

SERVING, SUPPORTING,
ENCOURAGING PRAYER

ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER

SUMMER 2026

VOL 34 NO 2

A MUSICAL SEASON

Reflections by Paul Feheley, National Director

I grew up in a household where music was almost always present. My father was a huge fan of the Big Bands—the likes of Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey and Benny Goodman. It was around this time of year that we made sure the Nat King Cole records got towards the top so we could laugh and enjoy his beautiful voice, singing songs like:

Roll out those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer.

Those days of soda and pretzels and beer

Roll out those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer.

Dust off the sun and moon and sing a song of cheer.

There was something about those songs—their ease, their warmth—that captured the spirit of the season. And perhaps that same spirit can shape our prayer.

This year I would like to ask you to think about summer as a unique opportunity to deepen one's prayer life, not through added pressure, but through a gentler rhythm that invites reflection. My hope (and prayer!) is that the slower pace of these months creates space—space to breathe, to notice, and to turn one's heart more readily toward God. Without the urgency that often defines the rest of the year, prayer can become less of a task and more of a natural response to the beauty and stillness around us.

Consider the warmth and light of summer that enables us to be outdoors, where creation itself becomes a living prayer. Sitting beneath a wide sky, watching the moon rise, or feeling the breeze move through trees can awaken a deeper awareness of God's grandeur. Nature speaks quietly but powerfully, reminding us of divine presence in the ordinary. Moments like these can easily become prayer—wordless gratitude, reflection, and simple acknowledgment of the Creator's work.

Gathering with family and loved ones, sharing meals, or walking together in the evening light may become moments infused with thanksgiving. Prayer does not always require solitude; it can be woven into laughter, conversation, and shared silence. Even the act of resting—so often neglected—can become a form of trust in God, a recognition that we are held without constant striving.

Ultimately, using the summer months to increase prayer is less about doing more and more about noticing more. It is about allowing the season's gifts—light, warmth, rest, and beauty—to draw us into gratitude. In doing so, prayer becomes not an obligation, but a way of living, where every moment reflects the presence of God and every breath carries quiet thanksgiving.

• All the best for a creative prayerful summer.





CURRENT WORK OF THE AFP EXECUTIVE

Val Kenyon, National Chair

Let Us Pray: New Dates ~ New Format

Teach Us To Pray: Growing a Life of Prayer Together
October 2026 to May 2027
FIRST Monday of Each Month

October 5, November 2, December 7, January 4, February 1, March 1, April 5, May 3

A monthly gathering to deepen our life of prayer — personally, corporately, and missionally with a variety of presenters throughout the series, including clergy, lay people members of the executive, guest speakers, and video presentation

Through teaching, reflection, discussion, and guided prayer, this series invites participants to explore the richness of Christian prayer. Together we will learn not only about prayer, but also how to cultivate rhythms of prayer that shape everyday life, strengthen faith, and renew the Church. Watch for more details in our September newsletter.

Video Resources

Remember, all of our Let Us Pray sessions are recorded and available to you at any time. They would make an excellent resource for a prayer group wishing to expand their experience and/or understanding of different kinds of prayer. As they are available on demand, they could be used at any time that suits your group. Please take advantage of these wonderful resources.

Did You Miss the Lord's Prayer presentation by Archbishop Cottrell

If you missed the outstanding presentation originally aired in March, it is still available to learn and enjoy. Please go to:

<https://anglicanprayer.org/#vod>

You will never pray this familiar prayer again in the same way!



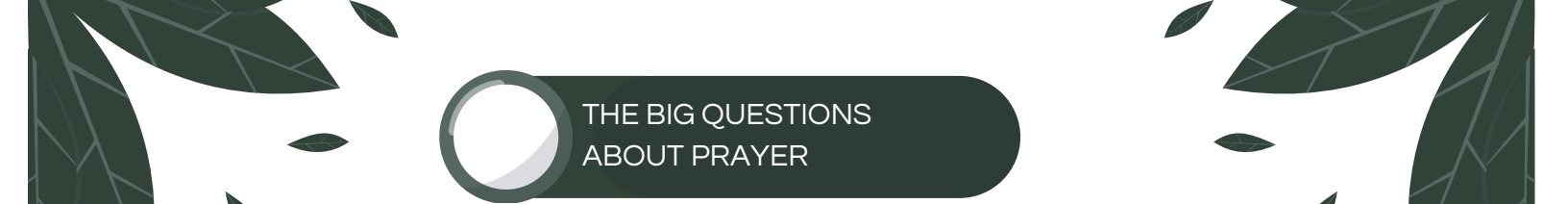
Protecting Our Trees ~ Reducing Our Costs

