

## 24-HOUR PRAYER VIGIL

Trinity Presbyterian Church

April 3-4, 2020

Ephesians 6:18-19

*And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel.*

Welcome to our congregation's spring 24-Hour Prayer Vigil—and our first virtual vigil. For the last several years, once in the autumn and once in the spring, we have been offered this holy time for our church family to grow spiritually and experience God's love more deeply in our lives. As we begin this Holy Week, a Holy Week unlike any other we have ever seen, this time of prayer is offered to help us spend some *sustained* time with the Lord. Below are some guidelines for how to use this time. All you need to do is read a little, pray a little, silently listen for God, and (if you wish) write some of your experiences.

Romans 8:26

*In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.*

## Using the Time

The goal of this Prayer Vigil is to open us more fully to the depth of God's love for us. It is also our congregation-wide attempt to keep unbroken prayer going for 24-hours. While in our own homes, we are gathering together in prayer and in love, to ask the Holy Spirit to help us experience more deeply the transforming power of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### ❖ *Prayerfully Reading God's Word*

Below are key verses that will help you focus on your own spiritual growth and relationship with the Lord Jesus. You might want to read a passage or part of a passage more than once. What do you hear Christ saying to you? What might the Holy Spirit be whispering within your heart? As we spend this week contemplating the Love of God that caused the Lord Jesus to come to earth to suffer and die for us, is there something that speaks to you deeply, even surprisingly, in something you've read? Allow a minute or two of silence before moving to the next passage. In the silence, do you sense God leading you to thoughts, memories, feelings? Take the time you need to think those thoughts, to remember those memories, to feel those feelings. You have the time. And Christ is with you.

o John 3:16 – *For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.*

o Luke 22:47-53 – *Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house. But Peter was following at a distance. When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. Then a servant-girl, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, 'This man also was with him.' But he denied it, saying, 'Woman, I do not*

know him.' A little later someone else, on seeing him, said, 'You also are one of them.' But Peter said, 'Man, I am not!' Then about an hour later yet another kept insisting, 'Surely this man also was with him; for he is a Galilean.' But Peter said, 'Man, I do not know what you are talking about!' At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, 'Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times.' And he went out and wept bitterly.

o Psalm 34:4-8 – I sought the Lord, and he answered me,  
and delivered me from all my fears.

Look to him, and be radiant;

so your faces shall never be ashamed.

This poor soul cried, and was heard by the Lord,  
and was saved from every trouble.

The angel of the Lord encamps  
around those who fear him, and delivers them.

O taste and see that the Lord is good;  
happy are those who take refuge in him.

o Mark 16:1-7 – When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?' When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on

*the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, 'Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.'*

### ❖ *Prayerfully Offering a Song*

As you move from this time of prayerful reflection on God's Word, it might be helpful to take a few moments to offer God a song. Over the years, people have enjoyed using hymns to offer praise and worship to the God who has given us life and salvation. For those of you who would find it meaningful, the lyrics to a few hymns have been provided below. You could sing one or more, if you so choose, or perhaps simply reading one out loud would be what you would prefer.

### Take, O Take Me, As I Am

Take, O take me as I am.

Summon out what I shall be.

Set your seal upon my heart,

And live in me.

## Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found;  
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved;  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils and snares,  
I have already come;  
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,  
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,  
His Word my hope secures;  
He will my Shield and Portion be,  
As long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand years,  
Bright shining as the sun,  
We've no less days to sing God's praise  
Than when we'd first begun

## Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine;  
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,  
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

Refrain:

*This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Savior all the day long.  
This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Savior all the day long.*

Perfect submission, perfect delight,  
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;  
Angels descending, bring from above  
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

Perfect submission, all is at rest,  
In my Savior am happy and blest,  
Watching and waiting, looking above,  
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

## Be Thou My Vision

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart,  
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art.  
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night;  
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light

Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word.  
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord!  
Thou my great Father, I Thy true son;  
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise;  
Thou mine Inheritance, now and always.  
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart  
High King of Heaven, my Treasure Thou art!

High King of Heaven, my victory won.  
May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heav'n's Sun.  
Heart of my own heart, whate'er befall  
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

## When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

When I survey the wondrous cross,  
On which the Prince of glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,  
Save in the death of Christ my God.  
All the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Where the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were a present far too small.  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

### ❖ *Quieting Our Hearts and Minds*

Having listened to God's Word and perhaps having sung a hymn, you are invited to use the next 12-15 minutes of your prayer time quieting yourself. In this moment—amazing as it sounds!—the Lord Jesus is with you right where you are and he is ready and willing to listen to you. You might begin with a short phrase you slowly repeat several times. Your prayer might include phrases like, “O Lord, quiet my heart” or “Fill me with your presence” or “Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.” It might be helpful to change your position for this time; you might want to sit or stand or kneel—whatever is most comfortable for you and will help you focus on God's presence with you. However you pray, remember: God looks upon the heart, not the words, so feel free to express your deepest thoughts and feelings, knowing that you are a beloved child of God.

### ❖ *Conversing with the Lord, Heart to Heart*

As we near the end of this hour, with a mind filled with God's Word and a heart that has grown quiet before the Lord, you have the gift of this quiet moment with Christ. You have time to thank God for sending Christ to redeem us. You have time to ask the Spirit to help you in whatever way you feel the need for God's assistance. You have time to pray for yourself and those you love and for this aching world which God loves so much. You have time to cry out your hurt and your fear. You have time to praise God for simply being God and filling your life with hope and strength.

- You can pray about anything you wish or perhaps you feel the Holy Spirit leading you into a specific topic.
- You might pray:
  - For our world and the anxiety that fills this moment in our lives.

- For our church and ask God to help us as we try to love one another during these weeks of compassionate spacing.
  - Where do you sense the Lord leading you?
  - For someone dear to you who needs God's help.
- Pray for yourself
    - God, who do you want me to be?
    - Lord, this is where I'm hurting, help me.
    - Fill me with your Holy Spirit!
    - What is one way I can have a deeper relationship with you?
    - Thank you, Heavenly Father, for the blessings in my life.

❖ ➤ *Prayerfully Writing*

As you near the end of your time, consider writing something about your time. If we were at church, there would be a public journal for this, but maybe you want to write something to tuck in your Bible. Or perhaps you'd like to write something and email it to Dr. Faulkner to be placed with our Vigil journals as a record of this unique, at-home Vigil.

Journaling is a very ancient spiritual practice and it offers a helpful way to bring a conclusion to your time of prayer conversation with the Lord. You could write about your experience in this time of prayer: what are thoughts and feelings that occurred while you prayed? what questions or insights surfaced? what, if anything, did you hear God say to you? You might rather write out a prayer that expresses your heart to the Heart of God. Whether you write something, is up to you. Whether you keep it for you or share it with our church family is also completely up to you.

If you find you have a few extra minutes, please feel free to remain here and pray in whatever way seems best (Scripture meditation, singing, conversation, thanksgiving, etc.).

May the Lord our God richly bless your time in prayer and may this day of prayer enrich our entire congregation's life in Christ and help us bring greater glory to the Lord our Savior.