who uplift us [or sometimes not so much] and other groups which sustain our longing for good health, peace, recreation, and restorative justice?

Singing in worship and choir feeds me spiritually—when you sing, you pray twice. Listening for God helps fill a need to be closer to God in a contemplative way. Hearing shared stories of how that can happen brings people closer together. In going to communion, we are fed every time with the Bread of Life.

Yes, Lord. Give us this day our daily bread. Dear Jesus, help us to embrace you as our Bread of Life. Thank you for feeding our souls with your abundant life so that we can share that life with everyone we meet. Amen.

Wednesday, March 18

(Judith Hedman)

Daily bread

My sisters and I sometimes played a "what-if-game." What if you had to choose TODAY the only five foods we could eat for the rest of our lives? We all chose potatoes (duh). We all made choices in terms of balance and variation of preparation and ease of storage. All very practical and with the tiniest bit of survivalist flavor.

In Luther's *Small Catechism* "our daily bread" includes so much more than food. It includes the other aspects of life that make for a balanced and healthy life. Supportive families, friends, and communities; good government, good weather, safe shelter, fulfilling work...

Praying this petition, I try to think about everything included in "daily bread." I think in thankfulness rather than demand. I remember the vastness of the good and necessary things in life that God wants and plans for us. I remind myself that this petition is not just about me, or my family and friends, and not just my community. But US—all the people and living things on this planet.

When my sisters and I played “what-if” it was with the assumption that there would always be choices. And those choices would always be ours. But, “what-if” the choices I’m making daily are affecting the goodness of the daily bread available for others.

Lord teach me to pray – that I consider others in the big and small decisions in my life. May my choices not harm others or diminish their access to daily bread.

Thursday, March 19

(Sara Gunsch)

Give us our Bread, our daily Bread

Like many of you I grew up with this picture on our dining room wall. I used to think it was my grandfather praying over his bread. As I matured, I realized that it was not my grandfather but referencing all who prayed over their blessings in life, giving thanks for abundance.



So what does it mean for Christian’s to ask for bread daily? Bread can mean so many different things. Obviously, food, sustenance but it can also mean money and when we receive communion, we receive the body and blood of our Lord and Savior, the ultimate gift.

But for many "our daily bread" can mean so much more! Adequate housing, justice, affordable and accessible healthcare. It can mean strong supportive community, a good education for our children and a safe living environment.

When we pray this prayer we must also remember it is not, give me my daily bread but give us our daily bread. This prayer was meant to be inclusive, not exclusive.

As I was reading about the origins of this picture, I was moved by the photographer's words that ring true today,

“By highlighting Wilden’s devout posture and humble surroundings, he aimed to evoke the spirit of religious faith, thankfulness, and humility he associated with many of the newly arrived European immigrants to Minnesota.”

So I ask that as you move through Lent and as you pray the Lord's Prayer, when you reach “Give us this day, our daily bread,” consider not just your daily needs but the needs of those around you, around us.

Pray with me, Our Father in Heaven, thank you for sustaining us with thy Holy Bread, remind us to humbly pray for those around us that are in need of your life-giving Bread each and every day.

In your Holy name we pray, Amen.

Friday, March 20

(Bobbie Spradley)

Daily Bread

Over the years as I've prayed the Lord's Prayer, some parts of it have taken on new meaning for me. It's become much more important to me, for example, to pray, "Your will be done." And realizing that we need to forgive others as God forgives us hit hard when I first really thought about it seriously. But another part of the Lord's Prayer has become especially meaningful to me. It's asking for our daily bread.

Over 30 years ago I was speaking with a wise spiritual counselor and she asked me about my devotional life. Oh, I don't have time, I said, and explained that I was working full time, adjusting to a move and a new marriage, had responsibilities and kids to tend to. She persisted. Might you consider taking 10 minutes each morning to be with God? I guessed I could.

