



50 DAYS OF PRAYER

50th Anniversary Celebration



Southwood
Lutheran Church

Sunday, February 7

Southwood's 50th Anniversary

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise! (Psalm 95:2 NRSV)

Almighty God, today we give thanks for the past 50 years at Southwood Lutheran church. We thank you and praise you for the many blessings you have poured out on this church in the past 50 years, and pray for many more in the next 50 years. We thank you for the leadership of this church, both past and present, for the pastors, church staff, and many volunteers who have led this church by sharing their time and talents. We thank you for the many people and relationships that you have brought to us through the ministries and mission of this church. We know that over the past 50 years you have indeed blessed this congregation in many ways, and for this we continually praise and thank you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Monday, February 8

Give Thanks

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason, I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. (Ephesians 1:15-16 NRSV)

Almighty God, the beauty of this earth reminds me of you. The sea, forest, and mountains are your creation, a reflection of your power and goodness. I pray that you would put godly counsel in my path. Give me the courage to seek mentorship and discipleship. Don't let me depend on my own wisdom but on yours and those wiser than I. Be with those who have absent family members and feel abandoned. Show them that you are their great Father who is able to fill that lonely place. Thank you for your faithfulness and the gift of friendship. Thank you for bringing people into my life to encourage me to draw near to you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

50 DAYS OF PRAYER

Southwood Lutheran Church 50th Anniversary Celebration

Tuesday, February 9

Need for God's Power

O taste and see that the Lord is good; happy are those who take refuge in him. (Psalm 34:8 NRSV)

Almighty God, I see that you are good. I am humbled when I look toward your face. You bless me when I don't deserve it. Lord, sometimes I feel far from you. Bring me close and remind me what it's like to be in close relationship with you. Would you be with all those who are lonely right now? Surround them with a loving community and fulfill all their needs. In Jesus' name. Amen

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Wednesday, February 10

Recognize Injustice

I know that the Lord maintains the cause of the needy, and executes justice for the poor. Surely the righteous shall give thanks to your name; the upright shall live in your presence. (Psalm 140:12-13 NRSV)

Almighty God, you are the true judge and true righteous one. You are known throughout the earth. Help me to recognize the injustice around me that I'm blind to. Help me to see my blind spots. Show me how I can help where I'm needed most. Be with those around the world who are suffering and being taken advantage of. Raise up someone to speak on their behalf. Thank you for being my advocate and allowing me to dwell in your presence. In the just and righteous name of Christ. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Thursday, February 11

Bless Our Schools

Do not forsake her, and she will keep you; love her, and she will guard you. The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom, and whatever else you get, get insight. (Proverbs 4:6-7)

Almighty God, bless all schools, colleges and universities during these uncertain times. Grant perseverance to our students and parents when the challenges of life seem overwhelming. Provide an abundance of patience to teachers and administrators as they juggle teaching and safety protocols, while also being attentive to the needs of all students. May those who are teaching and those who are learning find you to be the source of all truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Friday, February 12

Child of God

For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba, Father." (Romans 8:15 NRSV)

Almighty God, you have made me your child through your Spirit. In your kindness you adopted me and delivered me from sin and death. Remind me today what it means to be your child and to be free from that law. It is so easy for me to live my days on my terms. Help me to live it in light of your grace. I pray for my friends and family. Help them experience your love and feel their inheritance in your spirit. Thank you for accepting me as I am. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Saturday, February 13

Doing Good

Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. (Psalm 37:3-4 NIV)

Almighty God, I have felt the gentle nudge of conviction lately. You have shown me how I still hold on to certain parts of my life with a tight grip that indicates more fear than trust. God, help me to serve your people and embrace my purpose from a place of security and trust. The impact of my days could be so much more if I freely lived out the desires of my heart, never withholding my time, gifts and kindnesses. Help me to give to the people I love and the people you bring into my days. I want to see where the desires you place in my heart lead when I clear the obstacles of ego, fear and doubt. In your name I pray. Amen.

