

Prayer

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Preacher: Pastor Lisa Taylor

- [0 : 00] Where are you, evangelists? God, I am here to comemir questa cosa onde I Merkel vorbeque non neus Thank you.
- Thank you.
- Thank you. Thank you. Enjoy the service. We do welcome you and hope that you enjoy the service this morning here at Pendleton Center.
- Let's open with our call to worship. This is the day the Lord has made. Let's rejoice. Let's be glad. This is the day.
- This is the day. That the Lord has made. That the Lord has made. Let us rejoice. Let us rejoice.
- [2 : 02] And be glad in it. And be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.
- Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day. This is the day. That the Lord has made.
- Will you pray with me? Gracious Heavenly Father, we are so grateful to be able to gather in your presence this day. Your word promises that when two or more gather in your name, you are with us in the midst of us.
- And we're trusting you for that, Lord. We know that you're here. For we've come to bless you. Be with us, Lord God. Help us to worship well.
- In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Will you stand in spirit or body or both as you are able and join in our opening hymn. Let's sing praise to the God, to our God, the Lord, the Almighty.
- [3 : 24] Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation.
- Oh, my soul, praise Him, for He is by help and salvation. All ye who hear, now to His temple draw near, join me in glad adoration.
- Praise to the Lord, who are all things so wondrously reigning. Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy word.
- Praise to the Lord, who can defend thee. Surely His goodness and mercy here daily attend thee.
- Ponder are you what the Almighty can do. Who with His act doth He friend thee.
- [5 : 08] Praise to the Lord, who doth nourish thy life and restore thee. Fitting thee well for the tasks that are ever before thee.
- Then to thy need, God, as the mother doth speak. Spreading the wings of grace for thee.
- Praise to the Lord, O that all that is in me adore Him. All that have life andeth.
- All that have life and breath flow now with praises before Him. Let thee again, sound for this people again.
- Let thee forever adore Him. what is best we fully in jeep■? The Lord be with you.

[6 : 20] Please be seated. And join with Pastor Lori and I as we lead in Psalm 34. responsive psalm. I love to hear when the congregation of the people is actually speaking forth the word of God together. Amen? So I'm going to start with this half of the congregation, and Pastor Lori's going to have that, and we're going to do this psalm, and we're going to sing it, say it, as a psalm of praise. Are you ready? Let's pray. I will bless the Lord. This is all you over here. Do we have it? Is it up there? I'm with I will bless the Lord at all times.

I'm on the wrong psalm. I have Psalm 34. That was last week. You are a good congregation for just being kind to me and patient. Okay, I'm ready. You ready, Lord?

Bend down and hear my prayer, O Lord, and answer me, for I am in deep trouble.

Protect me from death, for I try to follow all your laws. Save me, for I am serving you and trusting you. Be merciful, O Lord, for I am looking up to you in constant hope. Give me happiness, O Lord, for I worship only you. O Lord, you are so good and kind, so ready to forgive, so full of mercy for all who ask your aid. Listen closely to my prayer, O God. Hear my urgent cry.

I will call to you whenever trouble strikes, and you will help me. Where among the heathen gods is there a God like you? Where are there miracles? All the nations, and you made each one. You come and bow before you, Lord, and raise your great and holy name.

[8 : 34] For you are great and do great miracles. You alone are God. Tell me where you want me to go, and I will go there. Many, the fiber of my being, unite in reverence to your name. With all my heart, I will praise you. I will give glory to your name forever, for you. For you love me so much. You are constantly so kind. You have rescued me from the deepest hell.

O God, proud and insolent men defy me. Violent, godless men are trying to kill me. But you are merciful and gentle, Lord, slow in getting angry, full of constant loving kindness and of truth.

So look down in pity and grant strength to your servant and save me. Send me a sign of your favor. When those who hate me see it, they will lose face because you help and comfort me.

The word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God. And Pastor Lori's going to pass around some clipboards for you. That's all about the Seneca Street dinner that's coming up.

We need your help. We need your donations so that we can take care of those folks who are in need. And it's a joy to be part of such a ministry. Amen? Amen. Amen. Also, a number of people have asked about how we're going to be continuing on with our study and our exploration of spiritual gifts and how we're using them.

