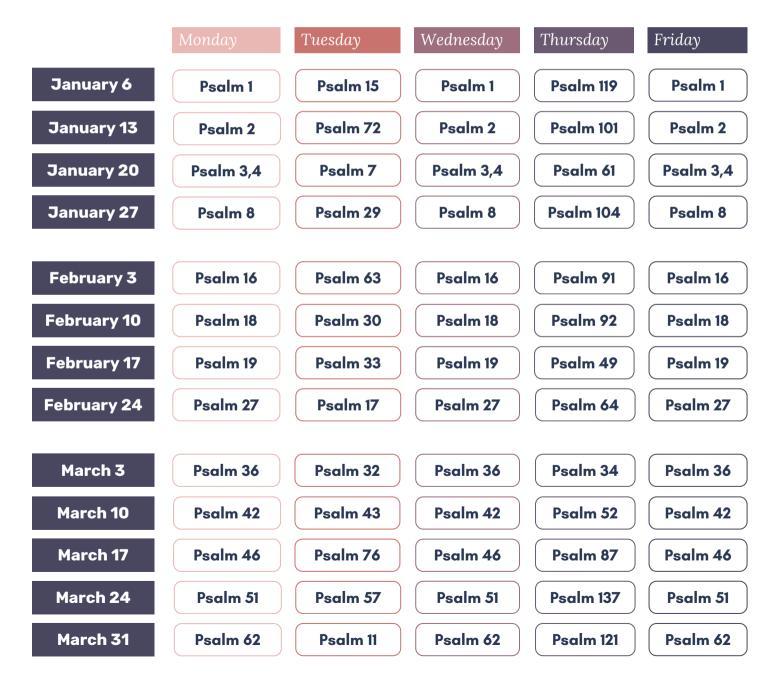
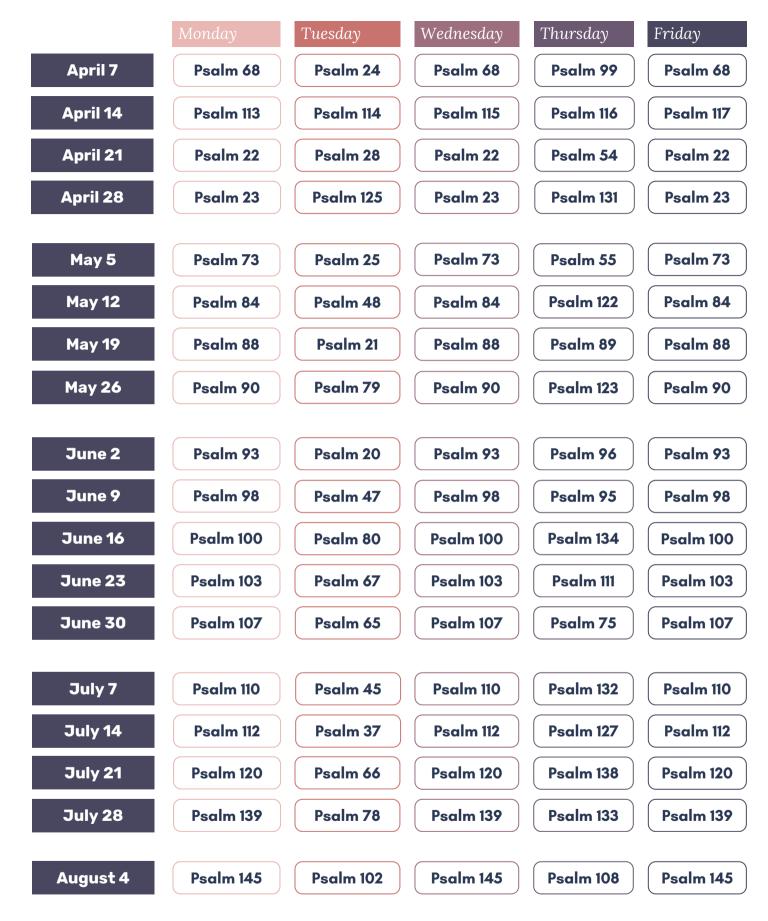


READING PLAN Psalms | Words for the Way through the World

We invite you to join us in reading a psalm each day, Monday through Friday, as we explore this central part of Scripture together. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, we'll read the same psalm that was the focus of our worship message. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, we'll read complementary psalms that share similar themes with the primary psalm of the week. As you read, we encourage you to try one of the spiritual practices included in this reading plan or reflect on the following questions to deepen your engagement with the psalms.

