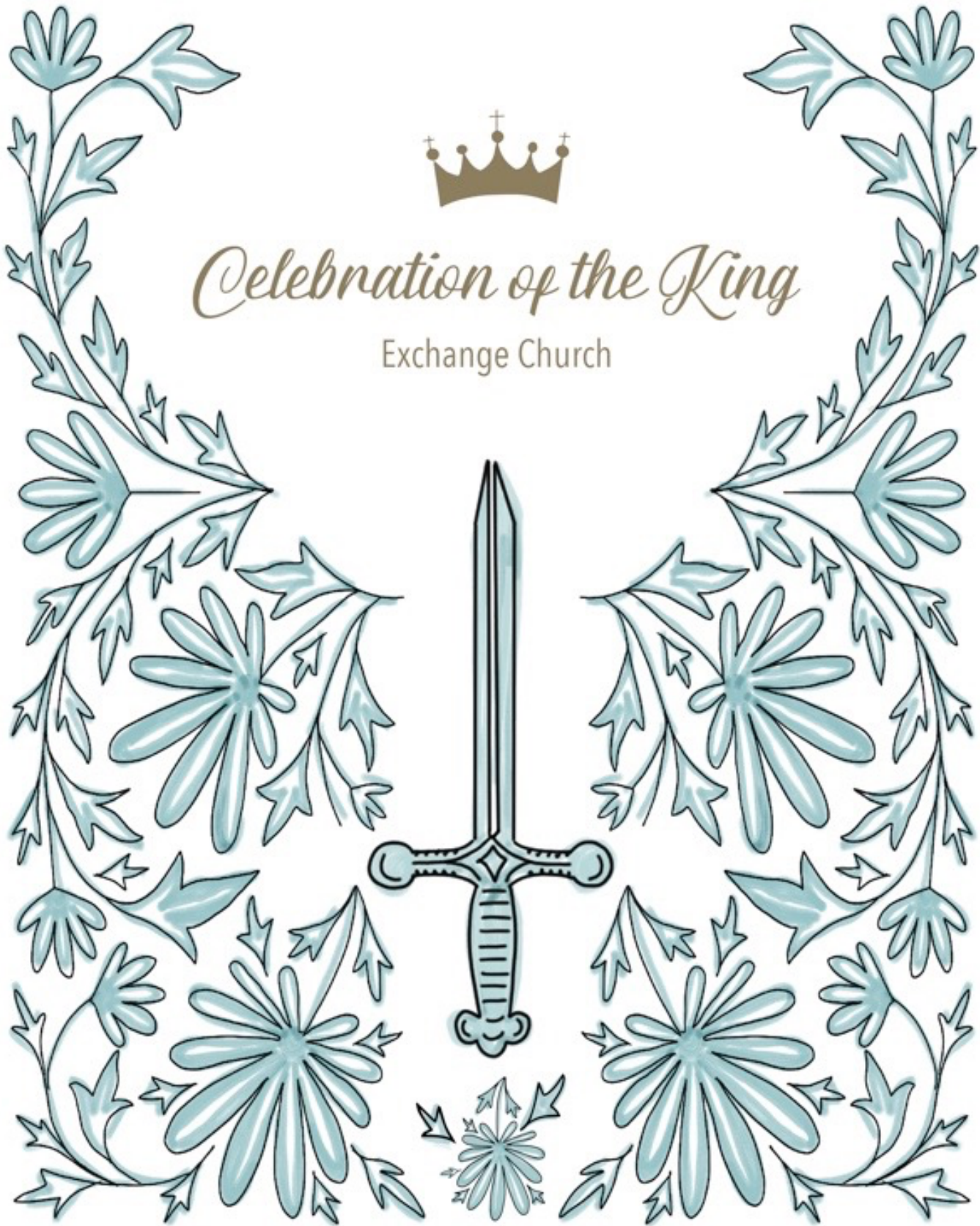
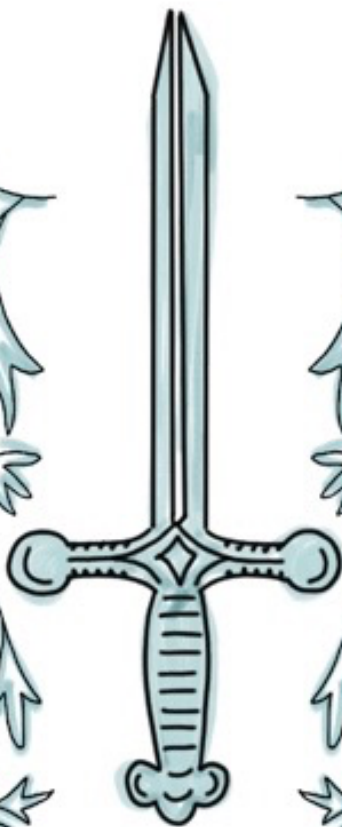




Celebration of the King

Exchange Church



Celebration of the King

A Devotional for the Ascension and Pentecost



Exchange Church

Rolesville, NC

Exchange Church | 2021

This version is an adapted version from the 2020 Celebration of the King.

Celebration of the King: A Devotional for the Ascension and Pentecost by Exchange Church (Rolesville, NC). For more information or other resources, please visit www.exchangenc.org.

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Cover design and artwork by Alex Manring.

Praying through the Mission Statement of Exchange by Susan Michael.

[Playlist](#) to help celebrate the King.

Special thanks to Kerissa Armstead, Kasey Channita, Amy Hardy, Mike Harmon, Justin Hendricks, Katie Martin, Dougald McLaurin, and Kimberly Penny for their contribution in writing the weekly reflections.

Our Hope for the Church

There were so many wonderful and talented people involved in the making of this guide in order for it to be a helpful resource for you as you reflect upon the glorious good news of the *Ascension* and *Pentecost*. It is our prayer and our hope, as the Church and for the Church, that as you use this guide you would Celebrate the King:

- By *worshipping* Jesus with all that you are as you reflect upon and entrust yourself to the Sovereignty of God in your life.
- By *developing* healthy rhythms of the “cruciform” life, establishing and maintaining order within this chaotic world.
- By *walking* alongside your sister and brother, bearing one another’s burden in this time of continued crisis in our country and around the world.
- By *living* out the Kingdom in how you serve your neighbor and sharing the reason for the hope you have in Christ Jesus.

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Colossians 3:1

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But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

Hebrews 10:12-14

Celebration of the King

At the cross Jesus conquered sin, and in his resurrection defeated death, putting to shame all rulers and authorities in heaven and on earth. It is because of this most magnificent victory that God the Father has highly exalted him above all and enthroned him as King over the universe (Philippians 2:6-11). The commencement of Jesus' glorious reign over the cosmos as the risen King is what is known as the *Ascension* (Acts 1:1-11), when he ascended to the right hand of the Father; and *Pentecost* is the day when he poured out his Spirit (Acts 2) in order that his Church may live as the rightful citizens of his heavenly Kingdom.

Therefore, as we embrace the full story of the gospel, we are to immerse ourselves in the ongoing reality of the *Ascension* and *Pentecost*, by rejoicing in the glorious reign of Christ the King, who empowers us to live out his Kingdom in the world through his Spirit. Therefore, while Easter is the day in which the Church most rightly and extravagantly celebrates the victory of Jesus Christ on the cross, the subsequent weeks are meant to be an ongoing parade to celebrate the reign of Jesus Christ as our King.

How to Use this Guide

This guide is designed to reflect upon and rejoice in the cosmic reign of Jesus and our loyal service to the King, in prayer, in Scripture, and in reflection. Each day of the guide provides a form of worship to shape the disposition of our heart, to set rhythms of worship for our soul, and to reflect upon *Ascension* of our Lord Jesus Christ and the pouring out of the Spirit at *Pentecost*. The aim is to approach the throne of God's grace together as his people—established by his grace, formed by his Word, and sanctified by his Spirit—for our good and for his glory.

Seeing how this devotional is digital, you may find it helpful to use a journal in which to write your daily thanksgiving, Scripture reflections, and further prayers.

For music to inform and form your celebration of the King check out this [playlist](#).

The Daily Practices

The following Daily Practices serves as a template, to be used as closely or as loosely as you find helpful.

- **The Call to Prayer**

Each morning will begin with a Scripture that invites us to meet with God and respond to him in prayer. Each call to prayer is connected to the area in the world over which God is sovereign that is introduced each Sunday.

- **Time of Gratitude**

Whereas the week leading up to Easter focus on confession and repentance, the weeks following Easter focus on thanksgiving and praise. Each day we will practice the discipline of giving thanks by recounting three (3) things for which we are grateful within the previous 24 hours. As the apostle Paul commends, let us “give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 5:20).

- **The Lord’s Prayer**

When asked how to pray, Jesus provided his disciples what is known as the “Lord’s Prayer” (Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4). This prayer can serve as a comprehensive framework to guide our prayers on what is most essential. Each day of the week we will pray through one line of the Lord’s Prayer, focusing on that particular emphasis of the prayer. In this way, we will pray the entire Lord’s Prayer throughout each week one day at a time. *(For an overview and further explanation, see Appendix 3, pp. 87-88.)*

- **Scripture and Reflection**

Each day we will have a particular passage of Scripture that we will read and reflect upon. The passage for each day will be related to the theme of the week, which focuses on a particular area over which God is sovereign. The passage of Scripture will come from a different part of biblical canon—Monday: the Old Testament; Tuesday: the Gospels; Wednesday: the Psalms; and Thursday: the Epistles. Friday and Saturday will walk us through the sermon series texts in Acts and corresponding major texts, which will prepare us for the [sermon series](#) at Exchange for that Sunday.

- **Praying through the Mission of Exchange**

We are committed to the Mission of Exchange, because we believe it is the mission that God has given the church: we exist to be a people, who enjoy the glory of God, equip the people of God, and extend the love of God. Each day we will pray through one of the elements of this mission: by praising God for one of his attributes (enjoy the glory of God); praying for God to cultivate in us a particular virtue or asking him to bless one of the ministries of the church (equip the people of God); and praying for a need in the world or mission of the church throughout the world (extend the love of God).

- **The Commission to Serve**

Each day ends with a commission from God’s Word to serve the King by extending his love to the world. Just as we begin with the Scripture, we will end with Scripture, in order that our time is framed by God’s Word.

The Design of this Guide

The form and content of this devotional is purposefully designed to orient our souls, hearts, and minds to the immutable truth that *Jesus is King*. Therefore, every element is meant to serve as a movement within a symphony that sings the song of God's sovereignty. The following elements of the guide are intended to shape how we behold our Risen Savior and celebrate our Ascended King.

The Realms of God's Sovereignty throughout each Week

Each week will focus on a different realm over which God reigns (for an explanation of the images see Appendix 2, pp.83-87). The Call to Prayer and the Scripture Reading for that day is intentionally related to the particular emphasis for that week.



Week 1 God Reigns over Life and Death



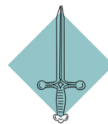
Week 2 God Reigns over Creation



Week 3 God Reigns over the Nations



Week 4 God Reigns over Suffering



Week 5 God Reigns over Sin



Week 6 God Reigns over Time and Possessions



Week 7 God Reigns over the Church



Week 8 God Reigns over each Soul

The Enthronement Psalms on Sundays

There is a particular grouping of psalms (Psalms 93, 95-99) that emphasize the Kingship of Yahweh. Each of the psalms is marked by the phrase, "Yahweh Reigns" or "Yahweh is Enthroned" (יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ) and have thus been labeled as "The Enthronement Psalms." Since the New Testament presents Jesus' salvific ministry (*Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension*) as his enthronement over the heavens and the earth, each Sunday will feature one of these psalms to reflect upon Jesus, the Victorious King.

Sermon Series through Acts

As the *Ascension* of Jesus Christ presses upon us to consider and celebrate his sovereignty over the cosmos, this theme will contribute to the current sermon series at Exchange Church in the book of Acts. Acts 2 will help us study the birth of the church. It gives us a beautiful picture of a unified people around what matters most. We will also briefly look at Acts 3 and get a picture of Christ that fills us with wonder and amazement. Throughout it all, God is sovereign and working out his good and perfect will for His glory and our good.

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 8:33-34

The Good News of the Ascension and Pentecost

It may seem to be a strange time to focus on the sovereignty of God, but perhaps this is the most appropriate time. It seems as if the world as we know it is becoming undone right before our very eyes. This last year of the COVID-19 global pandemic has drastically and dramatically altered everything about our lives. It has isolated us from one another. It has crippled the economy. It has taken hundreds of thousands of lives. It has brought governments to their knees. Although we knew it in our hearts before, this crisis has forcefully reminded us that the world is not as it should be, that the things of this world cannot be our security, and that this world as it is ultimately is not our home.

Yet, even as the world free falls into chaos, we are not without hope. In Christ Jesus we always have good news. The good news of Jesus' *Death* is that we are forgiven and cleansed from our sin, making us whole and right before the Father. The good news of Jesus' *Resurrection* is that we have the promise of eternal life in the new heavens and the new earth, where all the sad things of the world come untrue.

