



2021 Prayer Week Guide

Formed in the Wilderness

That we may change

Holy God – in this precious hour, we pause
 and gather to hear your word –
 to do so, we break from our work responsibilities
 and from our play fantasies;
 we move from our fears that overwhelm
 and from our ambitions that are too strong.
 Free us in these moments from every distraction,
 that we may focus to listen,
 that we may hear, that we may change.
 Amen

Walter Brueggemann

Welcome to Prayer Week.

This week is an opportunity to pause from all the frantic activity and anxiety of our productivity-oriented world and remember what it means to be transformed by the intimacy God offers.

We have had a hard year. We've had to adapt in many ways because of the pandemic and because of the challenging season the church is in now. But, what we most desire is to continue to be shaped and transformed by the love that God offers amid hard places.

We are starting a sermon series called "Formed in the Wilderness," and in the intro to this series, Joy writes:

We often think of wilderness time as an in-between time of pointless wandering and waiting, a time to simply endure so that we can get on with real living on the other side of the wilderness. In Scripture, however, we find that wilderness experiences are actually times of deep formation for God's people. The wilderness, though harsh, dangerous, and unsettling, can be a place of deepening trust in the God who is present in the wilderness. In the wilderness, we are shaped as the people of God. It is a place that strips away false notions of who God is, who we are, and how the world is, and teaches us to walk in fidelity with God of life.

Use this week of prayer to deepen in your faith as we journey in the wilderness together.

Invitations to pray this week:

- **Sunday, January 10th: Corporate Prayer.**
We will take time to focus on prayer together during our Sunday worship service, preparing in hope and asking for God to guide us into the year ahead as a community.
- **24-hour prayer chain** (Friday Jan 15 to Saturday Jan 16).
 - You are invited to choose an hour within a 24 hour period, during which you commit to praying. See below for suggestions on how to enter into this time of prayer.
 - Randy will send out a sign-up and then the reminder with times and who signed up. Join in even if you didn't sign up.
- **Prayer in Homegroups**
 - Stay tuned for opportunities to prayer together with and for the people in your homegroup. If you are not in a homegroup and are looking to connect in this way, please email rosemary@gcbchurch.ca for more information.

One Hour in the 24-Hour Prayer Chain

Prepare for your time of prayer

- Make sure the time is cleared on your calendar
- Turn off your phone and computer
- Decide what forms of prayer you are drawn to so that you can make those preparations
- Create a space in your home that is conducive to that form of prayer unless you are planning to walk.

Some suggestions for what to pray for:

- Staff: Christina, Joy, Todd, Fiona, Zoe, Bob, Jake, Randy, Rosemary, Laurie, Melanie
- Council: Lucas, Tim K, Melanie L, Becky, Greg, Ellen, Shandelle, Brendan, Nathan, Trish
- External structural support to help us through the crises and transitions of the last two years
- Stewardship committee with Rob T as chair.
- Partner groups: Kinbrace, JustWork, Salsbury Community Society, Co:Here
- Clean Break Laundry Program, MOMS, Stillpoint, Eastside Story Guild
- Global workers: Matt & Kristen Cato-Wall, Emmanuel and Grace Ndabarushimana, Steve and Elly McElroy, Jasmine Kwong

Ideas for how to spend your time of prayer

These are suggestions. Feel free to use one or more or shape the hour in way that works for you.

1. **Write and pray a psalm**

Many of the psalms include remembering and naming how God acted in their individual and communal story. This leads to elements of praise of petition. Write a personal psalm that has elements of remembering, praise, and petition.

2. **Go on a prayer walk.** Begin by praising the Creator for elements of creation that you see. Move into dialogue and prayer for GCBC, individuals on your heart, our city and world. You may like to come up with a simple blessing that you pray over the people and places you pass or ask God how to pray for those places and people.

3. **Go on a prayer walk and pray “The Jesus Prayer”.** As you walk repeat the famous prayer of the Russian pilgrim, “Lord, Jesus Christ, have mercy on me, a sinner.” After praying this first prayer for a while, pray for others: “Lord, Jesus Christ, have mercy on _____.” You may pray for individuals, groups, ministries, regions, issues, politics, our city, etc.

4. **Paint or draw your prayer.** Draw a simple outline of 2 open hands, representing God’s hands. Prayerfully draw or write in the hands people, places, situations that you would like to place in God’s hands.
5. **Journal your prayers.** Write your prayer as a letter to God in your journal. Be sure to listen for God’s response and record that as well (or you may choose to journal your prayer as a dialogue with God). When listening for the response first simply write what comes to mind and your heart. You can discern afterwards if this listening seems to be in line with God’s character and Scripture.
6. **Pray with children in your family.** Create prayer flags with children. Cut triangles out of colourful paper and draw or write words on each triangle for your prayers. Attach them to a string and hang up your prayers where you and the children can remember to keep holding them up in prayer and watching for how God may answer.
7. **Resting Prayer:** Find a comfortable space, light a candle and put on some music that is worshipful for you. Sit with God, rest in his light and love, as a young child rests in a parent’s arms. You may spend the time in

silence like you would with an old friend or be together in conversation.

8. **Have tea with God:** Imagine yourself sitting down with God (however you picture the Creator, the Saviour of the World) for a cup of tea, coffee or glass of lemonade! How would you spend that hour with God? Shake God's hand? Give God a hug? Get down to conversation?

Begin by listening, before talking.

- Ask God: what is on Your heart?
- Allow God to ask you: What is on your heart?
- Go back and forth this way – listening to God's heart, sharing your heart.

9. An Outline for Prayer

Begin by first slowly reading through Psalm 145 and joining the psalmist in giving thanks and praise to God:

Great are you Lord and most worthy of our praise. You are gracious, compassionate, faithful and loving...

We name and give thanks for the ways that you have revealed yourself to us this past year
 ... In the story of GCBC.
 ... in our own lives.

We pause and listen for you to remind us of other ways that you have been working and revealing your love to us. [Silent listening]

Following the generations that have gone before us we celebrate your abundant goodness and meditate on your wonderful works.

We confess that we have not always lived faithfully into your story of grace, compassion, and love. [Pause and notice]

We listen for you to shine your light on the places of darkness and bondage....
 ... in our story as a nation [Silent listening].
 ... in our story as a church [Silent listening].
 ... In our own lives [Silent listening].

We confess these sins to You, and ask You to lead us out of darkness and into your kingdom of light. [Pause to confess]

Because you uphold all those who fall, we rest in your forgiveness and compassion.

We look now toward the year ahead, trusting that you are near to all those who call on you.

We pray for our world and city.....

We pray for our church community,
partner groups and global workers

We pray for work, family, and friend
communities.....

We pray for our own lives....

We humbly seek your guidance and ask that
your Spirit may empower us to walk into our
particular calling as a church.

May your kingdom come on earth as it is
in heaven and may your name be glorified
in our church.

Great are you Lord and most worthy of praise.
Let every creature praise Your holy name
for ever and ever. **AMEN**



Prayer Week 2021
Grandview Church, Vancouver
Unceded Coast Salish Territories