Welcome to The Christ Connection:
A Book of Prayers for Group and Personal Prayer
An Introduction by the Rev. Jim Pressnell

John 15:5 NIV
I am the vine. You are the branches. If anyone remains joined to me, and I to him, he will bear a lot of fruit. You can't do anything without me.

Prayer is a precious gift from God.

The desire of God's heart goes beyond simply connecting us to Christ. The desire of God's heart is to keep us connected to Christ. Prayer in Jesus' name is one of the ways God works in our lives to keep us daily connected to Christ.

As we come to God in prayer, sharing everything on our hearts, we experience a deepening intimacy with our God who shaped and formed us in our mother's womb and saved us through the life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. As we grow in our prayer life, we discover how wonderfully God listens to us and answers us. We learn how much God wants our conversations with Him to be two-way conversations. We share our heart with God and He shares His heart with us. We learn not only to speak, but also to listen. Connected to Christ and strengthened through prayer, we are empowered to live out our faith journeys with certain hope and total confidence.

This precious gift of prayer keeps us daily connected to Jesus; it also keeps us daily connected to each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. We have the privilege of praying for each other, and we have the joy of praying with each other. Prayer binds us together as a family of faith in ways full of wonder and awe. Connected through Christ to each other, we are encouraged and supported as we live out our faith journeys together.

*The Christ Connection* is written to give people of all abilities the opportunity to pray individually and to pray together. Through this book, we trust you will discover how easy it is to pray to the God who loves you deeply and wholeheartedly. We have included prayers for a variety of circumstances in your life. Hopefully these prayers will teach you how to pray in all circumstances.

These meaningful prayers were written by people with a wealth of experience working with people of all abilities. Prayer is indeed a wonderful and powerful part of their lives. They have discovered the joy that comes from praying, especially praying together. They have also learned God uses our prayers to deepen our trust in Him and remind us we are safe in the palm of His hand, no matter what may be happening around us.

Our prayer is that *The Christ Connection* will be a rich resource for you as you seek to enrich your prayer life and the prayer life of those around you. Choose the appropriate reading level for the audience, depending on the prayer's location on the page. May we together, people of all abilities, lift our hearts and voices in prayer to the God who made us and saved us. May this God who made us and saved us use our prayer life to keep us connected to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

The Rev. Jim Pressnell
Vice President of Religious Life
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Why Should We Pray?

Sometimes we feel God is not listening to our prayers, especially when we ask Him to do something and it does not happen. It is still very important to pray. When we pray, it reminds us God already knows what is best for us; He promises to provide for us and take care of us no matter what may be happening around us. When we pray, we have a chance to give God our worries, our anger, and our thanks. When we pray, we are putting everything into God’s hands and letting Him be in charge. Many times, we think we should pray because God tells us to in the Bible, and this is right! But that is not the only reason. God loves us and cares for us; He wants us to be close to Him. One of the ways we stay close to God is by praying.

- David

Pray because you love Jesus and because He wants you to talk to Him. Tell Him whatever is on your mind.

- Jeanne

Through baptism, God our Father adopts us into His family. We are His sons and daughters! Like any loving parent, His heart’s desire is to talk with us regularly. God wants us to share everything we’re thinking and feeling.

- Jim

Pray because you love God and because He loves you! God our Father wants you to talk with Him. Tell Him whatever is on your mind.

Pray because God loves us and wants to talk with us, just like any friend does! God will help us feel peace and joy as we get to know Him better.

- Brian

Pray because you love Jesus and because He loves you! God our Father wants you to talk with Him. Tell Him whatever is on your mind.

I pray because I need God’s help. I also pray to thank and praise God for all His goodness, grace and mercy ... and for a thousand other things!

- Dennis

God is always nearby and always listening. Praying helps you feel connected to God.

- Michael

Praying is our way of keeping our relationship with God personal.

