

Word On Wednesday

FEBRUARY 1, 2022 – JUNE 8, 2022

A Friendly Guide: How Study The Bible

You open your bible, flip through a few of its pages, and let out a sigh of overwhelm. I get it, studying the bible can feel intimidating, even scary. I know you want to dive into God's word; and I know you are anxious to learn more. But you're not too sure where to start. While studying the bible can seem like a challenge, it's pretty simple once you have the right tools in place. Are you ready to embark on this life-changing journey with the God of the universe? Are you ready to learn and grow as the Holy Spirit speaks into your life?

Now, **before you start the Bible readings/lessons**, I recommend having these resources nearby. Bible, Pens, Highlighters, Notebook/Journal.

Homework Time Commitment: (30 min - 1 hour).

"Nobody ever outgrows Scripture; the book widens and deepens with our years." Charles Spurgeon

Why Should I Even Care About Going Deeper in Bible study? Isn't Surface Knowledge Enough?

No, it's not enough! The Bible says that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will be filled. (Matthew 5:6) If you only study on the surface, you will only gain a surface understanding. But, God has so much he wants to show you. God's word will literally illuminate your life and bring hope to dark places. But you cannot receive that light and hope if you do not seek for it. Personally, sometimes in-depth study of a particular passage in the Bible would be my key to breakthrough. Plus, why would you not want to have the fullest possible understanding of your Savior and Creator?

The Bible is an amazing book; we can't study it enough. Keep studying, learning, and growing. We turn to the Bible to learn, and then we also turn to the Bible in difficult times for comfort and consolation. "When the world beats you down, open up your Bible," said Lysa TerKeurst.

Helpful Routine Steps

"Unless we form the habit of going to the Bible in bright moments as well as in trouble, we cannot fully respond to its consolations because we lack equilibrium between light and darkness." Helen Keller

Start Off With Prayer

I **start off in prayer** and invite God to open my heart and teach me through his Word.

Read Through Once Without Highlighting or Taking Notes

Next, I dive right in and **read through the passage first without highlighting or taking notes**. I want to get an overview of what the passage is saying before I try to look for details. As I am reading, I do make a mental note of anything that stands out so I can come back to it later.

Read Through A Second Time and Highlight, Circle, Underline, and Make Note of Any Observations

I write down my questions, the things I find shocking, and the comments I have. If I feel convicted about something, I write that down too so I can pray about it later. Try to have no reservations in this step. You don't have to be perfect, simply write down any observation that comes to mind.

Reflect. When you've worked through the passage, put down your pen or highlighter and reflect on what you've learned. What does this passage teach you about God or yourself if anything? How could you act it message out in your day-to-day life? See if you can summarize what you learned in 1-2 sentences. You may also choose to turn to God and say a prayer of gratitude for what you learned or ask for guidance in helping to understand the passage.

Look Into Bible Study Tools

Next, I **consult my Bible study tools**. Most days I'll use a commentary but sometimes I'll also use other resources ([BibleHub](#), [Logos](#), [Blue-Letter Bible](#)) to look up what words mean in the Hebrew or Greek text. I'll also cross-reference at times, especially if the passage I just read reminds me of anything I've read before. Commentaries and sermons from theologians are great but I **always try to remember to allow the Holy Spirit to lead by Bible study**. Ultimately, he knows his word better than anyone else.

Pay Attention to The Historical Context

After this, I look at the **historical context** surrounding the passage. What was going on when it was written? Who was it written to? When was it written? Where was it written? You can discover some of the historical context right in the passage itself but there are also historical resources you can use to get a deeper understanding of the social/political/economic climate the passage was written in.

Consider The Meaning for Today and Its Personal Application for My Life

Finally, based on my understanding of the passage from my Bible reading/lesson, I **think about its meaning for today and its personal application for my life and walk with Christ**. I choose 2-3 takeaways and focus on them throughout the day. I also consider what the passage reveals about me as a human being. Does it speak of any hidden sin, attitude, or thought pattern that I need to repent of? Is it challenging me to draw closer to God? To trust him more? To have faith? I ponder these questions in prayer and ask God to help me through whatever he has revealed through his word.

Keep This in Mind

My final advice would be to choose the method that's simplest for you. Take other methods and modify as necessary to fit your needs. The most important thing is that you have a clear understanding of scripture, are applying it to your life, and that you remain consistent in study.

God has placed no pressure on you to know everything. It's okay if you don't. This is a learning process, and if you knew all of it, there would be no need to study. Take a deep breath, open your Bible, and begin reading. Remember to go at the pace most comfortable for you. Please don't let anyone rush you. Now, go and study!

All prayers, quotes, and lectionary readings are from the following:

Robert Benson, *Daily Prayer: A Little Book for Saying the Daily Office*. Lectionary: <https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/texts.php?id=126>

FEBRUARY PRAYERS

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God, you placed a star in the sky to draw wise men to the place of Christ's nativity. There you revealed the mystery of your eternal purpose for all humanity: God made flesh, born of Mary, opening to all the world the promise you made to Abraham and Sarah. Empower your church to be as the light of the star, that we may draw the world to the glory of Christ, our Lord, through whom we pray. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, you have given light to the world in Jesus Christ, but we have preferred to live in darkness. Your justice protects the weak and the distressed, yet we seek the shelter of privilege and power. Your righteousness redeems the poor and the needy, yet we seek the status of wealth and possessions. Your peace upholds the oppress and the defenseless, yet we seek the security of weapons and retribution. Forgive us our sins, and lead us to true repentance, that we may trust you in all things; through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

This is the good news: Christ is the light of the world, who grants forgiveness and healing of our sins. Thanks be to God.

