

# Parish News

## A COMMUNITY



*Just a few moments to focus on.*

*All pictures have been previously published.*

### Coming Events

#### Mission Prayer Group

Meet on the second Tuesday of each month pending COVID restrictions. Meet at 59 Stoddarts Rd, Warragul at 2pm but please ring Jill Dixon first on 5623 5584.

#### Who, Why, What and When of Exercise to Prevent Falls

Pending COVID restrictions, Physiotherapist, Helen Lowe will speak. Wednesdays, Warragul Anglican Church, 12.30pm September 1, October 6, November 3.

#### Whirlpool Youth Group

Contact Kerrie Armstrong on 0431 895 919 or email [karmstrong.hots@bigpond.com](mailto:karmstrong.hots@bigpond.com)

#### Sunday services

Keep up to date with services on the church website [www.warragulanglican.org.au](http://www.warragulanglican.org.au) and the weekly e-news

#### Community Groups

Community groups study the Bible, pray, support one another and reach out to others. If you want to join a group see the website for details. of the community groups.

#### More news and info. from

<https://warragulanglican.org/>

**MORE THAN A TRIVIA QUIZ...THE BIBLE ON PRAYER AND SIN...**

From <https://www.simplybible.com/f334-pprov-bible-quiz-sin-and-prayer.htm> Answers on page 9

1. What can pervert our prayers so that we "ask amiss"?
  - 1.1. (A) Lustful motives, (B) Sin, (C) Hating evil, (D) Being ungracious.
2. What does God expect of us before he answers our prayers?
 

(A) Absolute perfection, (B) To hate sin and follow goodness, (C) To forgive others and that's all.
3. What did David say everyone who is oppressed by guilt should do?
 

(A) Confess their transgressions to the Lord, (B) Believe they are still right with God, (C) Despair.
4. In what chapter do we read of a sinful Christian who had to repent and pray for forgiveness?
 

(A) Mark 9, (B) 1 John 5, (C) Acts 8, (D) Acts 12.
5. In what state was Simon the Sorcerer when Peter rebuked him?
 

(A) In grace, (B) Hopelessly fallen and lost, (C) Poisoned by sin and in need of a remedy, (D) None of the above
6. What was to be the content or point of Simon's prayer regarding his sin?
 

(A) To state that he was forgiven, (B) A request that he be forgiven, (C) An excuse to explain away his sin.
7. What is necessary before we pray for forgiveness?
 

(A) Repent, confessing our sin to God, (B) Proof that the sin couldn't be helped, (C) To get full enjoyment of the sin.
8. How should a Christian's sin be regarded if there is a refusal to repent, confess the sin to God, and ask forgiveness?
 

(A) As forgiven anyway, (B) As a sin unto death, (C) As not unto death.
9. How should we regard the belief that a Christian can sin with the intention to repent and pray forgiveness afterward to escape condemnation?
 

(A) As a true belief, (B) As a false belief, (C) As exploiting a loophole in God's law
10. In what capacity does Christ serve when someone genuinely and prayerfully seeks forgiveness from God?
 

(A) High Priest interceding, (B) Judge ready to condemn, (C) He is not involved.
11. Are there conditions one must fulfill before asking God to forgive our sins?
 

(A) No, God's love is unconditional, (B) Yes, especially that we must have overcome a sin before we ask forgiveness, (C) Yes, for example we must have forgiven those who ask forgiveness of us.
12. Can prayers be hindered?
 

(A) No, God hears every prayer favourably, (B) Yes, for example if a man is ungracious toward his wife his prayers may be hindered, (C) Yes, the devil can hinder our prayers.
13. What condition of complete forgiveness does John state in his first letter?
 

(A) That we don't distinguish between light and darkness, (B) That we walk in the light as God is in the light, (C) That we don't go outside at night time.

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**PRAYER**

The following questions were put to contributors to the Parish News to help all of us reflect on the value of prayer.

Do you prefer to pray on your own or share; aloud or in silence?