So I did. I discovered as time went on that the 10 minutes grew. Talking to God and reflecting on God's words to me became increasingly satisfying and whetted my appetite for more. I could see why Jesus said to ask for our daily bread. I'd always prayed "give us today our daily bread" and was grateful for the food on my table and the way God had provided for me. But this was a new way for me to think about this prayer. Perhaps Jesus meant for me to ask for daily spiritual nourishment. Maybe that was why Jesus said he was the Bread of Life!

My morning "spiritual meal" has become a must in my daily routine. And now when I pray the Lord's prayer and ask for daily bread, I mean spiritual "bread," not just physical.

Are you being nourished spiritually as well as physically? More than anything, God longs for each of us to be truly fed and maturing in a closer walk with God. If you don't have a devotional practice, might you consider starting with 10 minutes?

Saturday, March 21

The season of Lent continues and so too our intentional reflection on the Lord's Prayer. Every Saturday we will turn to the *Small Catechism* and Martin Luther's explanations to the petitions of the Lord's Prayer that will be at the center of this week's class on Sunday or Wednesday. They will also be the petitions that will shape the meditation at the 12:00 p.m. worship on Wednesday.

The Lord's Prayer and Martin Luther's Explanations in the Small Catechism

This translation of Luther's explanations is from the ELW, our cranberry hymnal, pages 1163-1164.

The Fifth Petition: Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

What is this? or What does this mean?

We ask in this prayer that our heavenly Father would not regard our sins nor deny these petitions on their account, for we are worthy of nothing for which we ask, nor have we earned it. Instead we ask that God would give us all things by grace, for we daily sin much and indeed deserve only punishment. So, on the other hand, we, too, truly want to forgive heartily and to do good gladly to those who sin against us.

Questions to consider:

1. Which petition are you drawn to today and why?
2. How does Martin Luther's explanation to the petition invite you to deeper reflection?
3. Begin or end your day with the Lord's Prayer.

Sunday, March 22

Every Sunday in Lent is a day to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. The Lord's Prayer is our guide for the 40 days of Lent. On Sundays in Lent our devotional reflection will turn to the gospel lessons. In this season of Lent there are remarkable lessons to ponder, moments that reveal God's love for you.

Lent 4: March 21/22

Gospel: John 9:1-41

Jesus heals a man born blind, provoking a hostile reaction that he regards as spiritual blindness to the things of God.

¹As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, ⁷saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." ¹⁰But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." ¹²They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" ²⁸Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for

this man, we do not know where he comes from.”³⁰The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes.”³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will.³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind.³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.”³⁴They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

³⁵Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”³⁶He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.”³⁷Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.”³⁸He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him.³⁹Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.”⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?”⁴¹Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

Monday, March 23

(Lynda Minnick)

Give Us This Day

“This day” oh Lord —

but I’m worried about tomorrow
next week, next year.
There are so many “what ifs”
so much uncertainty about my job
my retirement savings
my family
yes, my country.

Do you really mean “this day”?
That today I can let go of the anxiety
the worries that dog my footsteps?
That I can trust you for all I need
day after day
after day?

Open my heart, O God.
Open my eyes
my ears
my senses
to recognize the gifts of this very day
the wonder of each hour

Knowing
You are with me
loving and sustaining
through all my days.

Tuesday, March 24

(Viki Kimsal)

Give us this day our daily bread

As a theology student at Valparaiso University I had an amazing class studying the Psalms where the professor invited us to find the petitions of the Lord's Prayer as given to us in Matthew 6:9-13 in the Psalms. Up to this time my theology classes were lectures. Here was me taking the Bible and searching it for what Christ was saying to His disciples at the Sermon on the Mount because they asked Him to teach them to pray. During that semester I became familiar with 150 Psalms and found all the petitions through the words of David and other psalmists.

The fourth petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," can be understood in Matthew 6:8 when Christ says to his disciples, "Your Father knows what you need before you ask him." Psalm 23 is for us to trust God's goodness, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." Psalm 85:12, "The Lord will give what is good." Psalm 145:15, "The eyes of all look to you and you give them their food in due season." The Psalms are full of describing God's abundant goodness to us. So when we pray "Give us this day our daily bread," aren't we really asking God to help us know what we need. We might be articulate in what we want, but we need heavenly guidance to learn to know what we need. Daily.