Source: One Minute Prayers to Start Your Day, 2019 (H. Lyda)

Sunday, February 14

Thank You for Relationships

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. (Colossians 3:12-13 NRSV)

Almighty God, thank you for giving me friends and family to do life with. I praise you for the people you have blessed me with, the ones who have come alongside me to love, encourage, support, and uplift me through all the twists and turns of life. I pray that you would be present in all my relationships, that you would draw us together in deeper community with one another toward greater unity with you. I pray that you would help heal any places of brokenness or discord and restore any relationships that have fallen apart. May I be patient with those who I love and forgive freely like you have forgiven me. Thank you for the ways my friends and family build me up and remind me of your goodness and faithfulness. In your name I pray. Amen.

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Monday, February 15

President's Day

*So, teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.
(Psalm 90:12 NRSV)*

Almighty God, today we come before you and pray for our country and our country's leadership. We thank you for our blessings and ask that you help us share those blessings with others. We also ask for your grace and guidance. We don't all feel the same way about issues. Please help us to work together in reflective and constructive ways. Help us to avoid lashing out in hate and anger but rather come together in peace and graciousness. We thank you for our current president, past presidents and future presidents. We know that at the end of the day, no matter where we lean in our politics, political parties or opinions, you are still in charge. We are so grateful. Amen.

Source: Crosswalk.com

Tuesday, February 16

Shrove Tuesday

*I have come to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance.
(Luke 5:32 NRSV)*

God of infinite mercy, grant that we who know your compassion may rejoice in your forgiveness and gladly forgive others for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior who is alive with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. Amen.

Wednesday, February 17

Ash Wednesday

*Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.
(Genesis 3:19 NIV)*

Almighty God, as I enter this season of Lent, I come before you with a humble and penitent heart. I know I don't live the life you desire for me. I know I sin and don't always follow your path. During this season, cleanse my heart and wash away my sin. Make in me a new heart, full of love for you and a desire to more closely walk in your way. Lead me to daily commit to you and give you my full heart. May this be a season of salvation and new life in you. All this I pray through your Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

Source: Prayer + Possibilities (K. Shirey)

Thursday, February 18

Bless Our First Responders

He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day. (Psalm 91:4-5 NIV)

Almighty God, you lend your strength to those who are there for us in times of crisis, fear, and hurt. You give courage to the first responders who continue to do this important work they are called to do, looking beyond the risk for the sake of those who need your help and protection. We give you thanks for the many ways they give of themselves, their skills, knowledge and help in troubling times. Extend your shielding hand over them and comfort their hearts when they are tired and heartbroken. We also lift up prayers of thanksgiving and comfort for the families of first responders and all who support them. Give them hope and courage. Surround them with your loving presence and give them peace when their loved ones run toward uncertainty. All this we pray in your name. Amen.

Source: Augsburg University, S. Swindall

Friday, February 19

Good As A Teacher

*In the past, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.
(Hebrews 1:1-2 NIV)*

Almighty God, you are the one who spoke and still speaks. You are the one who came and still comes. Give me a discerning heart toward the Holy Spirit. Teach me to hear. Teach me to be still and silent to know when you talking. Give me silence today. Point my friends and family in the direction of your truth. As they are trying to decide which way to go, give them the strength to choose your way above their own. Thank you for the hope we have in you and that we have eternity to look forward to. In the name of your Son. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Saturday, February 20

Share My Gifts

*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.
(1 Peter 4:10 NIV)*

Almighty God, help me understand who I am in you. Allow me to see the gifts you have built into my heart and soul so that I can use this day for good. There are moments when I see my strengths in action, but I am not always consistent. Help me see the areas in my life that should be developed. Guide me to connect with anyone I can serve or comfort. Release me from insecurities that prevent me from sharing my gifts openly and wholeheartedly. Encourage me to let go of those activities or interests that are taking time away from what you would have me do. I want to get the most out of this life you have given me, Lord. Amen.