- Sandra

Christ Connection

Intro to Prayer
Jesus’ disciples asked Him the same question! They saw how important prayer was for Jesus because they saw Him praying a lot. This is one thing Jesus teaches us exactly how to do; He gave us a prayer to pray. We call it “The Lord’s Prayer” (p. 14). We should all learn it and use it to pray whenever we can’t think of how or what to pray. It covers everything we need to talk to God about. That does not mean this is the only prayer we can use. There are many other prayers in the Bible, many of them located in the Psalms. In fact, in the Bible, Jesus would often pray by using the Psalms. Even with all these prayers in the Bible, it is still great to pray using your own words.

- David

Pray as if you are talking to a friend. Jesus is your friend. If you can’t speak, you can use sign language or think your prayers in your mind. Jesus knows what we are thinking about even before we can say the words. Sometimes it helps to find a quiet place to pray.

- Jeanne

Because we are part of God’s family, we don’t have to be afraid to pray to God. He is eager and happy to listen to us. Pray confidently! Trust God to listen. Trust God to answer. Know He loves us very much.

- Jim

I thank God for what He does for me each day. I ask forgiveness for the sins I have done. I ask God to bless or give healing to those who need it.

- Norma

I always pray in the name of Jesus Christ ... sometimes even telling God that I am not really sure what to say. I trust Him to do what is best for me.

- Dennis

I like to sing praises to God.

- Susan

How Do We Pray?

Intro to Prayer

Christ Connection
**Praise**

Worship GOD for who He is and for what He has done.
He created us and all the earth, and continues to provide all our needs.
He forgives all our sins, and gives us His Holy Spirit for faith and love.

> Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.
> Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

**Repent**

Admit (confess) our sins. Ask for complete forgiveness.
Rely on God’s grace to forgive us through Jesus.
With God’s help, we turn away from sin back toward His will for our lives.

> Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

**Ask**

We come before our Lord to humbly ask for His help for others and ourselves. This includes prayers for faith, healing, protection, peace, guidance and strength.

> Give us this day our daily bread.
> Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

**Yes**

We listen to God through His Word for answers to our prayers.
We say “yes” and make ourselves available to do His will on earth.
We try to live like Jesus.

> Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
P is for **PRAISE!**

*What do we say to God when we P.R.A.Y?*

Psalm 150:6 NIV

Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!

If we look at the letters in the word PRAY, we see the first letter is P. The letter P reminds us to praise God all the time, no matter what is happening in our lives. – P is for PRAISE!

Let’s face it, sometimes life gets messy! Sometimes we are sad. Sometimes we are worried or lonely. Sometimes we are frustrated, mad or discouraged. It is impossible to be happy all the time with so much sin in the world. In life, everyone has bad days. So what does the Bible say about that? (Reread the Bible verse.)

The Bible verse says everyone should praise God. Wow, that seems so hard!

- Think about the week you have had so far. When was it hard to praise God?
- Think about the actual word _praise_. What does that word mean to you?
- Look up the word _praise_ in the dictionary or on your phone or tablet. Listen to the definition. Does the word _praise_ mean you have to be happy? Does it mean you say good things about someone else?
- Whether you have had a good or bad week, what are some praises you can say about God?

In the Bible, Jesus teaches us to pray by giving us _The Lord’s Prayer_. There are two places in the prayer where Jesus praises God.

**The Lord’s Prayer:**

“The Lord’s Prayer:“  
**“Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name!”**
We respect God as our all-knowing, all-powerful, perfect loving Father who lives in Heaven, whose name is holy!

**“For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”**
We praise God as we finish the prayer by remembering He is Lord over all and deserves our worship!

Jesus teaches us that no matter how we feel, praising God lets Him know we think He is more powerful than anything in this world. God is who we turn to when we are happy and God is who we turn to when we are sad. – P is for Praise!

**Sing, say or sign (the Doxology)**
Praise God from whom all blessings flow!  
Praise Him all creatures here below!  
Praise Him above, you heavenly host!  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost! Amen.