Do you believe God knows your every thought therefore you do not need to articulate your prayer content?

How often and where do you pray?

What preparation do you put into readying yourself for prayer?

Do you have a formula for prayer? eg: like the Lord's Prayer structure

What prevents us from praying regularly?

Describe your journey into the practise of praying.

What bible passages have you/do you find helpful in developing your praying practise?

What difference does praying make to your own life?

## PRAYER

*From Julie Cooper...*



After I became a Christian in the early 70's, I joined a local Bible study group. I noticed that people prayed out loud and I was horrified and extremely nervous about following their example. I realised eventually that I needed to overcome my fears. My first attempt at praying out loud was a gush of about five words but it was a start. God doesn't seem to have been bothered by my lack of experience and I kept doing it so that over time I grew more confident.

The hardest challenge on my journey has been to grasp that I am in a relationship with the God of the Universe who is also my heavenly Father. He knows me better than I know myself and yet sometimes I am shy about sharing my needs and thoughts with him. It helps that He knows my every thought but still I want talk with him as it is a two way relationship and it is also a part of the growing and healing process if I can verbalise what I am thinking about.

I don't have a formula for prayer. I do, however, like to sit in silence in His presence before I start praying and to end off with a period of silence. I used to come to God with a shopping list of things that were needful of resolution. However, I have stopped doing that (it was not helpful and I could sense God's impatience) and now focus on one or two issues and sit with those for some time. I usually pray once a day or as the Spirit leads.

Praying has caused me to shift my thinking from seeing God as part of my life to me being a part of God's purposes. It is deeply satisfying and amazing to see how prayers are answered. Sometimes, of course, we don't find out the outcome till years later or perhaps not in our lifetime.

*From Bev Foster...*



Standing on my desk beside me are wooden praying hands. Many years ago this beautiful carved object was given to me by a Christian mentor in my early life as a Christian. She was Mrs Jean Cheshire who encouraged me as I led a group of the *Girls' Friendly Society* at *Holy Trinity, Doncaster*. I recall, at the time, she told me the story of the artist who struggled to complete the original despite hands badly crippled with arthritis.

At church we have been encouraged by the series on *Prayer* and particularly the personal insight given by various members of our church family, including me.

Prayer can sustain us through times of difficulty.

Our family experienced this 26 years ago on the sad death of our youngest daughter. Amazingly, God was with us and put in place events and people who helped us through.

We all feel at times that our prayer life is lagging. Praying for others in a pastoral care role is important. As I mentioned, I had, on occasions, when asking "Would you like me to pray for you?", received the response, "If you think it will help". I assured them that would and can recall a Christian businessman with the sign in his office, "**Why worry when you can pray.**"

Regular Bible Study is a great aid in our prayer life and there are also many other helpful books, among them being, for me, an *Anthology of Public Prayers* compiled by the Mothers' Union. *God Understands* is a booklet produced in 1982 which has been tucked in my bookcase for that length of time and covers all aspects of our feelings from anger to joy, giving prayers and Biblical references. Finally, a prayer that has stood the test of time is that of Mary Sumner (1828 - 1921):

*All this day Lord, let me touch as many lives as possible for thee, and every life I touch, do thou by thy Spirit quicken, whether through the word I speak, the prayer I breathe, or the life I live. Amen*

Eternal God, the light of the minds that know thee, the joy of the hearts that love thee, and the strength of the wills that serve thee: Grant us so to know thee that we may truly love thee, and so to love thee that we may fully serve thee, whom to serve is perfect freedom, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*St Augustine of Hippo*

## MORE THOUGHTS ABOUT PRAYER

*From Nola Broadbent...*

I can never think of a time when I didn't have a conversation with God. I didn't always understand that I was praying, but as a child I knew, because Jesus loved me, I could ask him anything and he would hear.

I met a young woman when I was in my 20s who asked me to come and pray with her. This encounter, I think, was the beginning of understanding my relationship, through prayer, with God.