- How do these words reflect or mirror your own experiences, emotions, or thoughts?
- Do you know someone who could echo these words? How do these express the experiences of others?
- How do these words inspire you respond today through action, words, or a new way of loving God or neighboor?





QUESTIONS Psalms | Words for the Way through the World

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Invitations to Engage the Psalms

As you read a psalm each day, we invite you to consider using one of these practices to deepen your understanding of the psalm and prompt conversation with God.

Creative Response

The Psalms are a rich tapestry of emotion, imagery, and poetry that invite us to respond by expressing their themes through art, movement, or other forms of creativity. Some examples of creative response to the psalms include...

Art - Paint or draw the imagery of a psalm, letting its metaphors and emotions inspire your colors and shapes.

Movement - Choreograph a dance or use simple movements to embody the rhythms and emotions of the psalm.

Music - Compose a melody, create a song, or play an instrument to capture the tone of a psalm—be it joyful, mournful, or reverent.

Nature Walks - When reflecting on a psalm about creation go on a walk to observe nature, letting the psalm come alive through your surroundings.

Engaging the psalms through a creative practice allows the psalms to move from our mind to our hands, body, and heart, becoming a dynamic and personal expression of our life with God.



Festooning

READ SLOWLY

Read the psalm verse by verse, paying attention to its tone and emphasis.

EXPAND EACH VERSE

After reading a verse, rephrase it in your own words. Add your thoughts, feelings, and prayers as inspired by the verse. This can involve:

- Praising God with your own words.
- Applying the verse to your life or current situation.
- Asking questions or expressing gratitude related to the verse.

EXAMPLE FROM PSALM 23:1

Original Text: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." *Festooned Version:* "Lord, you are my gentle and loving shepherd. You know my every need and take care of me completely. Because of You, I lack nothing essential – I trust you to provide for my heart, mind, and body every single day."

PAUSE AND REFLECT

After festooning each verse, pause to reflect on your rephrased thoughts and let them guide your prayer.

Lectio Divina

PREPARE

Find a quiet place, free from distractions. Take a moment to calm your mind, pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance, and open your heart to God's Word.

READ THE PASSAGE

Slowly and attentively read the psalm. What words or phrases stand out to you?

READ THE PASSAGE A SECOND TIME

Slowly and attentively read the Psalm again. Ask God to give you insight and draw your attention to what you need to hear most from this passage. Allow the passage to prompt conversation with God.

REST IN GOD'S PRESENCE

Sit in silence and allow the words of the psalm and your conversation with God to sink deeply into your heart.

Pray the Psalms

Praying the psalms is simply the practice of reciting a psalm as our own prayer. We adopt the words as our own and direct them towards God. When we pray the psalms, it is important to remember to...

ENTER THE PSALMS WITH HONESTY

Approach the Psalms as a space where you can be entirely honest. They teach us to pray with raw emotion and without pretense.

SPEAK THE WORDS AS YOUR OWN

Pray the psalms aloud or silently, letting their words give voice to your experiences, whether they align perfectly or inspire deeper reflection.

ENGAGE THE WHOLE SPECTRUM OF LIFE

The Psalms cover the highs and lows of life. They remind us that every part of our story—celebration, pain, hope, and doubt—can be brought to God in prayer.

BE FORMED BY THE PSALMS

Over time, praying the Psalms shapes your heart and mind to align with God's purposes, teaching you to pray not just for yourself but for others and the world. Praying the Psalms helps us see that no emotion or situation is too much for God, and it draws us into a deeper, more transformative relationship with Him.

"To recognize that the Psalms call us to pray and sing at the intersections of the times – of our time and God's time, of the then, and the now, and the not yet – is to understand how those emotions are to be held within the rhythm of a life lived in God's presence." *N.T. Wright*