**Prayer:** Dear God our Father, we praise and thank You for making us and loving us. Forgive us when we forget to praise You, especially during hard times. Be with us when we are having bad days. Help us feel Your love for us. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.
R is for REPENT!

What do we say to God when we P.R.A.Y?

Matthew 4:17 NIV

Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

If we look at the letters in the word PRAY, we see the second letter is R. The letter R reminds us to repent, or say we are sorry for our sins. This is not always easy to do. – R is for REPENT.

There isn’t anyone reading this or listening to this who doesn’t sin. We all sin. We all mess up. We all make mistakes; and we all need forgiveness. Interestingly enough, it really doesn’t matter what the sin is, either. In God’s eyes, a sin is a sin; there is no ranking system or place that says one sin is worse than another. To God, we are all just sinners and we all need forgiveness. (Reread the Bible verse.)

The good news is no matter the sin, when we come to God for forgiveness, He forgives us! God also takes that sin and throws it in the trash; He doesn’t even remember that sin anymore. God wipes it away. This is because perfect Jesus, the only One who never sinned, died on the cross for us. Jesus saves us from our sins.

• Think about the week you have had so far. You don’t have to say it out loud, but can you think of a time you sinned?
• How do you feel when you do something wrong?
• Think about those you may have hurt. Have you asked them for forgiveness?
• Has anyone ever asked you for forgiveness? If so, was it easy to forgive that person?
• God wants us to repent - say we are sorry for our sins. How does it feel to know God promises to forgive our sins no matter what we may have done?

In the Bible, Jesus teaches us to pray by giving us The Lord’s Prayer. Jesus teaches us how to ask God for forgiveness.

The Lord’s Prayer:

“Forgive us our trespasses (sins), as we forgive those who trespass (sin) against us.”

Jesus teaches us that no matter how we feel, when we pray to God we should ask for forgiveness. It is a blessing to know God forgives us. God does this because His Son Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins. When we ask for forgiveness, we should start by telling God we are sorry for the sins we have done. – R is for Repent.

Prayer: Dear God our Father, we praise and thank You for making us and loving us. Forgive us for the sins we have done today. We are truly sorry and ashamed. Help us remember to ask for forgiveness when we have hurt others and when we have hurt You. Thank You for sending Jesus to die on the cross to save us from our sins. Thank You for forgiveness. Help us feel Your love for us. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.
A is for **ASK!**

*What do we say to God when we P.R.A.Y?*

Matthew 7:7 NIV

Ask, and it will be given to you. Search, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you.

If we look at the letters in the word PRAY, we see the third letter is A. The letter A reminds us to ask God to be in our lives and help us when we need help. This is not always easy to do because sometimes we do not know what to ask for. And sometimes we are just embarrassed to ask for help. – A is for ASK.

Take a few moments to close your eyes and think about when you were very young. Try to picture the people who helped you learn new things: tie your shoe, eat breakfast, get dressed, reach things in high places, read, draw, move from place to place, brush your teeth, pray, learn about the world. Can you picture those people who helped you? Can you picture asking them for help? (Reread the Bible verse.)

When we ask people for help, we get what we need. But we also build a relationship with that person. We learn to trust them and know they can help us. It is the same with God our Father. By asking God to be in our lives each day, we are learning to trust Him. By talking to God, we are learning to believe He is always with us and can help us with everything we need.

Think about the week you have had so far. What are some things you really needed help with?

- Did you ask someone for help or did you do it alone?
- Did you ask God for guidance or help as well?
- Think about some of the people you know. Is anyone in need of help?
- Can you help that person? Can you pray for that person?
  - Can you talk to God together with that person?

In the Bible, Jesus teaches us to pray by giving us *The Lord’s Prayer*. Jesus teaches us how to ask God for help.

**The Lord’s Prayer:**

*“Give us this day our daily bread”*

We respect God as our all-knowing, all-powerful, perfect loving Father who lives in Heaven, whose name is holy!

