

75 Hrs. *of Prayer*



FEBRUARY 12-15

Prayer Guide



St. Mark's
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Celebrating 75 Years



Introduction & Instructions

Welcome to the Prayer Guide for St. Mark's 75 Hours of Prayer. While several sections of this booklet are dedicated to many of the organizations we've worked with over the last 75 years (highlighted in blue below) there are also other prayers, petitions, scriptures, and guided prompts you may find helpful on any of your prayer journeys.

The booklet is divided into 15 sections modeled after the Prayers of Intercession. Each section offers three scripted prayers: First from Evangelical Lutheran Worship, secondly a prayer using more contemporary language, and lastly a prayer sourced from one of the Saints. You may wish to select one of these whose language resonates with you or pray using two or all three of them. After these three scripted prayers is a scripture passage and prompts for self-guided prayer, as well as extra room to write any prayer or prompt responses you may want to remember.

While there are no wrong ways to lift our praises, hurts, hopes, and prayers to God, a Prayer Guide can help when you don't know where to start or are searching for the words to say. One way to use this Prayer Guide is by starting with *For Entering into Prayer* on the next page of this booklet, pray through several of the middle sections which call to you, and ending with the *Closing Collect* on page 31.

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For Entering into Prayer...

from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

a Contemporary Prayer

God of nearness, we come to you carrying far more than we realize— hopes and hurts, weariness and wonderings, fears and frustrations. Meet us as we are, not as we wish we were, and move us to enter this time of prayer with honesty and grace.
Amen.

a Prayer of Martin Luther (1483-1546)

Behold, Lord, an empty vessel that needs to be filled. My Lord, fill it. I am weak in the faith; strengthen me. I am cold in love; warm me and make me fervent, that my heart may go out to my neighbor. I do not have a strong and firm faith; at times I doubt and am unable to trust you altogether. O Lord, help me. Strengthen my faith and trust in you. In you I have sealed the treasure of all I have. I am poor; you are rich and came to be merciful to the poor. I am a sinner; you are upright. With me, there is an abundance of sin; in you is the fullness of righteousness. Therefore I will remain with you, of whom I can receive, but to whom I may not give.
Amen.

1 Samuel 3:1-10

Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.
² At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; ³ the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. ⁴ Then the LORD called, "Samuel! Samuel!" and he said, "Here I am!" ⁵ and ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So he went and lay down. ⁶ The LORD called again, "Samuel!" Samuel got up and went to Eli

and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, my son; lie down again." ⁷ Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. ⁸ The LORD called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. ⁹ Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

¹⁰ Now the LORD came and stood there, calling as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

Invitation to Guided Prayer

- Read 1 Samuel 3:1-10. Slowly repeat "*Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.*"
- Notice what is present in you now—thoughts and feelings, worries and hopes..
- Name these things, aloud or in silence, offering them to God without judgment.
- Hold these things in your heart for a moment, then release them into God's care.

Pray simply: "*Here I am.*" Allow yourself to be carried into deeper prayer.

For the Church...

from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Gracious God, we pray for your holy catholic church. Fill it with all truth and peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in anything it is amiss, reform it; where it is right, strengthen it; where it is in need, provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it; for the sake of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

Amen.

a Contemporary Prayer

God of the gathered and the scattered,
we give thanks for the communities that have shaped our faith
and we confess the ways the Church has failed to love well.
Hold us in both gratitude and grief,
and lead us into deeper faithfulness.

Amen.

a Prayer of Brother Roger of Taizé (1915-2005)

O God the Father of all, you ask every one of us to spread love and reconciliation where people are divided. You open this way for us, so that the wounded body of Jesus Christ, your church, may be leaven of communion for the poor of the earth and in the whole human family.

Amen.

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴ Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵ If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member,

where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many members yet one body. ²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²² On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect, ²⁴ whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, ²⁵ that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. ²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

Invitation to Guided Prayer

- Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27. Reflect on what it means to belong to one body with many members, and where you see yourself in that body.
- Notice what stirs in you as you think about the Church: its people, its worship, its witness. What brings you gratitude? What brings you grief?
- Name these joys and hurts aloud or in silence, offering these hurts and hopes to God.
- Hold your hopes for the church—across denominations, cultures, and generations—in your heart, then release them into God's care.

