



LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Personal Guide for One Hour of Prayer



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*Our mission: glorifying God by growing in grace and giving our lives away
on the mountain, in the city, and around the world.*



An extended time of prayer can be intimidating if it's a new thing for you – and even if it isn't! This prayer guide is crafted by Eric Youngblood, pastor of our daughter church, Rock Creek Fellowship.

“Who has a God like ours, who works for those who wait on him.”

Let us be active and expectant for the move of our God who is always at work.

THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER

Give Him No Rest...

“A breed of Christians is greatly needed who will seek tirelessly after God, who will give him no rest, day and night, until He hearkens to their cries. The times demand people who are all athirst for God's glory, who are unselfish in their desires, who are quenchless for God, who seek Him late and early and who will give themselves no rest until 'the whole earth be filled with his glory.' (Psalm 72:19)” E.M. Bounds, *The Weapon of Prayer*

No Bad Praying....

A father is delighted when his little one, leaving off her toys and friends, runs to him and climbs into his arms. As he holds his little one close to him, he cares little whether the child is looking around, her attention flitting from one thing to another, or just settling down to sleep. Essentially the child is choosing to be with her father, confident of the love, the care, the security that is hers in those arms. Our prayer is much like that. We settle down in our Father's arms, in his loving hands. Our mind, our thoughts, our imagination may flit about here and there; we might even fall asleep; but essentially we are choosing for this time to remain intimately with our Father, and giving ourselves to him... It is very simple prayer. It is very childlike prayer. It is prayer that opens us out to all the delights of the kingdom.” Brennan Manning, *The Ragamuffin Gospel*



READ AND PRAY PSALM 103 ALOUD TO GOD

Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits—

who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases,

who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion,

who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The LORD works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.

He made known his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel:

The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever;

he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him;

as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;

for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.

The life of mortals is like grass, they flourish like a flower of the field;



READ AND PRAY PSALM 103 ALOUD TO GOD

the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more.

But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children—

with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts.

The LORD has established his throne in heaven, and his Kingdom rules over all.

Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word.

Praise the LORD, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will.

Praise the LORD, all his works everywhere in his dominion.

Praise the LORD, my soul.

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OFFER THE FOLLOWING PRAYER

Father in Heaven,

While we presently come to cry out to you, we realize full well that much of time is spent crying out against you. We have a grumbling disorder, which is just a symptom of our deep inner suspicion of your good intentions toward us.

We are sorry about this.

We wish we could say that we won't grumble any more. We wish we could promise that from now on, we won't doubt your good, holy and wise intentions.

But we know that would be a lie.

So today, we ask more simply, let the dampening dew of our grumbling be burned away by the sunlight of hearts radiating with praise.

Why would we doubt your intentions, Lord?

You meet our desert grumbling with rain-showers of nourishing bread. You meet our spoiled inner brat with a melting mercy that tames us.

You let frigid winter give way to enlivening spring; midnight's tears give way to dawn's song; hardened spiritual arteries give way to freely flowing veins of pulsating life.

You lead and nourish, protect and preserve, speak and act, and all with nothing but steadfast love.

Help us to know and rely on the love that you have for us, the love that "sought us when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God."

Help us, as we believe we are secure in you, to act as if it is true. Because it is! Free us, that we might take risks with other people...risks to seek reconciliation, to talk about our faith, to reveal a little more about who we really are and who you really are.

Help us to notice your good gifts to us and make gratitude a daily reality in our lives.

Help us to believe that it matters to pray. Help us to order our lives around you and not merely shoehorn you into our already crammed life.

Help us to live our lives in such a way in the world that our lives would not make sense if you didn't exist.

Jesus, fill us with the Spirit of God during this hour and lead us into prayer where we connect with you and are replenished by you. Show us what to pray and how to pray and graciously attend to each word, sigh, groan, or silence that we and other praying brothers and sisters offer.