*“Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”*

We pray with Jesus that God would protect us from bad things and ideas that would lead us away from Him!

Jesus teaches us that no matter how we feel, we should ask Him to be in our lives. We should do this even when we don’t know what to ask for. When this happens, it’s OK to tell God we are confused – “I don’t know what to do” or “I don’t know what to ask; I just know I need help.” The blessing for us is God does know what to do and He does know what we need. When we talk to God, we are putting our trust in Him to help us. – A is for Ask.

**Prayer:** Dear God our Father, we praise and thank You for making us and loving us. Forgive us for the sins we have done today. We are truly sorry and ashamed. Help us remember to ask You to be active in our lives whether it is a good day or a bad day. Remind us to talk to You and help us trust You. Thank You for the gift of prayer. Help us see what You want us to do with our lives. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.
If we look at the letters in the word PRAY, we see the fourth letter is Y. The letter Y reminds us to say yes to God’s will for our lives. This is not always easy to do because sometimes we do not like what God is telling us. Sometimes we do not understand what is best for us. Sometimes we just want our own way. – Y is for YES.

Many of us have seen examples of military training on TV or in the movies. Some of us actually know people in the army or navy or other places of service. Either way, saying yes to all the hard, physical work seems difficult. It’s hard to say yes to running 20 miles in the heat or climbing walls over and over again; those are not everyone’s favorite things to do. Think about sitting absolutely still in a field where bugs are crawling on you! Yuck!

Although it may not be something people in the military want to do, saying yes to their leaders helps them later in life. Military men and women become physically strong from all the exercise; they learn to keep themselves safe in times of dangerous situations. It is the same with God our Father. By saying yes to God, we are trusting Him to help us later in life. God knows exactly what we need, even if we don’t see it. God knows what is best for us. When we say yes to God, we are trusting Him to be in charge.

- Think about the week you have had so far. Have you spent any time wondering what God wants you to do in life?
- Have you talked to God about your future?
- Do you feel as if God is telling you to do something? Are you listening to Him?

In the Bible, Jesus teaches us to pray by giving us The Lord’s Prayer. Jesus teaches us how to say yes to God.

The Lord’s Prayer:

“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”
We want things to be like God wants them, and make ourselves available to do His will to help it happen!

Jesus teaches us that no matter how we feel, when we pray to God we should ask Him to help us see His will for our lives. We need to know that if God does not want something for our lives, it is not going to happen. We need to trust God to do what is right for us. Sometimes it is hard to trust God when we are sad or confused or even afraid. Talking to God by asking Him to do what is right for us helps us remember God is in control. – Y is for Yes.

Prayer: Dear God our Father, we praise and thank You for making us and loving us. Forgive us for the sins we have done. We are truly sorry and ashamed. Help us remember to ask You to be in our lives whether we’re having a good day or a bad day. Help us trust You to be in control of our day. Thank You for the gift of prayer. Help us see what You want us to do with our lives. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.
# The Lord’s Prayer

## Traditional Version

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Version</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,</td>
<td>Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.</td>
<td>Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give us this day our daily bread;</td>
<td>Give us this day our daily bread;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;</td>
<td>and forgive our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.</td>
<td>Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.</td>
<td>For the kingdom and the power and the glory are Yours, now and forever. Amen.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional Bible Verses

**Job 22:26-28:** Surely then you will find delight in the Almighty and will lift up your face to God. You will pray to him, and he will hear you, and you will fulfill your vows. What you decide on will be done, and light will shine on your ways.

**Job 42:10:** After Job had prayed for his friends, the LORD restored his fortunes and gave him twice as much as he had before.

**Psalm 5:1-3:** Listen to my words, LORD, consider my lament. Hear my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray. In the morning, LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly.

**Psalm 69:13:** But I pray to you, LORD, in the time of your favor; in your great love, O God, answer me with your sure salvation.

