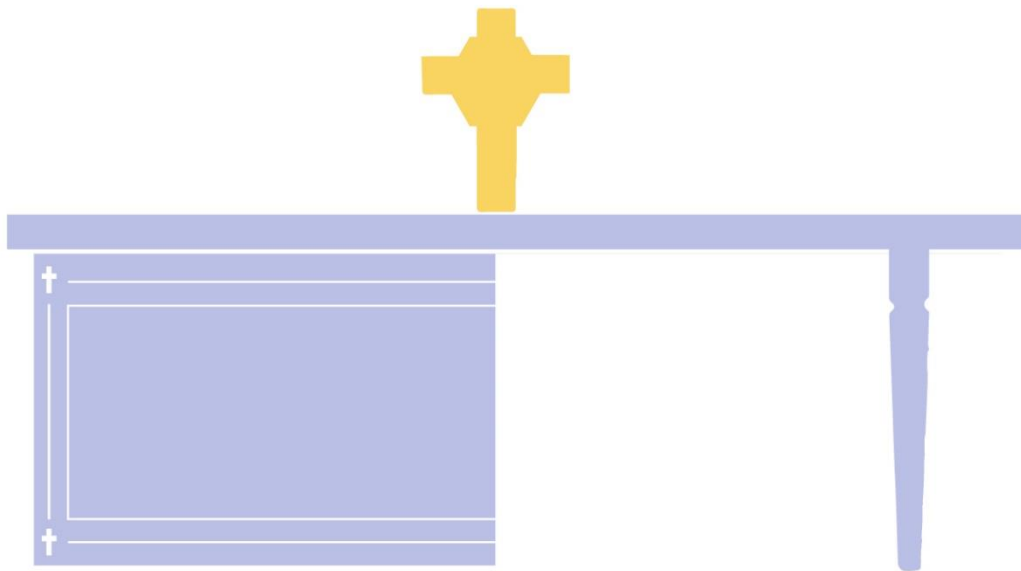


A Family Prayer Book

For Use Wherever the Family Is



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Cover art by Kathryn Morales.

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An Introduction to Family Prayer

Prayer, simply put, is speaking with God. Yet, despite this simple definition, which most of us know, we all struggle with this vital part of our relationship with God. In prayer, we wrestle with knowing what to say and how to do so with confidence.

How do I make requests for myself and others? Will God hear me? How do we offer thanks and praise to God for what he's done for us? A mere "thank you" doesn't seem like enough for all he's done. Should I use big, churchy-sounding words? How long should I pray for? Are we allowed to lament and complain to God sharing our anger, frustration, and sadness with him?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer points out in his little book, *Psalms: The Prayer Book of the Bible*, that, contrary to common thought, no one is born knowing how to speak with God. We must learn to pray. "The child learns to speak because his father speaks to him. He learns the speech of his father. So we learn to speak to God because God has spoken to us and speaks to us. By means of the speech of the Father in heaven his children learn to speak with him. Repeating God's own words after him, we begin to pray to him."¹

One of the tasks God has given to parents is to put God's word before their children (see Deut. 6:4-9). This is not just so they can learn who God is, hear the gospel, and so believe in him, but also so they can learn to speak with him. As parents learn to pray to God from his word, so they help their children learn to do the same.

God's word informs our prayers. It teaches us what to say. It puts the words of sorrow and grief, anger and frustrations, joy and thanksgiving, praise and honor in our mouths. In doing so, we receive the confidence that God hears our prayers.

This book hopes to help lead families in praying God's word together and in the process help your children learn to speak with God. That is, that they learn to pray.

Families are called to pray together. But, what is a family? A family is not just a married couple with kids. It's a married couple with adult children and a couple without kids. It is single parents, blended families with stepchildren and step-siblings. It is even a couple with children who, for whatever reason, just never got married or a divorced couple with children who do everything as one family except for living in the same house. A family may include foster parents and children or three generations living under one roof. It could include an unbelieving spouse or a doubting child and it may be grandparents serving their grandchildren as guardians and caretakers. Every family is unique. But every family can pray together.