THE COLLECT FOR THE SEASON

O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Spirit of God, in the proclamation of your Word, reveal to us the hidden mystery of your love in Christ, and strengthen our faith that we may approach you with boldness. Amen.

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE

Who wrote the book?

While Luke's name never appears in this gospel, ancient Christian tradition unanimously ascribes the book to him. One ancient prologue written to introduce the gospel describes Luke as a Syrian from Antioch. With this piece of information, we can deduce that Luke was probably not Jewish. Paul also listed him with other Gentiles in his greetings to the Colossians (4:14). The ancient prologue goes on to state that Luke eventually settled in the Greek city of Thebes, where he died at age 84.

Luke's own introduction to his gospel indicates that Luke composed the letter with the purpose of providing a careful rendering of the events of Christ's life in chronological order. As a physician, Luke would have been trained as a careful observer, a quality that would have been invaluable in this project. The result was the first part of a two-volume work written to Theophilus. We know the subsequent volume as Acts.

Where are we?

Much of the dating of the book of Luke depends on the dating of Acts. Luke's second volume cuts off with Paul imprisoned in Rome, before Paul's death (AD 68) and even before the persecution of Christians broke out under Nero (AD 64). It stands to reason that the book of Luke was completed before Acts. But when?

Acts 21:17 says that Luke accompanied Paul on the apostle's final visit to Jerusalem, a visit that occurred in AD 57–58. Eventually, the Jews had Paul arrested in the temple, a two-year ordeal which ended with Paul's imprisonment in Caesarea. Luke likely used this time apart from Paul to begin gathering information for writing the gospel from primary sources—those people who had witnessed the ministry, death, and resurrection appearances of Jesus. If Luke took to writing his gospel soon after the information was gathered, then it would have been completed around AD 60, after Paul had been transferred to a Roman prison.

Why is Luke so important?

Luke's interest in people is undeniable. Much of the material unique to Luke's gospel involves Jesus's interactions with individuals, many of them on the fringes of "acceptable" society—sinners, women, and children among them. Like Matthew and Mark, Luke recorded the incident of a woman coming to pour perfume on Jesus's feet. But Luke was the only gospel writer to point out the fact known to all present that she was an immoral woman (Luke 7:37). In a similar way, we find in Luke alone the conversation between the robbers crucified alongside Jesus, one of them defending Jesus and receiving the promise of paradise. Luke's portrayal of Jesus reveals in our Lord a man come to minister and show compassion to all people, no matter their station in life.

What's the big idea?

Just as Matthew portrays Jesus as the King, and as Mark reveals Him as the Servant, so Luke offers a unique perspective of Jesus as the Son of Man. This phrase, "Son of Man," was Jesus's favorite way to refer to Himself.

Most famous among the people unique to Luke's gospel is the tax collector Zaccheus, a short man who had to climb a tree to see over the crowds as Jesus approached his town. Jesus ended up sharing a meal with Zaccheus at his house, much to the chagrin of the local religious leaders. When Zaccheus expressed his regret over his former way of life and vowed to make restitution, Jesus responded with what became the theme of Luke's gospel: "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" ([Luke 19:10](#)). Luke portrayed Jesus as God's ideal Man, who offers salvation to all humanity—Jew and Gentile alike.

How do I apply this?

The richness of Luke's portrayal of Jesus has profound implications for our relationship with God today. Jesus walks through Luke's gospel illustrating His deep and abiding care for people, regardless of what they have done or their status in society.

Do you believe that God loves you no matter what you've done? The fact that the eternal Son of God condescended to lower Himself, take on human flesh, make Himself subject to human limitations, and seek out His people in bodily form shows us clearly how much God cares for us and, in turn, how we are to care for others.

<https://insight.org/resources/bible/the-gospels/luke>

INTRODUCTION TO MARK

Who wrote the book?

The Bible records more information about Mark than any of the other gospel writers aside from the apostle John. Luke mentioned Mark's name several times in Acts. A budding Jerusalem church met in his mother's home. Mark also started the first missionary journey with Paul and Barnabas but went home early, though he later traveled with Barnabas to Cyprus for more mission work. He became significant in the life of Paul, being one of the last people the apostle mentioned in his final letter ([2 Timothy 4:11](#)).

However, Mark's most significant personal connection was the one he had with Peter, who was likely Mark's source for the material in the gospel. Mark's mother's house was a regular enough stop for Peter that the servants recognized him by voice alone ([Acts 12:12–14](#)). And it appears that Mark was present at Gethsemane, a young man watching the proceedings from a safe distance ([Mark 14:51–52](#)), leading some scholars to believe the Last Supper took place in Mark's home.

Where are we?

Because Mark offered no further comment on Jesus's prophecy regarding the destruction of the temple—an event that occurred in AD 70—we can safely assume that Mark composed the gospel sometime before that tragic event. Also, the gospel has a distinctly Roman feel to it, particularly when compared with the Jewish emphasis of the book of Matthew. Mark chose to leave aside most comments on fulfilled prophecy (compare [Matthew 21:1–6](#) and [Mark 11:1–4](#)), and when he felt compelled to use an Aramaic term, he interpreted it ([Mark 3:17](#)). This suggests that Mark was in Rome, writing from Peter's recollections sometime before that apostle's death (ca. AD 64–68), possibly composing the gospel between AD 57 and AD 59.

Why is Mark so important?

Mark's gospel portrays Jesus as constantly on the move. The forward motion in Mark's writing keeps the knowledgeable reader's mind continually looking ahead to the cross and the resurrection. Thirty-nine times Mark used the word *immediately*, giving a sense that Jesus's time on earth was short and that there was much to accomplish in His few years of ministry.