Wednesday, March 25

(Caron Porthan)

"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespasses against us."

I'm drawn to the Fifth Petition, because it tells me of God's awareness that I am human. That God is aware I will make regrettable choices, say regrettable things. And others will do the same. Sometimes small, sometimes large. Trespasses against my own soul, against other souls. It's a continuing cycle, and sometimes results in breathtaking destruction.

Trespasses elicit anger, hurt, resentment, shame, guilt, even vengeance. These can disrupt our lives, send us way off track, cause an emotional turmoil which, if left unchecked, can descend us into a deep emotional trauma which negatively impacts every nook and cranny of our lives, in other lives. Trespasses are the dark bricks of unhealthy bridges, constructed between our souls, and within my own soul, over which levels of destruction are encouraged to pass, freely back and forth until the weapons of anger, shame, malice, blame leave nothing but ashes on both sides. It can soon feel like all we are doing is fighting a war to keep the bridge open, each side hoping to win. This is what sin looks like. It is the human condition with which we are all afflicted.

The Fifth Petition provides a way out of this war, this war of trespasses. God models it for us, by telling us that He loves and forgives us regardless of our actions. Despite how we react because of what others have done to us, or what Life has done to us. Despite our unhealthy bridges over which we fight our war of trespasses again and again, day after day.

He forgives us merely because he loves us and has compassion for us, just the way we are. Love and compassion dissolve the destructive wake left by this war of trespasses, within ourselves and others. It replaces those bridges built from old trespasses into bridges built from love and compassion. And these bridges will only allow love and compassion to pass over them; love and compassion that are the

ingredients of forgiveness. Like a light, these ingredients guide us, safely and freely, back and forth over these new bridges to see what's on the other side. Knowing that the light of forgiveness will rebuild our souls out of the ashes left on both sides.

Forgiveness is about releasing myself from my own anger, hurts, resentments, shame, guilt over what has happened to me, what I've done to others, what I've done to myself. It is not about me reconstructing the ashes on the other side of the bridge. That is God's business. But God's forgiveness tells me, that God will protect me if that bridge is no longer safe to cross. And, while God is taking care of that side, I can follow in God's model of love and compassion, or rather, forgiveness, to help rebuild a new bridge to my new destination, over which love compassion can freely pass, back and forth, healing myself and others along the way.

Thursday, March 26

(Megan Bowman)

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us

The Saturday afternoon that my dad passed away, I found myself with my aunt and uncles in a church pew praying. We had found each other and a 5:00 p.m. service after receiving the unexpected call. It seemed so natural to pray, and it seemed even more natural to pray prayers written by someone else. As the summer evening sun flooded the sanctuary, I went through the motions of standing for the gospel, sitting for the sermon; standing for the Creed, kneeling for the Great Thanksgiving. Motions, words, scents, sights—the ritual of the familiar conveyed so much comfort.

Then we came to the Lord's Prayer. I clasped my loved ones' hands and prayed the most familiar of prayers. However, one phrase struck me anew—"Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us." For years, grievances against my dad consumed my love for him, and my ability to be in relationship with him was bound up by the chains of wanting rectification for all the hurt he caused.

The psalmist writes, "Lord, teach me about death so that I may become wise" (Psalm 90:12). That day, I realized the dead are no longer accountable to us. Rectification for me would never come. And it was in the midst of that loss, of my dad and of the price I had set on our love, that I found what God had given both of us—forgiveness.

Friday, March 27

(William Nicol)

Deliver us from evil

One of the great joys of creating a life is the time when your child first becomes aware and so much in love. Where you experience a wonderful time in life of bonded sweet innocence. In their nighttime prayers we'd ask that God would make them clever to the ways of evil to protect their innocence.

Christ's love brings us back to that bond of love that God has for his creation. As we live and grow in that creation it's good to have that peace and understanding that God lived our life of flesh. Who in flesh was more clever to the ways of evil than Christ to give us this hope.