Source: One Minute Prayers to Start Your Day, 2019 (H. Lyda)

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Southwood Lutheran Church 50th Anniversary Celebration

Sunday, February 21

Bless Southwood's Annual Meeting

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. (Proverbs 3:5–6 NRSV)

Almighty God, be present during Southwood's annual church meeting today as our congregation focuses on the mission of our church. Teach us in all things to seek first your honor and glory. Guide us to perceive what is right, and grant us both the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Source: The Book of Common Prayer

Monday, February 22

Appreciate Sacrifice

Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it. "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them. (Mark 14:23–24 NIV)

Almighty God, you are good. You sent your Son for us and you are merciful to us daily, moment by moment, even to the final cost. Remind me today of your sacrifice, keep it close to my heart. Make me not only thankful for but a vessel of your grace. Don't let your grace stop with me but show it to others through me. Be with my friends and family who do not believe in you and have hard hearts. Let them know the promise of your good news. Thank you for the depth of your love. You sent your Son to die a sinner's death so that I could be redeemed. Thank you that you want to have a relationship with me through Jesus Christ. In his precious name. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Tuesday, February 23

Need for Encouragement

And now, O Lord God, you are God, and your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to your servant. (2 Samuel 7:28 NRSV)

Almighty God, you speak and it is done. Your words are true. They are powerful and they bring life. Would you give me a desire for your words? Sometimes I feel anxious but do not turn to scripture. I am fearful yet forget to ask you for protection. I am weak but reluctant to ask you for strength. Renew my desire for your constant help and remind me to return to your Word. Make your word close to my friends in need today. Please bring to their minds the words they need for encouragement and direction. Thank you for providing the Bible, it is all I need. Thank you for giving it to us as a gift and a guide. May I never take that for granted. In your name I pray, Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Wednesday, February 24

Help Those in Need

So, I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. (Luke 11:9–10 NRSV)

Almighty God, you are ever-faithful and true to your promises. You know what we will ask before we ask it, yet you listen to your children. I ask this day that you would open my eyes to those who are in need around me. So often, I'm blind to the struggles of my friends and family but I don't want to stay that way. I pray for my family who needs you. Help them to ask, seek and knock, as you've promised to respond to their cries. Thank you for answering our prayers, even when the answer is not easy to hear. In your precious name. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Thursday, February 25

Bless the Earth

To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. (Deuteronomy 10:14 NIV)

Lord, grant us the wisdom to care for the earth and till it. Help us to act now for the good of future generations and all your creatures. Help us to become instruments of a new creation, founded on the covenant of your love. In Christ's name. Amen.

Source: The Cry of the Earth, 2013 (J. Macy)

Friday, February 26

Follow Your Will

And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba, Father." (Galatians 4:6 NRSV)

Almighty God, thank you for sending help to direct my steps. You know everything and will guide me in your will. Help me to know your will. Keep me on the path you have set for me. Give me the desire to stay true to that path, and forgive me for the times I have already strayed from you. Be with my friends and family who are at a crossroads and don't know what to do next. May your spirit guide them and make the best decision clear. Thank you for caring about the details of my life and for not believing any request is too small. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

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Saturday, February 27

Share Generous Love

A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed. (Proverbs 11:25 NIV)

Almighty God, I want to be the one who uplifts others with words of encouragement and gestures of kindness. Release me from any frugality of spirit. I don't want to be restricted in my giving by a heart that has learned its limits from those who have withheld love from me. Your love does not have strings attached; it has lifelines. That's the type of love I want to share. Let me open the floodgates of generous love for my family and those around me today. Free me from the desire to demand results or reciprocation in order to keep on sharing the compassionate love of Jesus with an open heart. Amen.