What's the big idea?

While Matthew's gospel portrays Jesus as the King, Mark reveals Him as God's Servant. Jesus's work was always for a larger purpose, a point clearly summarized in [Mark 10:45](#), "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." Mark filled his gospel with the miracles of Jesus, illustrating again and again both the power and the compassion of the Son of God. In these passages, Mark

revealed more than Jesus as the good teacher who offered people spiritual renewal; the book also portrays Jesus as the true God and the true man, reaching into the lives of people and effecting physical and circumstantial change.

But Jesus's life as *the* agent of change wasn't without an ultimate purpose. Amid His hands-on ministry, Jesus constantly pointed to the definitive way in which He would serve humanity: His death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead. It is only through faith in these works of Jesus Christ that human beings find eternal redemption for their whole selves. Moreover, Jesus becomes our model for how to live our lives—serving others as He did.

How do I apply this?

Three times in three consecutive chapters—8, 9, and 10—Mark pictured Jesus informing His disciples of His great sacrifice and ultimate victory. His disciples either rejected the teaching altogether ([Mark 8:31–32](#)) or they showed themselves concerned with other matters (9:31–34; 10:32–37). As Jesus prepared to perform the greatest service in the history of the human race, His disciples could only think about themselves—their position or safety.

Do you find it a struggle to get yourself oriented toward sacrificial service, as Jesus's disciples did? The temptations we all wrestle with when faced with an opportunity to serve another person are to pull back within ourselves, to seek our comfort, or to protect our own interests.

The challenge that Jesus presents to us in the book of Mark involves breaking out of those patterns of self-absorption and giving ourselves in service and love to others.

As you read through Mark, look for these three strategies: 1) different people's reactions to Jesus throughout the book, 2) groupings of miracles and teachings that belong together, and 3) irony.

<https://insight.org/resources/bible/the-gospels/mark>

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN

Who wrote the book?

Not surprisingly, the gospel of John never provides the name of its author. Such identifications were not made in any of the other three biblical gospels either. However, two significant factors point to the identification of John as the author. First, the book itself identifies the author as the disciple whom Jesus loved. This description likely pointed to John for three reasons: the author had to be one of the twelve disciples because he was an eyewitness to the events in the gospel ([John 21:24](#)); he was probably one of the inner circle of three disciples (James, John, and Peter) because he was among the first Mary told of the resurrection (20:1–10); and this disciple is distinguished from Peter in the book, while James died too soon after the resurrection to be the author.

The second significant evidence for John’s authorship is the unanimous testimony of early Christians, among them the second-century Christian Irenaeus, who declared that John was the disciple who laid his head on Jesus—the disciple “whom Jesus loved” (13:23)—and the author of the gospel.

Where are we?

In Christian tradition, John’s gospel has always been referred to as the fourth gospel, meaning it was composed after the other three. Polycarp, a second-century Christian martyr who knew John personally, told Irenaeus that John had written the book during the apostle’s time serving the church in Ephesus. These factors suggest that John wrote the book between AD 85 and AD 95.

Why is John so important?

John did not include the nativity story in his gospel; instead, he introduced his book by going back even further into history. Invoking the “in the beginning” language of [Genesis 1:1](#), John made a direct link between the nature of God and the nature of the Word, Jesus Christ. The emphasis on the deity of Christ is a striking quality of John’s gospel. It also comes through clearly elsewhere in the book, particularly in [John 8:58](#) when Jesus claimed the divine name—“I am”—for Himself, which led an angry mob of Jews to try and kill Him for blasphemy.

What's the big idea?

While the other three gospels portray Jesus as the King, the Servant, and the Son of Man, John portrays Jesus as the Son of God. John stated his theme more clearly than any of the other gospel writers. He wrote so that his readers might “believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,” so that they may have life in His name ([John 20:31](#)). To accomplish that goal, John presented a riveting and distinctive picture of Jesus Christ, one in complete unity with the portraits in the other three gospels, but one that also adds significantly to the Bible’s revelation of Jesus Christ, the God-man.

John used a variety of techniques to communicate to his readers the nature of Jesus. These include his citation of Jesus’s seven “I am” statements, in which Jesus spoke of Himself in terms such as “the Light of the world” (8:12), “the resurrection and the life” (11:25), and “the way, and the truth, and the life” (14:6). Much of John’s gospel (chapters 2–12) might be called the Book of Signs, as it recounts Jesus’s performing of seven different

miracles—such as the turning water to wine at Cana and raising Lazarus from the dead at Bethany. These miracles illustrate His identity as the Son of God.

How do I apply this?

Jesus's identity as the divine Son of God sets Him apart from any other man who ever lived. He carries with Him the transcendence that comes only with God Himself. Therefore, His work on our behalf makes our salvation sure. Because He is God, His sacrifice on the cross has eternal implications, unlike the limited effect of the animal sacrifices in the Old Testament. Jesus, the God-man, has atoned for our sins. We can place our confidence in Him because of His divine nature.

For readers of John's gospel, the question is a simple, though significant, one: Do you believe that Jesus is Lord? If you believe, you will receive eternal life, claiming the truth that you will one day live in the presence of God in a place with no more pain, no more tears, and no more death.