Saturday, March 28

The season of Lent continues and so too our intentional reflection on the Lord's Prayer. Every Saturday we will turn to the *Small Catechism* and Martin Luther's explanations to the petitions of the Lord's Prayer that will be at the center of this week's class on Sunday or Wednesday. They will also be the petitions that will shape the meditation at the 12:00 p.m. worship on Wednesday.

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The Sixth Petition: Save us from the time of trial.

What is this? or What does this mean?

It is true that God tempts no one, but we ask in this prayer that God would preserve and keep us, so that the devil, the world, and our flesh may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, and other great and shameful sins, and that, although we may be attacked by them, we may finally prevail and gain the victory.

The Seventh Petition: And deliver us from evil.

What is this? or What does this mean?

We ask in this prayer, as in a summary, that our Father in heaven may deliver us from all kinds of evil— affecting body or soul, property or reputation—and at last, when our final hour comes, may grant us a blessed end and take us by grace from this valley of tears to himself in heaven.

Questions to consider:

1. Which petition are you drawn to today and why?
2. How does Martin Luther's explanation to the petition invite you to deeper reflection?
3. Begin or end your day with the Lord's Prayer.

Sunday, March 29

Every Sunday in Lent is a day to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. The Lord's Prayer is our guide for the 40 days of Lent. On Sundays in Lent our devotional reflection will turn to the gospel lessons. In this season of Lent there are remarkable lessons to ponder, moments that reveal God's love for you.

Lent 5: March 28/29

Gospel: John 11:1-45

Jesus is moved to sorrow when his friend Lazarus falls ill and dies. Then, in a dramatic scene, he calls his friend out of the tomb and restores him to life.

¹Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ²Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was

ill. ³So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." ⁴But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." ⁵Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, ⁶after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

⁷Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." ⁸The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?" ⁹Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. ¹⁰But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them." ¹¹After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him." ¹²The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right." ¹³Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. ¹⁴Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." ¹⁶Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

¹⁷When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, ¹⁹and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. ²⁰When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. ²¹Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." ²³Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." ²⁴Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." ²⁵Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, ²⁶and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

²⁸When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." ²⁹And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. ³⁰Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. ³¹The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. ³²When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." ³³When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. ³⁴He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." ³⁵Jesus began to weep. ³⁶So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" ³⁷But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

³⁸Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. ³⁹Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." ⁴⁰Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" ⁴¹So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. ⁴²I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." ⁴³When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

⁴⁵Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

Monday, March 30

(Judith Hedman)

Evil

To reach the Claude Monet exhibit at the Art Institute of Chicago in late 1980s, visitors had to walk through the medieval armaments hallway. Later that same day, a chance meeting with the former pastor of the friend I was visiting, explained how he had to “pray the evil away” so they could safely walk through that same hallway. What!!! Really???

It had never occurred to me that evil resides in inanimate objects. I don’t believe it does. Then is evil an entity like Satan that tempted Jesus in the wilderness? Or is evil like the Dementors from the Harry Potter movies that drain you of “every good feeling, every happy memory?” I don’t know. What I believe is that evil exists and shows itself in human actions or inaction.

I have personally experienced evil in the form of bullying and sexism. I have not personally experienced war, famine, racism, genocide, persecution for my faith or gender identity. I know people who have—a former co-worker who narrowly escaped death in war-torn Liberia, a cousin with un-diagnosed PTSD caused by battle in WWII, too many high-school classmates that died by suicide decades after returning from Viet Nam, friends escaping abusive relationships, racists words aimed at a student.

Does praying really “deliver us” from evil? Yes, when prayers propel us to action. Yes, when prayers give us the courage to confront evil everywhere. Yes, when prayers turn our hearts to love. Yes, when prayers give us peace within the storm.