Pray simply: "*Renew your Church, O God.*"

For Creation...

from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Almighty God, in giving us dominion over things on earth, you made us coworkers in your creation. Give us wisdom and reverence to use the resources of nature so that no one may suffer from our abuse of them, and that generations yet to come may continue to praise you for your bounty; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

a Contemporary Prayer

God of mountains and oceans, of cities and fields,
we give thanks for the beauty that surrounds us
and confess how often we treat creation as disposable.
Open our eyes to wonder,
and reshape our habits toward care and responsibility.
Amen.

a Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi (c. 1181-1226)

Most high, all-powerful, all-good God, all praise is yours, all glory, all honor, and all blessing. Be praised for all your creatures, especially Brother Sun, who brings the day and gives us light. Praise be for Sister Moon and the stars; for Brother Wind and the air; for Sister Water, so useful and humble; for Brother Fire, strong and beautiful; and for Sister Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us. Praise and bless my Lord, and give thanks and serve with great humility.
Amen.

Psalm 104:1-9

Bless the Lord, O my soul.

O Lord my God, you are very great.
You are clothed with honor and majesty,
² wrapped in light as with a garment.
You stretch out the heavens like a tent;
³ you set the beams of your chambers on the waters;
you make the clouds your chariot;
you ride on the wings of the wind;

- ⁴ you make the winds your messengers,
fire and flame your ministers.
- ⁵ You set the earth on its foundations,
so that it shall never be shaken.
- ⁶ You cover it with the deep as with a garment;
the waters stood above the mountains.
- ⁷ At your rebuke they flee;
at the sound of your thunder they take to flight.
- ⁸ They rose up to the mountains, ran down to the valleys,
to the place that you appointed for them.
- ⁹ You set a boundary that they may not pass,
so that they might not again cover the earth.

Invitation to Guided Prayer

- Read Psalm 104 (all of it or part of it). Reflect on the ways that creation is interconnected and sustained by God.
- Notice what stirs in you as you picture a place in the natural world that has been meaningful to you. What do you feel as you remember it? How does your body respond?
- Name the parts of creation that are suffering—through climate change, pollution, or neglect. Where do you feel especially burdened?
- Hold the wonder of creation in your heart for a moment, then release the world into God's care.

Pray simply: *"Teach me to care for what you love."*

For the Nations...

from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Gracious God, grant peace among nations. Cleanse from our own hearts the seeds of strife: greed and envy, harsh misunderstandings and ill will, fear and desire for revenge. Make us quick to welcome ventures in cooperation among the peoples of the world, so that there may be woven the fabric of a common good too strong to be torn by the evil hands of war. In the time of opportunity, make us be diligent; and in the time of peril, let not our courage fail; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

a Contemporary Prayer

God of every land and language,
we pray for a world shaped more by faithfulness than by fear.
Where leaders act from pride or self-interest, bring humility;
where people suffer from violence or injustice, bring protection and hope.
Amen.

a Prayer of St. Clement of Rome (died c. 100 AD)

Grant, O Lord, to those who govern on earth health, peace, concord, and stability, that they may exercise the authority you have given them with reverence and gentleness. Guide their decisions according to what is good and pleasing in your sight, so that, ruling in peace and justice, they may obtain your favor. Amen.

Micah 6:6-8

"With what shall I come before the Lord
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?

⁷ Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?

Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

⁸ He has told you, O mortal, what is good,
and what does the Lord require of you

but to do justice and to love kindness
and to walk humbly with your God?

Invitation to Guided Prayer

- Read Micah 6:6-8. Reflect on what it means to "*do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God*" in today's world.
- Notice what stirs in you or you think about a nation or a neighborhood that weighs heavily on your heart. What images, stories, or emotions arise?
- Name leaders—local, national, and global before God. What wisdom, courage, or guidance do they most need?
- Hold the safety, dignity, and lives of those affected by war, displacement, political instability, or injustice in your heart, then release them to God's care.