<https://insight.org/resources/bible/the-gospels/john>

FEASTING ON THE WORD (FEBRUARY)

| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|--|--|------------------------|--|
| TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1 PRESENTATION OF THE LORD | Psalm 56 2 Kings 5:1-14 1 Corinthians 14:13-25 | LUKE 2:1-21 | God made the impossible possible when Zechariah's wife Elizabeth became pregnant. What is something impossible that you would like God to do in your life? |
| WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2 (1ST BIBLE STUDY @ 7PM VIA ZOOM) | Psalm 56 Jeremiah 1:11-19 Luke 19:41-44 | LUKE 3:1-22 | Jesus believed it was important to make his faith public by allowing John to baptize him. Have you made your faith public through baptism? What are other ways you can make your faith public? |
| THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3 | Psalm 138 Numbers 20:22-29 Acts 9:19b-25 | LUKE 4:1-13 | Even Jesus faced temptation but was able to overcome it by speaking and believing the words of the Bible. What temptation are you facing today? What Bible verse or passage might encourage you through this temptation? |
| FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4 | Psalm 138 Numbers 27:12-23 Acts 9:26-31 | LUKE 5:1-11 | Jesus called Peter, James, and John to leave their lives as fishermen, and to follow him. Is there anything God might be calling you to leave in order to follow after him? |

| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|------------------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 5 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week's study? |
| SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6 | FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY | | |
| MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7 | Psalm 115 Judges 5:1-11 1 Corinthians 14:26-40 | LUKE 6:20-36 | Who would you consider to be your enemies? How can you obey Jesus' teaching by showing them love? |
| TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8 | Psalm 115 1 Samuel 9:15-10:1b 1 Timothy 3:1-9 | LUKE 7:1-17 | Jesus was amazed by the Roman Officer's faith and responded to it by healing his servant. In what circumstance in your life would you like to have increased faith? |
| WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9 | Psalm 115 Isaiah 8:1-15 Luke 5:27-32 | LUKE 7:36-50 | Do you ever feel like your past sins are too great for God's forgiveness? Be encouraged by this passage that God forgives you, and those who are forgiven much, love much! |
| THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10 | Psalm 1 Jeremiah 13:12-19 Acts 13:26-34 | LUKE 8:4-24 | Have you ever felt rejected by your family? Jesus said that if you hear and obey his words, you are welcomed into the family of God. |
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| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|-----------------------|--|-----------------|--|
| FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11 | Psalm 1 Jeremiah 13:20-27 1 Peter 1:17-2:1 | LUKE 8:40-56 | Jesus was mocked when he stated that Jairus' daughter would be healed. Can you recall a time when you were mocked for your faith? Don't be discouraged. Great things happen when we have faith. |
| SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week's study? |
| SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13 | SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY | | |
| MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14 | Psalm 120 2 Kings 24:18-25:21 1 Corinthians 15:20-34 | LUKE 9:57-62 | What is holding you back from following after Jesus with your whole heart? What do you think you might experience if you let go of whatever is holding you back and pursued Jesus? |
| TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15 | Psalm 120 Ezra 1:1-11 2 Corinthians 1:12-19 | LUKE 10:1-12 | Jesus told his disciples not to stay inside the four walls of the temple, but to go out into the world and tell people about him. In what ways are you, or could you be, reaching out to your community with the message of Jesus? |

| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|------------------------|---|-----------------|---|
| WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16 | Psalm 120 Jeremiah 22:11-17 Luke 11:37-52 | LUKE 10:17-42 | Many of us can easily get distracted by what we're doing for God, instead of simply spending time with God. How have you allowed busyness to get in the way of growing in your relationship with Jesus? |
| THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17 | Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40 Genesis 43:16-34 Romans 8:1-11 | LUKE 11:1-13 | Is there something that you've been praying for a long time, but still haven't received an answer? Continue to pray and don't give up! |
| FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18 | Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40 Genesis 44:1-17 1 John 2:12-17 | LUKE 12:22-34 | Do you have any physical needs that occupy your mind and cause you to worry? Seek Jesus first and trust him to take care of you. |
| SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week's study? |
| SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20 | SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY | | |
| MONDAY, FEBRUARY 21 | Psalm 38 1 Samuel 24:1-22 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 | LUKE 14:7-35 | Jesus said that those who humble themselves will be made great. In what situation could you practice more humility? |

| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|-------------------------------|---|-----------------|---|
| TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 22 | Psalm 38 1 Samuel 24:1-22 1 Corinthians 11:17-22, 27-33 | LUKE 15:11-32 | Do you feel like you've wandered so far away from God that he would never want you back. Humble yourself and come back to Him, and He will welcome you home. |
| WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23 | Psalm 38 Leviticus 5:1-13 Luke 17:1-4 | LUKE 16:14-31 | Jesus said that God looks past the appearance we display to others and sees our hearts. How is your heart? Is there anything you need to make right with God? |
| THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24 | Psalm 99 Deuteronomy 9:1-5 Acts 3:11-16 | LUKE 17:1-19 | Jesus healed ten men of leprosy, but only one came back to thank him. What has God done for you that you haven't yet taken the time to thank him for? |
| FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25 | Psalm 99 Deuteronomy 9:6-14 Acts 10:1-8 | LUKE 18:1-30 | In the Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector, Jesus said the corrupt tax collector, not the Pharisee, was made right with God because he humbled himself before God. God is not looking for perfection, but humility and honesty when we pray. Take some time to humbly and honestly talk to God. |

| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|-----------------------|---|-----------------|--|
| SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week's study? |
| SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27 | TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY | | |
| MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28 | Psalm 35:11-28 Exodus 35:1-29 Acts 10:9-23a | LUKE 20:27-47 | Jesus warned his followers not to be like the religious leaders who did all of their good deeds in front of men to get attention and praise. What good things can you do privately so that you will receive approval from God? |
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MARCH PRAYERS

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Gracious God, we give thanks for your awesome handiwork in all Creation. Gather us into your presence, and surround us with your Spirit as we come to worship you today; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Loving God, you come to us in the voice of wisdom; Proverbs 22; James 3 You walk beside us each day— yet we are quick to complain and slow to recognize your care. We do not bridle the destructive power of our tongues. We try to hoard up your good gifts and worry that there is not enough. Forgive our fearful and selfish ways, and teach us to trust your mercy, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel: In Jesus Christ you are forgiven. Thanks be to God.