But what about now? What about this present time in between Jesus' *Resurrection* and ours, while the earth gives way and the mountains be moved into the heart of the seas? This is where the good news of Jesus' *Ascension* comes in. This oft-overlooked event of Jesus' ministry is essential to comprehending his ongoing mission to his people and our enduring hope in his glory.

At the end of his gospel (Luke 24:50-53) and at the beginning of the book of Acts (Acts 1:1-11), Luke records that forty days after Jesus was raised from the dead with his new resurrected body, Jesus ascended into heaven, where he sits at the right hand of God the Father (1 Peter 3:22). This event signifies Jesus' rightful exaltation and enthronement as King over the universe. And although God has always been sovereign over his creation (Psalm 24:1), the *Ascension* of Jesus means that all those who have put their faith in him may also participate in the glorious reign of the risen King—the one who is fully God and fully human, in whom heaven and earth are being reconciled (Colossians 1:19-20).

But if Jesus has ascended to the right hand of the Father how exactly do we experience the first fruits of the resurrected life found in Christ Jesus? It is important to realize that *Ascension* does not mean that Jesus vanished in the heavens abandoning us here on earth (John 14:18). Having been given authority as King over the heavens and the earth, Jesus promised his disciples that he would always be with them (Matthew 28:20). In fact, he tells his disciples

it is to their advantage that he goes to the Father, in order that the Holy Spirit may come to us (John 16:7), giving us access to his presence always.

This is where the day of *Pentecost* comes in, which occurred fifty days after Jesus' *Resurrection* and ten days after his *Ascension* (Acts 2). *Pentecost* refers to the long-awaited-for-day (Isaiah 32:15; Joel 2:28-32) when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Church. What this means for the Church is that *through* the Spirit we have full access to the ascended King, that we are transformed into the Living Temple in whom the presence of God is manifest, and that we are empowered to live out the Kingdom of God in this world as pilgrims in a strange land awaiting our Heavenly country to come.

Therefore, because Jesus has ascended to the right hand of the Father, he is exalted as King over the world and has empowered us to reign with him through his Spirit.

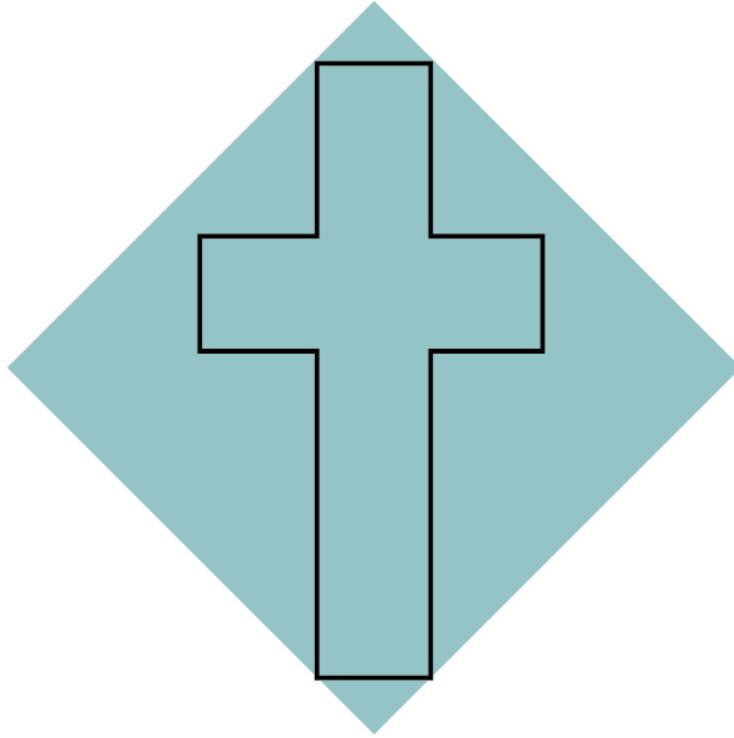
So, what does the *Ascension* and *Pentecost* specifically mean for us today, especially in the midst of this current crisis?

- ***Jesus is King and he is in Control***—While it appears that the world is collapsing beneath us, we can take heart that God is fully in control every aspect of our life today. This does not mean that we will not face difficulty or trial for this is not our home yet; but it does mean that in this world we can find our refuge in him who is the true and faithful King. Therefore, we need not fear but can joyfully trust that he is working all things together for his glory and for our good (Romans 8:28).
- ***Jesus is with You and for You***—For many, if not all, we are facing an unprecedented event that is demanding much of us at every level. We will struggle with doubt and fear. We will fall short. But thankfully, we have a King who knows exactly all that we are going through experiencing the fullness of death itself (4:13-14); a King who, after defeating death, is “seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven” (8:1); a King who “*always lives to make intercession*” for us (7:25). In other words, at every moment the Ascended King is faithfully and constantly praying for you and me, giving us his strength, his comfort, and his presence through his Spirit.

Since Jesus has ascended to the right hand of the Father and given us his Spirit, we have a King to celebrate, granting us a living hope in this life as we await the life to come. Therefore, no matter what you are going through today, take heart that Jesus is King and has overcome the world (John 16:33)—he has gone before you and goes with you because he loves you.

God Reigns over Life and Death

Week 1



We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.

Romans 6:9-10

God Reigns over Life and Death

Week 1 | Reflection

Imagine the difference between watching a movie for the first time and seeing it a second time. How does your vantage point change on the second viewing? You might still feel the drama or jump at a scary moment, but now you know the end of the story. Having seen the resolution, the anxiety or fear you had at first is eased. You can put these hard moments into proper perspective knowing that the story resolves for the good of the characters. So too, by knowing the end of our story, we can have proper perspective in today's anxieties or triumphs or pain. Since God has triumphed over death bringing life—as was demonstrated in the Resurrection of Jesus—our life today is leading us through a story greater than we could ever imagine. In this story, death is not our finale but the beginning of a glorious second act.

With this hope in mind, David could say with confidence, "My body also rests *securely*" (Psalm 16:9). Paul trusted God to bring him "*safely* into his heavenly kingdom" (2 Tim. 4:18). Both were convinced that something greater was happening beyond their death that gave them confidence for life. Can we say the same? Can we trust him with our death as well as our life? For us, death is not an eternal sting but a sweet release into the arms of the One who has sovereignly led us all of our days. We can find peace and security in knowing that God is in control of both death and life.

Amy Hardy



Monday | April 5

*Celebrate the King who reigns over Life and Death.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 56:13

For you have delivered my soul from death, yes, my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of life.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father who are in Heaven, Hallowed by thy Name"

Who in Heaven can be compared to you, God? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened to you, Lord? Truly, who in heaven do we have but you? And on earth who is your equal? In every single way that counts, you are not like us. You are complete when we are broken. You are constant while we are tossed about by the emotion and circumstance of this present moment. Thank you that you never change, and that in your case that's a very good thing. We love you. Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Old Testament: Deuteronomy 30

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Enjoy the Glory of God"

Attribute of God to Praise: *God is Life*

God, thank you that you are the creator of life. Thank you that you created all that we see and all that we ourselves are. Remind us that you are still in the work of bringing life to dead places, and that nothing is impossible for you. We pray that we would be a people who are easily able to see our Maker at work around us, bringing beauty from ashes, and life from death.

Commission to Serve the King: Romans 6:13-14

Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from *death to life*, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.



Tuesday | April 6

*Celebrate the King who reigns over Life and Death.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 34:22

The LORD redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).

Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"

Lord we fight for our own kingdoms with a fervor that never ceases to surprise me—our kingdom; our will. But you show us a better way. You trade our sad, failing kingdom for your own. Our wills traded in for the wise rulings of a King whose ways are above our ways and whose thoughts are better than my thoughts. Your kingdom will stand, ours is already falling. We submit with joy to your leading in our lives today. Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Gospels: John 5:19-29

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Equip the People of God"

Virtue to Cultivate: Faith

Lord, begin a new work of Faith in our hearts. We pray you would bring to life the embers of faith we once had in your goodness, your salvation, your sovereignty in the world. We ask for your forgiveness that we have allowed other things to take your place, to comfort us and console us in times of trouble. Thank you that you have promised to help us believe, even in this we are not left to our strength.

Commission to Serve the King: 1 Peter 4:10-11

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever.



Wednesday | April 7

*Celebrate the King who reigns over Life and Death.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 18:46

The LORD lives, and blessed be my rock, and exalted be the God of my salvation

Time of Gratitude

*"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.*

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread"

Thank you, Jesus, that you care about our daily bread. Thank you that over and over again in your Word you tell us to ask you for what we need. You are not a God who is unfamiliar with what it is to be human, or what it is to be in need of the physical things that sustain us. God you are good, and you do good, so we ask your mercy to provide for us this week. In each and every way. These are strange days, but you are still the God who sees us and knows just what we need even before we ask. We trust you today, Jesus. Thank you for giving us what we need. Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Psalms: Psalm 16

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Extend the Love of God"

Need in the World to be Restored: Death

We pray for our Exchange mission team in Costa Rica this week. We pray that they would see people today as you see them. We pray that they would wake up ready to share the Gospel today. That they would shine like lights in a dark place. That they would represent you well in thought and deed. Challenge them today Jesus to live like you and for you.

Commission to Serve the King: Galatians 5:13-14

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."



Thursday | April 8

*Celebrate the King who reigns over Life and Death.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 145:16

You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing.

Time of Gratitude

*"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.*

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us"

We have sinned, Lord. We know that and you know that. So, in your grace, have mercy on us, for we know that we cannot fix ourselves. Search us, O God, and know our heart. Try us and know our thoughts. And see if there be any grievous way in us, and lead us in the way everlasting. Jesus, we pray this for ourselves and for all your people. We thank you, God, that you care enough about us to continue the work of changing our hearts, and conforming us into the image of your son. Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Epistles: Romans 8

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Enjoy the Glory of God"

Attribute of God to Praise: God is Omnipotent

We praise you God that you are all powerful. As people with felt limitations, we cannot even fathom what this means but thank you that your power and might have no limits at all. You are able to do anything, at anytime, anywhere. We pray you would plant this truth deep down in our hearts as a body of Christ. We ask that this would change the way we pray as a people, that our hearts would be confident in You. Thank you that nothing is impossible for our mighty Father.

Commission to Serve the King: Titus 2:7-8

Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.



Friday | April 9

*Celebrate the King who reigns over Life and Death.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 54:4

Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"

The world is wrecked with sin. At each turn, a chance to fall into evil. But you already know that. Would you not only deliver us from the evil inside and around us, but also lead us away from temptation? We are failing in this. But you have already won the battle, Jesus. Show us your ways. Lead us in your truth. We will follow you with joy. Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Sermon Series: Acts 2:25-28

1. In this passage, how do you see the sovereignty of God in the face of fear?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Equip the People of God"

Ministry of the Church: Kid's Ministry

We thank you for the children that make up our EC Kids Ministry. We ask that even today, our children would know how deep and how wide and long and how high is the love of our great God for them. We pray that you would raise up our EC Kids Team and volunteers as we seek wisdom on when to phase in our full Kids Ministry. Help us love these kids as you love them.

Commission to Serve the King: Colossians 1:9-12

May you be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy.



Saturday | April 10

*Celebrate the King who reigns over Life and Death.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 30:3

O LORD, you have brought up my soul from Sheol; you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.

Time of Gratitude

*"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.*

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen"

You promise that the sad and bad and hard of this world will one day be made perfectly whole. But that day is not today. While we wait, we ask that you would still show us your kingdom, your power, your glory here on earth. Encourage our hearts as we walk roads that do not yet make sense to us. Remind us that we are pilgrims here, our home is another Country. Lead us further in and further up, Lord. In Jesus name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Sermon Series: 1 Peter 5:6-11

1. In this passage, how do you see the care of God in the face of fear?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Extend the Love of God"

Mission of the Church in the World: Pray for the [Southeast Asian Peoples](#)

Southeast Asia is home to 2,728 people groups and the world's largest Muslim population. Muslims, Buddhists, and animists are among the 7.7 million Southeast Asians who have never heard that freedom is found in Christ. Pray the millions of unreached people will hear and respond to the good news.

Commission to Serve the King: Romans 12:1-2

By the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

God Reigns over All of Creation

Week 2



He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Colossians 1:15-16

God Reigns over All of Creation

Week 2 | Reflection

There are two categories: creation and Creator. Scripture leaves no room for ambiguity about who God is and about who we are.

“I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no other God”
- Isaiah 45:5

God is undoubtedly in authority over His creation. I think that looking at the complexity of life on this planet makes it easy to believe in a Creator, but it is misguided to think that God has set creation in motion, and then abandoned us.

In the Scriptures this week, you will read that it is also God who sustains creation. All the processes that seem to “just happen” - the turning of the seasons, turning of the tides, turning of the planet on its axis - all occur under His authority. As the disciples discovered on a boat in the sea of Galilee, you will also see that Jesus is fully God, fully sovereign over creation.

The Lord is still reigning today! He will one day fully reveal this with a renewed heaven and earth, with no more crying or pain (Rev 21:1-7). These things should humble us before the Lord, draw us to worship, and move us to declare Him as Lord over our lives.