Source: One Minute Prayers to Start Your Day, 2019 (H. Lyda)

Sunday, February 28

Help Our Church Be A Light

Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying "I am the Light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life. (John 8:12 NRSV)

Almighty God, your light is the commencement and culmination of creation. From now until forever you are the light of life. As a church, you invite us to walk in your light and become lights to the world as we do so. Revive our hearts to sing, "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine. Let it shine. Let it shine. Let it shine!" Amen.

Source: ResistHarm.com

Monday, March 1

Giver of Good Things

Yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. (1 Corinthians 8:6 NRSV)

Almighty God, you are my father who gives all good things. I have life because of you and there is no one like you. I ask that you deepen that truth in my heart today. Point out my idols and the things I worship apart from you, that I would remember you alone are my God. Give my friends and loved one's freedom from their idols as well so they can fully enjoy being part of your family. Help them know that you are their only creator and nothing on this earth has ownership of them. Thank you for loving us, your creation, even when we go astray. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Tuesday, March 2

Need for Joy

Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me! O Lord, be my helper!" You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy. (Psalm 30:10-11 NRSV)

Almighty God, you're a God of reconciliation and redemption. You are capable of more than I could ever ask or imagine. Can you help me today? Help turn my sadness into joy. It's so easy to let the challenges around me pull me into the depths of sadness and frustration. Help draw me out of the darkness. Please protect my family and comfort their hearts. Show them what joy is. I know you want only the best for us and we are never alone in our state of misery. In Christ's name. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Wednesday, March 3

Help Those Who Are Hard to Love

But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. (Matthew 5:44-45 NRSV)

Almighty God, your love and acceptance don't stop. You are the well of grace and love that I must draw from daily. Help me today to love those who are hard for me to love. Humble me in their presence and show me a side of them I've been too prideful to see. Be with those people and protect them. Whatever past pain or hurt is causing them to lash out, bring it to the surface and heal them. Thank you for your redemptive nature and your ability to break down walls among your children. Through Christ I pray. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Thursday, March 4

Bless All Children

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth. (3 John 1:4 NRSV)

Almighty God, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world: Show them that your ways give more life than the ways of the world and that following you is better than chasing after selfish goals. Help them to take failure, not as a measure of their worth, but as a chance for a new start. Give them strength to hold their faith in you and to keep alive their joy in your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Source: The Book of Common Prayer

50 DAYS OF PRAYER

Southwood Lutheran Church 50th Anniversary Celebration

Friday, March 5

Share the Good News

*And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."
(Matthew 28:18–19 NRSV)*

Almighty God, you are good. You love all of your people with a love I'll never fully understand. You care for each child in each nation and know every heart. Give me the desire to spread your word. I so often keep it quiet. Let it begin to burn in me in a way that I can do nothing but tell others of your love and glory. Be with my friends who are sharing the good news of the gospel. Let them be encouraged and built up today. Thank you for your love and for calling me to be a part of sharing it with the world. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Saturday, March 6

Share Encouragement

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. (Hebrews 10:24 NIV)

Almighty God, I'm in awe of people who step up to do good in this world. I admire the convictions that shape leaders and become the catalyst for paths of change and hope. I want to cling to your hope and speak of it, so it will be a light to others. You've given me the time to practice efforts of encouragement. My day and my life provide opportunities to live out this desire. May I lift up each person I meet today. Give me the right words that speak to each individual's heart, spurring them on to their best in you. In your name I pray. Amen.

Source: One Minute Prayers to Start Your Day, 2019 (H. Lyda)

Sunday, March 7

Help Us Be The Church

*To this end we always pray for you, asking that our God will make you worthy of his call and will fulfill by his power every good resolve and work of faith, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.
(2 Thessalonians 1:11–12 NRSV)*

Almighty God, we give you the glory and honor for all that you're doing in the life of this church, even in the times we can't see it or understand your ways. Shine your light on us, through us, and over us. May we make a difference in this

world, for your glory, and purpose. Set your way before us. May we reflect on your peace and bring hope to a world that so desperately needs your presence and healing. Help us not to follow after the voice of the crowds but to press in close to you to hear your whispers and seek after you alone. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Source: ibelieve.com