[10 : 20] Please let me know on your friendship card if that is something that you are interested personally in doing. Either if you did it last year and need follow-up, that's great. I'll work with that.

If you haven't done a spiritual gifts assessment or study yet and you're interested in doing that because we want to be continuing on with that work. Disciple 1 is one way that you can do that.

If you are interested in taking that Disciple 1 course, it's starting on the 13th of September. I need to know real quick because I need to order books. So if you're interested in doing Disciple 1, please let me know right away.

And you also have, you should have a yellow card. Does everybody have a yellow card? If you don't have a yellow card, I need you to raise up your hand because somebody's going to come and grab yellow cards for you.

You need a yellow card. There, here comes Pete. This is awesome. And while they're handing out cards to make sure everybody's got them, we are in need, our preschool needs help.

[11 : 24] Because of all of the work that was done on putting in the new floor. Do you love the new floor out there? Isn't it gorgeous? It is amazing. And we are working on all kinds of things to get the building spruced up and up to snuff in the next few weeks.

But preschool is starting real soon. And all the furniture and all the playground equipment and stuff had to be moved because of stuff we're doing. After this service, if you are an able-bodied person willing to help, many hands make light work.

Amen? Okay? So meet Debbie Parise out at the Welcome Center in the back of the sanctuary. And she will give you direction about how to help. And I'll remind you again at the end of the service.

But we do need help moving the furniture back into preschool and moving the playground equipment. And I really think that's all I have. But that's all joy, isn't it?

We're moving forward in Christ. Amen? We're moving forward as the church. And Lori's going to lead you in some joys. Good morning.

[12 : 29] I was listening on the way here to the song Count Your Blessings. And I thought, you know what? I'm going to count them on my way to church. And I was able to count all kinds of blessings and get to church.

And I still was going on and on and on. I'm so thankful for all the blessings that God gives us. Does anybody else have anything that they're thankful for this morning? Yes.

God reassuring you. Amen. I'm also thankful for a lot of the prayer requests that we had last week.

We had a lot of answered prayer. Yes. Yes. So that's a wonderful testimony.

We prayed for this young girl that was having back surgery on Monday. And she was so afraid that she was on suicide watch. And her surgery went well. And she's recovering. So thank you, everybody, for keeping her in her prayers.

[13 : 32] Because I know that's such a witness to someone that's working with you. Anything else? Yes. Yes. Sean has a teaching job in Allegheny.

Yay. Yay. Yay. Yes. Yes. The wonderful celebration of Ellie Drake's life.

Amen. How's your dad doing? My dad's just good. And my in-laws just celebrated their 71st wedding anniversary. 71st wedding anniversary for your in-laws. And her dad's doing good, too, from prayer last week.

Okay. Walking backwards by trip. Yes. I'm thankful that my sisters are able to grow up nice and healthy. And that they really get baptized in this church.

Your two little sisters are growing up nice and healthy. And they were able to get baptized in this church. And this is a young man. I'm thankful for you for giving a thankful moment.

[14 : 41] Well, as we consider all of the wonderful blessings and all the wonderful joys and testimonies that we were able to share this morning, let us take time to give our tithes and offerings to the Lord.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amendment.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

[16 : 40] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Lord, we do give you the glory and we praise you, God, for the mighty works that you are doing.

Lord, I am humbled by the joys that we've had in this congregation from young and old, Lord God, that we can celebrate your goodness. Thank you for this gifts of tithes and offerings, Lord God.

[18 : 29] I pray, Lord God, as we give cheerfully, Lord God, you will bless this congregation that will be a light to this world. I pray that everybody that gave, Lord God, that you would just bless them overwhelmingly with your blessings, that they would be able to feel your presence.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

You may be seated. We have a couple of concerns that we're going to bring before the Lord. Sandy Geary, her continual health condition at Roswell, and Tim and Rene Lorenz, Marcy's sister and daughter of Tim and Lorraine, her namemass Kim and she has been diagnosed with cancer.

And those are the concerns that we have. Does anybody else have any concerns that they want to bring before the Lord today? I'm thankful for the testimonies we had of answer prayer last week, but let's continue to pray.