¹Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Psalms: The Prayer Book of the Bible*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House, 1974. 11. Here, Bonhoeffer does not mean to imply that mothers have no role in teaching their children to speak. He means to paint a picture for us to see that a child's speaking with their parents and our speaking with God is learned the same way.

History of Daily Prayer

It is worth noting at the outset of this prayer booklet that prayer at set times of the day is not an innovative idea. The history of praying the daily office or the “liturgy of the hours” stretches back well before the Reformation and has its roots in Jewish rituals. We see this in the Psalms again and again (5:3, 55:17, 92:2, 119:164, 130:6, 141:2). The idea is that God’s children mark the hours of the day with fixed times of prayer, and in so doing, they acknowledge that their time is a gift that comes from God, and they seek to rely upon him as they go throughout their daily activities.

Most commonly this has meant at least praying in the morning (Matins), in the evening (Vespers) and at the close of the day (Compline). This practice of praying at certain hours of the day was widely held by most churches as early as the 4th century, though eventually, the practice became more elaborate and most prominent in monasteries, not used by the general public.

Luther sought to revitalize the practice of praying the daily office or praying the hours, most especially by encouraging families to do it in their homes. He referred to the home as the “little church,” with mothers and fathers as “bishops” of their little churches. In this way, Luther wanted to retain the beautiful practice of daily prayer while eliminating the abuses (i.e.: only the super-spiritual pray the daily office, it is not for common Christians) that had grown up around it.

Because this is a historical practice that essentially stretches back to the church’s inception, it is a wonderful way for Christians in the 21st century to be united with those who have come before, and with brothers and sisters all over the world who still maintain this same practice.

About the Orders of Daily Prayer in This Book

The Orders of Daily Prayer in this book are based on the prayer services found in modern Lutheran hymnals, Matins or Morning Prayer, Vespers or Evening Prayer, and Compline or Prayer at the Close of the Day. The orders in this book share some common elements. But they also have things that make them distinct from one another.

Each order opens with an invocation and the sign of the cross. These words and accompanying movements remind us of our baptism in which God put his name on us and marked us with the cross of Christ. It also reminds us who it is we’re praying to the God who forgives our sins on account of Christ.

Each order has an opening dialogue that follows the invocation. The bolded texts can be read by a leader and the unbolded parts by everyone else. The opening dialogues are inspired by the canticles (liturgical songs drawn from Scripture) found in the prayer services mentioned above. The opening dialogue for the Order of Prayer for the Morning starts with us asking God to open

our lips that we would declare his praise. We then speak God's praise with words from the song Zechariah sings at the birth of his son, John the Baptist. The opening dialogue for the Order of Prayer for Mealtime and the Evening draws on the song Mary sings when she visits her cousin Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist. The opening dialogue for the Order of Prayer for the Close of the Day and Bedtime uses Simeon's song which he sings as he holds his Savior in his arms. The Scripture references can be found in the orders of prayer.

Each opening dialogue ends with the *Gloria Patri* spoken together. These words remind us that it is the Triune God who gave us these words to speak as we pray to him.

Following the opening section, the order of prayer moves into a time around God's word. Each order suggests opening this time with the Psalm of the Week. The Order of Prayer for the Morning suggests a separate Scripture reading following the Psalm. For the Order of Prayer for Mealtime and the Evening, it is suggested to read a Scripture passage, a portion of Luther's Catechisms, or other devotional material during the meal or during the order of prayer following the meal for discussion. For the sake of time and energy, the Order of Prayer for the Close of the Day and Bedtime suggests either the Psalm of the Week or another Scripture passage.

Each order suggests spending time in devotional material. Luther's Small Catechism is a great place to start and is an often-underestimated resource. What you choose to use is up to you. If you choose to use Luther's Catechisms, the Order of Prayer for the Close of the Day and Bedtime suggests only the Small Catechism since its parts are short.

