



# *Prayer Primer*



Collected and Arranged by

David W. Jones

See more books and  
resources at:

[www.davidjonespub.com](http://www.davidjonespub.com)

## INTRODUCTION

When I became a pastor, my family responded, “Hurray! Now we have a professional prayer, someone to say the blessing at Thanksgiving.”

To their disappointment, at holiday gatherings, I, the ordained, the minister, the reverend, responded, “Me? Pray? I’m on vacation. Someone else do it.”

I pray. I pray regularly and often, but my prayers usually lack nouns and verbs. The Apostle Paul seems to have prayed in a similar fashion as he talked to God in “groanings too deep for words.”<sup>1</sup>

I’m comfortable with my private groanings, and to date, God has yet to complain. There are times, however, when my personal sighs are not enough, and my prayers seek words, if not for God, for my own sake, for my own expression, for my own offering.

This book is a collection of prayer starters, not prayers, but prayer helps, prayer primers. A primer is an elementary instruction book. A primer is also something used to begin flow, like water poured in an old hand pump.

---

<sup>1</sup> Romans 8:18

These starters are from hymns, scriptures, and poets, known and unknown.

I have taken their words, reformatted, restructured and often rewritten them into a construction that helps me, and I hope you, pray. Where the prayer is close to the original, I have cited the author. Where I have altered the verse far from their beginning, I left those unnoted.

I've phrased almost all the prayer starters in simple, four to five word lines. In all the prayer books I have, the prayers are written across the page. I find over and back reading inhibits my praying. With the short lines, I can pray down or up, moving through the prayer, flowing, choosing, repeating. I encourage you to repeat phrases from these prayers over and again, chanting one, two, or three lines. Chanting in your mind or out loud opens the door to the soul.

The final section is a reworking of a selection of the prayers from the first part of the book for praying publicly in groups. I found changing from *I* to *we*, *mine* to *ours* too difficult to transfer mid-prayer, so I made the changes for you.

Again, both the individual and group prayers are just starters. My

structures are just suggestions. If you don't like my phrasing or form, change it. There is plenty of blank space to the side of each prayer to write in words that work for you. Use these prayers as beginnings, as doorways to your own words, your own prayers, your own groanings with God.

Enjoy them. Write your own. Add others. Pray.

Respectfully submitted,  
David W. Jones  
2012

# ***PRAYING HYMNS***



*Pray as you can,  
for prayer doesn't consist  
of thinking a great deal,  
but of loving a great deal.*

St. Teresa of Avila



Breathe on me  
Breath of God

Fill me  
with life anew

I want to love  
as You love  
and do  
as You want me to do.

Breathe on me  
Breath of God  
until I  
am wholly Thine  
until this  
earthly part of me  
glows with  
Your fire divine.

Edwin Hatch, 1835-1889

Immortal  
Invisible  
God only wise

In light  
Inaccessible  
Hid from my eyes

Most blessed  
Most glorious  
Ancient of Days

Almighty  
Victorious

Your great name  
I praise.

Walter Smith, 1876

Guide me  
O Thou  
Great Jehovah.

I am a pilgrim  
in a barren land.

I am weak  
but Thou art mighty.

Hold me  
  
with Your  
powerful hand.

William Williams, 1745



Open my eyes  
that I may see  
glimpses of truth  
Thou hast for me.

Place in my hands  
the wonderful key  
that shall unclasp  
and set me free.

Silently now  
I wait for Thee

Ready my God  
Thy will to see

Open my eyes  
illumine me,

Spirit divine!

Clara Scott, 1895

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.

Mary E. Byrne, 1905

Be my vision  
Heart Lord

all else  
to me is  
nothing  
except  
You

my best thought  
You

by day  
by night  
You

awake  
asleep  
You

my light  
my vision  
You.

Riches  
I need them not  
nor people's empty praise.

You  
are my inheritance  
for now  
and always.

You  
and You alone  
are first in my heart.

Mary E. Byrne, 1905

“Forgive our sins as we  
forgive,”  
You taught, Lord, to pray.  
Grant me the grace  
to live these words I say.

Rosamond E. Herklots, 1969

In my trials  
Lord walk with me.

In my trials  
Lord walk with me.

When  
my  
heart  
is  
almost  
breaking,

In my trials  
Lord walk with me.

Unknown

Tossed about  
with many conflicts  
many doubts  
just as I am  
to You I come.

Fightings and fears  
within and without  
just as I am  
to You I come.

You will receive  
You will welcome  
pardon cleanse relieve  
just as I am  
to You I come.

Your promise  
I believe  
just as I am  
to You I come.

Just as I am  
to You I come.

Charlotte Elliott 1834

Make me a captive  
Lord  
then I shall  
be truly free.

Force me  
to give up my sword  
and I shall  
conqueror be.

George Matheson 1890



O Savior  
in this quiet place  
where anyone may kneel  
I also come  
to ask for grace  
believing You can heal.

Fred Pratt Green 1974

Take my life  
and let it be  
consecrated  
Lord to Thee.

Take my silver  
and my gold  
not a cent  
do I withhold.

Take my moments  
and my days  
let them flow  
in ceaseless praise.

Take myself  
and I will be  
ever only  
all for Thee.

Frances Ridley Havergal 1874

Take Thou my mind  
dear Lord  
I humbly pray.

Give me  
the mind of Christ  
each passing day.

Teach me  
to know the truth  
that sets me free.

Grant me  
in all my thoughts  
to honor Thee.

William H. Foulkes 1918

Precious Lord  
take my hand  
lead me on  
help me stand.

I am tired.  
I am weak.  
I am worn.

Through the storm  
through the night  
lead me on  
to the light.

When my way grows drear  
precious Lord linger near.

When my life is almost gone...

hear my cry  
hear my call  
hold my hand  
lest I fall.

Take my hand  
precious Lord  
lead me home.

Thomas A. Dorsey 1938

I give Thee  
but Thine own

Whatever  
my gift  
may be.

All I have is  
Thine  
alone

A trust  
O Lord  
from Thee.

William Walsham How 1858

Joyful, Joyful,  
I adore Thee  
God of glory  
Lord of love.

My heart unfolds  
a flower  
before Thee  
opening to  
the sun above.

Melt my clouds  
of sin and sadness  
drive my gloom  
and doubts away.

Giver of  
immortal gladness  
fill me  
with the light of day.

Henry Van Dyke 1907

O Lord my God  
when I  
in awesome wonder  
consider  
all the works  
Thy hands have made

I see  
the stars  
I hear  
the rolling thunder  
Your power throughout  
the universe displayed...

Then sings my soul  
my Savior God  
to Thee  
how great Thou art!  
how great Thou art!

Carl Gustav Boberg 1885  
English Version Stuart K. Hine  
1953

For the beauty  
of Your earth  
for the beauty  
of Your skies  
for the beauty  
of Your love  
which from my birth  
over and around me lies...

Lord of all to You I raise  
this my prayer of grateful  
praise.

For the beauty  
of each hour  
of the day  
and of the night  
hill and vale  
tree and flower  
sun and moon  
stars of light...

Lord of all to You I raise  
this my prayer of grateful  
praise.

Folliott Sanford Pierpoint 1864



Have Thine own way Lord!  
Have Thine own way!

You are the potter  
I am the clay.

Mold me and make me  
after Thy will  
while I am waiting  
yielded and still.

Have Thine own way Lord!  
Have Thine own way!

Wounded and weary  
help me I pray!

Power all power  
surely is Thine!  
Touch me and heal me  
Savior divine!

Have Thine own way Lord!  
Have Thine own way!

Adelaide A. Pollard 1880

I need Thee  
every hour  
hours of joy  
hours of pain  
come quickly  
abide  
without You  
my life  
I live in vain.

I need Thee  
O I need Thee  
every hour  
I need Thee  
O bless me now  
my Savior  
I come to Thee.  
I come to Thee.  
I come to Thee.

Annie S. Hawks 1835-1918

All to You  
I surrender.

All to You  
I freely give.

I will ever love  
and trust You  
in Your presence  
daily live.

All to You  
I surrender.

Humbly  
at Your feet  
I bow.

Worldly pleasures  
all forsaken  
take me Jesus  
take me now.

I surrender all.  
I surrender all.

Judson W. Van DeVenter 1896

When peace  
like a river  
attendeth my way

when sorrows  
like sea billows roll

whatever my lot  
thou hast taught me to say  
“It is well  
it is well  
with my soul.”

It is well  
it is well  
with my soul.

It is well  
it is well  
with my soul.

Horatio Spafford 1873

Nearer  
my God  
to Thee.

Nearer  
my God.  
to Thee.

Even though  
it be a cross  
that raiseth me,

Nearer  
my God  
to Thee.

Sarah F. Adams 1805-1848

# ***PRAYING SCRIPTURE***



*Jesus was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray...”*

Luke 11:1



When I look at the stars,  
the skies,  
the heavens...

I think, "Who am I?"

Who am I that You

Creator of the ends of the  
universe

Notice me?

Think of me?

Care about me?

Who am I?

I am Yours.  
Yours.  
Yours.

Thank You...  
Thank You...  
Thank You...  
For caring about me.

Psalm 8

Lord,  
You are my shepherd.

You guide me  
down the right path,  
to green pastures,  
by quiet waters,  
where You restore my soul.

I trust and am not afraid,  
even in the darkest valley  
where death seems all around  
I trust and am not afraid  
because You comfort me.

You prepare me a table,  
You anoint my head,  
You fill my cup.

I trust and am not afraid,  
because in Your house  
I will dwell forever.

Lord,  
You are my shepherd.

Psalm 23



O Lord,  
all my longing  
is surely known to You,  
all my sighing  
cannot be hidden from You.

My heart throbs...  
My strength fails...  
The light of my eyes  
is going out...

I am hurting,  
and my pain is ever with me.

For You, O Lord,  
I will wait.  
In You, O Lord,  
I will trust.

Do not forsake me,  
Do not be so far from me,  
Come closer to me,  
Quickly!  
Help me.  
You, O Lord,  
are my only hope.

Psalm 38

I waited for You,  
and You heard my cry.  
You picked me up  
from the mire I was in,  
from the bog that was my life.

You picked me up  
and put me on solid ground.

You put a new song in my  
mouth,  
a song of praise to You.

I will sing a new song,  
for You,  
to You,  
because of You.

Psalm 40

As a deer  
thirsts for a stream,  
so my soul  
thirsts for You.

I start to weep,  
I begin to moan,  
then I say to my soul,  
“Soul, why so cast down?  
“Trust God,  
"Hope again.”

As a deer  
thirsts for a stream,  
so my soul  
thirsts for You.

Psalm 42

Have mercy on me,  
according to  
Your steadfast love,  
according to  
Your abundant mercy,  
blot out my transgressions.

Wash me  
thoroughly  
from my iniquity,  
cleansing me from my sin.

I know my transgressions,  
my sin is ever before me.

Teach me.  
Purge me.  
Wash me.  
Speak to me.

Create in me  
a clean heart, O God,  
put a new  
and right spirit  
within me.

Psalm 51

Here am I,  
send me.

Isaiah 6:8

I thank You.

You comfort me.

You are my refuge.  
You are my sanctuary.

In You,  
I trust.

With You,  
I will no longer fear.

You are my strength,

my song,

my salvation.

Isaiah 12:1-5

People are grass  
that wither and fade,  
but You are forever.

Eternal and everlasting,  
the Creator of the earth,  
You never faint  
and never grow weary.

Empower me,  
lift me up,  
renew my strength,  
set me high  
on wings of eagles,  
lift me up,  
and I will fly,  
and not fall.

Eternal and everlasting,  
Creator of the earth,  
lift me up...

Isaiah 40

I called out to You,  
out of my deep distress,  
and You answered me.

From the grave,  
from deep darkness,  
I cried, and You heard my  
voice.

You threw me into the deep,  
You cast me into  
the heart of the sea,  
where the torrent surrounded  
me,  
where Your surf,  
Your waves,  
crashed over me.

Then, I said, “I am lost,  
out of even the sight  
and presence of God.  
I am truly alone.”

The waters closed in over me.  
The deep encompassed me.  
Weeds wrapped around my  
head.  
At the base of the mountains,  
I fell into the deep where the  
darkness closed upon me.  
I surrendered. Gone forever.  
*(Continued on next page...)*



Yet, You pulled me  
up from the Pit.  
My Lord! My God!  
As my life faded, vanished,  
I remembered You!  
My prayer came to You!  
My voice entered into  
Your holy presence,  
where You heard me!

Salvation and deliverance  
I am Yours.  
This day, this moment, this  
instant  
are all Yours.

Amen.

Jonah 2  
(from inside the Great Fish)

My Father,  
in heaven,  
Hallowed is Your Name.

Your kingdom NOW.  
Your will NOW.  
in me  
as in heaven,  
in my home  
as in heaven,  
on earth  
as in heaven,  
in me  
as in You.  
NOW,  
not tomorrow,  
TODAY,  
not later  
NOW!

Matthew 6:9-13

Father,  
thank You,  
for I know You hear me.

John 11: 41-42

Abba, Father...

Mark 14:36

God,  
be merciful to me,  
a sinner.

Luke 18:13

Father,  
my soul is troubled,  
What shall I say?  
“Save me from this hour?”

No.

Your purpose is lived out  
in this moment.

For Your purpose,  
I have come to this place,  
this time,  
this moment.

I,

Here,

Now,

for You.

Glorify Your Name  
in me.

John 12:27-28

Lord,  
the one You love  
is ill.

John 11:3

Jesus,  
Remember me  
Into Your kingdom.

Luke 23:42

In my weakness  
make perfect Your strength.

1 Corinthians 12:9

Lord,  
You know  
that I love You.

John 21:16

Amen.  
Come,  
Lord Jesus.

Revelation 22:20

# ***PRAYING CLASSICS***



*The world may doubt  
the power of prayer,  
but the saints know better.*

Gilbert Shaw



I am empty.  
Fill me.

I am weak.  
Strengthen me.

I am cold.  
Warm me.

Martin Luther



You love,  
all that is,

You abhor,  
nothing You created,

You,  
Lover of souls,

Love me.

God,  
You,  
my thoughts cannot conceive.

God,  
You,  
my thoughts cannot reach.

God,  
You,  
my thoughts cannot better.

God,  
You...

God,  
You...

God,  
You...

God,

My heart is not large enough,  
enlarge it.

My vision is not clear enough,  
enlighten it.

My will is not tough enough,  
strengthen it.

I can't get there on my own,  
take me.

From the cowardice  
that dare not face new truth,

From the laziness  
that is contented with half  
truth,

From the arrogance  
that thinks it knows all truth.

Good Lord,  
deliver me!

from Kenya

God,  
be good to me.  
The sea is so large,  
and my boat is so small.

Unknown

As the rain  
hides the stars,  
as the autumn mist  
hides the hills,  
as the clouds veil  
the blue of the sky,  
so the dark  
happenings  
of my life  
hide the shining  
of Your face  
from me.

I am reaching out to You.

If You will let me  
take hold of Your hand,  
though I may stumble,  
I will not fall,  
because You,  
unfailing,  
never falter.

Alistair MacLean

I believe  
You are real  
though  
I cannot  
see You.

I believe  
You are near  
though  
I cannot  
sense You.

I believe  
You care for me  
though  
I cannot  
feel You.

Draw me closer  
so that I may  
see You,  
feel Your presence,  
sense Your love.

I believe,  
Help my unbelief.

Lord, make me an instrument  
of Thy peace;  
Where there is hatred,  
let me sow love;  
Where there is injury, pardon;  
Where there is error, truth;  
Where there is doubt, faith;  
Where there is despair, hope;  
Where there is darkness, light;  
And where there is sadness,  
joy.

O Divine Master,  
Grant that I may not so much  
seek  
To be consoled, as to console;  
To be understood,  
as to understand;  
To be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we  
receive;  
It is in pardoning  
that we are pardoned;  
And it is in dying  
that we are born  
to eternal life. Amen.

St. Francis



Most High,  
glorious God,  
enlighten the darkness  
of my heart  
and give me  
true faith,  
certain hope,  
and perfect charity,  
with sense and knowledge,  
Lord, that I may carry out  
Your holy and  
true command.  
Amen.

St. Francis

God be with me,

before me,  
behind me,  
in me,  
beneath me,  
above me,  
on my right,  
on my left,  
where I lie,  
where I sit,  
where I rise,  
in my heart,  
in my mouth,  
in my ears,  
in my eyes,

God be with me.

Wherever I go  
only You!

Wherever I stand  
only You!

Just You!  
Again You!  
Always You!

You!  
You!  
You!

When things are good,  
You!

When things are bad,  
You!

You!  
You!  
Always You!

Hasidic

Lord,  
Give me  
the power to be gentle,  
the strength to be merciful,  
the will to forgive,  
the patience to understand,  
the endurance to be faithful,  
and the love  
the world needs  
from me.

Show me,  
Gracious Lord,  
    the peace I should seek,  
    the peace I can keep,  
    the peace I must forgo,  
    and the peace I must give,  
For Your kingdom's sake.

God,

Give me a pure heart  
that I may see Thee,

a humble heart  
that I may hear Thee,

a heart of love  
that I may serve Thee,

a heart of faith  
that I may abide in Thee.

Dag Hammarskjöld

God,

be in my head  
and in my understanding,

be in my eyes  
and in my looking,

in my mouth  
and in my speaking,

in my mind  
and in my thinking,

at my end  
and at my departing.

Old Sarum Primer

God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things  
I cannot change;  
courage to change the things I  
can;  
and wisdom to know the  
difference.

Living one day at a time;  
Enjoying one moment at a  
time;  
Accepting hardships as the  
pathway to peace;  
Taking, as He did,  
this sinful world  
as it is, not as I would have it;  
Trusting that He  
will make all things right  
if I surrender to His Will;  
That I may be reasonably  
happy  
in this life  
and supremely happy  
with Him  
Forever in the next.  
Amen.

Reinhold Niebuhr



I am not eager,  
bold,  
or strong.

All that is past.

I am ready,  
not to do.

At last.  
At last.

Peter Canisus

From the unreal,  
lead me to the real.

From darkness,  
lead me to light.

From death,  
lead me to life.

Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad

Dear God,

I am so afraid  
to open my clenched fists!

Who will I be when I have  
nothing left to hold on to?  
Who will I be when I stand  
before you with empty hands?

Please help me  
to gradually open my hands  
and to discover  
that I am not what I own,  
but what you want to give me.  
And what you want to give me  
is love,  
unconditional,  
everlasting love.  
Amen.

Henri Nouwen

God,  
come to me,  
be near me,  
with me.

Come  
as water  
and cleanse me.

Come  
as fire  
and refine me.

Come  
as a spring  
and refresh me.

Confront me.  
Convert me.  
Consecrate me.

Turn my heart,  
and my life,  
toward Your greater good.

In me  
there is darkness,  
but with You  
there is light.

I am lonely,  
but You do not leave me.  
I am feeble,  
but You give me help.  
I am restless,  
but You give me peace.  
In me there is bitterness,  
but with You there is patience.

I do not understand Your  
ways.  
but You are the way for me.

Restore me to liberty,  
enable me to live free, now,  
that I may answer before You,  
and before me,  
whatever this day may bring.

Your name be praised.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer  
(written while awaiting  
execution)

Good morning, God,  
and thank You for another day.

Good night, God,  
and thank You for another day.

Now, into Your keeping,  
I give all doings of today.

All disappointments,  
hindrances,  
forgotten things,  
negligences.

All gladness and beauty,  
love,  
delight,  
achievement.

All that people  
have done for me,  
All that I have done for  
them,  
All my work, and my  
prayers,

And I commit to You,  
All the people I love,  
to Your shepherding,  
Your healing,  
Your restoring,  
Your calling,  
Your making,  
Your care.

Margaret Cropper

Night is drawing near

For all that has been –  
Thanks!

For all that will be –  
YES!

Dag Hammarskjold



# ***PRAYING TOGETHER***



*What life have you  
if you have not life together?  
There is no life  
that is not in community,  
And no community,  
not lived in praise of God.*

T.S. Eliot



Breathe on us  
Breath of God

Fill us  
with life anew

We want to love  
as You love.

We want to do  
as You want us to do.

Breathe on us,  
Breath of God

until we  
are wholly Thine

until this  
earthly part of us

glows with Your  
fire divine.

Edwin Hatch, 1835-1889

Be Thou our vision  
O Lord of our hearts.

Naught be all else to us  
save that Thou art.

Thou our best thought  
by day or by night.

Waking or sleeping  
Your presence is our light.

Mary E. Byrne 1905

Take our lives  
and let them be  
consecrated  
Lord to Thee.

Take our silver  
take our gold  
not a cent  
do we withhold.

Take our moments  
take our days  
let them flow  
in ceaseless praise.

Take us our very selves  
and we will be  
ever only  
all for Thee.

Frances Ridley Havergal 1874

Take Thou our lives  
dear Lord  
we humbly pray.

Give us  
the life of Christ  
each passing day.

Teach us  
to know the truth  
that sets us free.

Grant us  
in all we do  
to honor Thee.

adapted from  
William H. Foulkes 1918

Joyful, Joyful,  
We adore Thee  
God of glory  
Lord of love.

Our hearts unfold  
as flowers  
before Thee  
opening to  
the sun above.

Melt our clouds  
of sin and sadness  
drive our gloom  
and doubts away.

Giver of  
immortal gladness  
fill us  
with Your light today.

Henry Van Dyke 1907

Have Thine own way Lord!  
Have Thine own way!

You are the potter  
we are the clay.

Mold us and make us  
after Thy will  
while we are waiting  
yielded and still.

Have Thine own way Lord!  
Have Thine own way!

Wounded and weary  
help us we pray!

Power all power  
surely is Thine!  
Touch us and heal us  
Savior divine!

Have Thine own way Lord!  
Have Thine own way!

Adelaide A. Pollard, 1880

When we look at the stars,  
the skies,  
the heavens...

We think, "Who are we?"

Who are we that You

Creator of the ends of the  
universe

Notice us?

Think of us?

Care about us?

Who are we?

We are Yours.  
Yours.  
Yours.

Thank You...  
Thank You...  
Thank You...  
For caring about us.

Psalm 8



Lord, You are our shepherd.

Guide us down the right paths.

Guide us to green pastures.

Guide us to quiet waters.

Restore our souls.

In You, we trust  
and will not be afraid,  
even in the darkest valleys,  
where death seems all around,  
we will trust You  
and not be afraid,  
because You will comfort us.

Prepare us a table,  
anoint our heads,  
fill our cups,  
lead us to that place,  
where we can dwell  
with You forever.

Lord, You are our shepherd.

Psalm 23

God,

From the cowardice  
that dare not face new truth,

From the laziness  
that is contented with half  
truth,

From the arrogance  
that thinks it knows all truth,

Good Lord,  
deliver us!

Our hearts are not large  
enough,  
enlarge them.

Our vision is not clear enough,  
enlighten us.

Our will is not tough enough,  
strengthen us.

We can't get there on our own.  
Take us.

Lord, make us instruments  
of Thy peace;  
Where there is hatred,  
let us sow love;  
Where there is injury, pardon;  
Where there is error, truth;  
Where there is doubt, faith;  
Where there is despair, hope;  
Where there is darkness, light;  
And where there is sadness,  
joy.

O Divine Master,  
Grant that we may  
not so much seek  
to be consoled, as to console;  
to be understood,  
as to understand;  
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we  
receive;  
It is in pardoning  
that we are pardoned;  
And it is in dying  
that we are born  
to eternal life. Amen.

St. Francis

God be with us,

before us,  
behind us,  
in us,  
beneath us,  
above us,  
on our right,  
on our left,  
where we lie,  
where we sit,  
where we rise,  
in our hearts,  
in our mouths,  
in our ears,  
in our eyes,

God be with us.

God,

Give us pure hearts  
that we may see Thee.

Give us humble hearts  
that we may hear Thee.

Give us hearts of love  
that we may serve Thee.

Give us hearts of faith  
that we may abide in  
Thee.

Dag Hammarskjold

God,  
come to us,  
be near us,  
with us.

Come as water  
and cleanse us.

Come as fire  
and refine us.

Come as a spring  
and refresh us.

Confront us.

Convert us.

Consecrate us.

Turn our hearts,  
and our lives,  
toward Your greater good.

Lord,

During this time, be in  
our heads  
and in our understanding,  
our eyes  
and in our looking,  
our mouths  
and in our speaking,  
our minds  
and in our thinking.

While we are here,  
and after we leave,  
give us  
the power to be gentle,  
the strength to be merciful,  
the will to forgive,  
the patience to understand,  
the endurance to be faithful,  
and the love  
the world needs  
from us.

Amen.



## **Appendix:** ***Quotes for Meditation***

In our congregation, on the front of the bulletin each Sunday is a different quote to help participants prepare for worship.

Here are some quotes you can use to prepare your mind and heart for prayer or use as a starting point to talk with God. The quotes are divided in progressive sections: *Attend*; *Accept*; *Let Go*; *Orient*; *Appreciate*; *Trust*; and *Leap!*

### **Attend**

In order to prepare yourself, just pay attention, attend to your body, your mind, your thoughts, your emotions. Before a person can fully be open to God, there is much we need to see first.

*Listen to your life. See it for the fathomless mystery that it is. In the boredom and pain of it no less than in the excitement and gladness: touch, taste, smell your way into the holy and hidden heart of it, because in the last analysis all moments are key moments, and life itself is grace. Frederick Buechner*

*In the name of God, stop a moment, cease your work, look around you. Leo Tolstoy*

*Caretake this moment. Immerse yourself in its particulars. Respond to this person, this challenge, this deed. Quit evasions. Stop giving yourself needless trouble. It is time to really live; to fully inhabit the situation you happen to be in now. Epictetus*

*What the undeveloped man seeks is outside, the advanced man seeks within himself. Confucius*

*People travel to wonder at the height of mountains, at the huge waves of the sea, at the long courses of rivers, at the vast compass of the ocean, at the circular motion of the stars; and they pass by themselves without wondering. Augustine*

*Listen. Your life is happening. You are happening. Think on your journey. The music of your life... Frederick Buechner*

*You must have a room, or a certain hour or so a day, where you don't know what was in the newspaper that morning, you don't know who your friends are, you don't know what you owe anybody, you don't know what anybody owes you. This is a place where you can simply experience and bring forth what you are and what you might be.*

Joseph Campbell

*A waiting person is a patient person. The word patience means the willingness to stay where we are and live the situation out to the full in the belief that something hidden there will manifest itself to us.* Henri Nouwen

*Seek not the good in external things; seek it in yourself.* Epictetus

*You cannot find peace by avoiding life.* Virginia Woolf

*What deadens us most to God's presence within us, I think, is the inner dialogue that we are continuously engaged in with ourselves, the endless chatter of human thought. I suspect that there is nothing more crucial to true spiritual comfort . . . than being able from time to time to stop that chatter.* Frederick Buechner

*What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.* Ralph Waldo Emerson

*Instead of clearing his own heart the zealot tries to clear the world.* Joseph Campbell

*Most of the shadows of this life are caused*

*by standing in one's own sunshine.* Ralph  
Waldo Emerson

*Wipe out imagination. Stop the pulling of  
strings. Confine thyself to the present.*  
Marcus Aurelius

*Your task is not to seek for love, but merely  
to seek and find all the barriers within  
yourself that you have built against it.* Rumi

### **Accept**

Wherever you are when you stop to pray, whatever your surroundings, atmosphere, mood, or feelings, accept them. Pay attention to your body, if there is stiffness, don't resist it. If your thoughts are scattered, just watch them come and leave. To push against your thoughts or emotions is to push against a stream. Instead, accept them all and let them flow past.

*As soon as we are alone, inner chaos opens up in us. This chaos can be so disturbing and so confusing that we can hardly wait to get busy again. Entering a private room and shutting the door, therefore, does not mean that we immediately shut out all our inner doubts, anxieties, fears, bad memories, unresolved conflicts, angry feelings and impulsive desires. On the contrary, when we have removed our outer distraction, we often find that our inner distraction manifest*

*themselves to us in full force. We often use the outer distractions to shield ourselves from the interior noises. This makes the discipline of solitude all the more important.*  
Henri Nouwen

*This being human is a guest house. Every morning is a new arrival. A joy, a depression, a meanness, some momentary awareness comes as an unexpected visitor...Welcome and entertain them all. Treat each guest honorably. The dark thought, the shame, the malice, meet them at the door laughing, and invite them in. Be grateful for whoever comes, because each has been sent as a guide from beyond.* Rumi

*Peace is first of all the art of being.* Henri Nouwen

*Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and right doing there is a field. I'll meet you there.*  
Rumi

*So, this is my life. And I want you to know that I am both happy and sad and I'm still trying to figure out how that could be.*  
Stephen Chbosky

*I may not have gone where I intended to go,*

*but I think I have ended up where I needed to be.* Douglas Adams

*Experience is a brutal teacher, but you learn. My God, do you learn.* C.S. Lewis

*If you are irritated by every rub, how will you be polished?* Rumi

*Pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our consciences, but shouts in our pains. It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.* C.S. Lewis

## Let Go

Suffering comes when we hold too tightly to the people, possessions, and memories of our lives. Letting go is the path toward peace.

*Stop trying to protect, to rescue, to judge, to manage the lives around you . . . remember that the lives of others are not your business. They are their business. They are God's business . . . even your own life is not your business. It also is God's business. Leave it to God. It is an astonishing thought. It can become a life-transforming thought . . . unclench the fists of your spirit and take it easy.* Frederick Beuchner

*Hold everything in your hands lightly, otherwise it hurts when God pries your fingers open.* Corrie ten Boom

*It's hard to let go anything we love. We live in a world which teaches us to clutch. But when we clutch we're left with a fistful of ashes.* Madeleine L'Engle

*Finish every day and be done with it. You have done what you could; some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day; you shall begin it serenely and with too*

*high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense.* Ralph Waldo Emerson

*People want you to be happy. Don't keep serving them your pain! If you could untie your wings and free your soul of jealousy, you and everyone around you would fly up like doves.* Rumi

*I think joy and sweetness and affection are a spiritual path. We're here to know God, to love and serve God, and to be blown away by the beauty and miracle of nature. You just have to get rid of so much baggage to be light enough to dance, to sing, to play. You don't have time to carry grudges; you don't have time to cling to the need to be right.* Anne Lamott

*To love or have loved, that is enough. Ask nothing further. There is no other pearl to be found in the dark folds of life.* Victor Hugo

*We must be willing to let go of the life we planned so as to have the life that is waiting for us.* Joseph Campbell

## **Orient**

When I approach God in prayer, I usually



remind myself, “God is God, and you’re not.” I find it amazing how liberating that simple phrase can be. Apparently, in their own way, so did these people.

*The difference between you and God is that God doesn't think He's you.* Anne Lamott

*We may ignore, but we can nowhere evade the presence of God. The world is crowded with Him. He walks everywhere incognito.* C.S. Lewis

*All that we call human history – money, poverty, ambition, war, prostitution, classes, empires, slavery – is the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy.* C.S. Lewis

*You can be competent in many things, but you cannot be competent in God.* Henri Nouwen

*If you want to make God laugh, tell him about your plans.* Woody Allen

*I didn't come here of my own accord, and I can't leave that way. Whoever brought me here will have to take me home.* Rumi

*My arms are too short to box with God.* Johnny Cash

*I pray because I can't help myself. I pray because I'm helpless. I pray because the need flows out of me all the time – waking and sleeping. It doesn't change God – it changes me.* C.S. Lewis

*Man has not invented God; He has developed faith, to meet a God already there.*  
Edna St. Vincent Millay

*The function of prayer is not to influence God, but rather to change the nature of the one who prays.* Soren Kierkegaard

*Knock, And He'll open the door.  
Vanish, And He'll make you shine like the sun.  
Fall, And He'll raise you to the heavens.  
Become nothing, And He'll turn you into everything.*  
Rumi

*Prayer is not asking. It is a longing of the soul. It is daily admission of one's weakness. It is better in prayer to have a heart without words than words without a heart.* Ghandi

*My concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God's side.*  
Abraham Lincoln

*Solitude begins with a time and a place for God, and God alone. If we really believe not only that God exists but also that God is actively present in our lives-- healing, teaching and guiding-- we need to set aside a time and space to give God our undivided attention.* Henri Nouwen

*In a very real sense not one of us is qualified, but it seems that God continually chooses the most unqualified to do his work, to bear his glory. If we are qualified, we tend to think that we have done the job ourselves. If we are forced to accept our evident lack of qualification, then there's no danger that we will confuse God's work with our own, or God's glory with our own.* Madeleine L'Engle

*If in thirst you drink water from a cup, you see God in it. Those who are not in love with God will see only their own faces in it.* Rumi

## **Appreciate**

Gratitude is an attitude, a perspective, a choice. Consider the challenge of the following sages in how you approach your life.

*Cultivate the habit of being grateful for*

*every good thing that comes to you, and to give thanks continuously. And because all things have contributed to your advancement, you should include all things in your gratitude.* Ralph Waldo Emerson

*There is nothing so secular that it cannot be sacred, and that is one of the deepest messages of the Incarnation.* Madeleine L'Engle

*I always think that the best way to know God is to love many things.* Vincent van Gogh

*Even after all this time the sun never says to the earth, You owe me. Look what happens with a love like that. It lights the whole sky.* Hafiz

*Wealth consists not in having great possessions, but in having few wants.* Epictetus

*The earth laughs in flowers.* Ralph Waldo Emerson

*Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we find it not.* Ralph Waldo Emerson

*Life consists of what man is thinking about*

*all day.* Ralph Waldo Emerson

*People are not disturbed by things, but by the views they take of them.* Epictetus

## **Trust**

Too often faith is associated with what you think, believe, or understand. For the following people, faith is more akin to trust, and its opposite is not doubt but fear.

*There is nothing anti-intellectual in the leap of faith, for faith is not believing without proof but trusting without reservation.*  
William Sloane Coffin

*There is nothing that wastes the body like worry, and one who has any faith in God should be ashamed to worry about anything whatsoever.* Mahatma Gandhi

*I must say a word about fear. It is life's only true opponent. Only fear can defeat life. It is a clever, treacherous adversary, how well I know. It has no decency, respects no law or convention, shows no mercy. It goes for your weakest spot, which it finds with unnerving ease. It begins in your mind, always ... so you must fight hard to express it. You must fight hard to shine the light of words upon it.*

*Because if you don't, if your fear becomes a wordless darkness that you avoid, perhaps even manage to forget, you open yourself to further attacks of fear because you never truly fought the opponent who defeated you.*  
Yann Martel

*In order for one to learn the important lessons of life, one must first overcome a fear each day.* Ralph Waldo Emerson

*Have courage for the great sorrows of life and patience for the small ones; and when you have laboriously accomplished your daily task, go to sleep in peace. God is awake.* Victor Hugo

*I have a lot of faith. But I am also afraid a lot, and have no real certainty about anything. I remembered something Father Tom had told me – that the opposite of faith is not doubt, but certainty. Certainty is missing the point entirely. Faith includes noticing the mess, the emptiness and discomfort, and letting it be there until some light returns.* Anne Lamott