Yes. Hi. And what's her name?

[20 : 00] Debbie T. Is a friend who has diabetes, and they're working on antibiotics to save her toe from amputation.

So they're praying that the doctors would be able to give them the right dose of antibiotics. So we're going to keep Debbie T. in prayer. Pastor Lisa. Helen Stevens, some of you know her.

We saw a Saturday night, but she's one of the musicians at the Niagara Falls Church, and she has also been diagnosed with cancer, and she's in need of our prayers. Amen.

Lately scanning. Yes. There's a young man who was murdered in law enforcement. He was 16 years old. He was stabbed to death. His name is Elijah. He was part of our Lockport Live Youth Group.

And so I just ask for prayers for his family, for the leaders of our groups in the beginning. Hopefully help other kids not get into those situations. I don't know if everybody heard that, but there's a young man.

[21 : 06] His name is Elijah, and he was stabbed to death in Lockport. Was it this week? No, it was about a month ago. About a month ago. And he's part of the Lockport Alive Youth Group that they do in Lockport.

So we need to pray for the youth group, the leaders for wisdom in how to deal with this, and also the family of Elijah. Yes, Louis.

I have a friend who's getting test results. I would pray that God works in his life. A friend that is going to be getting test results for God to work in his life.

Yes. You. Yeah. My sister is battling depression, and she's in the hospital.

Pastor Bob. I think we ought to keep all the kids and the teachers and the bus drivers focused in our prayer. Kids, teachers, bus drivers, parents, lunch monitors, everybody.

[22 : 14] Bus drivers. Bus drivers. Bus drivers. Okay. Well, this is the time when we really can just enter into the Lord, into his presence through prayer.

So let's take this moment right now as a congregation to bow our heads and pray for these requests. Thank you, God, almighty Savior.

Lord, we are just in awe of your presence and the opportunity that we have to come boldly in your presence, Lord God, to speak on the behalf of the requests that have been brought before this congregation.

Our hearts, Lord God, are just broken with the amount of need and the severity of the requests that have happened. Lord, we pray for those that are suffering from depression, especially the sister, Lord God, who is in the hospital right now, under watch.

Lord, she is under watch, but, God, you can watch over her. And we ask, Lord God, for your presence to fill her heart, to fill her mind, that she will hear words from you today.

[23 : 33] The words, Lord God, of comfort and the words that you love her and that you care. And that you would just give her, Lord God, the ability to, Lord God, to reach your heart.

And that you would take that depression, Lord God. And you would touch her, Lord God, today. Lord, we know that you can do miracles and we pray for that right now, Lord God.

We pray for the family of Elijah, Lord God, the youth leaders. This young man that died this month, Lord God, of stabbing.

And, God, I pray that you would give the youth leaders wisdom on the direction, Lord God, that you need to share. You would give them a heart, Lord God, to love on the youth of Lockport, Lord God.

You would be with the city, Lord God, and that you would bring revival and need to that community, Lord God. The gangs and all that's going on, Lord Jesus.

[24 : 30] Lord, we thank you, Lord God, that we can be a light. And we pray, Lord God, that we'll be able to use this for your glory. And that you, God, will be shown through this in a mighty, miraculous way.

We pray for the lady, Deb, Lord God, with her antibiotics that she needs, Lord God, to keep her toe. Lord, I pray, God, that you would give the doctors wisdom.

And she'd be able to have the right dosages, Lord God. To deal with this, Lord Jesus. We pray for those that are being diagnosed with things, Lord God.

Louie's friend and all those that have cancer, Lord God. Friends of ours, family members of ours, Lord God. Lord, they're on a road, Lord God, that they've been given a diagnosis, Jesus, that kind of can bring fear.

And, Lord, I pray that you would bring love and life to them, Lord God. Breathe into their immune system, Lord God, your holy healing. Lord, I pray that you would touch them, Jesus.

[25 : 30] God, I pray that you would be with those that are going to school this week. The students, the teachers, the bus monitors, the bus drivers, the lunch monitors.

All, Lord God, that are going to school. I pray for protection for our students. I pray for wisdom for our teachers. And I pray, God, that you would protect our bus drivers, Lord God.