Each order closes this time in God's word by suggesting that the Apostle's Creed or Nicene Creed be confession together. Those words can be found in Appendix One.

Following that time in God's word, both the Order of Prayer for the Morning and the Order of Prayer for the Close of the Day and Bedtime suggest praying the Lord's Prayer together followed by a time of prayer for others and ourselves. This would be a time for individuals to bring specific prayer concerns before God. You could also use any number of the written prayers found in Appendices Three and Four. In the Order of Prayer for Mealtime and the Evening, the confession of the creed is followed by prayers for others and ourselves and closes with the Lord's Prayer.

Both the Order of Prayer for the Morning and the Order of Prayer for the Close of the Day and Bedtime round out this time with rhyming prayers based on the morning and evening prayers Luther put in his Small Catechism. They rhyme so that they are easy to memorize and use, particularly with children. Likewise, both these prayers end with one verse closing dialogue. In the morning, we ask for God's favor upon us as he establishes the tasks and good works he's given us throughout the day to do for our neighbors. At the close of the day and bedtime, we remember that the peace and safety we lie down and sleep in comes from God alone.

Using This Book

If this all seems intimidating, that's O.K. If you've never done this before it can feel overwhelming to know where or how to begin, let alone build and sustain this new habit of prayer. The combination of learning to pray this way, while leading others in it, mixed with the fear of failure can paralyze even the best of our intentions.

But there is good news. You don't have to do everything in this book. And, you certainly don't have to start it all at the same time. You have permission to start small. The following is a guide for using this book. It is not the only way to use it, nor is this guide exhaustive. It is meant to help you get going, try different things, and build up the habit of prayer that works for your family. A habit that will undoubtedly change over time. And that's O.K. too.

Do I have to use all three of these orders of daily prayers every day?

Nope. While these prayers are written so that you can use all three every day, you don't have to. Maybe you pray best before bed. Start by using the Order of Prayer for the Close of the Day & Bedtime. If dinner is chaotic in your home, don't try to introduce the Order of Prayer for Mealtime & Evening. Maybe the only time your family is together is in the car ride to and from activities. Try it then, but make sure the driver keeps their eyes open.

You don't even have to use all the parts of these orders of prayer. You can make the sign of the cross, confess the creed, and close with the Lord's Prayer. Or any combination of elements that works for you and your family.

Feel free to start as small as you need. Maybe there is only one day a week that works to get everyone in your family together. Try an Order of Daily Prayer then. Modify it as you see fit. These orders are not a required code of prayer. They are a tool to help you and your family pray and be focused when you do.

How do I get my children involved?

Even young children can participate in the Orders of Daily Prayer. They can be the leader and read the bolded parts of the dialogues and announce what's going to happen next. They can lead, join, or add to any number of the prayers found in the appendices. They can read the Scripture readings, or the Small Catechism, or any part of the devotional material you use. They can start the Creed or be your designated prayer ender by saying the "amen." Be as creative as you want to be in how you involve your children. In teaching them to pray you are also teaching them how to lead others (maybe one day *their* family) in prayer.

My child can't read; what about them?

Children learn best through pattern and repetition. Your non-reader is soaking up the habit of prayer you're building as you pray together. You can start by teaching them the parts you would say in unison—the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the closing prayer—by having them repeat it after you line by line. It may feel tedious. But again, that's O.K.

What scripture readings should I use?

We suggest that you read Scripture readings you would hear during the worship service on the forthcoming Sunday. This means using a lectionary, a list of readings assigned ahead of time for a given Sunday. Each Sunday has four readings assigned to it that relate to one another.

You can use these readings in a variety of ways outside of Sunday morning. You can use the upcoming assigned Psalm as the Psalm of the week and read it every day. You could likewise read the upcoming Gospel passage on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, you could read the Old Testament lesson on Tuesdays, and the Epistle readings on Thursdays. You could read the three main readings throughout the day, the Old Testament in the morning, the Epistle in the evening, and the Gospel at the close of the day. Or, you could just read the Psalm and the Gospel reading. Or, any other combination that works for you and your family.