Pray simply: "*Make me an instrument of peace.*"

For Those in Need...

from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

By your power, great God, our Lord Jesus healed the sick and gave new hope to the hopeless. Though we cannot command or possess your power, we pray for those who want to be healed. Mend their wounds, soothe fevered brows, and make broken people whole again. Help us to welcome every healing as a sign that, though death is against us, you are for us, and have promised renewed and risen life in Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

a Contemporary Prayer

God of compassion, we pray for those who feel overwhelmed by life—by illness, grief, loneliness, poverty, or despair. When the weight feels unbearable, let your love be felt through presence, care, and unexpected grace. Amen.

a Prayer of Julian of Norwich (c. 1343-1416)

In you, Father all-mighty, we have our preservation and our bliss. In you, Christ, we have our restoring and our saving. You are our mother, brother, and savior. In you, our Lord the Holy Spirit, is marvelous and plenteous grace. You are our clothing; for love you wrap us and embrace us. You are our maker, our lover, our keeper. Teach us to believe that by your grace all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well. Amen.

Matthew 11:28-30

“Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Invitation to Guided Prayer

- Read Matthew 11:28-30. Reflect on what it means to bring your own burdens to God.
- Notice who comes to mind as you sit with these words. What names, face, or situations arise in you?
- Name those you know who are in need, along with those whose suffering may go unseen. Lift them to God, silently or aloud.
- Hold those experiencing physical illness, mental health challenges, financial strain, or any kind of loss in your heart, then release them into God's care.

Pray simply: *"Be near, O God."*

For This Congregation...

from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Almighty God, your Holy Spirit equips the church with a rich variety of gifts. Grant that we may use them to bear witness to Christ in lives that are built on faith and love. Make us ready to live the gospel and eager to do your will, so that we may share with all your church in the joys of eternal life; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

a Contemporary Prayer

God of our shared life, you know this community more deeply than we do. You know our gifts and struggles, our hopes and hesitations.

Help us listen well to one another,
and to become a place where grace is practiced daily.

Amen.

a Prayer of St. Basil the Great (c. 330-379)

O Lord our God, who has taught us that we should pray for one another, receive the supplications of your servants. Make us worthy to stand before you in peace and love, that with one heart and one voice we may glorify your holy name.

Amen.

Colossians 3:12-17

Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. ¹³ Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Invitation to Guided Prayer

- Read Colossians 3:12-17. Reflect on where you see these values shaping and sustaining our community.
- Notice who comes to mind as you consider these things; people who you know to be examples of faith, or those whose stories you'd like to know better.
- Name those who serve in leadership within St. Mark's, as staff, council, or volunteers. What kind of support do they most need?
- Hold your hopes for the future of St. Mark's in your heart for a moment, then release that future into God's care.

Pray simply: "*Guide us in your way.*"

For Those Who Feed...

Our community partners who have helped feed our neighbors include: Blessings in a Backpack; CASA Community Garden; ENABLE Madison County; Food Bank of North Alabama; Interfaith Mission Service (Foodline); Manna House; Meals on Wheels; One Generation Away

from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

The eyes of all wait upon you, O Lord, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. Give us grateful hearts, O God, for all your mercies, and make us mindful of the needs of others; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

a Contemporary Prayer

God of abundance, we thank you for the partners who serve meals, stock shelves, organize pantries, and offer dignity alongside nourishment. Bless their work with strength, creativity, and compassion, and let no one be forgotten at the table of your care.

Amen.

a Prayer of St. Teresa of Calcutta (1910-1997)

Make us worthy, Lord, to serve our fellow human beings throughout the world who live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them through our hands this day their daily bread, and by our understanding love, give peace and joy.

Amen.

Matthew 25:35-40

for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸ And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹ And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' ⁴⁰ And the king

will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.'

Invitation to Guided Prayer

- Read Matthew 25:35-40. Reflect on how Christ is present in both those who serve and those who are served.
- Notice what stirs in you as you think of hunger in our community. What stories or faces come to mind?
- Name those who rely on food assistance and the partners who serve them. Give thanks for them and lift their needs to God.
- Hold the hungry and those who serve them in your heart for a moment, and then release them into God's care.

Pray simply: *"Give us this day our daily bread."*

For Those Who Shelter...