And that you would protect those that are serving our community. That you would bring life to our community, Lord God. That our students would rise up, Lord God.

And be blessed. And be a blessed community. God, I pray, Lord Jesus, I thank you for the answer prayers of young Sophia.

And all the prayer requests that you've given us, Lord God, that you've answered this week. That Sue Wilson is feeling better. And, God, I just know that you are here to hear our requests.

[26 : 27] But not only to hear them, Lord God, but to speak to us. And to bring life to our prayer. And, God, in a beautiful way, I pray that you would be with this church as we hear your word.

As we learn to seek your face. God, I pray, Lord, that we would be changed so we could be a light to this nation. Be with our congregation.

Be with our pastors. Be with our groups, Lord God. And, Lord, I just pray, God, that you would just bring us into a place where we could be that.

Love to this world. In your beautiful name, I pray. Amen. Now let us take an opportunity to hear from the word of the Lord. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[27 : 24] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. This morning's scripture lesson is Matthew chapter 26, verses 36 to 46. Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane.

And he said to them, sit here while I go over there and pray. He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.

Stay here and keep watch with me. Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, My father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me, yet not as I will, but as you will.

Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour? He asked Peter, Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.

[28 : 35] The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away a second time and prayed, My father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.

When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing. Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, Are you still sleeping and resting?

Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go. Here comes my betrayer. This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God. This is the word of the Lord.

What did you see?

[30 : 44] Hope. Okay. What else did you see? God's plan.

Abundance. Power of prayer. There was a man planting, right? One person, one man can make a difference.

Ooh, interesting. Yeah. Well, he went out and he did something, didn't he? He planted a seed. He covered it up. He watered it.

And then he prayed. And he continued to pray. He prayed as it grew. Did you see him rejoicing? He was so excited when that tree grew and finally had fruit on it.

That was so cool. He loved it. And then there was a storm. And he prayed through that. Fascinating stuff in that little story.

[31 : 48] There was a bigger picture than the man was originally praying for, wasn't there? He was content in the beginning of the story.

He was content in the beginning of the story to pray for that little tree that was blessing him. And he believed in prayer throughout the storm. Have you ever prayed through a bad storm?

Not necessarily a weather, you know, a weather event or something like that, but a storm, one of the storms of life. The storms that practically devastate us, that tear us apart inside.

But we continue to pray and we get through it. Sometimes the storms of our lives destroy things and we get to the point where we couldn't see how they could possibly get better.

We wish that God would just give us the answer that we think is best. I will bet it didn't even cross this guy's mind to pray for more than he could envision with his limited imagination.

[32 : 57] He had a dream of having a tree that would bear fruit. Fruit that he could eat and maybe that he could use to feed his family.

But God. Everybody say, but God. But God. There's always but God, isn't there? But God had a bigger plan. As the tree grew and he was encouraged by the fruit, he was also growing in his trust in God.

But he still couldn't see the bigger picture. Even so, when the storm came, because he had grown in his faith, grown in trust in God, he continued to pray.

And as he prayed, God's purpose for the one little tree became clear. This man wasn't just supposed to feed himself and his family from his one little tree.

He was supposed to have a whole orchard. How many people in his life could be fed by a whole orchard? Story doesn't go beyond what happened as God's orchard was growing up.

[34 : 16] But I can imagine that this man of prayer caught God's vision. He caught it and he ran with it and used it to bless many, many people.

This example of the power of God who hears and answers prayer is so much like the prayers Jesus prayed at Gethsemane.

I know you know the story. Jesus and his disciples had shared supper together in the upper room. It was the last time they would all be together to do something like that until after Jesus' resurrection.

The disciples didn't understand many of the things Jesus said about what would happen to him and to them. That they would be scattered and scared.

That they would deny even knowing him and feel like they had to hide out for fear of their lives while he suffered. Jesus knew he couldn't count on them fully.

[35 : 28] They were only human. But even as he suffered in Gethsemane knowing what was about to happen he continued to show them how necessary a devout strong prayer life is to make it possible for people to have what they need to go beyond themselves and be a blessing to others.

We heard Tim read the story in Matthew's Gospel but Mark tells a version of this story too in our Bibles. Let's hear that one.