Tuesday, March 31

(Deacon Mark Sedio)

The Lord's Prayer

Gracia Grindal
(after Luther)

Mark Sedio

1. Fa - ther in heav - en we are tru - ly your child - ren as
2. Your name be hal - lowed, by it - self it is ho - ly, Now
3. Bring in your king - dom, though it comes in its own time O
4. Your will be fin - ished, here on earth as in heav - en and

child - ren we ap - proach you, as be - lov - ed child - ren we
make it ho - ly for us as your Word is taught to us:
let it come in our lives, as you give your Spir - it so
help us do your bid - ding; curb the e - vil one, Lord, and

call you by name: The pow - er and glo - ry are yours!
your Word is truth! The pow - er and glo - ry are yours!
we may be - lieve. The pow - er and glo - ry are yours!
keep us in faith. The pow - er and glo - ry are yours!

- | | |
|--|---|
| 5. Give us bread daily,
as you feed all your children.
O work thanksgiving in us
for your gifts which satisfy
all our needs:
The power and the glory are yours. | 6. Forgive our sins as
we forgive one another
O grant us, grace to praise you
and to live in love for our
friends and our foes:
The power and the glory are yours. |
| 7. Save us from trials
so that even when tempted
we will not fall to sinning
into unbelief or to
sins of despair:
The power and the glory are yours. | 8. Spare us from evil
and from all that would harm us.
And when death comes to take us,
grant us life eternal and
give us your peace.
The power and glory are yours. |

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Wednesday, April 1

(Pastor Peter Nycklemoe)

The Lord's Prayer – Words in our mouths

When we are newborns we are fed by loving parents. Our vulnerability is on display as we open our mouths like little birds to be fed. In time we learn to feed ourselves, but that food is still provided for us by family. Eventually we head out on our own. We do feed ourselves, and buy our own groceries, but we still know that the food comes from the hand of a generous God, through hands that have planted and harvested, packed and stocked the shelves. In many ways we are still fed, the food literally put into our mouths by so many others.

The Lord's Prayer is a word that is put into our mouths by a loving God. Martin Luther, reflecting on the Lord's Prayer in the Large Catechism, writes, "God takes the initiative and puts into our mouths the very words and approach we are to use. In this way we see how deeply concerned God is about our needs."

We feast on these words, on this prayer, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed by your name..." We chew and digest these words in the morning when we rise or at night as the last words we speak before falling sleep. When we gather for weekly worship, they are the words we pray together right before we feast on the real presence of Jesus given to us in bread and wine.

Your parents hopefully fed you with love and tenderness with both food that nourishes and words that shaped you for a life of love, justice and hope. God as your divine parents feeds you still, daily giving you the pray of Jesus, on your lips and in your heart. A prayer to open you to God for a life of prayer, praise and thanksgiving.

Thursday, April 2

(Bobby Jones)

Bobby Jones is one of our Monday preachers. He helps lead worship on the 3rd Monday of every month and reminds us of how God is always present with us in the difficult struggles of our lives. Bobby tells his own story of addiction and recovery and is clear to remind us that God isn't finished with him yet. Though God was with him in the midst of his addiction and God redeemed him from that life, God is still with him guiding and shepherding. When asked how the Lord's Prayer has shaped him, Bobby pointed out how similar it was to Psalm 23. The God who we pray to provide for us and keep us from evil is the same God who leads us beside still waters, who walks with us through the valley of the shadow of death, who helps us walk in right paths for His name's sake, and who will surely make goodness and mercy follow us all the days of our life. Bobby knows the loving care of this shepherd who is also Our Father, who feeds us, who forgives us and whose is the kingdom and the power and who deserves all the glory.

Friday, April 3

(Pastor Stephanie Friesen)

Ruach is the Hebrew word for wind or spirit or breath. I love the word and the idea of ruach because embedded in its very nature *ruach* is a mystery. By teaching the concept of ruach, we have a word or language to teach about that which we cannot fully explain, a mystery that we know exists, and yet is beyond our grasp.

I especially love this concept of ruach when it comes to The Lord's Prayer. I love that when you ask people about how or when or under what circumstances they learned the Lord's Prayer, many people have a hard time coming up with an answer. A few of us have memories of being taught by parents or others, but many say they don't know how they learned this beloved prayer. Many say they've always known it or they can't remember a time when they didn't know it.