Kerissa Armstead



Sunday | April 11

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of Creation.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 9:7-8

But the LORD sits enthroned forever; he has established his throne for justice, and he judges the world with righteousness; he judges the peoples with uprightness.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Prayer for the Church

O God of all power and majesty, you created the heavens and stretched them out. You formed the earth and all that comes from it. You give the breath of life to all who walk on the face of the earth. Jesus, you conquered sin and death and now reign victorious. You are Lord; glory is due your name. The former things have come to pass; we now await the new things you will bring through the Holy Spirit. We rejoice to be gathered in your name. Alleluia! Accept our praises and petitions. *Amen.* [WSB, 660]

Scripture Reading from the Enthronement Psalm: Psalm 93

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "We exist to be a people"

The Gathering of the Redeemed for the Worship of the King

Pray for the gathering of believers for the worship of God. Pray that we may be filled with the Spirit in order that we may worship the Lord in Spirit and Truth. Pray that God will bless the worship of his people, that we may enjoy the glory of God, being fully satisfied in him.

Commission to Serve the King: 1 Timothy 1:17

To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever.



Monday | April 12

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of Creation.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 24:1-2

The *earth* is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the *world* and those who dwell therein, for he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the *rivers*.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Your Name"

Lord Jesus, we are constrained by our humanness, and from our birth you can take our measure. What we are and what we are not. But not you. You have no measure and no limit to your power, to your holiness. Yet you chose to limit yourself to take on flesh with all its constraints and walk among us so you could say with confidence that you are not unfamiliar with the burdens we bear. Yet you still did it all without sin. Even as you became like us, you were still all that we could not be. Thank you, Jesus, for living a life that we could not live and dying the death that was meant for us. In your name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Old Testament: Isaiah 45

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Enjoy the Glory of God"

Attribute of God to Praise: God is Good

God, we praise you that you are good and you do good. We confess that we think our definitions of goodness are better than yours. God help us reorient our mental processes to see how you both ARE the very definition of goodness, and you are actively doing good in our lives and in the world around us.

Commission to Serve the King: Romans 12:11

Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.



Tuesday | April 13

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of Creation.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 33:8-9

Let all the *earth* fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the *world* stand in awe of him! For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"

Lord Jesus, your kingdom far outshines the weak attempts at empire building our hearts and minds have produced. Yet we continue to fight for our rights to build them. Forgive us. Forgive us for the rebellion in our hearts that continues to spread the lie that we can do this on our own. We acknowledge with joy that we cannot produce anything that matters apart from you. We need you every hour. Thank you for being all that we cannot be today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Gospels: Mark 4:35-41

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Equip the People of God"

Virtue to Cultivate: Joy

Thank you God that you have made a way for us to have true, lasting, abundant, complete joy. We confess that we have put our hope of happiness in things that do not bring real joy. Jesus cultivate in us a deep well of joy that is not dependent on the things around us right now. Thank you that you will be faithful to do this.

Commission to Serve the King: 2 Timothy 4:5

As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.



Wednesday | April 14

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of Creation.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 89:11

The *heavens* are yours; the *earth* also is yours; the *world* and all that is in it, you have founded them.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).

Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread"

God, you have always provided for us in the past. Your faithfulness has been tested and found true at each turn. We are a faithless, forgetful people, but you are an utterly faithful, always remembering God who cares for us. Thank you that as you have always provided, you will continue to do so. We trust you for the needs of THIS day. We thank you that you are even now providing what is required. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Psalms: Psalm 104

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Extend the Love of God"

Need in the World to be Restored: The Environment

God, heal this broken earth. We confess that as stewards of the creation you made for us, we have not always done what was good and right to care for your world around us. We confess that in this way, as in many ways, our love of self has outweighed your ordering of things. Help us see how to engage the critical conversation of how to be responsible cultivators of our Father's World.

Commission to Serve the King: Colossians 3:23-24

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.



Thursday | April 15

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of Creation.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 90:1-2

Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the *mountains* were brought forth, or ever you had formed the *earth* and the *world*, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us"

Jesus, you have made provision for our sin by your death on the cross. We know that because of your work and by the power of the Holy Spirit, you can and will cleanse us from all our sin and all of our bent ways and bring us closer to you. Thanks Jesus that it's YOUR work and YOUR goodness that can do this—not our own attempts at conjuring up goodness in ourselves. We ask your forgiveness for the things we have done and left undone; for the things we said without consideration of the name we now represent. We thank you for being faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us, Lord. In your most gracious name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Epistles: Colossians 1:15-23

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Enjoy the Glory of God"

Attribute of God to Praise: God is Omnipresent

Thank you God that your Word says that you fill the heavens and the earth with your presence (Psalm 139:7-10). Thank you that you are somehow also a God who is near—we cannot go anywhere where you are not already there. Remind us of this when the loneliness and fear hovers near to us. Thank you that you are here now, with you and with all whom you love.

Commission to Serve the King: Galatians 6:9-10

And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.



Friday | April 16

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of Creation.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 8:1

O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the *earth*! You have set your glory above the *heavens*!

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"

Lord, we are unable to save ourselves. This has been proven without exception. On our own we will plummet further into the hole our own actions, and the actions of others has dug for us. But that is not your way. When we were flailing about helpless, you saved us and put our feet on the rock. In your sovereignty, you provide us a way out and into flourishing. Thank you, Father, that you do not leave us to our own foolish devices. Thank you for saving us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Sermon Series: Acts 2:25-28

1. In this passage, how do you see the sovereignty of God in the face of fear?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Equip the People of God"

Ministry of the Church: Student Ministry

God, bless the Student Ministry of Exchange. Thank you for the students that make up this ministry and for the incredible opportunity Exchange has to walk alongside them in these deeply formative years. Jesus, give Tyler & Kailey Gibbens wisdom and grace as they lead the students and volunteers who serve them. Thank God for the beauty of ministries like this one that disciple young believers to make much of Jesus.

Commission to Serve the King: 1 Thessalonians 2:16-17

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.



Saturday | April 17

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of Creation.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 108:5

Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth!

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen"

Father, from the day of our birth we've been building our little domains and asserting our power to rule them. You know our hearts. You see the tendencies and the well-beaten pathways towards crowing ourselves the king and queen of whatever it is we're doing and building. We're wrong and we're sorry. Yours is the kingdom. Yours is the power. It is your right to build our lives according to your kingdom. You have bought us with the blood of your son—you've called us your children and your heirs with Christ. By his grace, we choose your kingdom and your power, O Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Sermon Series: Psalm 23

1. How do you see the goodness and care of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today in the face of anxiety?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Extend the Love of God"

Mission of the Church in the World: Pray for the people groups in [North Africa and the Middle East](#)

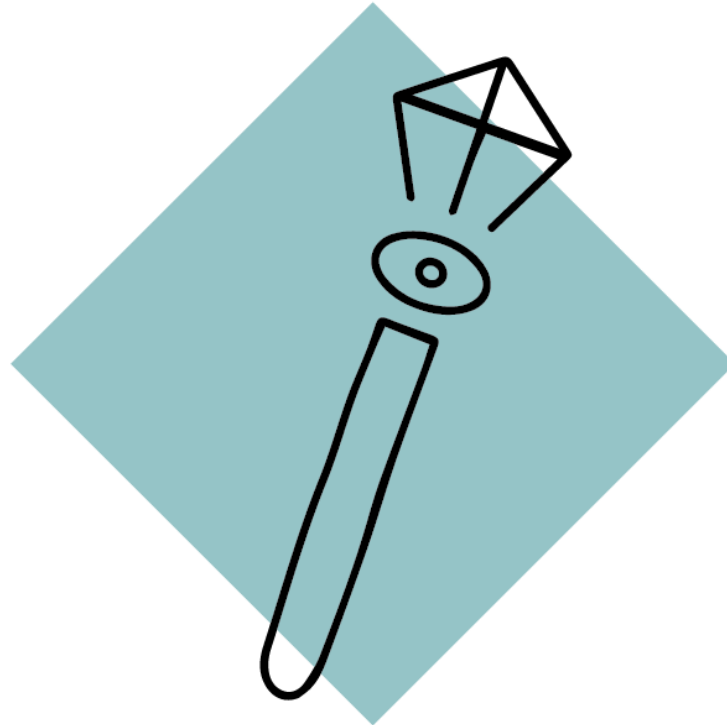
North African and Middle Eastern peoples live in a place where history blends with the modern world. Filled with unengaged and unreached peoples, there the church is engaged in a captivating resurgence unlike any other. Pray the millions of unreached people will hear and respond to the good news.

Commission to Serve the King: Romans 12:1-2

By the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Amen.

God Reigns over the Nations

Week 3



And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20

God Reigns over the Nations

Week 3 | Reflection

When the Church was born on the morning of Pentecost, the first miracle that the Holy Spirit empowered the followers of Jesus to perform defined the mission and purpose of the Church throughout history. In the hearing of "*devout men from every nation under heaven,*" (Acts 2:5) the Church declared to the world the mighty deeds of God and Christ's victory over the grave.

From the very beginning, our God longed to restore relationship with all of humanity. Through the willing sacrifice of His Son on the cross, God bridged the chasm that was our sin, extending His hand to deliver us from the death we earned in our rebellion against Him. This God, the Creator and King of all things, the champion over death, has entrusted us and empowers us with the task of advancing His Kingdom to the ends of the earth.

There is no way to tell whether the situation our world is facing has caused us to become more selfish or if it has simply revealed that which was lying under the surface already, called forth by our collective fear of uncertainty. But I invite you to consider, has this moment filled you with urgency? How has your witness for Christ been emboldened knowing that sickness, suffering, and loss of life have crept into the hearts and minds of humanity to the ends of the earth?

Our God is sovereign over all things and we can take great comfort in the truth that He remains on His throne, but what comfort do those who have not heard possess? To whom do they call if they do not know His name?

We the Church, the people of God, have been entrusted with a calling that continually directs our attention and focus outward. "Be His hand and feet, for the harvest is plentiful and the labors few; but praise God we have been given the Spirit to proclaim his Kingdom among the nations."

Kasey Channita



Sunday | April 18

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Nations.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 46:10

“Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the *nations*, I will be exalted in the earth!”

Time of Gratitude

“Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Prayer for the Church

We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. Great and amazing are your deeds, Lord God the Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the nations. Lord, who will not fear and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your judgments have been revealed. *Amen.* [WSB, 659]

Scripture Reading from the Enthronement Psalm: Psalm 95

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: “We exist to be a people”

The Gathering of the Redeemed for the Worship of the King

Pray for the gathering of believers for the worship of God. Pray that we may be filled with the Spirit in order that we may worship the Lord in Spirit and Truth. Pray that God will bless the worship of his people, that we may enjoy the glory of God, being fully satisfied in him. *Amen.*

Commission to Serve the King: 1 Timothy 6:15-16

Blessed is the only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. *Amen.*



Monday | April 19

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Nations.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 102:15

Nations will fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth will fear your glory.

Time of Gratitude

*"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.*

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Your Name"

Lord God, we thank you that you do not become less holy by taking on our lot—you just make everything around you holy as you go. And that includes us. You chose us to be in your family. Through you we may become children of God. You are conforming us into your image, all this to the praise of YOUR glorious grace, not ours. And you deserve every ounce of that glory, God. We give it to you with joy. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Old Testament: Isaiah 60

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Enjoy the Glory of God"

Attribute of God to Praise: *God is Peace*

God we praise you that you are peace. We confess that all of our efforts at coping have not brought us a lasting peace. Thank you that you not only offer a feeling of peace, but you ARE our peace. Thank you that in giving us your Spirit, we have access to a peace that passes all understanding that will guard our hearts and minds in Jesus.

Commission to Serve the King: Romans 12:9

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.



Tuesday | April 20

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Nations.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 22:27-28

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the *nations* shall worship before you. For kingship belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the *nations*.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"

Our Lord Jesus, our wills have made this world a disaster. Your kingdom come and may it come soon. We need what you have to offer us, God. Because the fixes and solutions we have to bind up this weary and broken world are not working. Our world needs a rest from its toil and labors that only kingdom with you as its rightful King can offer. So come, King Jesus. Fix what we've broken. We trust you to do this as only you can. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Gospels: Matthew 28:16-20

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Equip the People of God"

Virtue to Cultivate: Peace

God, fill our hearts with peace and form us into people who are peacemakers. We confess that even as Jesus has told us to be peacemakers, we often seek to divide and bring contention to our spaces. We ask you to bring peace first to our own hearts, and then through us to those around us. Bring the peace of God to the broken, tortured world around us as only you can do.

Commission to Serve the King: 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

May God make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.



Wednesday | April 21

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Nations.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 72:1, 17

Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the royal son! May his name endure forever, his fame continue as long as the sun! May people be blessed in him, all nations call him blessed!

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread"

We need your help, Jesus. Today we need your help as the world around us feels so broken. And the path set to our feet is more uncertain than ever. But you are the God who made us in our mothers' wombs. You knew us before we were born. And you see us and know us now. Our health is in your hands. The health of our families is in your hand. Thank you that we can place them back in your hands again today with confidence that you are good and you do good. We trust that you are providing what we need today. In your most gracious name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Psalms: Psalm 67

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Extend the Love of God"

Need in the World to be Restored: War

We confess that we live in a world we do not understand. Help us take the time to lament that many of the things we hear about and see going on around the world are so deeply broken and sad. We ask you to be the God of All Peace in the world you made today. Our Conquering King, would you make all things new, that governments and armies would bow their knees and their agendas to you. Jesus, we ask for wars to cease and peace to flourish in all corners of the earth.

Commission to Serve the King: Colossians 3:16-17

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.



Thursday | April 22

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Nations.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 47:8-9

God reigns over the *nations*; God sits on his holy throne. The princes of the *peoples* gather as the people of the God of Abraham. For the shields of the earth belong to God; he is highly exalted!

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us"

We are not good at this, Lord. Any of it, if we're honest. We do what we should not do, and we don't do the things we should. Forgive us. Humble us to remember just how much there is in need of forgiveness in our lives. Thank you for being the Just and Good King who is faithful to forgive the dark and twisted places. Thank you that you are all that we are not. Thank you that you give us your righteousness in exchange for our sin. We cannot do this on our own. Thank you that we don't have to, for you are with us and for us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Epistles: Revelation 7:9-17

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Enjoy the Glory of God"

Attribute of God to Praise: God is Unchanging

Thank God that your Word says that you do not change like shifting shadows (James 1:17). In your perfection, there is no need for variation or improvement. As you have always been, so you are today. As you have always been good, holy, just, kind, powerful, loving, faithful and true, so you are and always will be. Give us grace to hold on to your unchanging goodness when life feels ever shifting.

Commission to Serve the King: 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act *courageously*, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.



Friday | April 23

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Nations.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 82:8

Arise, O God, judge the earth; for you shall inherit all the *nations*!

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"

Lord we need your help. You lead us into places of flourishing, but to be honest, it doesn't always look like we think. A lot of times it doesn't look we think it should. Your deliverance doesn't always look like deliverance. When we find ourselves still in the battle, still in the struggle, we ask for your nearness. And that your nearness would be our good. You will not leave us or forsake us. Remind us why that is enough. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Sermon Series: Acts 2:42-47

1. How do you see the unity of the church in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Equip the People of God"

Ministry of the Church: Women's Ministry

Thank you God for the women of Exchange. Thank you God that you have brought a group of ladies from all ages and places and walks of life and made them a community. We ask for continued and growing unity among the sisters in Christ. Thank God for our leaders and their ability and willingness to lead the ministry to the treasured women of Exchange.

Commission to Serve the King: Mark 12:29-31

Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."



Saturday | April 24

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Nations.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 86:9

All the *nations* you have made shall come and worship before you, O Lord, and shall glorify your name. For you are great and do wondrous things; you alone are God

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20). Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: *"For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen" Lord, we are your servants, and it is to be our joy to work as a servant in your kingdom. We echo Peter in saying where else would we go? Only you have the words of life. Only in you is there life to be had. Your kingship is the only one that restores our hearts and this world. Retrain our hearts and our wills to bow with joy to what and how and where you lead—to want what you want. We lay down the lesser things—and they're all lesser things—for this better in every way kingdom you're building. We say together it's better. In your name, Amen.*

Scripture Reading from the Sermon Series: Ephesians 4:1-16

1. How do you see the unity of the church in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Extend the Love of God"

Mission of the Church in the World: Pray for the people groups in [Central and South America](#)

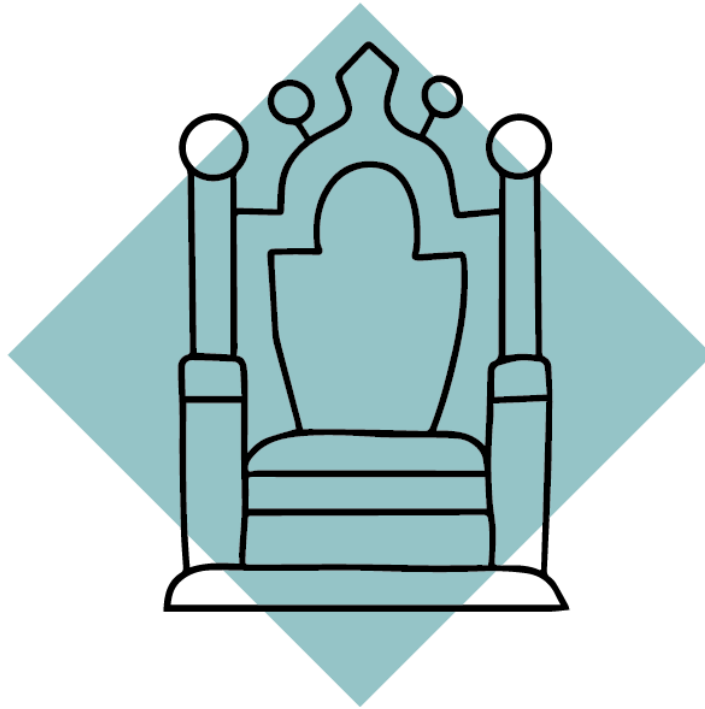
Even with their rich heritage of missions, the Americas are home to more than 550 million people living without Jesus. Help us exalt Christ, equip the church, and embrace the nations. Pray the millions of unreached people will hear and respond to the good news.

Commission to Serve the King: Ephesians 5:1-2

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

God Reigns over Suffering

Week 4



And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new."

Revelation 21:3-5

God Reigns over Suffering

Week 4 | Reflection

We are managers of all kinds of things. We manage people at work, we manage our home's and our kids' schedules, we manage our money, we manage our to-do list or our obligations at work. These are all good things and remind us how God has given us dominion over things in our world. Eventually though we are reminded that we are not quite given dominion over ALL things and that there are just simply things outside of our control. Nothing awakens us more to this than walking through a season of suffering. Instantly we realize we are not in control and quite simply, we never were. God uses these times to remind us we are broken people living in a broken world. Questions fill our minds while we wrestle with God over our sorrow and grief. *Why did this have to happen? Why did you allow this? Not me, this is for other people. Why can't you just fix this?*

All over Scripture we see God's people wrestle with Him as they try to come to an understanding of the suffering that He allows. Scripture offers us at least two handles as we grapple for answers. First, God promises His presence in the reality of our current suffering. He offers hope in Lamentations 3:22-23, "Because of the LORD's faithful love we do not perish, for his mercies never end. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness!" Our God faithfully walks in the fire with us and promises new mercies each new day. While we cannot control the situation or the outcome, we trust in the One who holds all of it in his hands, believing it is in his sovereign control and His purposes and plans for us are good. "How great is your goodness that you have stored up for those who fear you and accomplished in the sight of everyone for those who take refuge in you" (Psalm 31:19).

Second, Scripture also teaches us to look to things unseen, the future restoration of all things. Our suffering is not only in His sovereign loving hands, but by allowing this, he stirs in us a longing for a better home. We are reminded that we live in a fallen world and this world alone cannot and will not satisfy. Suffering has a way of making us ache for our future home, longing for the restoration of all things. 2 Corinthians 4 reminds us to not give up! "For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory." One glorious day we will see with our own eyes the restoration of all things, and we will be with Jesus in our eternal home, where all the sad things become untrue.

Katie Martin



Sunday | April 25

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of Suffering.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 6:2-4

Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am languishing; heal me, O LORD, for my bones are troubled. My soul also is greatly troubled. But you, O LORD—how long? Turn, O LORD, deliver my life; save me for the sake of your steadfast love.

Time of Gratitude

“Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Prayer for the Church

You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. You sent him into this world to satisfy the longings of your people for a Savior, to bring freedom to the captives of sin, and to establish justice for the oppressed. He came among us as one of us, taking the lot of the poor, sharing human suffering. We rejoice that in his death and rising again, you set before us the sure promise of new life, the certain hope of a heavenly home where we will sit at table with Christ, our host. Amen. [WSB, 460]

Scripture Reading from the Enthronement Psalm: Psalm 96

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: “We exist to be a people”

The Gathering of the Redeemed for the Worship of the King

Pray for the gathering of believers for the worship of God. Pray that we may be filled with the Spirit in order that we may worship the Lord in Spirit and Truth. Pray that God will bless the worship of his people, that we may enjoy the glory of God, being fully satisfied in him. *Amen.*

Commission to Serve the King: Romans 8:38-39

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.



Monday | April 26

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of Suffering.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 30:2-3

O LORD my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me. O LORD, you have brought up my soul from Sheol; you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father who are in Heaven, Hallowed by thy Name"

Thank you, Lord that before any of us were, you ARE. You have no beginning and you have no end. And with that comes the reality that ALL that you are has no beginning and no end. No end to your grace. No end to your love. We will never see the end of your goodness, your holiness, your justice, Lord. We love that you are our Father and you graciously share all things with your children. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Old Testament: Lamentations 3:19-26

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Enjoy the Glory of God"

Attribute of God to Praise: *God is Patient*

God thank you that over and over again your Word reminds us that you are merciful and generous, slow to anger, and rich in love towards us. Thank you that you are a God who bears with us, even when we are unbearable creatures. We confess that we do not follow you in this virtue, so we ask that you would continue to conform us to the image of your Son in this and all ways.

Commission to Serve the King: Romans 12:9

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.



Tuesday | April 27

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of Suffering.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 42:7-8

Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls; all your breakers and your waves have gone over me. By day the LORD commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"

Jesus, you're better than all that we lay aside in your name and for the sake of your kingdom. Our treasures and dominions are a small thing compared to all that we gain from a life fully devoted to following you. So, show us where we are holding on to our empires. The areas we still proclaim MINE. Let our kingdoms fade and die their deserving deaths. Let our wills and dreams go also. Your kingdom come. Your will be done. Here. And for eternity. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Gospels: Mark 5:21-43

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Equip the People of God"

Virtue to Cultivate: Hope

We confess that we often live as people who have not hope. We confess that we are quick to spiral into despair and chaos, rather than holding fast to the hope that you brought into reality by your death and resurrection. Ground our hope in you only, for that hope will not be put to shame.

Commission to Serve the King: Philippians 2:14-16

Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life.



Wednesday | April 28

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of Suffering.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 43:5

Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread"

Jesus, we thank you that you tell us to ask you for our daily needs—that you remind us in your Word that you take care of your people according to their need. So we ask you, Jesus, for your sustaining mercy and provision today for us as your people. These are deeply uncertain times. But you are the Waymaker. And you are making ways for us. Here. In our lives. In our bodies. In the air we breath. In our homes. By the jobs you've provided to us. By the help you give us through each other. Forgive us for not seeing you, not looking for you in our daily provisions. Reorient our minds to see you in the very bread we eat. Remind us that you are a God we can count on—because you're good and you love us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Psalms: Psalm 31

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Extend the Love of God"

Need in the World to be Restored: Suffering

We ask for your kingdom to continue to come and abide in every corner. We pray for those who are suffering today. We pray for those who are in bad health, deeply grieving, in want, or being persecuted for your sake. Thank you that we know that these light and momentary afflictions are preparing us for an eternal weight of glory that is greater than any of us could imagine.

Commission to Serve the King: 1 Corinthians 10:31

Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.



Thursday | April 29

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of Suffering.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 30:11-12

You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; you have loosed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness, that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever!

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us"

Jesus, we confess we use our own nature to excuse ourselves. We think if it's who we are, we have no power over it. We glorify our bent ways in the name of self-love, and we're sorry. But you have always shown a better way. Your ways, your goodness, your kindness, your faithfulness, your gentleness over our own. You call us to better. Thank you that you care deeply for our hearts, enough to go to those places and expose our sin. Humble us to welcome your exposure. Help us want what you want. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Epistles: 2 Corinthians 4:7-18

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Enjoy the Glory of God"

Attribute of God to Praise: God is Providential

Thank you God that you are working as you have always been, for your glory and for our good. Thank you that you have been at work since the beginning of the world and even before, writing a story so beautiful and so true that we cannot even begin to comprehend. Thank you that one day we will see the threads of your providence not in part but in the whole: a breathtaking tapestry of your goodness and grace throughout time and history to the glory of your name.

Commission to Serve the King: 1 John 4:7

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.



Friday | April 30

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of Suffering.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 119:28

My soul melts away for sorrow; strengthen me according to your word!

Time of Gratitude

*"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.*

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"

Lord Jesus, you say in your word that if we love you we will follow your commands. You say that if we are your people we will hear your voice and obey. Build in us a reflex to be quick in our response of "Yes Jesus!" when you lead us. Help us to know your Word deeply so we can recognize your voice easily and follow it faithfully. To know you is to love you, Lord. And we desire to know you in Spirit and in Truth. In your most gracious name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Sermon Series: Acts 2:42-47

1. How do you see the church as a sacrificial community in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Equip the People of God"

Ministry of the Church: Men's Ministry

Thank you for the men of Exchange. Thank you that you are working out a story of redemption and beauty in these men of God. We pray our men will know their worth comes not from what they do or cannot do, but from their identity as a son and coheir with Christ.

Commission to Serve the King: 1 Peter 5:8-9

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.



Saturday | May 1

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of Suffering.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Jeremiah 17:14

Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, for you are my praise.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).

Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen"

Lord, it's a very good thing that it's your kingdom and your power. Because the empires we build and the power we throw around are deeply ineffective to hold back the horror and evil and sadness and brokenness we see firsthand. Not to mention the things that we may never see that go on in the shadows. We only need to look around to see the limits of the power and rule of men. Whether in government, or in medicine and science or in the day to day social workings all around us. We don't have this. But your power is without a rival. Your kingdom is eternal...no beginning and no end. Nothing can stand against it. We are a vapor. You are eternal. We have a measurement. You are immeasurable. Our strength has definitive limits, but you are utterly limitless. There is nothing you cannot do. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Sermon Series: Philippians 2:1-11

1. What does this passage teach about the church being a sacrificial community?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Extend the Love of God"

Mission of the Church in the World: Pray for the people groups in [Central Asia](#)

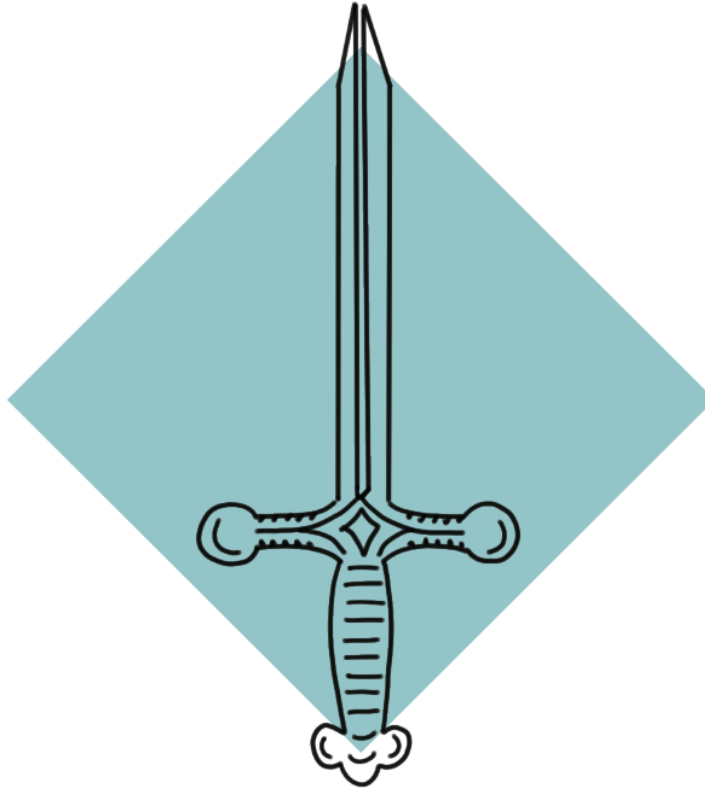
All of the Persian and Turkic peoples who call Central Asia home are unreached. Most Central Asians have no knowledge of biblical Christianity and are unaware that the gospel is good news. Pray the millions of unreached people will hear and respond to the good news.

Commission to Serve the King: Ephesians 4:1-3

Walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

God Reigns over Sin

Week 5



After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Hebrews 1:3-4

God Reigns over Sin

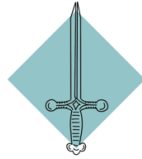
Week 5 | Reflection

Far too often the old nature of sin pulls me towards disobedience and the works of the flesh. Satan tries to convince me that I am a slave to sin. I identify most with Romans 7:21, "So I discover a new law: When I want to do good, evil is present with me." But we must not forget the power of Christ and his work: his death, burial, descent, his resurrection, and his ascent. In Romans 6 we are told that we are no longer enslaved to sin since we have died to sin in Christ (Rom 6:6-9). The body that was ruled by sin is now powerless. But often, far too often, sin rears its ugly head within me. So, what can we do? Romans 6:12-14 tells us,

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, so that you obey its desires. And do not offer any parts of it to sin as weapons for unrighteousness. But as those who are alive from the dead, offer yourselves to God, and all the parts of yourselves to God as weapons for righteousness. For sin will not rule over you because you are not under the law but under grace.

The answer, in short, is draw close to God and seek to please him. Easier said than done, but not when we look to Christ and seek to draw close to him. He is powerful enough to help us walk freely and his Spirit is quick to aid us.

Dougald McLaurin



Sunday | May 2

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Sin.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 32:1-2

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).

Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Prayer for the Church

O Lord, great God, all holy, Father most gracious, filled with mercy and steadfast love, we are embarrassed to come before you, for we have preferred the ways of this world to your ways, for we have rebelled against your wisdom and we have gotten into trouble, for we have rejected your fatherly guidance and have gotten lost altogether. To you belongs righteousness, O Lord, and to us confusion of face. O Lord, great God, all holy, filled with awe, Father, most gracious, filled with mercy and steadfast love, incline your ear to our troubles. Hear us when we pour out our sorrows before you. Forgive us, not on the ground of our own righteousness, but on the ground of your great mercy. On the ground of your great mercy in the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ. It is in his name that we pray, for he is our Savior and the mediator of the covenant of grace. Amen. [WSB, 89]

Scripture Reading from the Enthronement Psalm: Psalm 97

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

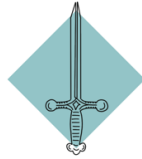
Praying the Mission of Exchange: "We exist to be a people"

The Gathering of the Redeemed for the Worship of the King

Pray for the gathering of believers for the worship of God. Pray that we may be filled with the Spirit in order that we may worship the Lord in Spirit and Truth. Pray that God will bless the worship of his people, that we may enjoy the glory of God, being fully satisfied in him. *Amen.*

Commission to Serve the King: Revelation 1:5b-6

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. *Amen.*



Monday | May 3

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Sin.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 32:5

I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. *Selah.*

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father who are in Heaven, Hallowed by thy Name"

Sovereign in all your ways, we thank you that we can trust you. All that is before us today, you already know. All that we will encounter, and all the places we will go, you have already gone before us. We trust that you are working out a story today that is consistent with who you are and who you have always been. Forgive us for still trying to write this story to our own liking. And we thank you for gently leading us in the ways that are better. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Old Testament: Jeremiah 31:31-37

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

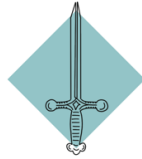
Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Enjoy the Glory of God"

Attribute of God to Praise: *God is Holy*

Thank you that you are pure and good in ways that we can never be. Thank you that you are unlike us, your holiness is not marred by the sin and the brokenness of the world. Rather, you make all around you holy and good and whole. Thank you for being holy and yet making a way for us decisively unholy sinners to be in your presence through the work of Jesus on the cross. Show us why your holiness is a reality to be treasured and celebrated even if we don't fully understand it.

Commission to Serve the King: Romans 12:10

Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.



Tuesday | May 4

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Sin.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 86:4-5

Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"

Thank you that you gently pry our hands open, taking what is not true treasure and replacing it with what is incorruptible and eternal. We confess our pride and self-sufficiency. We confess that we think we have this under control. But in your mercy you show us a better way—that our sin and twisted ways will find their answers in your holiness. The injustice, the sickness, the homelessness, the deeply sad hopelessness will find their rest in only in you. We cannot fix this. So come Lord Jesus, we're waiting for you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Gospels: Matthew 9:1-13

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

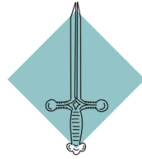
Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Equip the People of God"

Virtue to Cultivate: Holiness

Thank you that you have saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of your own purpose and grace. Thank you that this grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time. Help us seek to live lives that are holy not to highlight our own merit, but to shine a spotlight on the work that you have done and are doing.

Commission to Serve the King: Colossians 3:12-13

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.



Wednesday | May 5

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Sin.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you..*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 130:3-4

If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared.

Time of Gratitude

*"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.*

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread"

God, you are our portion. We thank you that you have said over and again that you withhold no good thing from us. We ask for contentment, and confidence in the provision you are giving us now. You have said that you are all that we need, so show us what that means today. In the midst of our confusion, in our loneliness, in our fear of the future, show us how the promise you give matter: that you never leave us or forsake us, that you have given us everything that we need for life and godliness, that you are our inheritance. We thank you that you are giving us all that we need. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Psalms: Psalm 103

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

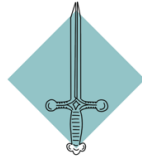
Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Extend the Love of God"

Need in the World to be Restored: Oppression

Thank God that you are a God who has always been concerned for the widow, the orphan, the oppressed, the unseen and uncared for among us. Will you champion those under oppression and raise up believers around the world to take up your banner of love and freedom for all peoples. Thank you that there is coming a day when all the wrongs will be put to right. Give us strength to be your hands and feet to the least of these.

Commission to Serve the King: Hebrews 12:1-2

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.



Thursday | May 6

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Sin.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 51:1-2

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us"

God, we have sinned and we are sorry. We rebel against you for the rightful place in our hearts to rule. Thank you for the work on the cross. Thank you for the ultimate once and for all atonement for sin. Thank you for the victory over sin that the resurrection grants us. We don't deserve it. We did not earn it. But you gave it to us while we were yet deeply in sin. Thank you for your gift of salvation. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Epistles: Romans 6

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

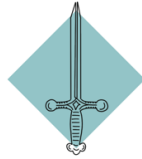
Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Enjoy the Glory of God"

Attribute of God to Praise: God is Righteous

You are perfect in all your ways. Thank you that each thing you does is right, that there is no darkness or shadows of wrongdoing in you. Thank you that unlike us; you do not struggle with knowing and doing right and wrong. We confess that while you are unable to sin, we do persistently struggle with sin. Thank you that you took OUR sin and shame on the cross and gave us HIS righteousness in return (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Commission to Serve the King: 2 Timothy 2:22

So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.



Friday | May 7

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Sin.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Daniel 9:19

O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name."

Time of Gratitude

*"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.*

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"

Jesus, tie us to things that breed faithfulness and obedience in our hearts. We are people who do not follow well. You lead us, but we go our own way. Tie us to the word, the Spirit, to each other. Bind us close to your side, knowing we are truly little children who need their Father to show them where to go. Thank you for being our Father. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Sermon Series: Acts 2:42-47

1. How do you see the hospitality of the church in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

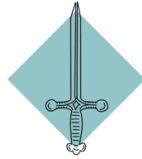
Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Equip the People of God"

Ministry of the Church: Marriage Ministry

Thank you for the marriages that are represented at Exchange. We pray that personal relationships with Jesus would flourish, and that the clear outflowing of that would be growing, healthy marriages. Thank you Jesus for the faithful shepherding of Rick & Beth McKoy over this ministry. Please give them continued strength, wisdom, and creativity as they seek to bring healing and hope to the couples struggling among us.

Commission to Serve the King: Jude 20-21

But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.



Saturday | May 8

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Sin.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 51:9-10

Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen"

Jesus we're not good at assigning glory to the right things. We give our praise and honor to things that don't deserve it. And we give you only our demands. But you are the ONLY one who deserves every breath we take to be poured back in praise to you- the one who made us in the first place. So we pour out our praise to the glory of your kingdom and your power, Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Sermon Series: 1 Peter 4:8-10

1. What does this passage teach about hospitality??
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Extend the Love of God"

Mission of the Church in the World: Pray for the people groups in [Sub-Sahara Africa](#)

Sub-Saharan African peoples have a growing Christian population, yet still nearly 1,600 unreached people groups remain in sprawling cities, barren deserts, rain forests, and tropical islands. Pray the millions of unreached people will hear and respond to the good news.

Commission to Serve the King: Romans 12:21

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

God Reigns over Time and Possessions

Week 6



Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all.

1 Chronicles 29:11-12

God Reigns over Time and Possessions

Week 6 | Reflection

If I'm honest, submitting to God's sovereignty fluctuates between a feeling of peace because I know He is able and trustworthy, and frustration because I want to be the one in control. There often is a mental struggle to put to death pride and selfishness, to take my thoughts captive and trust in the truth that He is God and I am not. I think this can be especially challenging when dealing with God's sovereignty over time and possessions. The idea of this "my time" comes to mind so quickly I didn't even see the enemy notch that arrow onto his bow. And thoughts like "I've worked hard to earn money. I went to school, did the homework, learned and practiced my craft, etc. I've put in the hard work and my paycheck is my due reward. I will now use this money *however I choose*, because it is mine" may seem like legitimate reasoning--but it is misguided. I have 24 hours of time to use today because God has *given* it to me- not because of any smart scheduling on my part. The mental ability to learn, the physical ability to actually do my job- *all gifts from God*. The fact that I woke up today and even took a breath is by the grace of God. He gives me life and He rightfully reigns over how I use the time and things He has *given* me. Louie Giglio reminds us "The goal of our faith isn't to settle into a nice comfortable job and a nice easy routine. The goal is to say, 'God, I'm available for whatever you want me to do.'" (*Goliath Must Fall*, 127). Does this mindset come naturally? Not for me! It is a daily (sometimes hourly) fight to reorient my mind and affections away from the usurper to the throne of my heart, myself, to the rightful King, Jesus.

Kimberly Penny



Sunday | May 9

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Time and Possessions.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 31:14-15a

But I trust in you, O LORD; I say, "You are my God." My times are in your hand.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Prayer for the Church

God of grace, we confess that we have elevated the things of this world above you. We have made idols of possessions and people and used your name for causes that are not consistent with you and your purposes. We have permitted our schedules to come first and have not taken the time to worship you. We have not always honored those who guided us in life. We have participated in systems that take life instead of give it. We have been unfaithful in our covenant relationships. We have yearned for, and sometimes taken, that which is not ours, and we have misrepresented others' intentions. Forgive us, O God, for the many ways we fall short of your glory. Help us to learn to live together according to your ways through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. [WSB, 103]

Scripture Reading from the Enthronement Psalm: Psalm 98

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "We exist to be a people"

The Gathering of the Redeemed for the Worship of the King

Pray for the gathering of believers for the worship of God. Pray that we may be filled with the Spirit in order that we may worship the Lord in Spirit and Truth. Pray that God will bless the worship of his people, that we may enjoy the glory of God, being fully satisfied in him. *Amen.*

Commission to Serve the King: Revelation 7:12

Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.



Monday | May 10

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Time and Possessions.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 9:9-10

The LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek you.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father who are in Heaven, Hallowed by thy Name"

Heavenly Father, we love you. We love that you are what you are and have always been so. You are holy and we are not. We thank you that in your kindness, you made a way for us to come back to you through your son Jesus. We are not worthy to represent your name, but before the foundations of the world you chose us for yourself, to be not just your servants, but sons and daughters, coheirs with Christ. We don't deserve anything from you, and yet you have given us everything. Thank you for being our Father. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Old Testament: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Enjoy the Glory of God"

Attribute of God to Praise: *God is Wise*

Your thoughts are not our thoughts. Thank you that your ways are higher than ours. By wisdom you founded the earth and by understanding you established the heavens. Thank you that you are both wise and powerful, and you are both perfectly good and infinite in your understanding. In every way we lack, you are wonderfully complete, and lead us into your completeness.

Commission to Serve the King: Romans 12:12

Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer



Tuesday | May 11

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Time and Possessions.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 65:9

You visit the earth and water it; you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water; you provide their grain, for so you have prepared it.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"

God Almighty, thank you for being the King that makes all things right, who takes what is broken and makes it new. Yours is a kingdom that brings life to dead places and light to darkness. We want to be a part of YOUR kingdom. But we know that it requires putting to death our own will to take up yours. So we do it with gladness in our hearts knowing that far better things lie ahead than anything we leave behind. May each moment on earth look a bit more like heaven as we joyfully bow our knee to what you offer. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Gospels: Matthew 6:25-34

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Equip the People of God"

Virtue to Cultivate: Wisdom

While we are called to be wise even as you are wise, we do not serve a God who is unfamiliar or unfeeling towards our frailties and inability to do and be what we should. Thank you that in your Word you says that if any of us lack wisdom we can ask you who gives generously to all without finding fault and you will give it to us (James 1:5-8). We ask you for wisdom today as you do what is set before you to do.

Commission to Serve the King: Ephesians 5:15-17

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.



Wednesday | May 12

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Time and Possessions.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 34:1-3

I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad. Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together!

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread"

God, we are your people. We need you to remember us as you always have. Will you give us the heart of children who KNOW with certainty that their Father will give them what they need? You know what provision is for us. So, we say yes to that. We say yes to whatever you have for us. We're not good at this, Lord. We don't trust you like we ought. Help us to see you providing and welcome it exactly how it comes. Build in us grateful, faithful hearts in response to your goodness. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Psalms: Psalm 90

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission Exchange: "Extend the Love of God"

Need in the World to be Restored: Poverty

You have promised to provide all that we need. Thank you for the opportunity to pray for those in poverty both near and far today. We pray that we would, as a Church globally, rise to the call to be the hands and feet of Jesus in the world. Provide for those lacking food, water, healthcare, access to services, and basic needs today. We trust you to work in the world, even when it seems bleak.

Commission to Serve the King: Matthew 6:33-34

Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.



Thursday | May 13 | The Day of Ascension

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Time and Possessions.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 37:3-4

Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness.
Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us"

Jesus, only because you are the one who goes before us can we forgive. We choose to forgive as you forgive—as you already have forgiven us. We cannot withhold forgiveness from others any more than you do for us. We're sorry that we do. May we forgive with open hands those who have sinned against us in big ways and small ways. You see our hearts. You know how hard this is. But we chose to walk in obedience even in this. By your Spirit, help us to forgive abundantly as we have been forgiven abundantly. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Epistles: 1 Timothy 6:6-12; Acts 1:1-11 for the Ascension

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Enjoy the Glory of God"

Attribute of God to Praise: God is Faithful

Your steadfast love never fails, so great is your faithfulness. It is new each morning (Lamentations 3:22-23). You have been perfectly faithful in the past, so you will be today, in this moment and in the ones to come. Thank you for being faithful to your promises even when we are unfaithful to ours. Remind us of your faithful care as we walk through this day.

Commission to Serve the King: 1 Peter 3:15-16

In your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.



Friday | May 14

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Time and Possessions.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 62:8

Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us. *Selah.*

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"

Lord, thank you for hearing us. Thank you that you don't ask us to go places you haven't already been on our behalf. The victory over sin and temptation isn't ours to win. You've done that for us already through your life and work on the cross...bearing our sin and shame and calling us your own. You know the end, and you do not withhold any good from us, nor is any suffering or trial wasted to you. Thank you that when we walk through the waters of whatever this season looks like, you will be with us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Sermon Series: Acts 2:42-47

1. What do you see about the worship of the church in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Equip the People of God"

Ministry of the Church: Small Groups

Bless the small groups meeting this week at Exchange. Thank you for the means to build community this way. Give the small group leaders fresh vision and excitement to shepherd those in their care. We confess that we are want to live life in isolation, so we ask you to help us live a life deeply dependent on you and the community of believers.

Commission to Serve the King: Luke 12:32-34

Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.



Saturday | May 15

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the Time and Possessions.
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 127:1-2

Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives to his beloved sleep.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: *"For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen"*
How precious is this steadfast love God! You give us refuge. You give us not just enough but an abundance of joy and peace and grace for the days and moments. You are the only source of life. And in your light only can we see what is true and bright. Show us how truly glorious this is. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Sermon Series: Romans 11:33-36

1. How do you see about the worship of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Extend the Love of God"

Mission of the Church in the World: Pray for the people groups in [East Asia](#)

East Asian peoples represent a fourth of the world's population. They live in a region that is home to four of the world's ten most populous cities. Among them are 213 unreached and unengaged people groups. Pray the millions of unreached people will hear and respond to the good news.

Commission to Serve the King: 1 Timothy 6:17-19

Set not your hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. Do good, be rich in good works, be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for yourselves as a good foundation for the future, so that you may take hold of that which is truly life.

God Reigns over the People of God

Week 7



And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Colossians 1:18-20

God Reigns over the People of God

Week 7 | Reflection

We will all encounter events that force us to grapple with the nature of our own frailty. Seasons and situations where we are forced to acknowledge the reality of our own lack of control. For just in a moment, our world as we know it can be upended. This leaves us, in our bewilderment, to exclaim the age-old interrogatives: What? When? How? Why?

After the crucifixion, Peter, the disciple that Christ proclaimed “on this rock I will build my church,” denies Christ with a coward’s cry sharper than the thrice-crowing rooster. In this moment, the advancement of Christ’s kingdom appears to come to a screeching halt, with no future in sight. But as we celebrated at Easter, we know that wasn’t the end of the story.

In Scripture, we read story after story where Christ’s Church was threatened. Nonetheless, in Christ’s ministry, resurrection, and continuing work of the Holy Spirit, his Church is established and promises that the people of God will persist until the end when God will make “all things new.”

In moments when we are quick to revisit those questions, may we begin asking, or better yet, remembering—Who. Before Christ made the proclamation to Peter, he asked him the question, “Who do you say that I am?” To which Peter replied, “the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

May we take solace and joy, knowing that in every present and future threat that assails the Church, our security rests in our Savior and his sovereignty. No person or circumstance will prevail against the people who are called by Him.

Justin Hendricks



Sunday | May 16

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the People of God
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 3:8

Salvation belongs to the LORD; your blessing be on your people! *Selah*

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Prayer for the Church

O God Most High! Everlasting Lord, mighty and lifted up! Grant to us your Holy Spirit, that in these words of Holy Scripture our hearts might be lifted up and our minds set on heavenly realities, that contemplating the reign of our ascended Lord we might long to be with him and enter into the joy of his eternal kingdom. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen. [WSB, 679]

Scripture Reading from the Enthronement Psalm: Psalm 99

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "We exist to be a people"

The Gathering of the Redeemed for the Worship of the King

Pray for the gathering of believers for the worship of God. Pray that we may be filled with the Spirit in order that we may worship the Lord in Spirit and Truth. Pray that God will bless the worship of his people, that we may enjoy the glory of God, being fully satisfied in him. *Amen.*

Commission to Worship the King: Romans 11:36

For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. *Amen.*



Monday | May 17

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the People of God
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 7:7

Let the assembly of the peoples be gathered about you; over it return on high.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father who are in Heaven, Hallowed by thy Name"

God of all creation, you are all that we can never be. And yet you take us as we are, while we were yet sinners in direct rebellion to your holiness you sent your one and only Son into the brokenness of the world to save us. We have done nothing to deserve this glorious intrusion. We still do nothing that would merit such a gift. So, we thank you, God, for your gift of salvation. We love you, Father. In the name of your Son, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Old Testament: Ezekiel 37

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Enjoy the Glory of God"

Attribute of God to Praise: *God is Gracious*

You are merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. If it were not for your indelible, unconditional grace we would be doomed to a life separated from you and left to our own devices. We confess that we often (if not always) take your grace towards us for granted in big ways and small ways. Help us live a life marked by this extravagant grace.

Commission to Serve the King: Hebrews 10:24-25

Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.



Tuesday | May 18

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the People of God
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 95:2

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).

Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"

Lord we fight for our own kingdoms with a fervor that never ceases to surprise me—our kingdom; our will. But you show us a better way. You trade our sad, failing kingdom for your own. Our wills traded in for the wise rulings of a King whose ways are above our ways and whose thoughts are better than my thoughts. Your kingdom will stand, ours is already falling. We submit with joy to your leading in our lives today. Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Gospels: Matthew 16:13-20

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Equip the People of God"

Virtue to Cultivate: Gratitude

We pray that your grace would lead us to deep wells of gratitude. Rather than a life marked by discontentment and reaching for that which we do not have, lead us to give thanks in all circumstances knowing that you withhold no good thing from us.

Commission to Serve the King: Colossians 3:1-2

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.



Wednesday | May 19

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the People of God
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 33:20-22

Our soul waits for the LORD; he is our help and our shield. For our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name. Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we hope in you.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread"

Jesus, we ask you for your provision and sustenance for our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world. We ask for sustenance and provision—for endurance as they suffer. It is impossible to imagine the lives of those planted in incredibly difficult places, so we lean on your spirit to intercede for us where we have no words, no idea of what to pray for them. They are your people, the fruit of your gospel. We know that you are with them, even as you're here with us today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Psalms: Psalm 89

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Extend the Love of God"

Need in the World to be Restored: Persecution

We pray for the persecuted church preparing to meet together around the world. We pray against barriers and persecution that would prevent them from gathering this weekend. We pray that the time they share would be edifying and encouraging as they study God's work and pray together. Thank you that we are not alone in America in our pursuit of Christ.

Commission to Serve the King: Philippians 2:3-4

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.



Thursday | May 20

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the People of God
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 34:3

Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together!

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).

Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us"

Jesus, only because you are the one who goes before us can we forgive. We choose to forgive as you forgive—as you already have forgiven us. We cannot withhold forgiveness from others any more than you do for us. We're sorry that we do. May we forgive with open hands those who have sinned against us in big ways and small ways. You see our hearts. You know how hard this is. But we chose to walk in obedience even in this. By your Spirit, help us to forgive abundantly as we have been forgiven abundantly. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Epistles: Revelation 21

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Enjoy the Glory of God"

Attribute of God to Praise: God is Immanent

We confess that we often live as people doing life on our own. This is never the case, as you have promised never to leave us or forsake us. Thank you that you are near to the broken hearted and that your nearness is our good. Build in us a reflex to look quickly for you, and to see you clearly.

Commission to Serve the King: Romans 12:14-16

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.



Friday | May 21

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the People of God
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 29:10-11

The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD sits enthroned as king forever. May the LORD give strength to his people! May the LORD bless his people with peace!

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"

We know you don't lead us places that are not for your glory and our good. But it feels that way. A lot. So show us where you are in these dark places. In these dark times. We echo the believers of the ages in saying we don't know what to do, but our eyes are on you. We can't do this on our own, we can't bear this on our own. Thank you Jesus we don't have to. You are the one who helps us. We don't have to be afraid. We love you Jesus. Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Sermon Series: Acts 3:1-10

1. How do you see the heart of Christ in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Equip the People of God"

Ministry of the Church: Worship Ministry

Thank you God for Jesse Gordon and all those who lead us in worship at Exchange. Lead them by your Spirit even as they lead us into his presence each week. We pray that their own time in God's Word and prayer would be vibrant and sustaining to them as they pour out so much on our behalf.

Commission to Serve the King: James 1:19-21

Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.



Saturday | May 22

*Celebrate the King who reigns over all of the People of God
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 33:21-22

For our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name. Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we hope in you.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen"

You are good—unchangingly good. And you do all things well. You are holy—entirely set apart and different than we are. Nothing in the ick and dark can taint the brilliant light that you bring. You are the origin and embodiment of love. Nothing we do can make you love us more or less than you do right now. You just give it and give it freely. Thank you. Your steadfast love, Jesus, extends to the heavens. Your faithfulness to a faithless people is as expansive as the entire sky. Your holiness and righteousness is like a mountain. Your judgments are perfect. You see us all, and you save us anyway. Thank you, Lord Jesus, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Sermon Series: Acts 3:1-10

1. How do you see the wonder and majesty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Extend the Love of God"

Mission of the Church in the World: Pray for the people groups in [Europe](#).

It seems impossible to reach the 99 percent of Europeans who don't have a relationship with Jesus. Yet we labor in joyful anticipation that the Holy Spirit will stir the hearts of Europeans once again. Pray the millions of unreached people will hear and respond to the good news.

Commission to Serve the King: 1 Corinthians 1:10

By the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, may you all agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.

God Reigns over Every Soul

Week 8



For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

Psalm 139:13-16

God Reigns over Every Soul

Week 8 | Reflection

The sovereignty of God over every soul. What does that mean? The day of Pentecost gives us a picture of the sovereignty of God over every soul. God created us for relationship with Himself for all of eternity. God also allowed us to have free will, to follow Him or to choose our own way. Sin broke the ability for us to live in close relationship to him, but he pursues us and has provided a way for us to come back to Him and have eternal life with Him.

God could have sent the Holy Spirit to the disciples quietly; instead there was a loud noise that drew a multitude together. He could have sent the Spirit to them at anytime and any place. He chose Jerusalem during the feast of weeks when there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven there, they spoke different languages. The Holy Spirit enabled the disciples to testify and the multitude to be able hear the testimony in their own language. The Spirit even gave the disciples what to say, God's sovereign message. All were amazed and perplexed.

We see a glimpse of mankind's struggle with God's sovereignty. Some in the crowd denied this was anything special. They certainly didn't give consideration that this was from God. They said the disciples were drunk. The religious leaders did the same with Jesus, not giving God glory or credit for the message Jesus shared or the miracles he did. It is still a problem today. God's word is twisted to suit our liking; his power is denied; he is questioned for not doing enough (what we would like done); His existence is denied with "there is no God" or other gods are put before him.

Peter tells them in Acts 2:23 Jesus was delivered because of God's definite plan and foreknowledge to be crucified, and they were the ones who turned him over to the Romans to carry it out. Many were convicted that day and 3000 believed the gospel that was given to them. There were those in Jerusalem that day who did not believe. God's plan and pursuit of lost souls did not end there. As the early church was formed we are told how they lived and what they did. Others outside of the church were drawn to them and they gave them favor. We are told day by day God added to their number those who were being saved.

We see God's sovereignty over every soul on the day of Pentecost as he drew nearly 3000 to himself. The beginning of the Church comes, providing a way for believers to live in community with each other and Him. God sent His only son to die as a sacrifice so that we could have life. He sent the Holy Spirit to be our helper in this life and show us truth. He invites the Church to join Him in sharing the gospel to those who don't know or believe in Him so that they too might be added to His kingdom.

Mike Harmon

This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

“The Lord said to my Lord,

“Sit at my right hand,

until I make your enemies your footstool.”

Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

Acts 2:32-36



Sunday | May 23 | Pentecost

*Celebrate the King who reigns over each and every Soul
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 33:18-19

Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, that he may deliver their soul from death and keep them alive in famine.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Prayer for the Church

Almighty God, who on the day of Pentecost sent the Holy Spirit to the disciples with the sound of wind from heaven and tongues as of flame, filling them with joy and boldness to preach the gospel, send us out in the power of the same Spirit to witness to your truth and to draw all people to the fire of your love, through Jesus Christ, our Lord who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.* [WSB, 711]

Scripture Reading for Pentecost: Acts 2

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "We exist to be a people"

The Gathering of the Redeemed for the Worship of the King

Pray for the gathering of believers for the worship of God. Pray that we may be filled with the Spirit in order that we may worship the Lord in Spirit and Truth. Pray that God will bless the worship of his people, that we may enjoy the glory of God, being fully satisfied in him. *Amen.*

Commission to Worship the King: Romans 8:14-17

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.



Monday | May 24

*Celebrate the King who reigns over each and every Soul
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 130:7

O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with him is plentiful redemption.

Time of Gratitude

“Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. 5:20).

Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord’s Prayer: “Our Father who are in Heaven, Hallowed by thy Name”

Lord Jesus, we are constrained by our humanness, and from our birth you can take our measure. What we are and what we are not. But not you. You have no measure and no limit to your power, to your holiness. Yet you chose to limit yourself to take on flesh with all its constraints and walk among us so you could say with confidence that you are not unfamiliar with the burdens we bear. Yet you still did it all without sin. Even as you became like us, you were still all that we could not be. Thank you, Jesus, for living a life that we could not live and dying the death that was meant for us. In your name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Old Testament: Ezekiel 18

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: “Enjoy the Glory of God”

Attribute of God to Praise: *God is Love*

You are the very essence of love—You are Love. We confess that we are quick to question your love for us and others, to even consider ourselves more loving than you are at times. Thank you that you love us with an everlasting, always and forever love that is not based on our behavior or character, but on your own.

Commission to Serve the King: Hebrews 4:14-16

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.



Tuesday | May 25

*Celebrate the King who reigns over each and every Soul
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 31:3-5

For you are my rock and my fortress; and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me; you take me out of the net they have hidden for me, for you are my refuge. Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"

Lord we fight for our own kingdoms with a fervor that never ceases to surprise me—our kingdom; our will. But you show us a better way. You trade our sad, failing kingdom for your own. Our wills traded in for the wise rulings of a King whose ways are above our ways and whose thoughts are better than my thoughts. Your kingdom will stand, ours is already falling. We submit with joy to your leading in our lives today. Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Gospels: John 10:1-30

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Equip the People of God"

Virtue to Cultivate: Love

We love (and can love) because you first loved us (1 John 4:10). Give us a greater understanding of what this even means, and that our confidence in your love for us would cultivate a greater love for you and for those around us. We confess that we often try to be loving in our own strength, and thank you that even in this you have not left us on our own. Make us lovable and loving creatures who mirror our Creator in your steadfast love.

Commission to Serve the King: Romans 13:8

Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.



Wednesday | May 26

*Celebrate the King who reigns over each and every Soul
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 34:22

The LORD redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread"

Thank you, Jesus, that you care about our daily bread. Thank you that over and over again in your Word you tell us to ask you for what we need. You are not a God who is unfamiliar with what it is to be human, or what it is to be in need of the physical things that sustain us. God you are good, and you do good, so we ask your mercy to provide for us this week. In each and every way. These are strange days, but you are still the God who sees us and knows just what we need even before we ask. We trust you today, Jesus. Thank you for giving us what we need. Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Psalms: Psalm 30

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Extend the Love of God"

Need in the World to be Restored: The Lost

Thank you that you came to seek and to save those that were lost. Thank you good Father that there is nothing impossible for you. There is no one too far gone to be reached by his mercy and grace. Thank you for making a way for all to come back to you through Jesus. We confess our lack of care for the lost around us, and we ask for a renewed vision to share the good news of Jesus with everyone we meet.

Commission to Serve the King: Galatians 5:13-14

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." *Amen.*



Thursday | May 27

*Celebrate the King who reigns over each and every Soul
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 55:22

Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us"

We have sinned, Lord. We know that and you know that. So, in your grace, have mercy on us, for we know that we cannot fix ourselves. Search us, O God, and know our heart. Try us and know our thoughts. And see if there be any grievous way in us, and lead us in the way everlasting. Jesus, we pray this for ourselves and for all your people. We thank you, God, that you care enough about us to continue the work of changing our hearts, and conforming us into the image of your son. Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Epistles: Ephesians 1:3-14

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Enjoy the Glory of God"

Attribute of God to Praise: God is Eternal

Give us a glimpse of what it even means to say that you are eternal. Impress in our hearts the enormity of the consequences of that reality, that all else will wear out and fade away, but you will remain. Thank you that you are the God who was, and is, and is to come; you is the beginning and the end. May these truths be a comfort to us in the midst of the temporal.

Commission to Serve the King: Titus 2:7-8

Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us. *Amen.*



Friday | May 28

*Celebrate the King who reigns over each and every Soul
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 71:22-23

I will also praise you with the harp for your faithfulness, O my God; I will sing praises to you with the lyre, O Holy One of Israel. My lips will shout for joy, when I sing praises to you; my soul also, which you have redeemed.

Time of Gratitude

*"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.*

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"

The world is wrecked with sin. At each turn, a chance to fall into evil. But you already know that. Would you not only deliver us from the evil inside and around us, but also lead us away from temptation? We are failing in this. But you have already won the battle, Jesus. Show us your ways. Lead us in your truth. We will follow you with joy. Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Sermon Series: Acts 3:11-26

1. What amazes you about the story of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Equip the People of God"

Ministry of the Church: The Preaching of the Word

Thank God that you promise that your Word will go out and not return until it has accomplished what it purposed. Thank God that your Word is accessible to us in the US. We confess that we do not treasure it as we should, and we take it for granted regularly. Give us new rhythms that make knowing and following your Word a priority. Thank you for Brian Kohout and Ed Martin, and all those who are charged with preaching the Word faithfully. Thank you for the time given to the preaching of the Bible each Sunday at Exchange. We ask for great wisdom and humility for those who preach.

Commission to Serve the King: Colossians 1:9-12

May you be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy. *Amen.*



Saturday | May 29

*Celebrate the King who reigns over each and every Soul
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 62:1-2

For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Praying the Lord's Prayer: "For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen"

You promise that the sad and bad and hard of this world will one day be made perfectly whole. But that day is not today. While we wait, we ask that you would still show us your kingdom, your power, your glory here on earth. Encourage our hearts as we walk roads that do not yet make sense to us. Remind us that we are pilgrims here, our home is another Country. Lead us further in and further up, Lord. In Jesus name, Amen.

Scripture Reading from the Sermon Series: Acts 3:11-26

1. How do verses 19-21 land in your heart today?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "Extend the Love of God"

Mission of the Church in the World: Pray for the people groups in [South Asia](#).

From the heights of the mighty Himalayas to the crystal-clear water of the Maldives, South Asia is both awe-inspiring and heart-wrenching. It has the largest concentration of non-Christians on the planet. South Asia is home to more than 500 million Muslims and is the birthplace of Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and Jainism. Pray the millions of unreached people will hear and respond to the good news.

Commission to Serve the King: Romans 12:1-2

By the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.



Sunday | May 30

*Celebrate the King who reigns over each and every Soul
Use this guide of prayer, in whole or in part, as the Lord leads you.*

Call to Prayer: Psalm 23:1-3

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Time of Gratitude

"Give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).
Take this time to give thanks to God for three (3) specific things from the last 24 hours.

Prayer for the Church

How blessed you are, eternal Lord, for giving us a Savior, conceived of the Spirit, born of a virgin. We bless you for his baptism, for the descent of the dove, the anointing of the Spirit, for his divine empowering, for his illumination by the Spirit of truth. We bless you for his ministry of mighty works and tender mercies. We praise you for his obedient suffering, for his sacrifice on the cross, for his rest in the tomb, for his glorious resurrection and ascension into heaven. How thankful we are, great God. To you be eternal praise. Blessed you are, O Father, that on the day of Pentecost Christ poured out the fire of his Spirit on his disciples and made them one body, that in this last day your Spirit is being poured out on all flesh, making us a holy people and a royal priesthood. [WSB, 709]

Scripture Reading from Pentecost: Hebrews 11

1. How do you see the sovereignty of God in this passage?
2. How might God be calling you into obedience today?

Praying the Mission of Exchange: "We exist to be a people"

The Gathering of the Redeemed for the Worship of the King

Pray for the gathering of believers for the worship of God. Pray that we may be filled with the Spirit in order that we may worship the Lord in Spirit and Truth. Pray that God will bless the worship of his people, that we may enjoy the glory of God, being fully satisfied in him. Amen.

Commission to Worship the King: Hebrews 12:28-29

Therefore, let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.

Though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:5-11

Appendix 1

Finding Our Place in the Story of the Gospel

Stories are an essential part of who we are as humans. At the most basic level, we are constantly engaged in a wide range of stories, whether it is streaming a tv series online, immersing ourselves in an engrossing novel, or even interacting on social media. Stories, however, are more fundamental in their significance and are more formative in their substance, for they give shape to how we understand the world in which we live, and move, and have our being. It is within the framework of narrative that our beliefs, actions, and desires are given meaning, which in turn reinforces the narrative we are living out day to day. It thus makes sense that we are so drawn to stories, because life itself is an immersive drama in which we take part.

Whether we realize it or not, the world is constantly offering a variety of powerful stories that attempt to sell us a vision of the “good life” in order to form the way we believe, act, and love. For example, the narrative of consumerism tells us that the “good life” is characterized by having more and more possessions, which not only informs our understanding of happiness, but forms the way we live our lives. If we are not careful, we may be living out a story offering cheap happiness, while only giving despair.

But by his grace, God has revealed the true story of our lives through his Word that counteracts the narratives the world has to offer. In Scripture, we are presented with the meta-narrative arc of Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Restoration: In the beginning, God created a good world, in which humanity, made in his image, was to represent the gracious reign of the Creator by causing the world to flourish and filling the world with his glory (Creation). Yet, the very creatures who were to represent God’s gracious rule, rebelled against their Creator, wreaking havoc on themselves and on the world (Fall). Because of this rebellion, humanity’s relationship with God, the world, and each other, is broken, leaving all of creation groaning for reconciliation with the Creator. But God in his rich mercy, sent his only Son to live out the story we could not, bringing reconciliation through his life, death, and resurrection (Redemption). Those who place their faith in Jesus Christ and are being formed by this story of the Gospel, faithfully proclaim the glory of God as they wait for the Creator and Redeemer to make all things new (Restoration).

The true story of the Gospel revealed in Scripture is the “good life” offered to us. It is in this grand story in which our individual stories make sense and find their proper place; and inasmuch as we immerse ourselves in this ultimate story, we faithfully bear witness to the

author and finisher of our faith. Yet, to immerse ourselves in this story does not mean to merely assent to the basic premises of Scripture (though that is essential), but to fully embody these truths in how we live our lives. We embody these truths in and through the daily habits (such as prayer, reading scripture, witnessing), weekly practices (such as the gathering as the corporate body of Christ to worship), and yearly rhythms (such as observing the seasons of Christmas and Easter). This is why as a church we are committed to these Gospel-shaped rhythms to form us as a people who exist to be a people who enjoy the glory of God, equip the people of God, and extend the love of God. We pray and hope that by God's grace and for his glory this guide will contribute to the alignment of our hearts, souls, and minds that we may live out the story of the Gospel to the glory of Christ, our King.

"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know—this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

"The Lord said to my Lord,

"Sit at my right hand,

until I make your enemies your footstool."

Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Acts 2:22-36

Appendix 2

Explanation of Images

The following are (somewhat) brief explanations of how the images correspond to the weekly theme. Admittedly, some correspond more “naturally” than others, but each image has a particular reason, rationale, or rhyme that will hopefully help shape our worship of the King. All the artwork was done by the very talented, Alex Manring.



Week 1 | The Cross **God Reigns over Life and Death**

Given its explicit reference to Jesus’ death, the cross may seem to be an unusual symbol for royalty and kingship. In fact, in the first century, the cross was such a well-known device for torture and death, that Cicero, a Roman philosopher and statesman, once said it was unbecoming for a Roman to even speak of it. But for the New Testament, the cross is presented as the place where Jesus is enthroned as King, where he is “lifted up” (John 12:32), for it is the place where Jesus has overthrown the worst of enemies: sin and death. In John 19, Jesus is given a royal robe, a crown of thorns, and a sign that proclaims that he is King. Given the context, all these gestures seem to be a mockery of Jesus and his claim to be the Son of God. And while this may be the intention, the actual irony is that Jesus is presented as the one true King of God’s Kingdom, through his death and resurrection, in which he is the conquering hero who has conquered death itself. Therefore, the cross is a perfect symbol to represent God’s reign over life and death.



Week 2 | The Crown **God Reigns over Creation**

The crown has obvious royal connotations, but what does it have to do with creation? And why the image of a crown in relation to the created order? First of all, in the ancient world, the divine being who was responsible for creation was considered to be the king, sovereign over all the gods. In this sense, creation imagery is closely tied to royal imagery throughout the ancient world, and specifically in the Bible. We can see this link between creation and kingship in Psalm 93, where it says, “Yahweh reigns; he is robed in majesty; Yahweh is robed; he has put on strength as his belt. Yes, the world is establish; it shall never be moved. Your throne is established from of old; you are from everlasting” (vv.1-2). Second, in the creation account of Genesis 1-2, humanity has been called the “crown of creation,” since they are made in the image of God, tasked to rule over his created order. In Psalm 8, it says that God has “crowned him with glory and honor” (v.5). Of course, humanity failed (and fails) in their royal task, bringing about chaos instead of order. Therefore, as the Son of God became the

Son of Man, taking on the full royal responsibility given to the first Adam, he reconciles everything in heaven and earth by his blood. In fact, it is “by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him” (Colossians 1:16). Through creation and redemption, Jesus is thus crowned as Lord over the heavens and the earth, and all that is in them.



Week 3 | The Scepter **God Reigns over the Nations**

The scepter is an ornamented staff that symbolized the sovereignty of a ruler. It thus became an image associated with the judgment of the king, especially over and against his enemies. In Scripture, it says that God rules with a scepter (Psalm 45:6, 110:2), and with a rod judges the nations (Psalm 2:9). Psalm 2 vividly portrays God’s judgment over the nations who rage against him. Yet, it is his Messiah, the Anointed One, the true King, whom Yahweh has set over all nations, warning them to be wise and serve Yahweh with fear and rejoice with trembling (2:10-11). It is all the more remarkable, even a mystery as Paul says (Ephesians 3:6), that in the Messiah’s rule the nations will be grafted in (Romans 11:17), taking part in the gathering of the redeemed. To this end, Jesus charges his followers to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20), which will lead to the Kingdom of God being comprised of a “great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb” (Revelation 7:9).



Week 4 | The Throne **God Reigns over Suffering**

The throne is the ceremonial seat upon which a king sits, representing his rule and place of authority. So, what might this have to do with suffering? While such an image may carry a sense of a sovereign, detached from those of his royal subjects, especially those marginalized in society, the image of Jesus sitting at the right hand of the Father is a powerful picture of his empathetic intercession for his beloved in all situations throughout all time (Romans 8:31-39). In particular, the author of Hebrews reflects upon this very concept. He says, “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” (4:15-16). We are able to draw near to this throne with confidence, because Jesus Christ, the one who has fully embraced and entered into all our suffering and knows it even better than we do, “is seated at the right hand of the throne of God” (8:1), always making intercession for us. Therefore, any and all suffering we experience, we have a

King who became an outcast on our behalf, who sits on the throne praying for us now, and will one day, make “all the sad things in this world come untrue.”



Week 5 | The Sword God Reigns over Sin

The sword symbolizes the warfare that the King wages against his enemies. In Scripture, sin is the open rebellion against God and his kingdom. Therefore, the sword represents God’s righteous judgment against all sin, transgression, iniquity, and idolatry. And just as Jesus Christ takes on the full righteous judgment of God on our behalf, God is both the just King and the justifying Savior who makes us right with him (Romans 3:23-27). At the same time, the sword is directly associated with the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17), which is “living and active, sharper than any two-edge sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints, and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). In this sense, the Sword of the Spirit (or the Word of God) is that which exposes our rebellion and thus becomes a surgical instrument to put to death in us that is in rebellion to God. Therefore, the sword of the King not only brings righteous judgment, but also becomes the means by which we are made righteous before the judge, through the sanctification of the Holy Spirit.



Week 6 | The Mountain God Reigns over Time and Possessions

Although a mountain may not have overt connotations to royal imagery to modern worldview, in the ancient world it has direct associations with a king, and even more so, the divine. The ancient world had what could be called a “theological geography,” in which to “go up,” meant something significant: it was not merely a statement of upward physical movement, nor was it merely a metaphor—it was an actual approach to the heavenly realm. An obvious corollary to this reality is that mountains, specifically that of the Holy Mountain (Isaiah 11:9; 56:7), symbolized one’s approach, ascent to God himself. Hence, Psalm 24, asks the question of questions for all humanity: “Who shall ascend the mountain of Yahweh? And who shall stand in his holy place?” The New Testament gives the resounding answer of Jesus of Nazareth, who is the one who ascended to the right hand of the Father. For this reason, the mountain symbolizes the *Ascension* of Jesus Christ, which is commemorated during week 6 of this season. In regard to God’s reign over time and possessions, a mountain represents that which is ancient, even timeless—to stand before a mountain, one should feel small. Psalm 90, which is a poetic exposition on humanity’s finitude of time and work, reflects upon the timelessness of God in relation to mountains: “Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God” (vv.1-2).



Week 7 God Reigns over the Church

The cup is meant to represent the royal cup of the king, symbolizing feasting and celebration, along with the fellowship with all those who share his table. In the New Testament, Jesus also refers to the cup that he is to drink as his suffering and death on the cross (Matthew 20:22–23), which is to be shared with all those who desire to follow him in his life and resurrection. Significantly, the cup of Jesus Christ’s passion, the “cup of the new covenant” (Luke 22:20) is that which is commemorated in the Lord’s Supper, to “proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes” (1 Corinthians 11:26). It is for this wide ranging network of associations with the cup—the cup of God’s wrath taken by Jesus Christ to grant us access to the fellowship with God; the cup of the New Covenant; the cup of the Lord’s supper taken by the Church—that this image is used to represent God’s reign over the Church.



Week 8 God Reigns over each Soul

There does not seem to be any direct correlation between royal imagery and fire. The rationale for this image is the obvious connection to the event of Pentecost, when “suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:2–4). However, there is a clear connection to this event and the empowerment the Spirit provides for the Church to live out the Kingdom of God throughout the world. And while fire is associated with the final judgment, it is the prayer of the Church and the desire of God our Savior that every soul “be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4). For this reason, let the Church be faithful to proclaim the Gospel throughout all of creation, that the King may be celebrated and worshipped with all the glory due his name.

Appendix 3

Praying the Lord's Prayer

In the Gospel of Matthew, the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray. Jesus responds with what is known as the "Lord's Prayer" (Matthew 6:9-13). In many ways, it is a comprehensive prayer, spanning from the desire to see God's Kingdom fully manifest to the basic need of our daily provision of bread. For this reason, our church fathers, Augustine, Martin Luther, and John Calvin utilized this "prayer of prayers" as a guide for their prayers to God. Following this wise and humble approach, we have provided a basic framework by which you may pray through the Lord's Prayer. The following takes each line of the Lord's Prayer and provides a particular focus along with a key passage to help guide your time in prayer. We have also provided an example prayer for each line.

*Our Father who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Your Name
Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will be Done, On Earth as it is in Heaven
Give us This Day our Daily Bread
Forgive us our Trespases as we Forgive those who Trespass Against Us
Lead us not into Temptation but Deliver us from Evil
For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, the Glory, Forever and Ever. Amen*

"Our Father who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Your Name"

Focus: Humbly and confidently address God as our Father, recognizing that this relationship is only possible through the atoning work of His Son Jesus Christ. Glorify God by revering His Name above all Names.

Passage to Pray: Ephesians 1:3-6; John 1:9-13; Galatians 4:4-7; Romans 8:12-17; Proverbs 3:11-12; 1 John 3:1-3; Isaiah 6:1-13; Psalm 97

"Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will be Done, On Earth as it is in Heaven"

Focus: Declare your desire that God's Kingdom would come, asking that God would manifest his reign in every part of the world and every part of our soul, where we see every type of sin, injustice, and evil. Pray that by his grace God would align our will to His, that we would see the uniting of heaven and earth, and that by the power of the Spirit we would contribute to the coming of his Kingdom.

Passages to Pray: Psalm 145:1-3; Zechariah 14:9; Psalm 93; Matthew 26:36-46; Luke 12:32-34; Colossians 3:1-4; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Revelation 21:1-5a

“Give us This Day our Daily Bread”

Focus: Pray that God would provide all that you need for the day, recognizing your absolute dependence upon Him for all things at all times. Pray also for God’s provision of others, since we are to pray for “our” daily bread.

Passages to Pray: Philippians 4:6-7, 19; Psalm 34; Psalm 104; 1 Peter 5:6-7; Matthew 6:26; Matthew 7:7-11; 1 Timothy 2:1; Ephesians 6:18

“Forgive us our Trespases as we Forgive those who Trespass Against Us”

Focus: Confess your sins that you have sinned against God in thought, word, and deed; for what you have done and for what you have left undone. In light of God’s forgiveness granted to you because of the atoning work of Jesus Christ, offer forgiveness for those who have sinned against you.

Passages to Pray: Psalm 51:1-4; Psalm 103:8-13; 1 John 1:5-10; Daniel 9:16-19; Colossians 3:12-13; Matthew 6:14-15; Ephesians 4:1-2, 31-32

“Lead us not into Temptation but Deliver us from Evil”

Focus: Pray for God’s protection in your life from evil in this world, from the evil within, and from the evil one. Also take time to pray for God’s protection in the lives of others.

Passages to Pray: 1 Corinthians 10:12-13; Psalm 20; Psalm 23; Isaiah 41:10-13; Ephesians 6:10-18; 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5; James 1:12-15

“For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, the Glory, Forever and Ever. Amen”

Focus: Proclaim, rejoice, and take heart in the truth that the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory belong to God. Glorify God for who He is and for what He does. With your “amen” submit all your requests to God, trusting in His infinite wisdom that He will respond according to His glory and for our ultimate good.

Passages to Pray: 1 Chronicles 29:10b-13; Psalm 27; Job 26:7-14; Isaiah 40:12-17; Ephesians 1:17-21; Romans 11:36; Psalm 106:48; Revelation 7:9-12

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ὅτι ἐξ αὐτοῦ καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα
αὐτῷ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας
ἀμήν.



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