You have total freedom to read the Scripture passages you want. You could read through a book of the Bible a little at a time, or follow your own Bible reading plan. We suggest the lectionary as a way to help keep you connected with the worship service throughout the week.

Don't be afraid to repeat Scripture readings. No one fully understands all that a Scripture reading can teach in one reading. Allow the Scripture passage or passages you use to rattle around in your mind and the minds of your family members. God uses his word to strengthen our faith and calls us back to him.

What about using Luther's Catechisms or other devotional material?

Feel free to use whatever devotional material works for your family. Or, use none at all. Devotional material can be a way to foster and facilitate family discussion and spiritual growth. But it's not necessary for conversation.

If you have children who are in or will be entering confirmation, using Luther's Small Catechism may be a great way to help them learn it and be prepared to enter class. Luther's Small Catechism is a great place to start for family devotions because it can also be prayed. See Appendix Three for more.

What's in the appendices of this book and how do I use them?

Appendix One contains the words of the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, and the Nicene Creed. While some may have the words of the Lord's Prayer and Apostles' Creed memorized, we wanted to make sure those who don't have them. The Nicene Creed is another creed of the church you could use. You can also make use of it during certain times of the year, like during Advent or Lent, to add some more variety to the Order of Daily Prayers.

Appendix Two has the Psalms organized according to the parts of the Lord's Prayer put together by John Pless. This can be an easy way to decide what part of the Small Catechism to read. If you have a reading from the Psalms you can find the corresponding part of the Lord's Prayer in Luther's Small Catechism and read that. For example, if you're reading Psalm 23, you could look in Appendix Two and see that it corresponds with the introduction of the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father, who art in heaven." You could then read that and its explanation in Luther's Small Catechism as part of your devotional material.

Appendix Three contains prayers based on the parts of Luther's Small Catechism and his explanations. These can be added to the orders of daily prayer or used on their own. They are a great way families can learn the explanations of the Small Catechism together.

Appendix Four has prayers for the occasion we find ourselves in now. They have been taken from our hymnal, the *Lutheran Book of Worship*, the *Book of Common Prayer*, and *For All the Saints: A Prayer Book for the Church* to assist you in prayer, especially in the midst of these disquieting circumstances.

An Order of Prayer for the Morning

All may make the sign of the cross to remember their baptism.
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

O Lord, open my lips
And my mouth will declare your praise.
Blessed be the Lord God of Israel
For he has visited and redeemed his people.
To give knowledge of salvation to his people
In the forgiveness of their sins.

Psalm 51:15

Luke 1:68

Luke 1:77

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was, in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The psalm of the week

A reading from Holy Scripture

A portion of the Small or Large Catechism or other devotional material is read

The Apostles' Creed or Nicene Creed is confessed together

The Lord's Prayer is prayed together

Prayers for others and ourselves

A Prayer for the Morning

**I thank you, Heavenly Father,
Through Jesus Christ your Son,
That you have kept me safe this night
From harm that could be done.**

**And I pray this day you keep me
From sin and evil's ways.
May all I do be pleasing, Lord.
I'm in your hands today. Amen.**

Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us,
And establish the work of our hands upon us.

Psalm 90:17

An Order of Prayer for Mealtime & the Evening

BEFORE MEALTIME

A Family Mealtime Prayer

**Heavenly Father,
May your name be holy here,
Your will be done, your kingdom near.**

**Thank you for this time we share
And this food that's been prepared.**

**Bless these gifts you give to us
That they may nourish faith and trust.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

During the meal, a portion of the Small or Large Catechism, a Scripture passage, or other devotional material could be read and discussed.

AFTER MEALTIME *(either at the table or somewhere else the family can gather)*

All may make the sign of the cross to remember their baptism.
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

My soul magnifies the Lord
And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Luke 1:46-47

He who is mighty has done great things for me,
And holy is his name.

Luke 1:49

He has filled the hungry with good things,
And the rich he has sent away empty.