THE COLLECT FOR THE SEASON

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy God, you are the source of all wisdom and truth. Nourish us by your Living Word and fill us with your Holy Spirit, so that we may love and serve you faithfully this day, and always, through Jesus Christ, true wisdom from heaven. Amen.

FEASTING ON THE WORD (MARCH)

| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|--|--|-----------------|---|
| TUESDAY, MARCH 1 | Psalm 35:11-28 Ezekiel 1:1; 2:1 Acts 10:23b-33 | LUKE 24:36-53 | Stop and ask yourself, "Is the bodily resurrection important to me?" Why? |
| WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2 ASH WEDNESDAY LENT BEGINS (<i>NO BIBLE STUDY</i>) | Psalm 51:1-17 Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10 | MARK 1:1-13 | What is the "gospel" (good news) about Jesus? |
| THURSDAY, MARCH 3 | Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16 Exodus 5:10-23 Acts 7:30-34 | MARK 1:14-34 | Jesus declares that the moment has come to join God's kingdom. How does one join? |
| FRIDAY, MARCH 4 | Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16 Exodus 6:1-13 Acts 7:35-42 | MARK 1:35-45 | How does understanding Jesus' priorities in this study help to guide us when we pray? |
| SATURDAY, MARCH 5 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week's study? |
| SUNDAY, MARCH 6 | FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT | | |
| MONDAY, MARCH 7 | Psalm 17 1 Chronicles 21:1-17 1 John 2:1-6 | MARK 2:18-28 | How was Jesus' time of ministry like a wedding feast? What was the appropriate response to his presence? |
| TUESDAY, MARCH 8 | Psalm 17 Zechariah 3:1-10 2 Peter 2:4-21 | MARK 3:1-19 | What did Jesus intend to build with these twelve men? What leadership qualities should we look for in the church today? |

| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|----------------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9 | Psalm 17 Job 1:1-22 Luke 21:34-22:6 | MARK 3:20-34 | What does Jesus' definition of family mean for us? |
| THURSDAY, MARCH 10 | Psalm 27 Genesis 13:1-7, 14-18 Philippians 3:2-12 | MARK 4:1-20 | How can our hearts be "good soil" for God's word? What will be the result? |
| FRIDAY, MARCH 11 | Psalm 27 Genesis 14:17-24 Philippians 3:17-20 | MARK 4:21-41 | How can faith impact on the way we cope with difficult circumstances? |
| SATURDAY, MARCH 12 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week's study? |
| SUNDAY, MARCH 13 | SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT | | |
| MONDAY, MARCH 14 | Psalm 105:1-42 Exodus 33:1-6 Romans 4:1-12 | MARK 5:21-43 | Why does Jesus insist on speaking with the woman he has healed? |
| TUESDAY, MARCH 15 | Psalm 105:1-42 Numbers 14:10b-24 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 | MARK 6:1-29 | Who do people think Jesus is today? |
| WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16 | Psalm 105:1-42 2 Chronicles 20:1-22 Luke 13:22-31 | MARK 6:30-44 | What sensible suggestion do the disciples make? What is Jesus' surprising command in verse 37? |
| THURSDAY, MARCH 17 | Psalm 63:1-8 Daniel 3:19-30 Revelation 2:8-11 | MARK 6:45-56 | What do these miracles demonstrate about Jesus' relationship with the natural world? |

| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|----------------------------|---|------------------------|--|
| FRIDAY, MARCH 18 | Psalm 63:1-8 Daniel 12:1-4 Revelation 3:1-6 | MARK 7:1-23 | What traditions can distract us from seeking God wholeheartedly? |
| SATURDAY, MARCH 19 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week's study? |
| SUNDAY, MARCH 20 | THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT | | |
| MONDAY, MARCH 21 | Psalm 39 Jeremiah 11:1-17 Romans 2:1-11 | MARK 8:1-13 | Why did Jesus perform miracles for the crowd but refuse to do so for the Pharisees? |
| TUESDAY, MARCH 22 | Psalm 39 Ezekiel 17:1-10 Romans 2:12-16 | MARK 8:14-26 | What explanation did Jesus provide for why some people do not understand His teachings? |
| WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23 | Psalm 39 Numbers 13:17-27 Luke 13:18-21 | MARK 8:27-38 | What does it mean to follow Jesus? |
| THURSDAY, MARCH 24 | Psalm 32 Joshua 4:1-13 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:5 | MARK 9:1-13 | What is God the Father's important message? For who was it meant? |
| FRIDAY, MARCH 25 | Psalm 32 Joshua 4:14-24 2 Corinthians 5:6-15 | MARK 9:14-32 | The disciples had been given the authority to drive out demons. Why did they fail this time? |
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| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|----------------------------|---|------------------------|--|
| SATURDAY, MARCH 26 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week's study? |
| SUNDAY, MARCH 27 | FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT | | |
| MONDAY, MARCH 28 | Psalm 53 Leviticus 23:26-41 Revelation 19:1-8 | MARK 10:1-16 | How did Jesus treat this divorced Samaritan woman, and why did it shock her? |
| TUESDAY, MARCH 29 | Psalm 53 Leviticus 25:1-19 Revelation 19:9-10 | MARK 10:17-34 | Why is it so hard for the rich to enter the Kingdom of Heaven? How can we be saved? |
| WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30 | Psalm 53 2 Kings 4:1-7 Luke 9:10-17 | MARK 10:35-52 | How was Bartimaeus different from the "rich young man"? |
| THURSDAY, MARCH 31 | Psalm 126 Isaiah 43:1-7 Philippians 2:19-24 | MARK 11:1-11 | In what ways did Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem declare him publicly to be the Messiah? Why did He choose this moment to reveal His identity? |

