

Sample Prayers

Churches, groups of Christians, families, or individuals may elect to fast and pray for one meal or fast and pray for an entire day. Richard Pratt, author of *Pray with Your Eyes Open* and President of Third Millennium Ministries, has prepared a guide for fasting and prayer which we have provided.

Various types of prayers in the Reformed Tradition

- Common prayer
 - “Collects” and Prayers for Particular Occasions
 - Unison prayers
 - Litanies (a leader offering petitions and the congregation or group responding)
- Guided Prayer in which a minister leads a congregation in prayer through a list of subjects, clothing his thoughts with words as he goes through the list (the Matthew Henry method)
- Extemporaneous prayers.

The leadership of each congregation, prayer group, or family will decide on which type(s) of prayer to use.

Listed below are some suggested common prayers. The Suggested Matters for Prayer may be used for guided prayers or extemporaneous prayers.

A Prayer during the Coronavirus Pandemic

Walter H. Henegar, Pastor of Atlanta Westside PCA

Almighty God,
Our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend,
You who sit enthroned over the flood—
We are staggering in the surf of breakers
bringing bad news, and worse news,
while an invisible menace laps at our doorstep.

Father of all mercies, have mercy on us.
We are anxious, exhausted, angry, and sad.
We need your peace that surpasses understanding
to guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.
Be our refuge and strength;
be our very present help in this time of trouble.

Even in this trouble we thank you:
for green Spring life that refuses to wait for death’s shadow to pass;
for technology that unites exiles and draws the solitary near;
for your church that prevails in catacombs and quarantine;
for your own Holy Spirit who is socially present with us, always.

But Oh, forgive us, Holy Lord:

for hating our unwashed neighbors in our heart;
for opening our hearts to unfettered fear;
for closing our hearts, and our pockets, to any in need;
for loosening our grip on your precious and very great promises.

Assure us, our Gracious Redeemer:

that our sins are nailed to the cross of Jesus;
that we are clothed in the righteous white robes of Christ;
that you will never leave us nor forsake us;
that nothing – nothing – can separate us from your love.

Great Physician, we pray for those most vulnerable to this virus:

for the elderly, the weak, and those with chronic conditions;
for the poor, the hungry, and the isolated;
for those already infected.

Deliver them from this evil,

and prevent the rest of us from carrying it to them.

God of Hosts, we pray for the caregivers on the front lines:

for doctors and nurses and healthcare workers;
for police and firefighters and government officials;
for parents in the home and under-shepherds in the church:

Guard and guide them; shield and sustain them.

Rock of Ages, we pray for the newly unstable:

for those who have lost jobs, lost businesses, lost savings, lost homes;
for those facing the likelihood of losing even more—

Hide them in the cool shadow of your wings;

provide every good thing for them
that you, as a good Father, know they need.

Indwelling Spirit, empower your people to serve:

to get wisdom, and live by it, and share it freely;
to embody peace amid the strife of tongues;
to present our bodies as living sacrifices;
to suffer with Christ in patient endurance.

Give us all fresh confidence that there is:

no future where you are not present,
no sorrow where you are not near,
no tears not kept in your bottle,
no locust-eaten years you will not restore.

And so we trust you, our generous Provider:
if the curve does not flatten,
if the market does not pull up,
if the shelves go empty,
and if all our accounts drain to pennies—
Even still, let us rejoice in the Lord, our strength;
let us take joy in the God of our salvation.

In the name of Jesus we ask, Amen.

Suggested Litany

L. Roy Taylor

[Words in plain type are to be said by the minister, group leader, or family leader. Words in boldface type are responses are to be said by the congregation, prayer group, or family]

O God the Father, Creator of heaven and earth.

Have mercy upon us.

O God the Son, our Savior and Redeemer,

Have mercy upon us.

O God the Holy Spirit, Sanctifier of the faithful,

Have mercy upon us.

O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, one God,

Have mercy upon us.

Lord Jesus Christ, do not remember our offenses; neither reward us according to our sins. Spare your people, whom you have redeemed by your precious blood, and in your mercy preserve us.

Forgive us and spare us, good Lord.

From temptations arising from the world, the flesh, and the devil,

Good Lord, deliver us.

By your power, mercy, and providence, from this pandemic engulfing the world,

Good Lord, deliver us.

For all people who are suffering from this pandemic in body, mind, or spirit,

Good Lord, have mercy.

For all people who are suffering poverty, isolation, or pain,

Good Lord, have mercy.

For those who have lost homes, jobs, or financial resources because of this pandemic,

Lord, in your merciful providence, provide for them.

For those who mourn the loss of loved ones from this virulent disease,
Comfort and encourage them, O Lord.

For those who transport life's necessities, provide essential services, or protect us,
O Lord, strengthen and bless them,

For our government, military, and business leaders who serve us in this pandemic,
Give wisdom, kindness, and strength, O Lord.

For medical doctors, nurses, technicians, and researchers who serve the sick,
Give persistence, compassion, and insight, O Lord.

For effective therapies, a cure, and a preventive vaccine,
Lord, in your merciful providence, provide them.