Luke 1:53

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was, in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

The psalm of the week

A portion of the Small or Large Catechism or other devotional material is read

The Apostles' Creed or Nicene Creed is confessed together

Prayers for others and ourselves

The Lord's Prayer is prayed together in closing

An Order of Prayer for the Close of the Day & Bedtime

All may make the sign of the cross to remember their baptism.
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Lord, now you are letting your servant go in peace,
According to your word.
For my eyes have seen your salvation
That you have prepared in the presence of all peoples.
A light for revelation to the Gentiles,
And for glory to your people Israel.

Luke 2:29-32

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was, in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The psalm of the week or another Scripture reading is read
A portion of the Small Catechism or other devotional material is read
The Apostles' Creed or Nicene Creed is confessed together
The Lord's Prayer is prayed together
Prayers for others and ourselves

A Prayer for the Close of the Day/Bedtime

I thank you, Heavenly Father
Through Jesus Christ your Son
That you have kept me safe this day
From harm that could be done.

And I pray you would forgive me
For all my sins and slights
Please keep me safe while I'm at rest
I'm in your hands tonight. Amen.

In peace I will both lie down and sleep;
For you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.

Psalm 4:8

The Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' & Nicene Creeds

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Appendix Two

Psalms Organized According to the Lord's Prayer

John Pless, in his book, *Praying Luther's Small Catechism*,² includes a helpful appendix in which he organized all the Psalms according to the petitions of the Lord's Prayer. It is helpful (and therefore included in this book) because you and your family can use it to connect the Small Catechism—which Pless writes is more than a textbook, but a prayer book—to the Psalms, which Martin Luther considered a "little Bible."

Introduction:

Our Father who art in heaven.

Psalms 23, 42, 84, 116, 117, 118, 121, 131

(Remembrance of Baptism that gives us access to the Father)

First Petition:

Hallowed be Thy name.

Psalms 8, 15, 16, 50, 52, 68, 76, 78, 80, 83, 86, 89, 95,
96, 105, 106, 115, 124, 135, 138, 145, 148

(Faith and life in God's name)

Second Petition:

Thy kingdom come.

Psalms 1, 2, 14, 17, 18, 21, 24, 37, 40, 43, 44, 45,
46, 47, 48, 53, 57, 58, 60, 61, 65, 72, 74, 82,
87, 93, 97, 110, 125, 126, 127, 132, 147

(Hearing and keeping God's Word)

Third Petition:

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Psalms 19, 33, 41, 49, 62, 63, 66, 67, 71, 73, 77,
81, 85, 92, 94, 101, 108, in heaven 112, 114,
119, 122, 128, 129, 133, 134, 137, 144

(Strengthening of faith; trust in God's good will)

² John T. Pless, *Praying Luther's Small Catechism*, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2016. 161-163.

Fourth Petition:

Give us this day our daily bread.

Psalms 20, 75, 100, 103, 104, 107, 11, 136

(Thanksgiving)

Fifth Petition:

***And forgive us our trespasses as we
forgive those who trespass against us.***

Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143

(Confession and Absolution)

Sixth Petition:

And lead us not into temptation.

Psalms 7, 13, 26, 91, 139, 141, 142, 146

(In times of temptation)

Seventh Petition:

But deliver us from evil.

Psalms 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 25, 28, 30, 31, 35, 36, 38, 39, 54,
55, 59, 64, 69, 70, 79, 88, 90, 109, 120, 123, 140, 143

(Healing and protection; confidence in the face of death)

Conclusion:

***For thine is the kingdom and the power
and the glory forever and ever. Amen.***

Psalms 9, 22, 27, 29, 34, 56, 98, 99, 113, 149, 150

(Confidence in Christ, who is the "Amen" to every promise of God)

Prayers from Luther's Small Catechism

The Ten Commandments

The First Commandment:

O Lord, our God, you command that we shall have no other gods before you. May we fear, love, and trust in you above all things. Amen

The Second Commandment:

O Lord, our God, you command that we shall not take your name in vain. May we fear and love you so that we do not use your name superstitiously or to curse, swear, lie, or deceive. Instead, may we call upon you in every time of need, and worship you with prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. Amen.