They went to a place called Gethsemane and he said to his disciples sit here while I pray. And he took with him Peter and James and John and he began to be distressed and agitated.

He said to them I am deeply grieved even to death remain here with me and keep awake. Going a little farther he threw himself on the ground and prayed if it were possible the hour might pass from him he said Abba Father for you all things are possible remove this cup from me yet not what I want but what you want.

He came and found them sleeping and he said to Peter Simon are you asleep?

[37 : 28] Could you not keep awake for one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial.

the spirit is indeed willing but the flesh is weak. Again he went away and prayed saying the same words once more he came and found them sleeping for their eyes were very heavy they did not know what to say he came a third time to them and said are you still sleeping and making your rest?

Enough the hour has come the son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners get up let us be going see my betrayer is at hand Jesus was distressed agitated and deeply grieved to the point of death his disciples saw this he told his disciples this he admitted where he was really at and then he demonstrated that the only way to deal with this state of being was to connect with his father God and when he prayed pouring out his heart in anguish he made it known that he did not want to do what he had been sent to do but he could see the big picture the picture the man in the video couldn't see because Jesus had used prayer throughout his life to remain constantly connected to

God he was able to say not my will but your will be done Jesus disciples had traveled with him and ministered with him for three years but they still hadn't developed the practice of prayer they needed to be able to truly rely on God for everything to truly be able to say like we say every Sunday in the Lord's prayer thy will be done and really mean it how do I know this the scripture tells us that they could not even say my they could not even say not my will but thy will be done and stay awake with Jesus for one hour I don't know about you there have been many times in my life that I've been able to stay up way later than I should have even when I was dead tired to do something that

I wanted to do now I'm going to tell you about a couple things real briefly please don't tell the rest of the church don't spread it around okay this is a long time ago too Romney will verify anything and everything but don't spread it around I have chosen to stay out all night at parties I've chosen yeah this one I guess is kind of recent I've chosen staying up really late just to get in one more episode of whatever Netflix series I am binge watching and I have gone to the middle of the night showing of the Rocky Horror Picture show gotten up front and done the time warp again stop it now you're picturing that don't do that but stay up one extra hour to pray that's no fun not until you do it see when we answer the call to take time away from work or from some fun activity or from sleep and as disciples of

[42 : 04] Jesus Christ discipline ourselves to a time of prayer that gets us to a place where we're so close with God so tight with him that we can see how we are part of the big picture it's amazing John Wesley the founder of the Methodist movement believed prayer was an essential part of the Christian's regular methodical get it Methodist methodical yeah methodical spiritual discipline that made it possible for us to do the ministry God has called each one of us to do wherever ever we're called to do it he didn't stay up late to pray so much as he got up really early to pray Wesley spent at least an hour each morning before the sun came up in a time of prayer and devotion to God that he believed was essential to have what he needed to know and to accomplish the thy will be done for his life that day he also fasted one day each week until supper time as part of his prayer practice

Wesley remembered the story that's told in Mark's gospel I bet you remember it too about the boy who was afflicted by the demon who made him unable to speak it would throw him into convulsions according to the story this boy's father took him to Jesus disciples so that they could pray for him and that he would be set free and he would be made well the disciples tried but they couldn't do it Jesus he came along saw this happening and all he had to do was look at the boy and say you deaf and mute spirit I command you come out of him and never enter him again later the disciples asked why their prayers didn't work and

Jesus said this kind can come out only by prayer and fasting here here's the thing about prayer and the principle of drawing into closer and closer relationship with God through prayer and fasting it's not really something that happens instantly on the spot relationships grow over time true and they need constant attention and nurturing for them to really grow right this is true of human relationships and of our relationship with God when Jesus confronted the boy in need of prayer for healing and for deliverance he didn't say okay stay right there and then go off someplace and pray and fast for a little while and then come running back and say okay

I'm ready I'm powered up I can deal with that demon I can deal with that need of healing Jesus arrived powered up he was there powered up everywhere he went for every circumstance that he might have been confronted with he didn't know exactly what he was going to face in any given moment but when he was faced with it he was ready because Jesus had a sense of the big picture he arrived everywhere he went ready willing and able to do whatever needed to be done in the moment his disciples weren't there yet they hadn't put in the time and the effort that was necessary to develop their relationship with God to the point where they would be ready whenever needed they couldn't help the boy they couldn't stay awake and pray with