Our community partners who have helped provide assistance related to housing include:

305 8th Street; First Stop; Habitat for Humanity of the River Valley; Huntsville Assistance Program; Johnson Towers; Magnolia Trace; A New Leash on Life; ShowerUp Huntsville

from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

God of compassion, whose Son became poor for our sake: Help us to see the face of Christ in those who are poor, and in serving them to serve you. Give us generous hearts so that those living in poverty may have adequate food, clothing, and shelter. By your Spirit move us to affirm the dignity of all people and to work for just laws that protect the most vulnerable in society; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

a Contemporary Prayer

God of welcome, we thank you for the partners who provide shelter, who open doors, make beds, and help rebuild lives. Bless their work with patience and perseverance, and let every person be met with dignity and care. Amen.

a Prayer of St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

You have made us for yourself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may seek you, for in seeking we find you, and in finding you, we find our true rest. Amen.

Psalm 91:1-11

You who live in the shelter of the Most High,
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,
² will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress;
my God, in whom I trust."
³ For he will deliver you from the snare of the hunter
and from the deadly pestilence;
⁴ he will cover you with his pinions,

and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness is a shield and defense.
⁵You will not fear the terror of the night
or the arrow that flies by day
⁶or the pestilence that stalks in darkness
or the destruction that wastes at noonday.
⁷A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand at your right hand,
but it will not come near you.
⁸You will only look with your eyes
and see the punishment of the wicked.
⁹Because you have made the Lord your refuge,
the Most High your dwelling place,
¹⁰no evil shall befall you,
no scourge come near your tent.
¹¹For he will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways.

Invitation to Guided Prayer

- Read Psalm 91. Reflect on the image of God as refuge and shelter.
- Notice what stirs in you as you remember the homes you have known, both past and present. What feelings arise as you reflect on them?
- Name those who lack stable housing or who feel unsafe where they live. Name also those partners who work to provide access to safe and stable housing.
- Hold those who lack adequate shelter and all who serve them in your heart for a moment, and then release them into God's care.

Pray simply: "*Be our dwelling place.*"

For Those Who Heal in Body & Mind...

Our community partners who have helped care for our neighbors bodies and minds include:

57 North Hampton; Caring House; Clearview Cancer Institute; Community Free Clinic; Crestwood Hospital; Happy Trails Therapeutic Riding; Heals, Inc.; Huntsville Hospital Child Life Program; Huntsville Hospital Foundation; Thrive Alabama; WellStone

from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

God, our refuge and strength, our present help in time of trouble, care for those who tend the needs of the sick. Strengthen them in body and spirit. Refresh them when weary; console them when anxious; comfort them in grief and hearten them in discouragement. Be with us all, and give us peace at all times and in every way; through Christ our peace.
Amen.

a Contemporary Prayer

God of tenderness, we thank you for the partners who listen, diagnose, treat, counsel, and accompany people through pain and uncertainty. Strengthen them in their calling, and let their work be a sign of your care in the world.
Amen.

a Prayer of St. Catherine of Siena (1347-1380)

Power of the eternal Father, help me. Wisdom of the Son, enlighten the eye of my understanding. Tender mercy of the Holy Spirit, unite my heart to yourself. Eternal God, restore health to the sick and life to the dead. Give us a voice, your own voice, to cry out to you for mercy for the world. You, light, give us light. You, wisdom, give us wisdom. You, supreme strength, strengthen us.
Amen.

Mark 5:24-34

So he went with him.

And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him. ²⁵ Now there was a woman who had been suffering from a flow of blood for twelve years. ²⁶ She had endured much under many physicians and had spent all

that she had, and she was no better but rather grew worse. ²⁷ She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, ²⁸ for she said, "If I but touch his cloak, I will be made well." ²⁹ Immediately her flow of blood stopped, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. ³⁰ Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my cloak?" ³¹ And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?' " ³² He looked all around to see who had done it. ³³ But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. ³⁴ He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

Invitation to Guided Prayer

- Read Mark 5:24-34. Reflect on the courage it takes to seek healing and the compassion that meets it.
- Notice what stirs in you as you think about caregivers and those seeking healing.
- Name those who are ill and hurting. Name those who serve them.
- Hold those who are sick or suffering—and all who work for their health and wellbeing—in your heart for a moment, then release them into God's care.

Pray simply: "*Restore what is broken.*"

For Those Who Tend to the Spirit...

