



CALL TO KINGDOM COMMUNITY PRAYER - Dec. 31, 2024

What might happen if the CHURCH (individual local churches and local churches throughout our community) was UNITED in PRAYER TO GOD (privately and in public gatherings) - prayers of listening to and for the Holy Spirit guided by the Scriptures; of worship, adoration, and thanks; of confession, repentance, reconciliation, consecration, and surrender; of petition and supplication for common needs and concerns? What might our God - Father, Son, & Holy Spirit - do in and among us?

Before we see the Church in prayer, let's consider first things: the GOD of the Church.

God is a conversational God who created us in His image, including being in his conversational image.

Listen for how God is speaking, especially to and with his conversational beings.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. ⁴ And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. Genesis 1:1-5

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. Genesis 1:26-31

then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. Genesis 2:7

The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” Genesis 2:15-18

Notice how this prioritizes first, God speaking, and then us listening.

Consider how the “lines of communication” are disrupted, disturbed, and distorted because of our sin.

And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” Genesis 3:8-10

Yet, consider how in Jesus Christ the Son of God and by the Holy Spirit of God, these lines of communication are being reestablished. He opens the way, intercedes for us, and is our advocate with the Father. The Spirit is also integrally involved in this intercession:

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, Hebrews 1:1-3

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek. Hebrews 5:7-10

those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath, but this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him: “The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, ‘You are a priest forever.’” This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better

covenant. The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. Hebrews 7:20-27

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. Romans 8:26-27

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Romans 8:31-34

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. 1 John 2:1-2

For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. 1 Timothy 2:5-6

These truths and realities of our Triune God become the foundation upon which we humbly yet boldly and confidently approach our God.

Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:14-16

Be inspired and guided into prayer by Acts 12:1-17, especially focusing on the witness of Acts 12:5. Pray specifically for the Holy Spirit to move to bring about such a widespread movement in hearts to unite together in prayer:

¹ It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. ² He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. ³ When he saw that this met with approval among the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Festival of Unleavened Bread. ⁴ After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover.

⁵ So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.

⁶ The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. ⁷ Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. “Quick, get up!” he said, and the chains fell off Peter’s wrists.

⁸ Then the angel said to him, “Put on your clothes and sandals.” And Peter did so. “Wrap your cloak around you and follow me,” the angel told him. ⁹ Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰ They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him.

¹¹ Then Peter came to himself and said, “Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod’s clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen.” ¹² When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying. ¹³ Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant named Rhoda came to answer the door. ¹⁴ When she recognized Peter’s voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, “Peter is at the door!”

¹⁵ “You’re out of your mind,” they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, “It must be his angel.” ¹⁶ But Peter kept on knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. ¹⁷ Peter motioned with his hand for them to be quiet and described how the Lord had brought him out of prison. “Tell James and the other brothers and sisters about this,” he said, and then he left for another place. Acts 12:1-17

PRAYING FOR GOD’S KINGDOM TO COME: HEARTS

- To hear Jesus’s call to “follow me” and act on it in true faith “immediately” (Matt. 4:18-22)
- To have hearts genuinely characterized by the Beatitudes of Jesus - poor in spirit, mournful, meek, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, merciful, peacemaking - that then receive the rich kingdom promises associated with them (Matt. 5:3-12)
- To ask God to search our hearts (Ps. 139:23-24); lead us to specifically confess and repent of our sins (1 John 1:5-10), and trust and receive Christ as our atoning sacrifice and advocate with joy (1 John 2:1-2); and, begin to walk in Spirit-empowered obedience

PRAYING FOR GOD'S KINGDOM TO COME: HOMES

- For the strengthening of marriages in Christ so as to reflect Christ
- For the 9-fold fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control) to be expressed and nurtured through all relationships within each household (see Galatians 5:16-26)
- For the Spirit to lead and convict hearts to adopt and grow in practices of personal and family discipleship (Scripture, prayer, holy conversations, personal and family worship, Biblical instruction, holy discipline, shared outreach and witness) so that disciples may be made within and through each household