Jesus when he was deeply grieved even to the point of death and when Jesus was taken away they ran away terrified and one of them even denied knowing him let's hear the story one more time from something of an eyewitness account from the gospel of Luke you know it all began with the last supper you know we shared a meal with Jesus and then we went out and we were following him we weren't really sure where we were going but eventually we ended up in the Mount of Olives so we were just walking along and at one point Jesus turned to us and he was like pray that you will not fall into temptation and we were a little confused we were like where is out in the garden and what kind of temptation is even talking about but then we went and sat down and

[47 : 47] Jesus walked about a stone's throw away from us and he knelt down and began to pray to him to and to and he knew it was coming to me the next day I was afraid and what else could I do but talk to dad and and you know I said Father if you were willing take this cup from me yet not my will which was to be done you know I was looking down from heaven on my main man Jesus and I could see that he was in such anguish he was sweating blood for Christ's sake so you know I just put my hand on him just had to give him some strength help him out just let him know we're there for him he's not alone not alone how could you fall asleep?

you were asleep too you were supposed to set an alarm my phone died it didn't go off okay you know Jesus was just he was really upset with us for falling asleep I think he really just wanted us to understand the importance of prayer what he said to us was like get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation you know it's pretty tough that one of the last things he asked us to do something just so simple we weren't even able to do for him I guess Jesus just wanted us to understand the importance of prayer prayer yes prayer is important a regular time of prayer is essential to being effective in being the light of Christ in the world among our families our neighbors our co-workers our fellow students everywhere we are and church

I've got to tell you while God hears those prayers that we just throw up there at random throughout the day if we're running on spiritual empty because we haven't been regularly taking the time we need to fill up on the Holy Spirit through the prayer that feeds and nurtures our own spirit through the prayer that grows our relationship with God well like the disciples we're just not going to be as effective in dealing with the day-to-day stuff of life as we could be as God wants us to be God wants us to be able to hear God's voice without wondering whether it's coming from God God wants us to be able to follow the Spirit's leading because we know God so well that we recognize in an instant that it's God leading us not us just trying to figure out what we think is best

Jesus set an example of prayer throughout his life that enables us to do everything he did and much, much more there is so much more to prayer than just talking to God and asking for help and as Christians we need everything God has for us all the benefits of a strong disciplined regular prayer life I could keep talking about that and tell you all about it but it's just way easier to show you this way prayer is a simple thing to do but sometimes we can have a limited view of what prayer actually is now don't get me wrong prayer is a means of supplication and making requests to God it's just that prayer is also more than that prayer is both talking to God and having a relationship with Him prayer is making yourself available to God and allowing Him to make Himself available to you prayer is a way to ask God for provision for tomorrow and a means by which He provides the sustenance we need for today so we pray not to get our own way but rather we pray to align ourselves to God's will we pray not for things that might create independence from God but rather we pray as an expression of dependence upon God yes God loves to hear our prayers and requests

He listens to them He delights in them and He responds to them it's just that prayer is also where we can confess our sins praise His goodness listen to His voice and be reminded of truth prayer isn't just a way to ask for more fruit but through prayer we begin to bear more fruit prayer isn't just words spoken at specific times during the day it's living with a mindset that allows God to transform you throughout all of your days so don't think of prayer as just an activity done before meals or bedtime but rather think of prayer as a way of life a regular devout lifestyle of prayer both individually in our own little prayer closets and in groups of Christians who are able to join their prayers together strengthens our faith and blesses us with the assurance that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us a life of disciplined prayer practices works together with all the spiritual gifts we have that we've been talking about and exploring all summer that we worked on last year many of us in fact if we're not regularly plugged in to all the power of God that God has for us through spending time specifically devoted to prayer we are severely limiting our own ability to use those gifts that God has given us and to take it a step further if we are each a unique member of the body of Christ because of the gifts God has given us well we're limiting our ability to function we aren't doing our part and therefore we're weakening the ministry of the body of Christ in fact we weaken the ministries of this very church