The Third Commandment:

O Lord, our God, you command that we shall remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. May we fear and love you so that we do not despise your Word and the preaching of it, but acknowledge it as holy, and gladly hear and learn it. Amen.

The Fourth Commandment:

O Lord, our God, you command that we shall honor our father and mother. May we fear and love you so that we do not show contempt for our parents and others in authority, nor provoke them to anger. May we instead respect, obey, serve, and honor them. Amen.

The Fifth Commandment:

O Lord, our God, you command that we shall not murder. May we fear and love you so that we do our neighbors no bodily harm nor cause them any suffering, but help and befriend them in every need. Amen.

The Sixth Commandment:

O Lord, our God, you command that we shall not commit adultery. May we fear and love you so that in matters of sex we are chaste and disciplined in our words and actions, and that husband and wife love and honor each other. Amen.

The Seventh Commandment:

O Lord, our God, you command that we shall not steal. May we fear and love you so that we do not rob our neighbors of their money or property or take from them by unfair dealing or fraud. But may we help them to improve and protect their property and means of making a living. Amen.

The Eighth Commandment:

O Lord, our God, you command that we shall not bear false witness against our neighbor. May we fear and love you so that we do not betray, slander, lie, or gossip about our neighbors, but instead defend them, speak well of them, and put the most charitable construction on all that they do. Amen.

The Ninth Commandment:

O Lord, our God, you command that we shall not covet our neighbor's house. May we fear and love you so that we do not plot to take our neighbor's possessions, inheritance, or home, or obtain them through deceptive means. May we assist and serve our neighbors in keeping what is theirs. Amen.

The Tenth Commandment:

O Lord, our God, you command that we shall not covet our neighbor's wife, his workers, or his livestock, or anything that is our neighbor's. May we fear and love you so that we do not ruin our neighbors' relationships with their husband or wife, workers, or livestock, or try to lure them away. May we encourage them to remain and serve each other faithfully. Amen.

The Close of the Commandments:

O Lord, our God, you declare concerning all these commandments, "I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments" (Exod 20:5b-6). You threaten to punish all who violate these commandments. May we, therefore, fear your anger and in no way disobey them. You also promise grace and every blessing to all who keep these commandments. May we, therefore, love you, trust in you, and gladly keep your commandments. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed**The First Article:**

God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, you created me and all that exists. You have given me and still preserve my body and soul, my eyes and ears, my reason and all my senses together with food and clothing, home and family, and all my property. Continue, every day to provide abundantly for all the needs of my life. Protect me from all danger and guard and keep me from every evil. Thank you for doing this purely out of fatherly and divine goodness and mercy, though I do not deserve it. May I, therefore, thank, praise, serve, and obey you. Amen.

The Second Article:

Jesus Christ—true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary—you are my Lord. You have redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, and have freed me from sin, death, and the power of the devil, not with silver or gold, but with your holy precious blood and your innocent suffering and death. You have done all this in order that I might be your own and live under you in your kingdom. May I serve you in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as you are risen from the dead and live and reign for all eternity. Amen.

The Third Article:

Holy Spirit, I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him. But you have called me through the gospel, enlightened me with your gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith. In the same way, you call, gather, enlighten, and sanctify the whole Christian church on earth and preserve it in unity with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In the Christian church, continue to daily forgive abundantly all my sins and the sins of all believers; and at the last day, raise me and all the dead and grant everlasting life to me and to all who believe in Christ. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

The Introduction: *Our Father, who art in heaven.*

Heavenly Father, you encourage us to believe that you are truly our Father and that we are truly your children. May we boldly and confidently pray to you, just as beloved children speak to their dear father. Amen.

