



The Eager Love of God

PRAYER WEEK GUIDE 2020
GRANDVIEW CHURCH

Rowan Williams comments on the *Eleousa* icon: “If we begin, as most of us tend to, with a notion that God stands at a distance waiting for us to make a move in his direction, this image should give us something of a shock. The Lord here does not wait, impassive, as we babble on about our shame and penitence, trying to persuade him that we are worth forgiving. His love is instead that of an eager and rather boisterous child, scrambling up on his mother’s lap, seizing handfuls of her clothing and nuzzling his face against hers, with that extraordinary hunger for sheer closeness that children will show with loving parents.” (from *Ponder These Things*)

Prayer week is an opportunity to pause from all of the frantic activity and anxiety of our productivity-oriented world and remember what it means to be transformed by the intimacy that God offers.

Invitations for Prayer Week

24 hour prayer chain (Monday evening- Tuesday evening)

Join in our 24 hours of prayer! If you did not have a chance to sign up on the list, no matter - choose an hour and join in. You can pray right where you are, or make plans ahead of time to meet with the prayer companions of that hour. Either way, as you begin, pray for those who went before you, pray for those who are praying with you, and as you finish, pray for those who will be praying next. (An e-mail will be sent out from Celeste with the list of times and of those who are praying.)

Evening prayer

Evening prayer is held in the lane suite of the Spray-Guenter household, on Monday-Thursday and Sunday evening, at 8:30PM. Walk to the backyard to access the garden suite. 2022 E 3rd Ave.

Preparing for your time of prayer:

- ❖ Make sure the time is cleared on your calendar. Turn off your phone and computer. Decide what forms of prayer you are drawn to so that you can make preparations.
- ❖ You may be drawn to fast for a meal before your prayer time.
- ❖ You may invite someone to join you.
- ❖ Create a space that is conducive to the form of prayer.

What to pray for (remember prayer is dialogue: listening and speaking):

- ❖ Our city and nation: Places you long to see transformed by Christ.
- ❖ Our vision, calling, and community at Grandview.
- ❖ Our partner organizations: Kinbrace, MOMS, Stillpointe, Co:Here, Salsbury, JustWork, the Potter's House, C.L.E.A.N. Break Laundry Program, Crossroads Community Meal, Eastside Story Guild.
- ❖ Our Global Workers: The Nachos, The McEllroys, The Ndabarushimanas, and Jasmine Kwong.
- ❖ Our pastors, church staff and council.
- ❖ Individuals or situations that are on your heart.

Ideas for how to spend your time of prayer:

Write and pray a psalm. Many of the psalms include remembering God acted in their story. This leads to elements of praise of petition. Write a personal psalm that has elements of remembering, praise, and petition.

Go on a prayer walk. Begin by praising the Creator for elements of creation that you see. Move into dialogue and prayer for GCBC, individuals on your heart, our city and world. You may like to come up with a simple blessing that you pray over the people and places you pass or ask God how to pray for those places and people.

Paint or draw your prayer. Draw a simple outline of two open hands to represent God's hands. Prayerfully draw in the hands people, places, or situations that you would like to place in God's hands in prayer.

Journal your prayers. Write your prayer as a letter to God in your journal. Listen for God's response and record that as well. When listening for the response first simply write what comes to mind and your heart. You can discern afterwards if this listening seems to be in line with God's character revealed in scripture.

Pray with a group. Sometimes prayer is easier with a group. Ask some others to join you for your time of prayer.

Pray with children. Create prayer flags with children. Cut triangles out of colourful paper and draw or write words on each triangle for your prayers. Attach them to a string and hang up your prayers somewhere to remind you and the children to keep holding them up in prayer and watching for how God may answer.

Resting Prayer: Find a comfortable space, light a candle and put on some music that is worshipful for you. Sit with God, rest in his light and love. You may spend the time in silence.

Receiving God's Love in Christ

Henri Nouwen writes that God's words to Jesus, "You are my beloved," reveal the most intimate truth about all human beings." (from *Life of the Beloved*) God is saying to you: "You are my beloved."

Can you receive these words today, from your divine Father/Mother: "You are my beloved, with you I am well pleased."

It is hard to receive these words in a culture filled with voices that shout: you aren't good enough, you aren't wealthy enough, you aren't successful enough or beautiful enough. Nouwen says that these words, these feelings, "as strong as they may be, are not telling you the truth about yourself. The truth, even though you may not feel it right now, is that you are the chosen child of God, precious in God's eyes. You are God's beloved."

You can receive these words as a blessing. It doesn't rely on your talents, it doesn't rely on how others have treated you or spoken about you. It relies on something stable, on God and on God's intention in creating you, to create something beautiful.

Receive these words from God in this moment. Close your eyes and open your hands and receive these words: "You are my beloved, with you I am well pleased."