Monday, March 8

Praise God's Name

Therefore, God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth. (Philippians 2:9–10 NRSV)

Almighty God, your name is above all other names. You deserve my worship and my praise. Help me to remember that the same power that conquered the grave also lives in me. So often I take for granted what Christ did for me. Teach me the truths of Jesus as if I am hearing them for the first time. Please help my friends and family to see that your way is righteous and true. Thank you, God, that you give us what we need when we need it. In Christ's name. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Tuesday, March 9

When Feeling Overwhelmed

Hear my cry, O God; listen to my prayer. From the end of the earth I call to you, when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. (Psalm 61:1–2 NRSV)

Almighty God, you reign forever and over everything. Bring me peace when I am overwhelmed. Sometimes I don't know how I can accomplish all of the things I need to get done. Light my path and show me the activities and obligations I can say no to. Help me release the burdens that preoccupy my mind and keep you at bay. God, please hear the cries of those who feel overwhelmed as they serve you. Many don't feel your presence right now in their lives. Remind them of your faithfulness. Thank you for your nearness and consistency. Thank you for hearing my cries no matter where I am. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

50 DAYS OF PRAYER

Southwood Lutheran Church 50th Anniversary Celebration

Wednesday, March 10

Help Those Experiencing Loneliness

Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand. (Isaiah 41:10 NRSV)

Almighty God, we pray for people who live alone and have experienced limited human interaction for so long. We pray for those living in nursing homes, wondering when they will be able to see their loved ones again. We pray for anyone who is currently working from home—still interacting with people, but missing the dynamic of a human sitting across from them. We pray for anyone fighting a mental illness, addiction or abusive situation that can worsen in isolation. We pray for everyone to reach out in safe and creative ways to check on one another. As we connect in new ways, may we go wisely where you call us. Amen.

Thursday, March 11

Bless Those in the Armed Forces

I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. (Joshua 1:9 NRSV)

Almighty God, we ask for you to care for and keep all the men and women of our armed forces at home and abroad. Defend them day by day with your heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; give them courage to face the perils which beset them; and grant them a sense of your abiding presence wherever they may be; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Source: The Book of Common Prayer

Friday, March 12

Follow God's Teachings

Good and upright is the Lord; therefore, he instructs sinners in the way. He leads the humble in what is right and teaches the humble his way. (Psalm 25:8–9 NRSV)

Almighty God, you are good. Your ways are perfect and above my own. You deserve my full respect and worship. You are my teacher and authority because of your goodness. Humble me today when I choose my way over yours. Use my prideful moments as an opportunity to teach me and redirect me. Show my friends that your goodness is more important than their desires. Provide them with encouragement to seek your good and upright way. Thank you for your constant instruction and concern for each step of my life. In Jesus' name, I pray these things. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Saturday, March 13

Open to Joy

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. (Psalm 15:10,12 NIV)

Almighty God, let my day be a clean slate that welcomes the hope and joy ahead. I no longer want to live with thoughts of losses, mistakes or "should've been" scenarios. As soon as I begin that tally, the day's potential joy is already lost. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and allow me to release my burdens to your care. Help me actively look for opportunities of joy throughout my day. Amen.

Source: One Minute Prayers to Start Your Day, 2019 (H. Lyda)

Sunday, March 14

Help Us Be the Church

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. (John 13:35 NIV)

Almighty God, help us to keep our eyes on you, so that we can follow your promptings and respond to your call. Help us to see when another soul around us needs to be encouraged. Help us to be faithful to carry one another's burdens, remembering that we're all in this life together. Through our own struggle and pain, help us to be your vessels to offer comfort and strength to others who are hurting. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Source: ibelieve.com

Monday, March 15

Appreciate God's Blessings

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with who, there is no variation or shadow due to change. (James 1:17 NRSV)