I have been fortunate, over many years, to have been able to pray with some wonderful Christian women. I think praying with others is when you see God's answers more clearly, and it is a wonderful opportunity to be encouraged in your faith.

My personal prayer life is quite different.

The Bible tells us we should "pray without ceasing" so I talk to God continuously, No matter where I am, or what I am doing, He must get quite sick of me rambling on!

But it is very important for me to spend some time in quiet reflection alone.

I don't necessarily find this easy but am reminded particularly at this time that we are in a spiritual battle. It is so easy to be distracted particularly with a busy life and often "things" get in the way of our time with Him.

I believe that prayer is the most significant part of being a Christian and it is one of the most important things in my life.




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## HOW OFTEN AND WHERE DO YOU PRAY?

*From John Broadbent...*

Prayer is mostly a very personal experience, or at least it can/should be. In my experience, prayer at a large gathering needs to have the entire body of people involved, and at one, for such prayer to be effective. (See Ephesians 4:1-6). That means that all or most of those present should be experiencing a strong sense of 'presence' of the Holy Spirit and that is not easy to achieve in a spontaneous way.

Such a 'atmosphere' can only be experienced if the individuals are experiencing constant prayer in their personal daily life. This might sound radical but my experience is as follows.

To answer the question "how often and where do you pray?" I would have to say I am constantly in prayer with Jesus through His Holy Spirit. I talk to Him all through the day, in my mind, during my walk/s, playing golf, during time spent with my wife or other family or friends, enjoying a break in a coffee shop, driving somewhere, or whatever I am doing I am constantly being 'prompted' by the Spirit to please Him or to do something. It is not a voice or loudspeaker in my head that announces the presence of the Holy Spirit but rather a sense of comfort to a question in my mind or an experience I am having. If I have a concern of the day or an issue of the week or a problem of the month, whatever it is I talk to God about it, often silently, but sometimes out loud, especially if I am walking my dog on the local walking track, but it happens anywhere.

Over the passage of time, I find those 'problems' dissolve away, sometimes by a gradual awareness but sometimes quite suddenly. I would never say I am walking on a cloud, but I don't need to. Of course, my failings occur often in that I sometimes forget to mention my concerns, or to praise Him for the repeated answers He gives through life's experience. And I think that is where we all fail to grasp that God is everywhere and anywhere and is so concerned about our welfare that He will respond to ANY need however large or small. It should not be needed here but how long is it since we asked God to do something trivial to improve our living days? How long is it since we voiced our appreciation for the Universe right down to microbial life patterns? Because it is somewhere in between that we live. My experience is not necessarily better than other means of communicating with God, but somewhere in the experiment of life we all have the opportunity to share with Him.



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT...ABOUT PRAYER

*From Graeme MacRobb*

I am looking forward to reading what other members of our Parish Family have to say about the part prayer has played in their growth as a Christian, or to share with us what new understandings of prayer that they have gained recently.

One of the great things about being involved in evangelistic ministry, which has been a large part of my ministry over the years, is to talk with people who have recently begun a new walk with God or have come back to God after a long absence. Some have told me of their struggle to pray, while others have amazed me with their account of the difference that prayer is making in their daily life. But sadly most have received little help to develop an effective prayer life. I was fortunate that, at twenty, I received support and encouragement when I was making a fresh start with God.

Thankfully, when I first began a personal relationship with God, I received help from more experienced Christians who encouraged me to not only say “shopping list” prayers, but to spend a part of my prayer time in not only talking to God about my needs and the needs of others about whom I was concerned, but to balance these important personal prayers with a time of becoming more actively aware, and thankfully reminding myself, of how great it is to have Him in my life—and then to actually let Him know how much I appreciate ways in which He was blessing and helping me.

Probably the big step forward in my early prayer life was when one of my new friends in Christ realised that I had all sorts of ideas about God jumbled about with all sorts of my own wrong ideas about him and what I needed to do gain His friendship.