While we are pleased to send a paper copy of our quarterly newsletters to those who request them, in the interest of saving paper, and reducing costs, we invite anyone who is open to receiving an electronic copy to reach out to Libi Clifford at:

AFPletspray@gmail.com

*the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;
the flowers appear on the earth;
the time of the singing of birds is come
— Song of Songs 2:11-12*





THE BIG QUESTIONS ABOUT PRAYER

Paul Dumbrille

Those who identify themselves as Christians have, at one time or another, likely prayed for another person, or a particular situation, in what we call Intercessory Prayer. This is the case in praying for another person who is ill and/or for the victims of some natural disaster. If we take this type of prayer effort seriously, and if things don't turn out the way we want them to, we might want to think about our expectations when we pray for others. In doing so, we cannot avoid some big questions, such as:

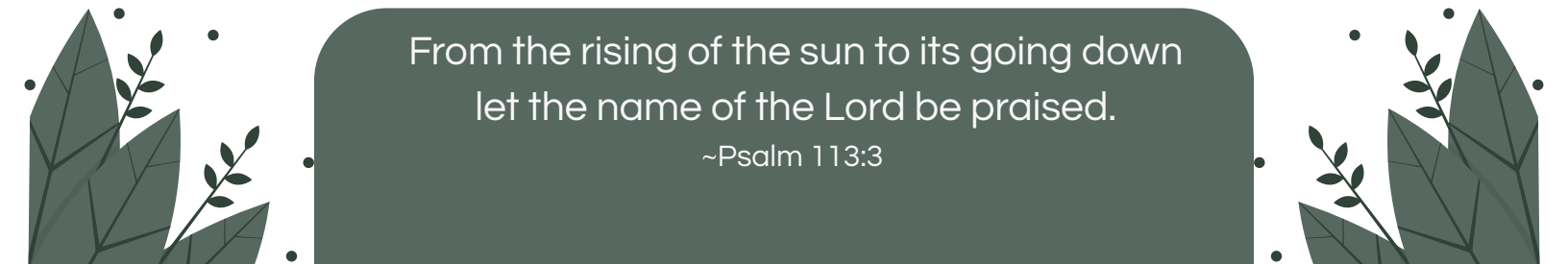
- How do we think God acts in our world?
- What is the nature of divine power?
- Why is there so much evil in the world?
- How do we sort out what God does and what we do?
- Why are some people healed and others not?
- Why do bad things happen to people of faith, and good things happen to bad people?
- Why does God allow events such as hurricanes and volcanoes to harm so many people?

I think it is important to ask big questions and struggle with them. The purpose of this article is not to attempt to provide answers, but rather to stimulate the reader to consider the big questions. While reading and listening to how others deal with these questions can be helpful, there is no substitute for facing them ourselves. I have found that in living with these questions, and working through them, my faith has been strengthened. I have also found that the result of my quest for answers has changed my prayers over time.

A particular resource that has helped my understanding of the answers to some of these questions is a book entitled, *Praying for Jennifer*, by John B. Cobb Jr. It is an exploration of intercessory prayer in story form. The story begins with a car accident involving several teenagers, one of whom, Jennifer, is severely injured. The other young people, one of whom was driving the car at the time and feels responsible for the accident, survive unhurt, and are drawn to pray for Jennifer. Through their conversations, questions and explorations Jennifer's friends face some of the big questions about prayer. The story progresses through the interaction and exchanges the teenagers have with several adults they trust, and along with their own experiences they come to a better understanding of how their prayers and their own role in Jennifer's life have evolved. This book is one of many books written by John B. Cobb, Jr., Ph.D., who at the time of writing was Professor of Theology Emeritus at the Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, California, and Co-Director of the Center for Process Studies.