**Jeremiah 29:11-13:** For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart”.

**Jeremiah 42:3:** Pray that the LORD your God will tell us where we should go and what we should do.”

**Mark 1:35:** Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

**Luke 5:16:** But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

**Luke 6:12:** One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God.

**Philippians 1:3-4:** I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy.

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18:** Rejoice always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.

**3 John 1:2:** Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.

**Jude 1:20-21:** But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in God’s love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.
The following prayers are written at varied levels of understanding by reading level.

- 3.0 and below
- 5.0 and below
- 8.0 and below
When we are afraid

Try reading Psalm 56

Joshua 1:5 NIV
I will never leave you nor forsake you.

Dear Jesus, we praise Your name even when we are afraid. We are sorry when we forget to talk to You. Help us know You are always with us. We are so afraid. Help us feel Your strength and love. Amen.

Dear Jesus, we know You will never leave us alone. We can pray to You when we are afraid. We praise You because You love us. We do not need to be afraid because we know You hold us in Your loving arms at all times. You are with us always. Help us talk to You when we are afraid. Amen.

Dear Jesus, we come to You in prayer because we are afraid. Remind us that even when we are scared, You are always right beside us. Because You are our light and hope, we don’t have anything to fear! Fill us with Your strength and courage, so we are bold and able to face our fears. Amen.
Emotions

When we are angry

Try reading Psalm 54

Ephesians 4:26 NIV
Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry.

Dear God, I am angry today with [name]. Please help me understand why [name] hurts my feelings. I know You created me with all kinds of feelings, like being happy or mad. I would rather be happy and ask You to help me do this. Help me be happy again. Thank You for forgiving my sins. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

Heavenly Father, today I was told I will have to do [situation] and this makes me feel angry inside. Help me express my anger in good ways to those who care for me. Help us understand my needs and help us do what is best for me. Forgive me when I get frustrated with trying to share my feelings of anger. I trust You to lead me. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

Dear Jesus, I am feeling rotten today and I am angry! Things just don’t seem to be working out the way I want them to. It is very frustrating. Help me find peace today and help me control my anger. I don’t want to hurt anyone’s feelings, Lord. Help me feel Your strength. Forgive me when I show my anger in hurtful ways. Amen.
When we are confused

James 4:10 NIV

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

Dear Jesus, I praise You and need Your help today. I am confused. I am mixed up. I am not sure how to fix my problem. Help me see things clearly. Help me find someone who can help or support me. Thank You for loving me. Amen.

Dear God, We praise You for loving us and always keeping Your promises to us. We know You have promised to guide our path. Help us trust You when we are confused. We want to follow Your plan for us. Amen.

Dear God, I am confused. There are many things that happen in my life I do not understand. I don’t know why I need to do certain things. People get angry with me and I don’t know why. I even get angry and don’t know why. I feel sad at times and can’t seem to find the joy in life You promise. Lord, help me understand these things. Jesus told us He came so we might have a full life. I want that full life, so teach me Your ways and help me understand my life through Your eyes. I pray this in Jesus’ name. Amen.
Emotions

When we are happy

Try reading Psalm 98

Philippians 4:4 NIV

Rejoice in the Lord always.
I will say it again: Rejoice!

Dear Jesus, we praise Your name when we feel happy. We are sorry when we forget to praise You. Help us know our happiness comes from You. Thank You for that, Jesus! Help us share Your joy with others. Amen.

Dear Jesus, we praise You for the beautiful things You give us in life that make us happy. Forgive us when we forget to thank You. We are happy to be Your children. Your love, kindness and mercy make our hearts happy. Help us share our happiness with others. Amen.

Dear Jesus, We are so happy today! We give glory to Your Name. We thank and praise You for all the blessings You give us. We rejoice in knowing You are our Lord and Savior! Help us remember to come to You with our struggles and help us give You thanks! We love You, Jesus, and give all glory to You! Amen.