PRAYERS FOR FORGIVENESS

Spend some moments “forgetting not all his benefits.” A sometimes helpful trick is to work through the alphabet, praising God for something that begins with each letter...not mandatory, but an idea that gets us pondering all he’s done in our lives...all the way from A-Z...

CONFESS BEFORE THE GOD WHO HAS ASSURED US OF PERMANENT AND HEALING FORGIVENESS:

“Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.”

Rend your hearts and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.

Who knows? He may turn and relent and leave behind a blessing—“grain offerings and drink offerings for the Lord your God.” Joel 2:13-14

Gracious God, my sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what my lips tremble to name, what my heart can no longer bear, and what has become for me a consuming fire of judgment. Set me free from a past that I cannot change; open to me a future in which I can be changed; and grant me grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image, through Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Amen.

Spend a few moments asking God to wipe out all rebellion in you and to cleanse you entirely because of the completed work of Jesus Christ on your behalf. Consider the following quotes:

“Purity of heart is to will one thing.” Soren Kierkegaard

*“...I pray that you will conquer by prayer, privately and publicly as you daringly disciple men, calling them to give up a divided will to will only God’s will.” Jack Miller *The Heart of a Servant Leader**

“Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.” Psalm 86:11

PRAYER WITH A PROMPT

A favorite and well-worn prayer prompt of mine is from the psalmist stuck in a cave. In one sentence of distress he captures the essence of our Savior's freedom-giving mission in the world: “Set me free from my prison that I may praise your name.”(Psalm 142:7)



PRAYERS FOR FREEDOM

Spend some time praying for others and ourselves that we desire to be set free from the prisons that keep all of us from living as God would have us live.

THOSE BOUND IN UNBELIEF:

Pray for those in your sphere of influence who seem bound in unbelief and do not know Jesus. Pray that they would be set free from their prison and that they would come to a saving knowledge of Jesus.

THOSE BOUND BY UNFORGIVENESS, CONFLICT, AND RESENTMENT:

One astute author has suggested that almost all the hindrance for growth in the Christian life can be traced back to: “the inability to accept Christ's acceptance of you, the inability to receive forgiveness, and the refusal to give forgiveness.”

Think of conflicts and strained relationships that you see, both around you and in your own home. Ask Jesus to set you and the people around you free from criticism, resentment, unforgiveness, and from the inability to accept forgiveness. Plead for liberation, both corporate and personal, from a preoccupation with getting your own needs met.

THOSE BOUND BY ADDICTION:

Think about people who are addicted in various ways...Addicted to overeating, to work, pornography, alcohol, complaining, drugs, shopping, exercise, control gossip and pleasing people more than God. Ask that Jesus would set them or you free so that joy and praise may result in the lives of liberated captives!

THOSE BOUND BY SICKNESS, BOTH MENTAL AND PHYSICAL:

Think about those who have chronic pain, fatigue, and various health ailments. And some are struggling with various mental maladies like depression, anxiety, bi-polarity, and the like. Let's pray that there'd be sustaining grace for each minute of distress but that there'd also be some liberation from the captivity of these sicknesses, to be replaced with flourishing health.

THOSE BOUND BY FEAR:

Think about areas in our church's life or your own where you are afraid. Areas where you may be in disobedience because of fear: fear of what someone will think of you, fear of being hurt, fear of not having enough...Ask Jesus to set you and our congregation free from the fear that keeps us from robust obedience, a generous sharing of our lives, money and time, from sharing our faith and from opening our lives up to outsiders or to our neighbors.

THOSE BOUND BY SELF-ALLEGIANCE:

Perhaps pray for yourself and for others that Jesus would set you free from preferring yourself over everyone else. Ask that our community might be filled with people willing to disadvantage themselves for the advantage of others. Pray that we would be so liberated from our own “self-allegiance,” that we would be free to serve others, be generous with our words and our lives, and not feel like we are in constant competition with our brothers and sisters.