Almighty God, your blessings are perfect. All that you give is good. From creation to the end, your gifts bring life to this earth. Teach me to accept what you've given. I may not always understand circumstances, but show me how they are blessings and give me gratitude for all of your gifts. Rain your blessings on my friends and family today. Give them hope whatever they face. May they recognize that the good and perfect gifts are from you. Thank you that your blessings never end. You give them to us at unexpected times. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

50 DAYS OF PRAYER

Southwood Lutheran Church 50th Anniversary Celebration

Tuesday, March 16

Search for Joy

Your sun shall no more go down, or your moon withdraw itself; for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning shall be ended. (Isaiah 60:20 NRSV)

Almighty God, you have the power to control the sun and the moon. You are the everlasting light. Help me to see a light at the end of my tunnel. Sometimes I can barely remember what light looks like or what it feels like to have simple joy. Help me to focus on you even in the darkness. Support my friends as they suffer challenges, such as illness and death. When these trials plague those I love, I feel so helpless. Would you show your light in their lives? Thank you, God, that you are our rock and healer and that you will bring our mourning to an end. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Wednesday, March 17

Help Those Who Are Unemployed

Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. (Philippians 4:6 NRSV)

Almighty God, you sustain and nourish all who are in your kingdom, from the birds of the air, to the beasts of the earth, to your human children. You seek out the needful and the suffering and raise them up. You provide for the hungry, the thirsty and those in need of shelter. We lift up our prayers for all who are being impacted by the economic crisis caused by the pandemic. For those whose incomes have been reduced, for those whose jobs have been suspended and all who are facing unemployment. Sustain all who fall and raise up all who are bowed down. Provide for the families and individuals who are enduring economic hardship. Draw your people together in one supportive and loving community. Amen.

Source: Augsburg University, S. Swindell

Thursday, March 18

Bless Our Medical Professionals

So, do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (Isaiah 41:10 NRSV)

Almighty God, bless our medical professionals and those who support them. They work long hours attending to patients and are faced with tough decisions to make in matters of life and death. Give them strength. Let your Holy Spirit comfort them and guide every decision they make. Let their hearts desire to please you in every aspect of their work as the source of healing. Let them see you in everything they do. Amen.

Source: Connect Us

Friday, March 19

Embrace the Gift of Grace

Pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit. (1 Thessalonians 5:17-19 NIV)

Almighty God, I sit here in awe of all that I should thank you for. You are so much bigger and greater than I could ever understand. Give me reminders to be grateful today. Don't allow me to miss the small, or big, blessings around me. Fill my heart with gratitude. For my friends who struggle to pray, would you give them a desire to know you more. Teach them to pray, as you're teaching me to. Thank you for loving us. Thank you for the gift of grace. In Christ's name. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Saturday, March 20

Shape My Steps

In their hearts, humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps. (Proverbs 16:9 NIV)

Almighty God, I have big plans for today. I will be productive, creative and efficient...and graceful as I accomplish so much. Perhaps my real plan is just to survive but my faith motivates me toward a bigger purpose. I see how even the smallest acts can be turned into blessings. I realize my accidental moments might be part of your intentional plans. Please help me to be facing the right direction...toward you. Amen.

Source: One Minute Prayers to Start Your Day, 2019 (H. Lyda)

Sunday, March 21

Working Together as a Church

Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing. (1 Thessalonians 5:11 NRSV)

Almighty God, thank you for our church. Some may think of doors and windows when they think of the word "church" but we know the church is really our people. We are so thankful for the lives you've intersected through your remarkable grace. You've blended the talents of so many individuals into a beautiful masterpiece of joy. May we love and support each other while we grow in our faith and carry out your work. In your name. Amen.