The First Petition: *Hallowed be thy name.*

Heavenly Father, your name is indeed holy in itself, but we pray that it may be kept holy also among us. Hallow your name when your Word is taught in its truth and purity and we, as your children, lead holy lives in accordance with it. Grant this to us, dear Father in heaven. But, whoever teaches and lives in ways other than what your word teaches dishonors your name among us. Prevent us from doing this, heavenly Father. Amen.

The Second Petition: *Thy kingdom come.*

Heavenly Father, your kingdom comes indeed by itself, without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may also come to us. Give us your Holy Spirit, so that by your grace we believe your holy Word and live a godly life now and in eternity. Amen.

The Third Petition: *Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*

Heavenly Father, your good and gracious will is done indeed without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it will also be done among us. Hinder and destroy every evil design and purpose of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature that would keep us from hallowing your name and

prevent the coming of your kingdom. Strengthen us and keep us steadfast in your Word and in faith to the end of our earthly lives. This is your good and gracious will. Amen.

The Fourth Petition: *Give us this day our daily bread.*

Heavenly Father, you indeed give daily bread to all, even unbelievers, without our prayer. We pray in this petition that you would help us to recognize this so that we would receive our daily bread with thanksgiving. Thank you for giving us everything required to meet our earthly needs. Amen.

The Fifth Petition: *And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.*

Heavenly Father, we pray in this petition that you would not hold our sins against us and deny our prayers because of them. We know we have not earned, nor do we deserve, those things for which we pray. But we ask that you would grant us all things through grace, even though we sin every day and deserve nothing but punishment. May we, too, heartily forgive, and gladly do good to those who sin against us. Amen.

The Sixth Petition: *And lead us not into temptation.*

Heavenly Father, you indeed tempt no one to sin, but we pray in this petition that you would guard and protect us from this, that the devil, the world, and our sinful nature may not deceive us or lead us into false belief, despair, and other great and shameful sins. We pray that when we are tempted, we may finally prevail and gain the victory. Amen.

The Seventh Petition: *But deliver us from evil.*

Heavenly Father, we pray in this petition, as in summary, that you would deliver us from every type of evil—whether it affects our bodies or souls, property or reputation—and at last, when our hour of death comes, you would grant us a blessed end to our earthly lives and graciously take us from this world of sorrow to yourself in heaven.

The Conclusion: *Amen.*

Heavenly Father, may I be certain that my petitions are acceptable to you and are heard by you, for you yourself commanded us to pray in this manner and promise to hear us. May I pray with confidence: “Amen,” meaning, “Yes, it shall be so.” Amen.

Holy Baptism

The Definition & Command of Baptism:

Heavenly Father, you created baptism, not merely as water; it is water used according to your command and connected with your Word. May we remember our baptism in which your name was given to us, the Word of our Lord Jesus Christ as recorded in the last chapter of Matthew: “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” (28:19). Amen.

The Promise of Baptism:

Heavenly Father, you created baptism to give us gifts and benefits. May we remember that our baptism brings about forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives everlasting life to all who believe, as your Word and promise declare in Mark, “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned” (16:16). Amen.

The Means of Baptism:

Heavenly Father, in baptism it is not the water that does these things, but your Word connected with the water and our faith which relies on that Word. For without your Word it is simply water and not baptism. May we remember that when connected with your Word it is a baptism, that is, that we have received a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Daily Purpose of Baptism:

Heavenly Father, our baptism signifies that the old Adam in us, together with all sins and evil desires, should be drowned by daily repentance and sorrow for sin, and be put to death. Daily bring us to repent, turn us back again to you, that the new person should come forth every day and rise to live before you in righteousness and purity forever as St. Paul says in Romans, “We were therefore buried with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life” (6:4). Amen.

Confession and Absolution

Heavenly Father, before you we should acknowledge ourselves guilty of all kinds of sins, even those of which we are not aware, as we do in the Lord’s Prayer. To a confessor, we should confess only those sins which we know and which trouble us.