In addition to helping me think about some of the big questions, the book pointed me to some other thoughts about prayer. I realized in reading this book that my own understanding of prayer in general, and intercessory prayer in particular, have developed and changed over the years. My expectations of how God acts, and what the outcome of my prayers might be, have changed. One example of how my personal prayers have changed is that I no longer address the Divine as "Almighty God". This is because the title suggests to me that God has all the power, and that people, including myself, don't have any power to make the world more like God wants it to be. Jesus modeled God's Kingdom, and we have been given the freedom to make choices and use what power we have to bring it about.

I have learned that unless I grapple with the big questions my prayers lack meaning. I have learned that each of us is unique and our relationship to God is unique. Reflecting on my own experience has helped me leave behind expectations and views that are no longer helpful. I have been helped by the insights and wisdom of others and have learned that while I need to ask the big questions, I do not have to have all the answers. Grappling with the questions without finding all the answers is often enough.



From the rising of the sun to its going down
let the name of the Lord be praised.

~Psalm 113:3



GARDENING ALONGSIDE
THE MASTER GARDENER

Carol Knox, Diocese of Algoma

Winter snow began to melt at my recently purchased house. What plants would appear in an obvious garden under the living room window? Soon a tangled mass of scraggly bush canes appeared, but no sign of anticipated perennial flowers. I ventured out with newly purchased clippers and started cutting out the most obvious of the radically overgrown bush. Discouraged, I quit after about an hour.

A few days later, the canes started leafing out, so sending up an arrow prayer for help, I clipped again, trying to shape them into a reasonable bush. With some gone, I could better see what still needed removal. Very slowly I clipped and periodically stood back to see where to clip next. Amazingly, 5 hosta plants soon appeared in front of the bush. Then I recognized the gentle voice of the Holy Spirit.

Rather than overwhelming us by pointing out all our “bad habits” at one swoop, the Holy Spirit draws to our attention things that need changing in our lives, one thing at a time. When one “bad habit” is gone it is easier for us to hear what is next.

Other things I’ve learned about prayer from gardening alongside the Master Gardener:

MANURE: God can transform negative experiences into opportunities for growth.

WEEDING: We need to keep up with it, inviting God to point out where change is needed.

GROWTH: It’s not all up to me. God sends the rain and the sun metaphorically through people and circumstances.



BOOK REVIEW:
BY DAVID DOW

What Is This Prayer Stuff Anyway?
by Laura Marie Piotrowicz and Rick Pryce

I have long been drawn toward contemplative spirituality. That wider understanding of prayer - silence, listening, creativity, movement, contemplation, ordinary moments - resonates strongly with me. The book moves the reader beyond the idea that prayer is merely “saying words to God.”

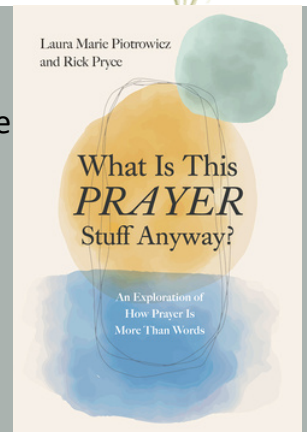
The title itself suggests the authors are intentionally lowering barriers for people who may feel intimidated, bored, uncertain, or disconnected from traditional prayer language. That pastoral accessibility is valuable.

Covering over sixty forms of prayer suggests this is meant to be invitational, not merely theological theory. I believe that to be extremely helpful for parish groups, retreats, or personal exploration.

Based on the chapter titles (“Contemplation”, “Movement”, “Creative Prayer”, “Ordinary Moments”, “Silent Prayer”), the book offers prayer as awareness, presence, attentiveness, and relationship rather than mere performance.

So, who might this book be for? People whose prayer life feels dry or repetitive; spiritually curious Christians; contemplative prayer groups; individuals exploring silence and listening prayer.

Prayer is not merely something we *say* but a way we *attend* to God, others, ourselves, and the present moment.



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