APRIL PRAYERS

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Dear Father in heaven, you let us see and feel your great goodness toward us. Grant us the inner help to be victorious in the Savior, rejoicing to be by his side with faith and loyalty, and with the strength of soul that frees us from all burdens by laying them in your hands. Hear us as together we pray to you. All we ask and long for, all our concerns down to the very smallest, we lay in your hands in the one great request that your name be glorified on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from Your ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against Your holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and there is nothing good in us. O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore those who are penitent; according to Your promises declared unto men in Christ Jesus our Lord. Grant that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of His name. Amen.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? (Isa. 43:18-19). Thanks be to God.

THE COLLECT FOR THE SEASON

Almighty and ever living God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Draw us close, Holy Spirit, as the Scriptures are read, and the Word is proclaimed. Let the word of faith be on our lips and in our hearts, and let all other words slip away. May there be one voice we hear today — the voice of truth and grace. Amen.

FEASTING ON THE WORD (APRIL)

| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|--------------------|---|-----------------|---|
| FRIDAY, APRIL 1 | Psalm 126 Isaiah 43:8-15 Philippians 2:25-3:1 | MARK 11:12-33 | Why is it important to forgive? |
| SATURDAY, APRIL 2 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week's study? |
| SUNDAY, APRIL 3 | FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT | | |
| MONDAY, APRIL 4 | Psalm 20 Exodus 40:1-15 Hebrews 10:19-25 | MARK 12:18-34 | What might our "burnt offerings and sacrifices" be that seem religious but are less important to God than love? |
| TUESDAY, APRIL 5 | Psalm 20 Judges 9:7-15 1 John 2:18-28 | MARK 12:35-44 | What lesson is there for us in our giving? |
| WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6 | Psalm 20 Habakkuk 3:2-15 Luke 18:31-34 | MARK 13:1-13 | What are the apostles to look out for? (especially verses 5, 9 and 23) |
| THURSDAY, APRIL 7 | Psalm 31:9-16 Isaiah 53:10-12 Hebrews 2:1-9 | MARK 13:14-37 | What is the meaning of the parable of the absent landlord? |
| FRIDAY, APRIL 8 | Psalm 31:9-16 Isaiah 54:9-10 Hebrews 2:10-18 | MARK 14:1-26 | Why is it significant that Jesus' death happened at the Passover? |
| SATURDAY, APRIL 9 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week's study? |

| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|--|--|------------------------------|--|
| SUNDAY, APRIL 10 PALM SUNDAY | Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 Luke 19:28-40 | LITURGY OF THE PSALMS | |
| MONDAY, APRIL 11 MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK | Psalm 36:5-11 Isaiah 42:1-9 Hebrews 9:11-15 | MARK 14:43-65 | What was Jesus' response to being arrested? (Read Isaiah 53:7 and Mark 10:33) |
| TUESDAY, APRIL 12 TUESDAY OF HOLY WEEK | Psalm 71:1-14 Isaiah 49:1-7 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 | MARK 14:66-72 | In what way do we deny Jesus? |
| WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13 WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK <i>(NO BIBLE STUDY)</i> | Psalm 70 Isaiah 50:4-9a Hebrews 12:1-3 | MARK 15:1-20 | How do people mock Jesus today? |
| THURSDAY, APRIL 14 MAUNDY THURSDAY LENT ENDS | Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19 Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 | MARK 15:21-41 | What is the significance of Jesus' innocent death for us? |
| FRIDAY, APRIL 15 GOOD FRIDAY | Psalm 22 Isaiah 52:13-53:12 Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9 | MARK 15:42-47 | Why was Pilate surprised that Jesus was already dead? |
| SATURDAY, APRIL 16 HOLY SATURDAY | Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16 Job 14:1-14 1 Peter 4:1-8 | MARK 16:1-20 | What does eternal life mean to you? |
| SUNDAY, APRIL 17 RESURRECTION OF THE LORD | Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 Isaiah 65:17-25 1 Corinthians 15:19-26 | LUKE 24:13-49 | What does this passage teach me about the character of God? |
| MONDAY, APRIL 18 | Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 Joshua 10:16-27 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8 | MATTHEW 28:8-15 | How easy or difficult does the women's message (see vv7, 10) seem to deliver? Why? |
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| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|---------------------|--|-----------------|---|
| TUESDAY, APRIL 19 | Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 Judges 4:17-23; 5:24-31a Revelation 12:1-12 | JOHN 20:11-18 | “I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God” What has changed in the relationship between man and God, and man and Jesus? |
| WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20 | Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 2 Samuel 6:1-15 Luke 24:1-12 | LUKE 24:13-35 | If Jesus were to walk a few miles with you today, what would you talk with Him about? |
| THURSDAY, APRIL 21 | Psalm 150 1 Samuel 17:1-23 Acts 5:12-16 | LUKE 24:35-48 | What words and phrases communicate the thoughts of Jesus’ followers in verses 37-43? |
| FRIDAY, APRIL 22 | Psalm 150 1 Samuel 17:19-32 Acts 5:17-26 | JOHN 21:1-14 | What is the proper response to he resurrected Jesus? Read Philippians 2:10-11. How have you responded? |
| SATURDAY, APRIL 23 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week’s study? |
| SUNDAY, APRIL 24 | SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER | | |
| MONDAY, APRIL 25 | Psalm 122 Esther 7:1-10 Revelation 1:9-20 | MARK 16:15-20 | What were the disciples called to do? |
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| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|---------------------|--|-----------------|---|
| TUESDAY, APRIL 26 | Psalm 122 Esther 8:1-17 Revelation 2:8-11 | JOHN 3:7-15 | When used by John, the words night or darkness usually carry a symbolic reference to spiritual darkness. Why do you think we are told Nicodemus visits Jesus at night? |
| WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27 | Psalm 122 Esther 9:1-5, 18-23 Luke 12:4-12 | JOHN 3:16-21 | Does seeing Nicodemus as spiritually blind impact how you read the end of the conversation? |
| THURSDAY, APRIL 28 | Psalm 30 Isaiah 5:11-17 Revelation 3:14-22 | JOHN 3:31-36 | According to this passage, what is the opposite of belief? What is the result? |
| FRIDAY, APRIL 29 | Psalm 30 Isaiah 6:1-4 Revelation 4:1-11 | JOHN 6:1-15 | Aside from the resurrection, this is the only miracle performed by Jesus that is recorded in all four of the Gospels (Matthew 13:13-21; Mark 6:32-44; Luke 9:10-17). Why does it appear that this event is so significant in the life of Jesus? |
| SATURDAY, APRIL 30 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week's study? |