He drew my attention to the fact that Jesus is God’s way of revealing Himself to those who really want to enjoy His company and also live lives blessed and empowered by the gift of God the Holy Spirit. He encouraged me to start with “getting to know about God by getting to know Jesus”; becoming more acquainted with what he said and did when he spent time with his first followers. He reminded me that God the Son had made clear to us that “He who has seen me has seen the Father”. So I started to read the Bible. When my encourager realised that I was not making much headway with randomly reading bits and pieces of the King James Bible, he gave me a gift of the recently published J.B Phillips translation of the New Testament. Reading the Bible was no longer a duty but a daily delight,

Did that make much difference to my prayer life, and how I prayed? My word it did!

When I made a point of thanking the gift-giver and shared with him the things that I now appreciated about God and about how so many things had moved from head knowledge to heart excitement and life enjoyment - things I had never previously been excited by that were now becoming things that were reshaping my life, he then asked me if I chatted with God about these things. He reminded me that God, being a Father, just loved to hear from his children about what was happening in their lives, what were their dreams and hopes and longings. So conversational prayer became a part of my prayer life and “real” worship gradually became a part of my relationship with God not so that he would answer my prayers — but because I was more aware of Who He really was and still is and He was doing for me far more than I could have ever imagined.

The other thing that has so richly transformed my more informal times of prayer into real worship has been reading and singing hymns written by men and women whose lives have been enriched by their experience of *Getting to know about God by getting to know Jesus*. One hymn has always been a part of my personal prayer life more than any other is *What a Friend we have in Jesus*. No other hymn or poem or sermon has ever touched my heart and turned my thoughts into prayer than that simple love story set to singable worship.

A few years back I found a poem called *You are my best friend, God* by an unknown author. It made me realise afresh that prayer is so much more than asking a distant God to do things **for us** but someone who himself longs to do things **with us**.

*You are my best friend, God* has been a wonderful encouragement to pray. May it bless you as much as it has blessed and encouraged me.

The other helpful advice I received years ago was to combine my love of walking with my desired prayer life. I did so and still do so. So when you see me walking between Drouin and Warragul you will know that I have a sermon that is just not going right and I need to talk it over with a friend. I have also found that doing so also helped answer my prayer that I might lose weight

So if you are walking to or from Drouin and you hear someone singing *He walks with me and talks with me along life’s narrow way*, you will know who it is and you will be most welcome to sing the next line *You ask me how I know he lives — He lives within my heart*.

**WHAT A FRIEND...****What a Friend We Have in Jesus****No Doubt About That**

*You're my best friend, Lord.  
With You I can risk anything.  
I don't have to worry about  
measuring up,  
or fitting in  
or looking just right  
or having the best clothes  
or saying all the right things.  
I don't have the to fear  
Having a confidence betrayed  
or not being understood  
or being able to keep up  
with the Joneses.*

*Our conversations are so meaningful. Lord,  
and unlike so many  
You listen,  
then listen again.  
You give me your undivided attention,  
and you never wonder how to break away  
lest you miss Your next appointment.*

*And you are patient Lord  
when I do all the talking.  
You are faithful  
I can't turn you away.  
You go on loving me  
In spite of traits  
that have turned others away.*

*Now may I be a friend to someone, Lord.  
Show me the person who needs a good  
friend,  
and let me be the friend to them  
that you have been to me.*

**PRAYER THOUGHTS THROUGH THE AGES**

Lord, teach me the art of patience whilst I am well, and give me the use of it when I am sick. In that day either lighten my burden or strengthen my back. Make me, who so often in my health have discovered my weakness presuming on my own health, to be strong in my sickness when I rely solely on thy assistance.

*Thomas Fuller*

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve. I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey. I asked for health, that I might do greater things. I was given poverty, that I might be wise. I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men. I was given weakness that I might feel the need of God. I asked for all things that I might enjoy life. I was given life, that I might enjoy all things. I got nothing that I asked for — but everything that I hoped for. Almost despite myself my unspoken prayers were answered. I am among men most richly blessed.