Our community partners who have provided spiritual guidance to our neighbors include:

Ascension Lutheran; Faith Lutheran; Grace Lutheran; Messiah Lutheran; Operation Christmas Child; Southeast Huntsville Clergy Association; Temple B’Nai Sholom; Unitarian Universalist Church of Huntsville

from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Gracious and holy God, give us diligence to seek you, wisdom to perceive you, and patience to wait for you. Grant us, O God, a mind to meditate on you; eyes to behold you; ears to listen for your word; a heart to love you; and a life to proclaim you; through the power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

a Contemporary Prayer

God beyond our knowing, we thank you for partners who listen deeply, teach wisdom, and hold space for holy questions. Bless the relationships we share across traditions, and shape them into sources of understanding, trust, and peace. Amen.

a Prayer of Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968)

O God, we thank you for the fact that you have inspired men and women in all nations and in all cultures. We call you different names: some call you Allah; some call you Elohim; some call you Jehovah; some call you Brahma; some call you the Unmoved Mover. But we know that these are all names for one and the same God. Grant that we will follow you and become so committed to your way and your kingdom that we will be able to establish in our lives and in this world a brother and sisterhood, that we will be able to establish here a kingdom of understanding, where men and women will live together as brothers and sisters and respect the dignity and worth of every human being. In the name and spirit of Jesus.

Amen.

Psalm 46:1-4,7-11

God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.

² Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea,

³ though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult. *Selah*

⁴ There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.

⁷ The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge. *Selah*

⁸ Come, behold the works of the Lord;
see what desolations he has brought on the earth.

⁹ He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
he breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.

¹⁰ "Be still, and know that I am God!
I am exalted among the nations;
I am exalted in the earth."

¹¹ The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge. *Selah*

Invitation to Guided Prayer

- Read Psalm 46. Reflect on the invitation to "*be still and know that I am God.*"
- Notice what stirs in you as you think about spiritual communities and traditions beyond your own.
- Name those who are searching, questioning, or disconnected, and all who work to offer guidance and hope.
- Hold the relationships of ecumenical and interfaith partners in your heart for a moment, and then release them into God's care.

Pray simply: "*Draw us toward your truth.*"

For Those Who Educate...

Our community partners who have supported the education of our neighbors include:

Boys and Girls Club of North Alabama; Free 2 Teach; Greater Alabama Council (Boy Scouts of America); Huntsville City Schools; Huntsville-Madison County Public Library; Madison Academy; Madison City Schools; Madison County Schools; Randolph Schools; Westminster Christian Academy; Whitesburg Christian Academy; WLRH

from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

God of wisdom, your Son came among us as a teacher. Send your blessing on all who are engaged in the work of education: give them clearness of vision and freshness of thought, and enable them so to train the hearts and minds of their students that they may grow in wisdom and be prepared to face the challenges of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

a Contemporary Prayer

God of curiosity and insight, we thank you for partners, who open minds, encourage questions, and cultivate imagination. Strengthen their patience and creativity, and let their work shape lives with dignity and hope. Amen.

a Prayer of St. Anselm of Canterbury (c. 1033-1109)

O my God, teach my heart where and how to seek You, where and how to find You. You are my God and You are my all and I have never seen You. You have made and remade me, You have bestowed on me all the good things I possess, still I do not know You. I have not yet done that for which I was made. Teach me to seek You. I cannot seek You unless You teach me or find You unless You show Yourself to me. Let me seek You in my desire, let me desire You in my seeking. Let me find You by loving You, let me love You when I find You. Amen.

Proverbs 2:1-6

My child, if you accept my words
and treasure up my commandments within you,
² making your ear attentive to wisdom
and inclining your heart to understanding,
³ if you indeed cry out for insight
and raise your voice for understanding,
⁴ if you seek it like silver
and search for it as for hidden treasures—
⁵ then you will understand the fear of the Lord
and find the knowledge of God.
⁶ For the Lord gives wisdom;
from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;

Invitation to Guided Prayer

- Read Proverbs 2:1-6. Reflect on learning as not just an academic pursuit, but a spiritual discipline.
- Notice what stirs in you as you remember those who have taught you.
- Name students, educators, and administrators that you know, especially those facing obstacles in their studies or their work.
- Hold the needs of schools and teachers in your heart for a moment, and then release them into God's care.