May we examine ourselves in light of the Ten Commandments whether as father or mother, son or daughter, employer or employee, and consider whether we have been disobedient, unfaithful, lazy, angry, sexually unfaithful, or quarrelsome; whether we have injured anyone by word or deed; stolen, neglected, or wasted anything or done any other evil.

May we also remember that confession consists of two parts. One is that we confess our sins and the other is that we received absolution, or forgiveness, from the confessor as from you yourself. May we in no way doubt, but firmly believe that our sins are thereby forgiven before you in heaven. Amen.

The Sacrament of the Altar

The Definition & Command of Communion:

Heavenly Father, thank you for giving us the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, given to us Christians to eat and drink, as it was instituted by Christ himself as written in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul, “Take and eat; this is my body, given for you... This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me.” Amen.

The Promise of Communion:

Heavenly Father, the benefit of such eating and drinking in communion is pointed out in these words: “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.” Through these words the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given to us in the Sacrament, for where there is forgiveness of sin, there is also life and salvation. And for that, we thank you. Amen.

The Means of Communion:

Heavenly Father, it is not the eating and drinking alone that produces such great benefits, but also the words that accompany it, “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.” May we cling to these words, together with the eating and drinking, which are the chief thing in the Sacrament. Believing your words, may we have what they say and declare, namely, the forgiveness of sins. Amen.

Preparation for Communion:

Heavenly Father, fasting and other outward disciplines are indeed good preparation for communion, but people are truly worthy and well prepared who believe these words, “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.” May we not be those who do not believe these words or who doubt them and are unworthy and unprepared. But instead, may we be those who do believe, for the words “for you” require truly believing hearts. Amen.

Appendix Four

Prayers for Other Occasions

General

Heavenly Father, in whom we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but remember that we are ever walking in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord, during this Lenten season, nourish us with your word of life and make us one in love and prayer. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Watch, dear Lord, with those who wake or watch or weep, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, rest the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake. Amen.

Prayer from a London Hospital (1940's; language slightly updated)

Almighty God, who sent your Son into the world to heal our hurts of body, mind, and soul: We pray you bless the work of all hospitals, especially those now caring for your people. Give to all workers therein patience and skill, faithfully to fulfill their calling. We commend to you all sufferers committed to their care: praying you will still their pain, relieve their anxiety, companion their loneliness, and bid them cast their cares upon you since underneath are your everlasting arms. Amen.

Prayers for the Afflicted

Almighty and everlasting God, comfort of the sad and strength to those who suffer: Let the prayers of your children who are in any trouble rise to you. To everyone in distress grant mercy, grant relief, grant refreshment; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For Guidance

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings with your most gracious favor, and further us with your continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name, and finally by your mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For Peace

O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works: Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your

commandments; and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God forever. Amen.

Visit our dwellings, O Lord, and drive from them all the snares of the enemy; let your holy angels dwell with us to preserve us in peace; and let your blessing be upon us always, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For the Evening

Eternal God, the hours both of day and night are yours, and to you, the darkness is no threat. Be present, we pray, with those who labor in these hours of night, especially those who watch and work on behalf of others. Grant them diligence in their watching, faithfulness in their service, courage in their danger, and competence in emergencies. Help them to meet the needs of others with confidence and compassion; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Be our light in the darkness, O Lord, and in your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of your only Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

For Protection

O Lord, mercifully assist us in our supplications and prayers. Direct the lives of your servants toward the goal of everlasting salvation, that, surrounded by all the changes and uncertainties of life, we may be defended by your gracious and ready help in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, when tempted by the devil, you remained true to your Father, who commanded his angels to watch over you. Guard your church from the plague of sin, so that we may remain faithful to you until the day when we enjoy the fullness of your salvation; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

Gracious Father, protector of those who hope in you: You heard the cry of your Son and kept him safe in your shelter in the day of evil. Grant that your servants who seek your face in times of trouble may see your goodness in the land of the living, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blank Pages for Personal Prayers

The following pages are left blank for you and your family to write your own prayers and lists of people and things to pray for.