*Found on the body of an Unknown Confederate Soldier*

O Lord, let us not live to be useless; for Christ sake. Amen.

*John Wesley*

Teach is good Lord, to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to ask for any reward save that of knowing that we do your will, O Lord our God. Amen.

*St Ignatius of Loyola*

## MISSION NEWS AND PRAYERS NEEDED

### Irene in South East Asia

#### Give thanks:

- for Irene's teaching position in South East Asia and for the opportunities she has had to share her faith with many locals.
- that her dad should be home from hospital when you read this. Pray for continued personal rehab. to regain his strength

#### Please pray:

- for all Irene's acquaintances who have Covid, many of whom are dying.
- for the National Christian workers in all three areas where Irene has worked. We pray for unity amongst the workers and for good follow-up of people interested in exploring the Christian faith.
- for ex-pat workers to receive new visas, including her own –some have just returned which is good news.
- for those in her local community who will have missed her whilst she has been home to support her parents in their time of current need; people like Renee, Anthony, Bert's mum and family.
- for good health for Irene herself, that her GP can get on top of a couple of medical issues.

### Anita in the Middle East

#### Please pray:

- for safety as the situation deteriorates with terrorists fighting Government troops. (Her home organization tell me she is OK and safe as of 16th July).
- her home organization to know if their teams should come home.
- for the students Anita & team have taught; for paid jobs and freedom to work at all.

### The Linton family in West Africa (Andy, Cathy, Georgia, Isabella and Violet)

#### Give thanks:

- for the 3 weeks leave spent with Aussie friends at Danja Hospital in West Africa. They needed "some time-out". Pray they will return refreshed.
- that their girls have caught up with Aussie friends too – they are on "summer break" from school.
- for the cooler weather, the rains and "planting season"

#### Please pray:

- they will be able to return to Australia around November for leave.
- for them to cope with an increase of sick kids and pregnant women in the up-coming "Malaria season"
- for ongoing staff needs at the hospital; for more doctors, a lab scientist, a hospital director, facility manager. These are BIG prayer needs as it's not a "glamorous workplace in the easiest environment in the world"
- for their girls; Georgi, Isabel & Violet, that they will grow in their relationship with God and their friendships and connections in Galmi.



### David and Prue Boyd, D R Congo

#### Give thanks:

- that they and all their luggage (audiology equipment) arrived intact.
- for the warm welcome they received from Mamas and the hospital staff

#### Please pray:

- for the energy they need as they clean the house and settle back into a routine.
- wisdom in dealing with the scepticism of the local people in regard to covid vaccination, there is much distrust and the locals seem afraid to be vaccinated.
- for wisdom for Prue in her hospital works she helps Amani's get the recognition in the hospital for his Audiology course.
- as David has been teaching in the "ordination" course; *The Pastor in the Bible*. Give thanks for the ordination of 25 and pray the students will benefit from the course work and also catch up with each other.



**MISSION NEWS** *(continued from page 8)***Daniel Lowe, Chaplain, St. Paul's Anglican Grammar and his team and Oscar Correa at Warragul Regional College****Please pray:**

- for a positive completion to term 3 at school
- for good health amongst staff and students
- for students to be touched by God as they hear the gospel in classes and assembly at the Grammar.
- for chaplain teams in their care of vulnerable students.

**Warragul Regional College Chaplaincy Committee****Give thanks:**

- both the Deb Balls went beautifully just before the lockdown. We felt so blessed that these events could still take place.
- the support group did a good job assisting the students.
- the committee will receive funds from these 2 nights but we don't know yet what they are. We thank God though that these two Deb Balls could run.

**Please pray:**

- We have a meeting next week to discuss our options around holding a fundraising dinner. Wisdom around this and energy and enthusiasm to organize would be good.
- We would also like to get a promo video out to local churches around the work Oscar is doing. Please pray we have the resources needed to do this well.
- It would be good to put out another newsletter updating supporters of where things are at with Chaplaincy. Please pray this comes together.

**Sheryn Cutler, Chaplain Warragul North Primary School.**

Thanks for your continued prayerful support of Warragul North Primary School.

**Please pray:**

- that staff and students will settle back into school life smoothly
- for good health for all staff and students. There are many minor illnesses circulating which cause further disruption to students' learning in what has already been a highly disrupted couple of years.
- Kid's Hope program. Praise God for this wonderful ministry.
- for the "Seasons for Growth" Sheryn is running for a group of children who have experienced some kind of grief and loss.
- for the Kid's Hope team from our parish who haven't really started this program yet at Warragul Primary

**Youth For Christ****Please pray:**

- for interns doing their 'Abide Internship', to grow in their identity with Christ
- for strong unity across Christian denominations in reaching those who are lost

**Give thanks:**

- for God's provision of finances
- the mobile mission team that crossed the Nullarbor to connect with Christians in Exmouth and Newdegate in WA
- 'School of Hope' videos to be released soon

**ANSWERS TO THE QUIZ...Prayer and Sin** *from page 4*

1. **(A)** Lustful motives (James 4:3) 2. **(B)** To hate sin and follow goodness (Romans 12:9) 3. **(A)** Confess their transgressions to the Lord (Psalm 32:1-7) 4. **(C)** Acts 8. 5. **(C)** Poisoned by sin and in need of a remedy (Acts 8:19-23) 6. **(B)** A request that he be forgiven (Acts 8:22) 7. **(A)** Repent, confessing our sin to God (Acts 8:22, 1John 1:9) 8. **(B)** As a sin unto death (1John 5:15-17) 9. **(B)** As a false belief (Hebrews 10:26-27) 10. **(A)** High Priest interceding (Hebrews 4:14-16) 11. **(C)** Yes, for example we must have forgiven those who ask forgiveness of us. (Matthew 6:14-15) 12. **(B)** Yes, for example if a man is ungracious toward his wife his prayers may be hindered. (1Peter 3:7) 13. **(B)** That we walk in the light as God is in the light (1John 1:7)

2021

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St Paul's, Warragul

**Church online Sunday Morning and in realtime (depending on COVID restrictions):**

**Check the weekly e news and the website for any changes.**

8.00 am - Holy Communion

9.45 am - Contemporary Service including Children's Ministry

### Contact Us

It is best to call Tracy on her mobile for any urgent matters.

Rector's day off: Friday

Church office phone: 5622 3503

Check the website for more details

[warragulanglican@dcsi.net.au](mailto:warragulanglican@dcsi.net.au)

### Rector

Rev. Tracy Lauersen

0414 971 043

[minister@warragulanglican.org.au](mailto:minister@warragulanglican.org.au)

### Emergency Contact

Canon Graeme MacRobb

5611 0326

[gmacrobb@dcsi.net.au](mailto:gmacrobb@dcsi.net.au)

### Youth Events

Youth programme is up and running again providing COVID restrictions allow.

Contact Kerrie Armstrong for information

0431 895 919

### Mothers' Union

MU is in hibernation due to COVID 19 restrictions. Contact Jenny MacRobb, 56110326

### mainly music

mainly music activities depend on Covid restrictions. Contact Jennifer Newitt v040 066185

### Parish News

Material to Carol Monson by the first Thursday of each month.

Email: [carol@monson.net.au](mailto:carol@monson.net.au)

## By the Way...the rector writes

I hope you've been getting as much from our sermon series on the Lord's Prayer as I've been getting from preparing the sermons each week. At the start of the series, I mentioned Gideon (Judges 6:33-40). Gideon was discouraged and felt abandoned by God, and in his prayers, he asked God to prove his love and presence. Gideon asked for some signs that God heard his prayers and that Gideon was discerning God's guidance properly. God acquiesced and gave Gideon the signs he asked for. But some time later, God asked Gideon to go out on a limb and to trust him by sending home much needed soldiers ahead of a big battle. It seems God meets us where we are, but then he doesn't let us stay there in that weak spot; he helps us to move forward in faith. He asks us to take some trusting steps. I hope that by using the Lord's prayer, our prayer lives will be fanned into flame and we will each grow in our faith and trust of God at this uncertain time.

The Lord's Prayer is a tremendous template for us to use, a scaffolding for our prayers. A comprehensive prayer, to be prayed, not just recited. If we use this prayer, we leave nothing out of our prayers; praise, confession, refocus, petition, healing, renewal, recommitment. It's all in this prayer. Below are some tips to help you use the Lord's Prayer as a scaffold to which you fill in the bits and pieces from your own life and current context. I invite you to use this template each day for a week and see how your spiritual life deepens as you do... Each day, set your alarm for your prayer time, grab a warm spot in the house, turn off any distractions and just...pray

#### *Our Father in heaven,*

At the same time exclusive and invitational – for not all can call God Father, yet all are invited to know God as adoptive, perfect father. 'Father' is a personal and familial, confronting and above all, comforting title. Bask in the parental love of God for you, whether you are feeling like a white or black sheep, able-bodied or needing healing at this time. Remember too that it's 'our' father, not just 'my' father; is there a spiritual brother or sister who needs the Father's help at this time?

#### *hallowed be your name,*

To hallow is 'to render or treat as holy'. This is our invitation to enter into a time of inward and outwards active praise of God, and to desire that God's holiness will be seen by others too – for this will lead to a better world. Your praise might be stimulated by listening to, or singing, a worship song, by reflecting on one or more of the names of God in scripture ( Almighty, Creator, Lord, Lord of hosts, Sovereign God, Master, Shepherd, Healer, Peace, rock, potter, Father, Spirit, Alpha and Omega, Saviour...).

*your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.*

This gets our eyes off ourselves and refocuses us on what is most important for us and our world. The Kingdom of God is the realm of God's domain. Because God is so good and loving, God's rule is good for us and our world. It's the best. God's kingdom is not a place on a map, rather the kingdom is wherever God's will is done. It's a spiritual kingdom. Jesus established the Kingdom of God through his incarnation, his reconciling death and resurrection to new life. We who trust in Jesus are citizens in this new kingdom, yet we are also called to pray for it to come – both to become more apparent in our hearts and more powerfully present in our world. To pray for God's kingdom to come is to pray 'for the success of the gospel' (R. T Kendall). Spend some time praying for the success of the gospel in your realm, your town, nation and beyond that, the world. Pray for our mission partners too who sacrificially give their livelihoods to the coming of God's kingdom in some of the most remote parts of the world. Pray that you will live out God's rule, and submit to God's will in your own life, trusting that this is for the best.

#### *Give us today our daily bread.*

Bring your non-spiritual needs before God, no matter how basic, trivial or temporal they may be. 'Us' and 'our' are plural words. What do others need? Ask God to provide for them as well.

#### *Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.*

What do you need forgiveness for as you come before God today?

Who has wronged you? Forgive them, or, if it's a weighty or complex trauma, start by bringing your hurt before God.

#### *Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.*

Trials and temptation are not sin, but they are an invitation to sin. What, right now, is inviting you to turn away from God and God's ways? Is it something in you (perhaps a fear or weakness) or some external force? Ask God, through the Holy Spirit, to draw close to you so that you may better discern the right way to respond to this temptation or trial. Acknowledge the darkness. Pray for strength and deliverance.

#### *For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.*

Beautiful, simple, powerful words. 'Kingdom and power' – only the enabling power of God's Spirit can make the kingdom real to us and others. Pray for the power of the Holy Spirit in your life, my life, the life of our church and world. 'Glory': give God the credit for what he has been doing in your life, your world, your church. 'Forever': thank God that he does not change. Ever 'Amen' – so be it.

Reverend Tracy Lauersen