Pray simply: *"Teach us your ways."*

For Those Who Advocate...

Our community partners who have advocated for the needs of our neighbors include:

Kairos Prison Ministry; Kids to Love; Lincoln Village Ministry; New Hope Community Center; Not One More Alabama; Operation Green Team; Rocket City Pride; Studio 60 Senior Center

from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may move every human heart; that the barriers dividing us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; and that, with our divisions healed, we might live in justice and peace; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

a Contemporary Prayer

God of truth, we thank you for partners who speak up, organize, challenge unjust systems, and accompany those harmed by them. Give them courage when the work feels heavy, and wisdom to seek change with compassion and integrity.

Amen.

a Prayer of St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556)

Lord, teach me to be generous. Teach me to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, save that of knowing that I do your will.

Amen.

Isaiah 1:16-17

Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;

remove your evil deeds

from before my eyes;

cease to do evil;

¹⁷ learn to do good;

seek justice;

rescue the oppressed;

defend the orphan;
plead for the widow.

Invitation to Guided Prayer

- Read Isaiah 1:16-17. Reflect on the relationship between justice and faith.
- Notice what stirs in you as you consider matters of injustice that weigh on your heart, whether local, national, or global.
- Name those who lift up their voices to advocate for others, and those whose voices are overlooked or ignored.
- Hold in prayer those whose rights, dignity, and safety are threatened by injustice, and then release them into God's care.

Pray simply: *"Let justice take root."*

For the Faithful Departed...

from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Eternal God, your love is stronger than death, and your passion more fierce than the grave. We rejoice in the lives of those whom you have drawn into your eternal embrace. Keep us in joyful communion with them until we join the saints of every people and nation gathered before your throne in your ceaseless praise, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

a Contemporary Prayer

God of memory and hope, we remember those we have loved and lost. We give thanks for their lives, their gifts, and their love, even as we feel the ache of their absence. Hold them in your light, and hold us in your comfort. Amen.

a Prayer of St. John of Damascus (c. 675-749)

O God of spirits and of all flesh, who have trampled down death and made the devil powerless, and have given life to your world: give rest, O Lord, to the souls of your departed servant, in a place of light, in a place of green pasture, in a place of refreshment, from where all pain, sorrow, and sighing have fled. Amen.

John 11:25-26

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

Invitation to Guided Prayer

- Read John 11:25-26. Reflect on what resurrection means, not just for the future, but for hope here and now
- Notice what stirs in you as you remember those who have died.
- Name the ones whose presence you miss, and the grief you carry for the absence of friends and loved ones..
- Hold all who grieve—especially those whose loss feels fresh or unresolved—in your heart for a moment, and then release them into God's care

Pray simply: *"Into your hands, O God."*

General Intercessions...

from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work or watch or weep, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, comfort the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake.

Amen.

a Contemporary Prayer

God of deep knowing, there is so much we hold in our hearts that we cannot find words for; concerns too heavy, hopes too fragile, longings too complex. Hold them all with care, and meet us with your grace.

Amen.

a Prayer of Thomas Merton (1915-1968)

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope that I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

Amen.

Romans 8:26-27

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Invitation to Guided Prayer

- Read Romans 8:26-27. Reflect on what it means for God to pray with and for us.
- Notice what concerns or desires remain unspoken within you.
- Name the situations that still weigh heavily on your spirit.
- Hold these things and the prayers of others in your heart for a moment, and then release them into God's care.

Pray simply: *"For all that you see we need."*

Closing Collect...

from Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Almighty God, by the power of the Spirit you have knit your servants together into the one body of your Son, Jesus Christ. Look with favor upon us in our commitment to serve in Christ's name. Give us courage, patience, and vision; and strengthen us all in our Christian vocation of witness to the world and of service to others; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

a Contemporary Prayer

God who meets us in stillness and in struggle,
we thank you for this time of shared prayer.
Carry what we have named and what we could not name,
and shape our lives as living responses to your grace.
Amen.

the Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
 hallowed be thy name,
 thy kingdom come,
 thy will be done,
 on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
 as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
 forever and ever. Amen.

a Closing Benediction

May the God of peace, who meets us in every place,
hold you in grace, guide you in love,
and send you forth with hope.
Amen.