This prayer that lives deep in our bones calls us into the mystery of our faith. It calls us into relationship with God and with one another. It is a community prayer. “Our father...”, “give us...” and “lead us...” – remind us that our lives as God’s people are always relational – even and especially when we pray.

Consider God’s *ruach* as you pray this beloved and ancient prayer and ponder how it finds its way into your life.

Saturday, April 4

The season of Lent enters Holy Week. This weekend we celebrate Palm Sunday and we continue our intentional reflection on the Lord’s Prayer. These Saturdays in Lent we have turned to the *Small Catechism* and Martin Luther’s explanations to the petitions of the Lord’s Prayer. Today we turn to the conclusion of the prayer and Luther’s explanation.

The Lord’s Prayer and Martin Luther’s Explanations in the Small Catechism

This translation of Luther’s explanations is from the ELW, our cranberry hymnal, pages 1163-1164

Conclusion: [For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever.] Amen.

What is this? or What does this mean?

That I should be certain that such petitions are acceptable to and heard by our Father in heaven, for he himself commanded us to pray like this and has promised to hear us. "Amen, amen" means "Yes, yes, it is going to come about just like this."

Questions to consider:

1. Which petition are you drawn to today and why?
2. How does Martin Luther’s explanation to the petition invite you to deeper reflection?
3. Begin or end your day with the Lord’s Prayer.

Palm Sunday, April 5

Every Sunday in Lent is a day to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. The Lord’s Prayer is our guide for the 40 days of Lent. On Sundays in Lent our devotional reflection will turn to the gospel lessons. In this season of Lent there are remarkable lessons to ponder, moments that reveal God’s love for you.

Processional Gospel: Matthew 21:1-11

Jesus enters Jerusalem

¹When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ²saying to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. ³If anyone says anything to you, just say this, ‘The Lord needs them.’ And he will send them immediately.” ⁴This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

⁵“Tell the daughter of Zion,

Look, your king is coming to you,

humble, and mounted on a donkey,

and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

⁶The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. ⁸A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

“Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

¹⁰When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” ¹¹The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Monday in Holy Week, April 6

Guide to Prayer

On each day in Holy Week, the church marks significant moments as we journey to Jesus death and new life. In the ancient practice of *lectio divina*, or divine reading, we slowly read the lesson three times, pausing between each reading to pay attention to a word or phrase that catches our attention. The word or phrase may arrive like a gentle, comforting spring rain or it may arrive like a rattling thunderstorm. We pay attention to what it stirs up. What is God saying to you? What invitation is God offering for your relationship with the One who is all love for you?

Gospel: John 12:1-11

A few days after raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus visits the man’s home. Lazarus’s sister Mary anoints the feet of Jesus with costly perfume.

¹Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ²There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. ³Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus’ feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, ⁵“Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?” ⁶(He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) ⁷Jesus said, “Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. ⁸You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.”

⁹When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ¹⁰So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, ¹¹since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus.

Prayer

O God, your Son chose the path that led to pain before joy and to the cross before glory. Plant his cross in our hearts, so that in its power and love we may come at last to joy and glory, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Tuesday in Holy Week, April 7

Guide to Prayer

On each day in Holy Week, the church marks significant moments as we journey to Jesus death and new life. In the ancient practice of *lectio divina*, or divine reading, we slowly read the lesson three times, pausing between each reading to pay attention to a word or phrase that catches our attention. The word or phrase may arrive like a gentle, comforting spring rain or it may arrive like a rattling thunderstorm. We pay attention to what it stirs up. What is God saying to you? What invitation is God offering for your relationship with the One who is all love for you?

Gospel: John 13:1-17, 31b-35

The story of the last supper in John's gospel recalls a remarkable event not mentioned elsewhere: Jesus performs the duty of a slave, washing the feet of his disciples and urging them to do the same for one another.

¹Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ²The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper ³Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. ⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." ⁹Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" ¹⁰Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." ¹¹For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹²After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. ¹⁴So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. ¹⁷If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them."