A PRAYER OF JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time, with one accord to make our common supplications to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will grant their requests: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us, granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come, life everlasting.

Amen

PRAYERS FROM THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER (ACNA, ANGLICAN LITURGY PRESS, 2019)

O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, our only help in time of need: We humbly beseech you to behold, visit, and relieve your sick servant _____ for whom our prayers are desired. Look upon him/her with the eyes of your mercy; comfort him/her with a sense of your goodness; preserve him/her from the temptations of the enemy; and give him/her patience under his/her affliction in your good time, restore him/her to health, and enable him/her to lead the remainder of his/her life in your fear and to your glory; and grant that finally he/she may dwell with you in life everlasting; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let us pray to God the Father Almighty, that he would cleanse the world from all evil; deliver it from pestilence and famine; set free those who are in captivity; restore the sick to health; and bring those who travel to a haven of safety.

O God, you know that we are set in the midst of many grave dangers, and because of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright: Grant that your presence and protection may support us in all trials and carry us through every temptation; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty God, by your Word you laid the foundations of the earth, set the bounds of the sea, and still the wind and waves. Surround us with your grace and peace, and preserve us through this coronavirus pandemic. By your spirit, life up those who have fallen, strengthen those who work to rescue or rebuild, and fill us with the hope of your new creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, send down on those who hold public office in federal, state, and local governments the spirit of wisdom, charity, and justice; that with steadfast purpose they may faithfully serve in their offices to promote the well-being of all people; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

O Lord our heavenly Father, whose blessed Son came not to be served, but to serve: We ask you to bless all who, following in his steps, give themselves to the service of others; endue them with wisdom, patience, and courage, that they may strengthen the weak and raise up those who fall, and, being inspired by your love, may worthily minister to the suffering, the friendless, and the needy, for the sake of him who laid down his life for us, your Son our Savior Jesus Christ.

Heavenly Father, we remember before you those who suffer want and anxiety from lack of work. Guide the people of this land so to use our public and private wealth that all may find suitable and fulfilling employment and receive a just reward for their labor, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty God, whose Blessed Son Jesus Christ went about doing good, and healing all manner of sickness and disease among the people: Continue in our hospitals his gracious work among us; console and heal the sick; grant to the physicians, nurses, and assisting staff wisdom and skill, diligence and patience; prosper their work, O Lord, and send down your blessing upon all who serve the suffering; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Look with mercy, O God our Father, on all whose increasing years bring them weakness, distress, or isolation. Provide for them homes of dignity and peace; give them understanding helpers, and the willingness to accept help; and as their strength diminishes, increase their faith and their assurance of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

O God, almighty and merciful, you heal the broken-hearted, and turn the sadness of the sorrowful to joy. Let your fatherly goodness be upon all whom you have made. Remember in pity all those who are this day destitute, homeless, elderly, infirm, or forgotten. Bless the multitude of your poor. Lift up those who are cast down. Mightily befriend innocent sufferers and sanctify to them the endurance of their wrongs. Cheer with hope all who are discouraged and downcast, and by your heavenly grace preserve from falling those whose poverty tempts them to sin. Though they be troubled on every side, suffer them not to be distressed; though they are perplexed, save them from despair. Grant this, O Lord, for the love of him who for our sakes became poor, your Son our Savior Jesus Christ.

Almighty God, whose Son took upon himself the afflictions of your people: Regard with your tender compassion those suffering from anxiety, depression, or mental illness; bear their sorrows and their care; supply all their needs; help them to put their whole trust and confidence in you; and restore them to strength of mind and cheerfulness of spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

O blessed Lord, you ministered to all who came to you: Look with compassion upon those who through addiction have lost their health and freedom. Restore to them the assurance of your unfailing mercy; remove from them the fears that beset them; strengthen them in the work of their recovery; and to those who minister to them, give patient understanding and persevering love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Most loving Father, you will us to give thanks for all things, to dread nothing but the loss of you, and to cast all our cares on the One who cares for us. Preserve us from faithless fears and worldly anxieties, and grant that no clouds of this mortal life may hide from us the light of that love which is immortal, and which you have manifested unto us in your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Go before us, O Lord, in all our doings with your most gracious favor, and further us with your continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy Name, and finally, through your mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Most merciful God, whose wisdom is beyond our understanding: Deal graciously with those who mourn the loss of loved ones and friends. Surround them with your love, that they may not be overwhelmed by their loss, but have confidence in your goodness and strength to meet the days to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: I hold up all my weakness to your strength, my failure to your faithfulness, my sinfulness to your perfection, my loneliness to your compassion, my little pains to your great agony on the Cross. I pray that you will cleanse me, strengthen me, guide me, so that in all ways my life may be lived as you would have it lived, without cowardice and for you alone. Show me how to live in true humility, true contrition, and true love.

O Lord our God, grant us grace to desire you with our whole heart:

that desiring you, we may seek you;

and that seeking you, we may find you;

and that finding you, we may love you;

and that loving you, we may hate those sins from which you have delivered us;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen