

EVENING PRAISE & PRAYER

Proclamation of the Light

You are encouraged to light an unadorned candle as the following words are spoken. If you are so inclined, you may also burn incense during this service. Since the fourth century of the early church, the burning of incense has served as a devotional sign of prayer (based on Psalm 141).

Light and peace in Jesus.
Thanks be to God.

We call upon you, O Lord;
come quickly to us;
give ear to our voice when we call to you.
Let our prayer be counted
as incense before you,
and the lifting up of our hands
as an evening sacrifice.

adapted from Psalm 141:1-2

The Doxology

adapted from No. 95, *The United Methodist Hymnal* (1989)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, you heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Psalm 71:1-14

Common English Bible

I've taken refuge in you, LORD.
Don't let me ever be put to shame!
² Deliver me and rescue me by your righteousness!
Bend your ear toward me and save me!
³ Be my rock of refuge
where I can always escape.
You commanded that my life be saved
because you are my rock and my fortress.
⁴ My God, rescue me from the power of the
wicked;
rescue me from the grip of the wrongdoer and
the oppressor
⁵ because you are my hope, Lord.
You, LORD, are the one I've trusted since
childhood.
⁶ I've depended on you from birth—
you cut the cord when I came from my mother's
womb.
My praise is always about you.
⁷ I've become an example to many people
because you are my strong refuge.
⁸ My mouth is filled with your praise,
glorifying you all day long.

⁹ Don't cast me off in old age.
Don't abandon me when my strength is used up!
¹⁰ Yes, my enemies have been talking about me;
those who stalk me plot together:
¹¹ "God has abandoned him!
Pursue him!
Grab him because no one will deliver him!"
¹² Don't be far from me, God!
My God, hurry to help me!
¹³ Let my accusers be put to shame,
completely finished off!
Let those who seek my downfall
be dressed in insults and disgrace!
¹⁴ But me? I will hope. Always.
I will add to all your praise.

Giving Thanks

Prayers of the People

You are encouraged to offer your voice to this time of prayer. After each petition, you may add your specific prayers of thanks and intercession. After each prayer, the pray-er should end with "Amen."

Together let us...

pray for our world.
pray for our community and
neighborhoods.
pray for our friends and family.
pray for ourselves.

The Lord's Prayer

No. 895, *The United Methodist Hymnal* (1989)

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. Amen.

Conclusion

Abide with us, O Christ,
for the night is at hand and the day is now past.
As the night watch looks for the morning,
so do we look for you.

May God bless us,
that in us may be found love and humility,
obedience and thanksgiving,
discipline, gentleness and peace.
Amen.

DEVOTIONAL

By Beth Ferguson, Lay Leader & Member to the Annual Conference

Psalm 71 is a prayer for lifelong protection and help. The Psalmist acknowledges that in our lives we will experience adversity, but we can trust that God is with us throughout our difficulties. God is with us at our birth before we can even know God. John Wesley calls this prevenient grace and it is available to each of us whether we find God in childhood through our parents or later in life through others.

God is also with us as our refuge, God lives within us when we accept Him as our savior. We can depend on God in every phase of our lives even to our old age, when we seem weak and frail, God gives us strength to go on and is with us when we leave this life to our heavenly home.

In this time the enemy is Coronavirus, but the enemy is also loneliness and fear. We can't physically touch one another, but God can hold us close without fear. We may be lacking in personal protective equipment, but God is our refuge and strength and our protector.

In this Holy Week, we think of Jesus time on the earth, his instructions to strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all things will be given to you. (Matt 6:33). In Jesus time of trial he went to the garden to pray, he asked that the cup might be taken from him, but God's will be done. His persecution was extreme, yet he depended on God's strength throughout his ordeal.

We can trust in God in these times and we will praise the Lord for the comfort, protection and love God brings.

PRAYER FROM THE EXTENDED CABINET

By Rev. Erica Robinson-Johnson, Director of Connectional Ministries/Assistant to the Bishop (based on Psalm 71:1-14)

Holy One,
It is Tuesday of the holiest of weeks. And yet our thoughts are far from holy. We are grateful for the psalmists who give us permission to cry out to you from the depths of our souls, with honesty, no holding back. Take #71 ... she speaks my truth so well this day: from belief, to fear, to hope ... and back again

In you, O Lord, I take refuge

Deliver me

Rescue me

Listen to me

Save me

You are my hope, my fortress

Do not cast me off in old age

Do not forsake me when my strength is spent

Do not leave me

I will not give up hope ... I will praise you even more.

Thank you God, for psalmists, poets, preachers, prophets, and for your Spirit which intercedes for us when we just don't have our own words to express the prayers in our hearts.

In you we take refuge ... our strength and redeemer.

May it be so.