MAY PRAYERS

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Dear Lord, Thank you for waking me up this morning and I pray that you keep my mind positive and ready for a new week. I know that whatever may occur this week I am well equipped to handle it. I choose to enter the week with positivity, knowing that you have already gone before me. That you know both the joys and challenges that I will face this week and you have given me the ability to face them all without becoming frustrated or overwhelmed. Thank you for your divine favor in advance. In Jesus Name I Pray. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Believe the good news! God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:17) Thanks be to God.

THE COLLECT FOR THE SEASON

God our Father, who by sending into the world the Word of truth and the Spirit of sanctification made known to the human race your wondrous mystery, grant us, we pray, that in profession the true faith, we may acknowledge the Trinity of eternal glory and adore your Unity, powerful in majesty. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Calm us now, O Lord, into a quietness that heals and listens. Open wounded hearts to the balm of your Word. Speak to us in clear tones so that we might feel our spirits leap for joy and skip with hope as your resurrection witnesses. Amen.

FEASTING ON THE WORD (MAY)

| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|------------------|--|-----------------|---|
| SUNDAY, MAY 1 | THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER | | |
| MONDAY, MAY 2 | Psalm 121 Ezekiel 1:1-25 Acts 9:19b-31 | JOHN 6:22-29 | What did the crowd do when they realized that Jesus and the disciples had left (vs. 22-24)? |
| TUESDAY, MAY 3 | Psalm 121 Ezekiel 1:1-25 Acts 9:19b-31 | JOHN 14:6-14 | What two ways can we come to faith in verse 11? Which way is better? |
| WEDNESDAY, MAY 4 | Psalm 121 Isaiah 6:1-8 Luke 5:1-11 | JOHN 6:35-40 | What do you think Jesus means when he claims to be “the bread of life” in verse 35? |
| THURSDAY, MAY 5 | Psalm 23 Ezekiel 11:1-25 Revelation 5:1-10 | JOHN 6:44-51 | In verses 43-51 Jesus gives a longer explanation of the “bread of life”. Try putting his explanation in your own words. How did the crowd respond this time? |
| FRIDAY, MAY 6 | Psalm 23 Ezekiel 20:39-44 Revelation 6:1-7:4 | JOHN 6:52-59 | The Jewish leaders were grumbling because they didn’t understand Jesus’ teaching. What difficult teaching causes you to “grumble” because it doesn’t fit nicely into how you would like for God to operate? |
| SATURDAY, MAY 7 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week’s study? |

| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|--------------------------|---|------------------------|--|
| SUNDAY, MAY 8 | FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER | | |
| MONDAY, MAY 9 | Psalm 100 Ezekiel 37:15-28 Revelation 15:1-4 | JOHN 10:1-10 | How well does a shepherd know his sheep? What is the importance that the shepherd knows the sheep by name? |
| TUESDAY, MAY 10 | Psalm 100 Ezekiel 45:1-9 Acts 9:32-35 | JOHN 10:22-30 | What is the message of verses 27-30? |
| WEDNESDAY, MAY 11 | Psalm 100 Jeremiah 50:17-20 John 10:31-42 | JOHN 12:44-50 | How is the Father glorified through the death of Jesus? |
| THURSDAY, MAY 12 | Psalm 148 Ezekiel 2:8-3:11 Revelation 10:1-11 | JOHN 13:16-20 | Why is Jesus troubled in spirit? |
| FRIDAY, MAY 13 | Psalm 148 Daniel 7:13-14 Revelation 11:15 | JOHN 14:1-6 | In verse 6 Jesus makes the sixth "I AM" statement. What does it mean when Jesus says that He is "the way"? |
| SATURDAY, MAY 14 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week's study? |
| SUNDAY, MAY 15 | FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER | | |
| MONDAY, MAY 16 | Psalm 133 1 Samuel 20:1-23, 35-42 Acts 11:19-26 | JOHN 14:21-26 | What do we know about the Holy Spirit from verse 26? |
| TUESDAY, MAY 17 | Psalm 133 2 Samuel 1:4-27 Acts 11:27-30 | JOHN 14:27-31 | Why is Jesus telling His disciples all these things in verse 29? |

| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|---|---|------------------------|---|
| WEDNESDAY, MAY 18 | Psalm 133 Leviticus 19:9-18 Luke 10:25-28 | JOHN 15:1-8 | What might the pruning process look like in our lives? |
| THURSDAY, MAY 19 | Psalm 67 Proverbs 2:1-5 Acts 15:36-41 | JOHN 15:9-11 | How do we remain in the vine? |
| FRIDAY, MAY 20 | Psalm 67 Proverbs 2:6-8 Acts 16:1-8 | JOHN 15:12-14 | How do you get to be Jesus' friend? |
| SATURDAY, MAY 21 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week's study? |
| SUNDAY, MAY 22 | SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER | | |
| MONDAY, MAY 23 | Psalm 93 1 Chronicles 12:16-22 Revelation 21:5-14 | JOHN 15:26-16:4 | When did Jesus send the Helper "from the Father |
| TUESDAY, MAY 24 | Psalm 93 2 Chronicles 15:1-15 Revelation 21:15-22 | JOHN 16:5-11 | What did Jesus mean by convicting the world "of sin, because they do not believe in Me" |
| WEDNESDAY, MAY 25 | Psalm 93 2 Chronicles 34:20-33 Luke 2:25-38 | JOHN 16:12-15 | Why can't the disciples "bear" the "many things" that Jesus still had "to say" to them? |
| THURSDAY, MAY 26 ASCENSION OF OUR LORD | Psalm 47 Acts 1:1-11 Luke 24:44-53 | LUKE 24:46-53 | What hope does Jesus' ascension plant in his disciples' hearts (50-51)? What did the disciples do after this (52-53)? |
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| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|--|--|-----------------|--|
| FRIDAY, MAY 27 | Psalm 97 Exodus 33:12-17 Revelation 22:6-9 | JOHN 16:20-23 | What does Jesus tell the disciples about the message that they will proclaim to the world? Read John20:23. |
| SATURDAY, MAY 28 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week's study? |
| SUNDAY, MAY 29 | SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER | | |
| MONDAY, MAY 30 | Psalm 29 Exodus 40:16-38 Acts 16:35-40 | JOHN 16:29-33 | Jesus tells the disciples that the Father loves them. What reasons does he give them for the Father's love? (Verse 27) |
| TUESDAY, MAY 31 VISITATION OF MARY TO ELIZABETH | Psalm 113 Romans 12:9-16b Luke 1:39-57 | LUKE 1:39-56 | Mary's song is also a prayer. Spend some time evaluating your own prayer life in light of her prayer. How should this passage influence the way we pray? |
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JUNE PRAYERS

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Lord, please forgive me for my sins. They are many. Forgive me for the idols in my life that I put before you and for the times that I try to be my own god. Change my heart, Lord. Make me pure and righteous in your sight and by the power of your blood that you shed for me. Thank you for your promise of forgiveness. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit. (2 Cor. 3:17-18). Thanks be to God

THE COLLECT FOR THE SEASON

Almighty God, on this day you opened the way of eternal life to every race and nation by the promised gift of your Holy Spirit: Shed abroad this gift throughout the world by the preaching of the Gospel, that it may reach to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Everlasting Father, Send your Spirit among us, O God, as we meditate on your love. Prepare our minds to hear your Word, move our hearts to embrace what we hear, and strengthen our will to follow your way. This we pray through Christ, our Savior. Amen.

FEASTING ON THE WORD (JUNE)

| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|-------------------|--|-----------------|--|
| WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1 | Psalm 29 Ezekiel 3:12-21 Luke 9:18-27 | JOHN 17:11-19 | Does Jesus want His followers to isolate themselves from the world? Why? Why Not? |
| THURSDAY, JUNE 2 | Psalm 104:24-34, 35b Isaiah 32:11-17 Galatians 5:16-25 | JOHN 17:20-26 | What is the purpose for the unity (John 17:21)? |
| FRIDAY, JUNE 3 | Psalm 104:24-34, 35b Isaiah 44:1-4 Galatians 6:7-10 | JOHN 21:15-19 | Jesus tells Simon Peter "Follow me." What does it mean to follow Jesus? |
| SATURDAY, JUNE 4 | REFLECTION | | What is something new you learned about Jesus that stood out to you from this week's study? |
| SUNDAY, JUNE 5 | DAY OF PENTECOST | ACTS 2:1-21 | What areas of unbelief must you deal with in order to become more open to the movement of God in your life? |
| MONDAY, JUNE 6 | Psalm 48 Joel 2:18-29 1 Corinthians 2:1-11 | PSALM 8 | What role do human beings have in God's creation? Is it an important one that should not be overlooked, or is it secondary in nature? Explain. |
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| DATE | LECTIONARY READINGS | GOSPEL READINGS | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS |
|-------------------|---|-----------------------|--|
| TUESDAY, JUNE 7 | Psalm 48 Ezekiel 11:14-25 1 Corinthians 2:12-16 | PROVERBS 8:1-4, 22-31 | Some say wisdom and intelligence are the same. What are the characteristics of wisdom? How is it similar to intelligence? Are there elements within wisdom that are not found in intelligence? |
| WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8 | Psalm 48 Numbers 24:1-14 Luke 1:26-38 | ROMANS 5:1-5 | If God has demonstrated His love to us through Jesus' death, what can we anticipate concerning our future relationship with God? |