50 DAYS OF PRAYER

Southwood Lutheran Church 50th Anniversary Celebration

Monday, March 22

Give Thanks

And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted. (John 6:11 NIV)

Almighty God, you multiply the loaves and fishes. You perform miracles that you alone are capable of. You speak all there is into being. Help me experience your mighty power today. Show me that you are capable of more than I could ever ask or imagine. And when I see your power at work, help me be grateful for it. I pray for everyone who feels there is not much to give thanks for right now. They have lost jobs. They are sick. They are alone. Fill their hearts with inexplicable gratitude, for you are still good. I give you thanks for your almighty power and kindness. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Tuesday, March 23

Search for Strength

Give us help from trouble, for the help of man is useless. Through God we will do valiantly, for it is He who shall tread down our enemies. (Psalm 60:11-12 NIV)

Almighty God, you can wipe out the strongest army, move mountains, and create the earth out of nothing. Your strength and loving kindness know no end. Remind me of your power now. I am so quick to run to a friend for help and then feel let down. Be my strength in all situations. My friends come to me for help sometimes, but you alone are the answer to their troubles. Help them look to you first and always. Thank you for being on our side and fighting for us. In Christ's name. Amen

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Wednesday, March 24

Help Those Facing Destructive Life Choices

And my God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19 NRSV)

Almighty God, you meet all of our needs. You are perfect love, perfect joy and perfect peace. When I look to fill my needs outside of you, draw me back to you. Remind me that you are all I need. Keep me from turning to old habits and destructive patterns. Do the same for those who are struggling with addiction. I am so afraid for them and where their lives are headed. Bring them to their knees so they may see and know you. Thank you for giving us second, third and 100th chances. You don't give up on us. In your name I pray. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Thursday, March 25

Bless Those Who Are Suffering

The centurion answered, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my servant will be healed. And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; let it be done for you according to your faith." And the servant was healed in that hour. (Matthew 8:8,13 NRSV)

Almighty God, death is no match for you, nor sickness, nor pain. You are mightier than it all, able to abolish all suffering. Remind me of your promises today. May I walk in them and not the promises of man. When others let me down, allow me to see your face and be comforted. For my family, I pray you would bless them today, more than they can even ask for themselves. Surprise them at every corner and build up their faith. Thank you that you gave us Jesus through whom all power is given. Thank you that when we ask, you hear our cries. In his name I pray. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Friday, March 26

Ask for God's Guidance

Pray then in this way: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. (Matthew 6:9-10 NRSV)

Almighty God, you are above all, know all, and see all. Yet, you hear me as if I am your only creation. May I not view you as a distant parent but as one who has come to earth and understands the challenges and temptations of my life. Be near me today and whisper reminders that you are close and holding me as your child. Be with my friends as they face difficult decisions in their workplaces and within their families. Would you show them that you are close? Thank you for listening to my pleas. Amen.

Source: Pocket Prayers, 2014 (M. Lucado & A. Lucado)

Saturday, March 27

Purify My Heart

There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off. Listen, my son, and be wise, and set your heart on the right path. (Proverbs 23:18-19 NIV)

Almighty God, keep my path straight. I become easily distracted but I want to stay on track. I pray that you will bring people into my life who will guide me when I do step off the intended route or become fascinated by the wrong map. Nudge me with ideas and things I read. Fill my mind with whatever it takes to steer me toward wisdom. My prayer today is for purity. Save me from the clutter and mess that taints my viewpoint. I want to be free and willing to embrace the hope of my future. Amen.

Source: One Minute Prayers to Start Your Day, 2019 (H. Lyda)

50 DAYS OF PRAYER

Southwood Lutheran Church 50th Anniversary Celebration

Sunday, March 28

Palm Sunday

The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the King of Israel!' (John 12:12–13 NIV)

Almighty God, who, of thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent your Son Jesus to take upon him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may both follow the example of his patience, and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Source: Collect for Palm Sunday, The Book of Common Prayer

Monday, March 29

Holy Week

How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! (Hebrews 9:15 NIV)

Almighty God, who sent your only Son Jesus Christ to save us from our sin, show me how I can honor you and bring glory to your name, by walking in the way of Jesus. Give me grace and mercy as I try and fail, guidance when I'm not sure which way to go, and wisdom to trust you in all things. For your love brings light and life to all who seek it. May I seek you evermore as I walk with you through this Holy Week and beyond. Amen.