PRAYERS OF PETITION

1 SAMUEL 12

“Do not be afraid,” Samuel replied. “You have done all this evil; yet do not turn away from the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart. Do not turn away after useless idols. They can do you no good, nor can they rescue you, because they are useless. For the sake of his great name the Lord will not reject his people, because the Lord was pleased to make you his own.

As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you. And I will teach you the way that is good and right. But be sure to fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you.”

Lord Jesus, You came to seek and to save what was lost. It was your “Father’s will that you lose none of whom he had entrusted to you”, but that instead, you “would raise them up at the last day.”

Knowing full well that “no one came come to you”, Lord Jesus, “unless the Father who sent you draws them”, and that “whoever comes to you, you will never turn away”, we ask you to summon those we love but that do not yet love you. Let us see many come to know you and privilege us to co-labor with you in bringing folks into your family.

(Include the names of folks you are trusting Christ to draw to himself here:

You looked on helpless and harassed crowds and had compassion on them. Will you show compassion and healing to the people around us who are sick, angry, addicted, jobless, lonely, poor, overwhelmed? *(Pause to pray for those around you who fall into these categories.)*

You have promised to build your church in the world, which is to embody your Gospel in word and deed. Make us to flourish as a church, in our devotion to you, in our strong sense of calling to represent you in our daily work and recreation, and in our obedience, love, service, generosity, and in our love for strangers and outsiders.



PRAYERS OF PETITION CONT.

FOR OUR CHURCH FAMILY, WE PLEAD THAT YOU WOULD:

- Teach us in our singleness and in our marriages to reflect the reality of Christ, his forgiveness, power, and sacrificial love.
- Instruct our families and their children your ways, how to steward their lives, and guide them in truth.
- Permit our children to meet Christ and therefore fulfill their baptisms, growing in prayer, faith, repentance, obedience and service through family life, Sunday School, worship, and small groups.
- Nurture in our youth and children's ministry.
- Prosper ministry to women, men, and children of every age throughout the school year.
- Prepare, equip, encourage, and empower our elders and deacons to lead us prayerfully, all the while "keeping in step with your Spirit."
- Empower our pastors (Joe, Frank, Len, Brian, Jared and Aaron), adult discipleship leaders, congregational care contacts, small group leaders, and staff as well to lead our congregation into more Christ-likeness...more ardent worship, togetherness, and bold witness in the world.
- Keep us from apathy and make us to grow in praise, in outreach, in care for others, and in excellence in our daily work.
- Give us joy in our daily vocations so we may be "Christ's servants" in all the industries to which you have called us.
- Plant within us the desire "to will what you will" and to be always open to your leading.
- In our Sunday morning worship, let us grow in humility and in adoration of Christ and of his completed work for us.
- Let every member at LMPC find places to serve you in this world, both in their daily work and in the community
- Direct us as we seek to exercise true religion in the care of "widows and orphans in our community", the least, the lost, and the disadvantaged...make us all willing to disadvantage ourselves for the advantage of others.
- Give us open eyes to see AND act when it is in our power to serve.

Lord, encourage our partners who are spreading the Gospel of your renovating and reconciling mercies throughout the mountain, the city, and the world. Empower them to see your church spread and your Kingdom increase.

Pray for ministries on your heart and mind.



FINAL PRAYER

OFFER, REFLECTIVELY, THE FOLLOWING PRAYER OF AUGUSTINE:

“Give me yourself, O my God, give yourself to me. Behold I love you, and if my love is too weak a thing, grant me to love you more strongly. I cannot measure my love to know how much it falls short of being sufficient, but let my soul hasten to your embrace and never be turned away until it is hidden in the secret shelter of your presence. This only do I know, that it is not good for me when you are not with me, when you are only outside me. I want you in my very self. All the plenty in the world which is not my God is utter want. Amen.”

Spend about 10 minutes in prayer, asking God to reveal himself to you. To bring to mind anything he might want you to consider, understand, believe, or know deep in your heart. Perhaps begin with:

“Speak Lord, for your servant listens...”