PRAYING FOR GOD'S KINGDOM TO COME: CHURCHES

- For our St. John's family to grow in "Loving God, Loving People, Making Disciples"
- For Sunday School to grow in numbers, in depth and breadth of understanding and transformational application of God's Word, in numbers and maturity of leaders and teachers, and in capacity to send each person out into authentic discipleship, service, and witness in home, work, school, recreation, community engagement, church engagement, and more
- For our St. John's staff (Andy, Arie, Baylor, Ben, Kim, Mattie, Nicole, Schiefer, Tamie, Vicki) to be Spirit-filled and led servant leaders who set an example of love for and faithfulness to Christ and provide teaching, service, and leadership that helps us grow
- For the Youth IGNITE Weekend (Jan. 10-12): for Baylor and Youth Design Team to be filled with the Spirit and given wisdom, love, and everything else to lead the youth and each other well; for the praise band and speaker (Casey Sorrels) to be filled with and led by the Spirit and to be empowered to lead the St. John's students into greater depths of intimacy, transformation, and growth in Jesus
- For the REVIVE Week (Jan. 12-15): for people to do what it takes to show up as often as possible; for the Holy Spirit to guide preparations; for the worship music times to be Spirit-filled and led and draw every heart into transforming encounter with Christ; for teaching and group discussion times to be inviting, enriching, and transforming in an authentic knowledge of Christ and His grace; to experience "Outpouring" & "Awakening" that leads to joy, intimacy, new life, holiness, and service and witness from the overflow in Christ!
- For our upcoming AHAVA TEAM TRIP (Jan. 19-24, 2025) - for all team members and Ahava staff, favor in travel, for continued building of strong relationships, for the Gospel to be shared powerfully in word and deed, for disciples to be made, for victory over demonic powers, for healing, for provision of resources, for the lives of all in Guatemala and all on the team to be transformed in Christ, for those being served to advance in their lives and livelihood while growing in and exalting Christ
- **Read Acts 1:8** - But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Things to consider as you pray:

- Who in Greenwood needs the love of Jesus? How can St. Johns show that love better? How can you be a better witness? Doesn't it feel like an honor to know God trusts us with the duty of being his witness, how beautiful. We are honored and grateful!
- For our Global Methodist family, esp. the churches and lay and clergy leaders of the Mississippi-West Tennessee Conference and the North Delta District
- For the larger family of God throughout Greenwood/Leflore Co. and in every nation

PRAYING FOR GOD'S KINGDOM TO COME: COMMUNITY

- For The Church in Greenwood to be fruitful in reaching and blessing the least, the last, and the lost with the message of salvation in Christ, becoming and growing as disciples of Jesus, and fostering the fulfillment of God's total purposes for all
- For violence to cease because persons are being led to a transformative faith in Christ and discipleship through the bold witness and outreach of local churches, Christians, and pastors throughout the community
- For the growth in numbers, unity, vision, and fruitful and active spiritual leadership of our Greenwood-Leflore Ministerial Association
- For churches to be mobilized in unity through the work of the Ministerial Association in more shared fellowship, worship, and mission that helps bring God's grace and transformation for the spiritual, relational, physical, economic, political, and other needs and concerns of our community
- For the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Unity Prayer Breakfast on January 20 to be a time that fosters racial and denominational unity and healing through the love of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit for God's glory and the good of all in Greenwood/Leflore Co. and beyond
- For the work and continued fruitful progress of the Greenwood chapter of Mission Mississippi and its monthly initiatives as it seeks to foster racial reconciliation and for its co-leaders Rev. Terry Williams and Rev. Luke Quinn
- For our mayor Carolyn McAdams and other city and local officials, esp. for cooperation and effectiveness governed by God's love, wisdom, and justice
- For children to feel safe, be loved, and to be given every resource needed for spiritual, physical, social, emotional, and cognitive well-being
- For community serving organizations (Community Kitchen, Boys and Girls Club, Greenwood Community Center, etc.) to be fruitful in sharing the Word and love of Christ and help foster transformation of person's lives through offering help and resources in faithful, empowering ways
- For college campuses & campus ministries, college students, faculty, and staff in our area (Mississippi Valley State, Mississippi Delta, Delta State, Coahoma, MSU/UM Extension in Grenada) to experience a powerful movement of the Holy Spirit, to become completely Christ-centered, Kingdom-oriented in heart, mind, soul, and body as they are preparing and being prepared to live lives of influence and leadership, family and community-building, in our state and nation in all aspects of culture and society. Name specific persons/ministries as you know these (like Delta State Wesley Foundation, Julie Sheets, Darron Davis).

***I strongly encourage you to be inspired, moved, and led by the Holy Spirit to pray by watching the documentary of the Asbury Outpouring - even one video. There are also additional videos and materials for learning, reflection, and transformation. Go to <https://awakeninglibrary.com>