[55 : 01] I know that every person who is a part of this church prays if I ask you to raise your hand if I ask you the question do you pray every single hand in this room would go up I know this is true we have all prayed to God but this year I'm asking this church to up your game we've all prayed to God and I'm going to up my game too I'm going to help you up your game with prayer and I'm going to be right along with you because my game could be using some improvement what does that mean?

it means I'm going to invite you all to begin to pray more on your own and I'm going to offer you some resources to do that so you don't have to just kind of come up out of it you know come up with it out of air but I'm also going to ask you to join together with a small group of folks from the church kind of like the groups that John Wesley formed as part of his Methodist movement and I'm going to give these groups guidelines to work on upping the prayer game of this church and you have a card true?

put your name on it just write your name on the card and in addition to writing your name what I'd like you to do is just jot down the names of the days of the week that you could be available to pray in a small group in somebody's house or in the church someplace or somewhere else for just a little while maybe half hour 45 minutes some of you might be able to say yes Jesus I'll pray with you an hour any day could work and Sunday is a possibility too then I want you to put on there also morning, afternoon, or evening what time of day and you don't have to organize anything we'll take care of that we'll get you all organized and let you know what's happening the last thing if you feel

God is calling you to be somebody who could help facilitate a group like that you need to be somebody who'd be willing to work with me on it to get together with me and learn how we're doing this and kind of figure it out together just write leader on there if you think that's what God's calling you to do you're not committing to anything today you're just letting God kind of speak to your heart let you know how God wants you to pray you can put it in a basket there are a couple of baskets around when you come up for communion you're welcome to put your card in the basket and I'll be able to work with them Jesus asked the disciples to pray because Jesus saw God's big picture he saw that by dying for us like the tree that died and became an orchard we would become God's orchard of praying disciples we would be able to do everything Jesus did because through growing in our prayer life we grow in Christ then we can be disciples who could stay awake with Jesus we'll experience our gifts and fruit growing to be able to meet any challenge

God brings our way our devotion will bring honor and glory to Jesus Christ who thought of each of us above all else who saw the big picture of who God was calling us to be in the world and by the power of the Holy Spirit we will be able to say thy will be done and really mean it let's sing stand as you're able we're going to sing to God above all and recognize and acknowledge and praise God for all God has done for us and give our hearts to God's work above all powers above all kings above all nature and all created things above all wisdom above all wisdom above all the ways of man you were here before the world began above all kingdoms above all thrones above all wonders the world has ever known above all wealth the treasures of the earth there's a way to measure as you're not your world you were you were crucified laid behind the soul you lived and died rejected and blown like the road traveled on and down you took the fall you took the fall you took the fall you took the fall

[61 : 47] Like the world trampled on the ground You took a fall You thought of me above all Yeah, we're not perfect at this prayer thing yet.

But God will help us. God will forgive us for our shortcomings. So let's ask Him to do that in prayer. Heavenly Father, I have sinned.

I have not devoted my whole life to you. In prayer. Help me, Lord.

Forgive me, Lord. I want to grow closer to you. I want to be able to do everything that you have called me to do.

I want to be that light that shines in dark places that can say to demons come out of Him and don't return.

[63 : 22] I want to see the big picture. In Jesus' name. Amen.

God loves us so much. You know, we are perfect before Jesus. As we stand before Christ right now because we know Him and love Him and seek to live as His disciples, we are saved.

We are perfect. But the scripture also tells us to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. So it's these two things working together.

We are saved and we are being saved. And prayer is a huge part of that. But God knows as we continue to walk on that God can continue to forgive us for all of our shortcomings.

It's an ongoing thing. So we can say to one another with confidence, in the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

[64 : 24] Glory to God. Amen. As we wait on the Lord, let's realize how God will strengthen us in that waiting, strengthen us in that praying, empower us as we move on.

We will wait upon the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord.

Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord. Our God, you reign forever.

forever. Our hope, our strong deliverer. You are the everlasting God, the everlasting God.

You do nothing to all, grow weary. You are the everlasting God, you are the everlasting God.

[65 : 36] You come with those in me, you lift the sun upon me, your tongue may heal us.

Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord. Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord.