*Here is the world. Beautiful and terrible things will happen. Don't be afraid.*  
Frederick Buechner

*It is not my ability, but my response to God's ability, that counts.* Corrie ten Boom

*We must be willing to fail and to appreciate the truth that often Life is not a problem to be solved, but a mystery to be lived.* Scott Peck

*All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen.* Ralph Waldo Emerson

*Even the darkest night will end and the sun will rise.* Victor Hugo

*The wise man in the storm prays to God not for safety from danger but for deliverance from fear.* Ralph Waldo Emerson

*There is but one way to tranquility of mind and happiness, and that is to account no external things thine own, but to commit all to God.* Epictetus

*The greatest happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved -- loved for ourselves, or rather, loved in spite of ourselves.* Victor Hugo

*Self-rejection is the greatest enemy of the spiritual life because it contradicts the*

*sacred voice that calls us the Beloved. Being the Beloved expresses the core truth of our existence.* Henri Nouwen

*Turn around and believe that the good news that we are loved is better than we ever dared hope, and that to believe in that good news, to live out of it and toward it, to be in love with that good news, is of all glad things in this world the gladdest thing of all.* Frederick Buechner

*The future has several names. For the weak, it is impossible; for the fainthearted, it is unknown; but for the valiant, it is ideal.* Victor Hugo

*Always do what you are afraid to do.* Ralph Waldo Emerson

## **Leap**

Since faith is trust, faith enacted is a hopeful and trusting leap.

*If you are falling....dive.* Joseph Campbell

*I love the recklessness of faith. First you leap, and then you grow wings.* William Sloane Coffin



*A bit of advice given to a young Native American at the time of his initiation: As you go the way of life, You will see a great chasm. Jump. It is not as wide as you think.*  
Joseph Campbell

*There's a reason we refer to leaps of faith - because the decision to consent to any notion of divinity is a mighty jump from the rational over to the unknowable, and I don't care how diligently scholars of every religion will try to sit you down with their stacks of books and prove to you through scripture that their faith is indeed rational; it isn't. If faith were rational, it wouldn't be - by definition - faith. Faith is belief in what you cannot see or prove or touch. Faith is walking face-first and full-speed into the dark. If we truly knew all the answers in advance as to the meaning of life and the nature of God and the destiny of our souls, our belief would not be a leap of faith and it would not be a courageous act of humanity; it would just be... a prudent insurance policy.* Elizabeth Gilbert

*There is a candle in your heart, ready to be kindled. There is a void in your soul, ready to be filled. You feel it, don't you?* Rumi

*The cave you fear to enter holds the treasure*

*you seek.* Joseph Campbell

*If you stumble about believability, what are you living for? Love is hard to believe, ask any lover. Life is hard to believe, ask any scientist. God is hard to believe, ask any believer. What is your problem with hard to believe?* Yann Martel

*If you want to improve, be content to be thought foolish and stupid.* Epictetus

*Is it so bad, then, to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood.* Ralph Waldo Emerson

*The leaders of the future will be those who dare to claim their irrelevance in the contemporary world as a divine vocation.* Henri Nouwen

*The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.* Frederick Buechner

*Don't be too timid and squeamish about your actions. All life is an experiment. The*

*more experiments you make the better.*  
Ralph Waldo Emerson

*When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left, and could say, I used everything you gave me.* Erma Bombeck

*I do not understand the mystery of grace -- only that it meets us where we are and does not leave us where it found us.* Anne Lamott

*Look for God. Look for God like a man with his head on fire looks for water.* Elizabeth Gilbert

*Thus, when you wake up in the morning, called by God to be a self again, if you want to know who you are, watch your feet. Because where your feet take you, that is who you are.* Frederick Buechner

*If you do follow your bliss you put yourself on a kind of track that has been there all the while, waiting for you, and the life that you ought to be living is the one you are living. Follow your bliss and don't be afraid, and doors will open where you didn't know they were going to be.* Joseph Campbell

*The grace of God means something like: Here is your life. You might never have been, but you are because the party wouldn't have been complete without you.* Frederick Buechner

*No, life cannot be understood flat on a page. It has to be lived; a person has to get out of his head, has to fall in love, has to memorize poems, has to jump off bridges into rivers, has to stand in an empty desert and whisper sonnets under his breath... We get one story, you and I, and one story alone. God has established the elements, the setting and the climax and resolution. It would be a crime not to venture out, wouldn't it?* Donald Miller

*Go where your best prayers take you.* Frederick Buechner



David Jones is a pastor  
and author of the following books:

*The Psychology of Jesus:  
Practical Help for Living in Relationship*

*In the Beginning Were the Words:  
A Look at the First Chapters of Genesis  
through Poetry*

*The Enlightenment of Jesus:  
Practical Steps to Life Awake*

*Enough!  
And Other Magic Words to Transform Your  
Life*

*Moses and Mickey Mouse:  
How to Find Holy Ground in the  
Magic Kingdom and Other  
Unusual Places*

*For the Love of Sophia  
Wisdom Stories from Around the World  
And Across the Ages*

*Prayer Primer*

*Going Nuts! (Fiction)*  
For more information on these books,  
go to: [www.davidjonespub.com](http://www.davidjonespub.com)