^{31b}"Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³²If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' ³⁴I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Prayer

Holy God, source of all love, on the night of his betrayal, Jesus gave us a new commandment, to love one another as he loves us. Write this commandment in our hearts, and give us the will to serve others as he was the servant of all, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Wednesday in Holy Week, April 8

Guide to Prayer

On each day in Holy Week, the church marks significant moments as we journey to Jesus death and new life. In the ancient practice of *lectio divina*, or divine reading, we slowly read the lesson three times, pausing between each reading to pay attention to a word or phrase that catches our attention. The word or phrase may arrive like a gentle, comforting spring rain or it may arrive like a rattling thunderstorm. We pay attention to what it stirs up. What is God saying to you? What invitation is God offering for your relationship with the One who is all love for you?

Gospel: John 13:21-32

At the last supper, Jesus identifies Judas Iscariot as the one who will betray him, and sends him on his way.

²¹Jesus was troubled in spirit, and declared, “Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me.” ²²The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he was speaking. ²³One of his disciples—the one whom Jesus loved—was reclining next to him; ²⁴Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. ²⁵So while reclining next to Jesus, he asked him, “Lord, who is it?” ²⁶Jesus answered, “It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.” So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot. ²⁷After he received the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, “Do quickly what you are going to do.” ²⁸Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. ²⁹Some thought that, because Judas had the common purse, Jesus was telling him, “Buy what we need for the festival”; or, that he should give something to the poor. ³⁰So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

³¹When he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³²If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once.”

Prayer

Almighty God, your Son our Savior suffered at human hands and endured the shame of the cross. Grant that we may walk in the way of his cross and find it the way of life and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Maundy Thursday, April 9

Worship at 7:00 p.m.

Service of Forgiveness, Foot/Hand Washing and Holy Communion

Maundy Thursday begins the Three Great Days that open us to God’s love at work in the death and new life of Jesus Christ. There is one worship service that we join over these “three days.” Maundy Thursday evening the first worship services draws us to the communion table. On Good Friday we gather to meditate on the death of Jesus for the life of the world. At the Easter Vigil we remember God’s history of salvation, our baptism and celebrate Holy Communion. On Easter Sunday we gather to raise our alleluia, singing that Jesus Christ is Risen. You are encouraged to be a part of all four services that comprise one worship event.

Guide to Prayer

We turn to the central moments for each of these “three days” (sunset on Thursday through morning on

Sunday). On each day of these three days, the church marks the arrival at Jesus death and new life. In the ancient practice of *lectio divina*, or divine reading, we slowly read the lesson three times, pausing between each reading to pay attention to a word or phrase that catches our attention. The word or phrase may arrive like a gentle, comforting spring rain or it may arrive like a rattling thunderstorm. We pay attention to what it stirs up. What is God saying to you? What invitation is God offering for your relationship with the One who is all love for you?

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Prayer

Holy God, source of all love, on the night of his betrayal, Jesus gave us a new commandment, to love one another as he loves us. Write this commandment in our hearts, and give us the will to serve others as he was the servant of all, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Good Friday, April 10

Worship at 12:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m.

Service of Readings, Sermon, Prayer and Devotion at the Cross

Today is Good Friday, God's Friday. It is the day when God's unconditional love leads Jesus to the cross for you. Worship continues and is offered at either 12:00 or 7:00 p.m. This is a deeply devotional service, guided by readings, sermon, prayer and our devotion at the cross. We depart in silence, ready to return for the Easter Vigil and then Easter Sunday. At the Easter Vigil we will remember God's history of salvation, our baptism and celebrate Holy Communion. On Easter Sunday we will gather to raise our alleluia, singing that Jesus Christ is Risen. You are encouraged to be a part of all these services that comprise one worship event.

Guide to Prayer

We turn to the central moments for each of these "three days" (sunset on Thursday through morning on Sunday). On each day of these three days, the church marks the arrival at Jesus death and new life. In the ancient practice of *lectio divina*, or divine reading, we slowly read the lesson three times, pausing between each reading to pay attention to a word or phrase that catches our attention. The word or phrase may arrive like a gentle, comforting spring rain or it may arrive like a rattling thunderstorm. We pay attention to what it stirs up. What is God saying to you? What invitation is God offering for your relationship with the One who is all love for you?