Our God, you reign forever. Our hope, our strong deliverer.

You are the everlasting God, the everlasting God. You do nothing to all, you do nothing to all, you will not grow weary.

You are the defender of your weak, you come with those in me, you lift the sun upon me, you are the everlasting God.

[66 : 50] We are the everlasting God, you are the everlasting God, you are the everlasting God. You are the everlasting God. We will wait upon the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord.

I've got to tell you, dancing up here in praise to Jesus, way better than anything Rocky Horror ever offered. And now as people who are forgiven and dearly loved by God, share the peace of Christ with one another, preparing your hearts for communion.

God's peace be with you. God's peace be with you.

God's peace be with you.

God's peace be with you. God's peace be with you. God's peace be with you. God's peace be with you. God's peace be with you. God's peace be with you.

[68 : 49] God's peace be with you. God's peace be with you. God's peace be with you. God's peace be with you. Let the poor say I am rich Because of what the Lord has done for us And now let the weak say I am strong Let the poor say I am rich Because of what the Lord has done for us Give thanks Good morning

Good morning Certainly is a reason to give thanks to our Lord For all that he has done for us So we come this morning to celebrate forgiveness through Jesus Christ So join with me please Lord be with you And also with you Lift up your hearts To lift them up to the Lord Let us give thanks to the Lord our God It is right to give our thanks and grace It is right and a good and a joyful thing Always and everywhere to give thanks to you Father Almighty Creator of heaven and earth You formed us in your image And breathed into us the breath of life When we turned away and our love failed Your love remained steadfast You delivered us from captivity to sin and death And made covenant to be our sovereign God And spoke to us through your prophets And so with your people on earth

And all the company of heaven We praise your name And join their unending hymn Holy, holy, holy Lord God of power and might Heaven and earth are full of your glory Hosanna in the highest Blessed is he who comes In the name of the Lord Hosanna in the highest Holy are you and blessed is your son Jesus Christ Your spirit anointed him To preach good news to the poor Proclaim release to the captives And recovery of sight To the blind Set at liberty those who are oppressed And to announce the time had come When you would save your people He healed the sick Fed the hungry And ate with sinners By the baptism of his suffering And death and resurrection You gave birth to your church And delivered us from slavery To sin and death And made with us a new covenant By water and the spirit

When the Lord Jesus ascended He promised to be with us always In the power of your word And Holy Spirit On the night in which he gave himself up For us he took the bread He gave thanks to you oh Lord And he broke it And gave it to his disciples And said This is my body Which is given for you Take and eat In remembrance of me After the supper was over He took the cup He gave thanks to you oh Lord Gave it to his disciples And said This is my blood of the new covenant Port out for you and for many For the forgiveness of sins Do this as often as you drink it In remembrance of me And so in remembrance of these Your mighty acts in Jesus Christ

We offer ourselves In praise and thanksgiving As a holy and living sacrifice In union with Christ's offering For us as we proclaim That mystery of faith Christ has died Christ has risen And Christ will come again Pour out your Holy Spirit On us gathered here And on these gifts of bread and drink Make them be for us The body and blood of Christ That we may be for the world The body of Christ Redeemed by his blood By your spirit Make us one with Christ One with each other One in ministry to all the world Until Christ comes again And final victory And we feast at that heavenly banquet Through your son Jesus Christ With the Holy Spirit In your holy church All honor and glory is yours Almighty Father Now and forever Amen Would you join with me In the prayer that Jesus Taught us disciples When he said Our Father Who art in heaven Hallowed be thy name Thy kingdom come

[74 : 11] And 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 With those who are serving Please come up Come out Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[78 : 38] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[81 : 44] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. few minutes for just a short time. So I'll meet you over in the office wing. You know, a number of you, many of you actually as I'm looking, have brought your cards forward saying that you are willing to up your game in prayer. If you need to pray about that a little bit more, if you need to seek God about what God would have you do, hang on to it. Drop it in the offering plate next week when you have a better idea. As you go, may the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be a blessing unto you. May the Lord make you well able to bless everyone you meet this week. And as you continue to pray, God will strengthen you and move you on so you minister more and more and more like Jesus. Go in his peace. Amen.

[85 : 06] Amen.