Source: Prayer + Possibilities (K. Shirey)

Tuesday, March 30

Holy Week

Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me. (John 12:25–26 NIV)

Almighty God, who sent his only Son Jesus to live and die as one of us, save me. For all wisdom, all strength, and all glory is in you. You are my rock and my redeemer, my shelter in the storm. In you I place my trust, so that I may have hope. Let me walk in your light all my days, seeking only you. I give you my life to love and serve you, following you in all that I do. Amen.

Source: Prayer + Possibilities (K. Shirey)

Wednesday, March 31

Holy Week

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus. (Hebrews 12:1–2 NIV)

Jesus, you suffered greatly for our benefit. You walked the hard road through shame, betrayal, persecution, rejection. Yet, you only desired good things for us. You came in glory to save us and redeem us from our sins. You came to offer us light and life, a hope in you that surpasses anything the world can offer. So, why do we too often turn our backs? Why do we give in to questions and disbelief when the road gets hard? Why do we look for easier paths to follow? Lord, lead me in your way, encouraging me to persevere on the hard days, remembering the great hope I have in you. Amen.

Source: Prayer + Possibilities (K. Shirey)

Thursday, April 1

Holy Week

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. (John 13:34–35 NIV)

O Lord, the King of Kings, who led and taught not as a mighty ruler, but a servant leader, show me how to lead and live through love. Teach me how to love and serve others with a gracious and humble heart. Help me to always remember your words, being reminded each time I come before your table to share in the cup and the bread. As I come before you to eat the bread of redemption and drink the cup of your salvation, may I recommit my heart to serving you and leading through love. To you, O Lord, who are mighty to save, pour out your mercy and grace and lead me in your way. Amen.

Source: Prayer + Possibilities (K. Shirey)

50 DAYS OF PRAYER

Southwood Lutheran Church 50th Anniversary Celebration

Friday, April 2

Holy Week

Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him. (Hebrews 5:8–9 NIV)

On Jesus, on this day we remember your death, the day your light went out from this earth. We sit in the darkness today, remembering the trials you faced on our behalf. You have borne our sin and made the ultimate sacrifice to save us. Today, as we recall your final hours, we consider a world without you and hold onto the hope we know we have in you. Lord, commit my heart ever closer to you, because I don't want to live in a Good Friday world without you. I want you and your light in my life. I believe in you and want to follow you all the days of my life, even knowing the road ahead will be difficult. Come, Lord Jesus, come and fill this world with your light. Amen.

Source: Prayer + Possibilities (K. Shirey)

Saturday, April 3

Holy Week

The end of all things is near. Therefore, be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. (1 Peter 4:7–8 NIV)

Almighty God, what great love you have for me that you would send your only begotten Son to die for my sins. How can I ever doubt your love or your ways? Yet in these dark moments, I start to question and doubt. I wonder what comes next and I fail to recall your great faithfulness. Lord, forgive my unbelief and help me believe. Help me to trust you in all things, in all times, even through the valleys and dark seasons of my life. For you are my rock and my refuge, my strength in the storm. Your love never ceases, your mercies never end. You are enough for me – more than enough. Help me to remember that all the days of my life. Lead me to walk in love, as a shining reflection of your love into this world. And help me live the life you desire of me, bringing glory to you in all that I do. Amen.

Source: Prayer + Possibilities (K. Shirey)

Sunday, April 4

Easter

As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. (Mark 16:5–6 NIV)

Almighty God, who through thine only begotten Son Jesus Christ overcame death and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life: Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of the Lord's resurrection, may be raised from the death of sin by thy life-giving Spirit; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with thee and the same Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Source: Collect for Easter, The Book of Common Prayer



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