Holy Saturday, April 11

Easter Vigil Worship at 7:00 p.m. (Note: no 5:00 p.m. worship)

Service of Fire, Readings, Baptism and Holy Communion

Today is Holy Saturday and tonight we gather for the Easter Vigil, the oldest service order in the Christian Church. We begin with fire, then turn to four reading that draw us to God's history of healing and love. We give thanks for the waters of Baptism, celebrating baptism and affirming our own. The Good news of resurrection is shared and then we are fed at God's table. Worship concludes with good food and drink as we give thanks for our readiness for Easter Sunday.

Guide to Prayer

We turn to the central moments for each of these "three days" (sunset on Thursday through morning on Sunday). On each day of these three days the Church marks the arrival at Jesus death and new life. In the ancient practice of *lectio divina*, or divine reading, we slowly read the lesson three times, pausing between each reading to pay attention to a word or phrase that catches our attention. The word or phrase may arrive like a gentle, comforting spring rain or it may arrive like a rattling thunderstorm. We pay attention to what it stirs up. What is God saying to you? What invitation is God offering for your relationship with the One who is all love for you?

There are twelve possible readings for the Vigil, four are usually chosen. At the center of the story is God's deliverance of the people of Israel from their captivity in Egypt. A song is sung after they are set free, words for us to ponder.

Exodus 15:1b-13, 17-18

- ^{1b}I will sing to the Lord, who has | triumphed gloriously;
throwing horse and rider in- | to the sea.
- ²The Lord is my strength | and my might,
and has become | my salvation;
this is my God—this God | I will praise;
my father’s God—this God I | will exalt.
- ³The Lord | is a warrior;
the Lord | is his name. R
- ⁴The Lord hurled Pharaoh’s chariots and army in- | to the sea;
his picked officers were sunk in | the Red Sea.
- ⁵The floods | covered them;
they went down into the depths | like a stone.
- ⁶Your right hand, O Lord, glo- | rious in power—
your right hand, O Lord, shat- | tered the enemy.
- ⁷In the greatness of your majesty you overthrew your | adversaries;
you sent out your fury, it consumed | them like stubble. R
- ⁸At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up, the floods stood up | in a heap;
the deeps congealed in the heart | of the sea.
- ⁹The enemy said, “I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, my desire shall have its | fill of
them.
I will draw my sword, my hand | shall destroy them.”
- ¹⁰You blew with your wind, the sea | covered them;
they sank like lead in the | mighty waters.
- ¹¹“Who is like you, O Lord, a- | mong the gods?
Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, | doing wonders? R
- ¹²You stretched out | your right hand,
the earth | swallowed them.
- ¹³In your steadfast love you led the people whom | you redeemed;
you guided them by your strength to your ho- | ly abode.
- ¹⁷You brought them in and planted them on the mountain of your | own possession,
the place, O Lord, that you made | your abode,
the sanctuary, O Lord, that your hands | have established.
- ¹⁸The Lord will reign forev- | er and ever. R

Prayer

Eternal giver of life and light, this holy night shines with the radiance of the risen Christ. Renew your church with the Spirit given us in baptism, that we may worship you in sincerity and truth and may shine as a light in the world, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Easter Sunday, April 12

Early Morning Spoken Prayer at 7:30 a.m.

Festival Worship at 8:30 or 10:30 a.m.

Christ is Risen! Alleluia! Today we gather to give thanks that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. Love has triumphed and new life begins, once again.

Throughout the 40-day journey of Lent we have centered our devotional life in the words of the Lord's Prayer. Martin Luther has been our teacher through the explanations in the *Small Catechism*. We gather for worship to hear the good news, sing our praise, offer our prayers and commune at God's table.

We join together in the prayer that our Lord has taught us, the words of faith put into our mouths and hearts.

Our Father in heaven,

**hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Amen and Amen!



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