



**First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer – February 2012**

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.* Philippians 4: 6 ESV

Welcome to our February 2012 first Friday Call to Prayer. Our aim is to provide you with teaching that we trust will enhance your prayer experience and will be an encouragement to you. We will also provide you with praise items and prayer requests coming from within ANiC and the Anglican Communion worldwide.

<p>We encourage you to set aside <b>the first Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup></b>, as a day of prayer and fasting for the Church in these critical days, ideally gathering with other believers in your parish or region for corporate prayer at some point in the day</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Prayer Quotes</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">“I would rather teach one man to pray than ten men to preach.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Charles Spurgeon 1834-1892</p>
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**The Jehoshaphat Agenda**

Into the life of every Christian believer, every parish family, and every fresh movement of God there comes a time when circumstances seem paralyzingly difficult. I am not referring here to the hard times that are stressful to walk through but where God’s will is clearly shown for us to follow. No, I’m thinking of adverse situations which arise where the solutions appear impossible, if they can be discerned at all. Being able to determine the will and direction of God in the midst of such crisis and turmoil is challenging to say the least. Many of our parishes are facing such trying times as they seek the Lord for viable worship facilities, or even their future survival. Throughout our orthodox Anglican movement, there are difficult situations where the way forward is less than clear.

Are there prayer principles that we can learn from the Scriptures that will shed some light on this? Is there a strategy that we can use when everything around us is shouting, “Impossible! Hopeless! Beyond redemption! Why don’t you just quit”? I am aware that our title this month, *The Jehoshaphat Agenda*, sounds more like a Robert Ludlum spy novel than a prayer meditation. However, I believe that we will see a strategy revealed that can silence the negative voices of fear and hopelessness and bring positive solutions to our dilemma.

This month, I would like to revisit a passage that we looked at in September 2010. It is found in 2 Chronicles 20 and tells the story of Jehoshaphat, a God-fearing king of Judah, and his people who are poised on the edge of annihilation, but who, at their darkest hour, cry out to Almighty God for deliverance from their enemies. Jehoshaphat is all too aware of the futility of trying to defeat in their own strength the vast alliance of hostile forces arrayed against them. Despite his fear, he “sets his face to seek the Lord, and proclaims a fast throughout all Judah” (v.3). Then, as their monarch and intercessor, he begins to pray:-

*“O Lord, God of our fathers, are you not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of nations. In your hand is power and might so that none is able to withstand you. Did you not, our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel and give it to the descendants of Abraham, your friend?”*  
II Chronicles 20: 6-7 ESV

It is important to note that the king/intercessor does not begin with a plaintive cry for help, although that is certainly on his heart and the reason that the fast was proclaimed. No, Jehoshaphat begins with statements of praise and worship extolling the Lord in heaven and declaring (to the seen and unseen worlds) that our God is sovereign over all the nations and the unfolding of history. He reminds himself

and all who are listening to his prayer that it was God alone who drove out the previous inhabitants for the sake of His friend, Abraham, and his family. It is only then that the king expresses their desperation and recognition that God is their only hope.

*O Lord God, will you not execute judgment on them? For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. **We do not know what to do, but our eyes on are on you.***

2 Chronicles 20: 12 ESV

As the people of Judah were all gathered to wait upon the Lord, complete with wives, children and infants, the Spirit of the Lord came upon a man named Jahaziel who began to speak prophetically: *“Thus says the LORD to you, ‘Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed at this great horde, **for the battle is not yours but God's.** Tomorrow go down against them . . . You will not need to fight in this battle. Stand firm, hold your position, and see the salvation of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.”*

2 Chronicles 20:15-17 ESV

What was the response of the king and the people of Judah to this prophetic word? Did they debate whether God still speaks through prophets in their generation? Did they question Jahaziel’s credentials or his track record as a prophet? Did they decide to look for a second opinion? Let’s look.

*Then Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshiping the LORD.*

*And they rose early in the morning and went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. And when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, “Hear me, Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem! Believe in the LORD your God, and you will be established; believe his prophets, and you will succeed.” And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed those who were to sing to the LORD and praise him in holy attire, as they went before the army, and say, “Give thanks to the LORD, for his steadfast love endures forever.”*

2 Chronicles 20:18, 20-21 ESV

Worship and praise rose up in their hearts, and a renewed trust in the Lord’s faithfulness to deliver them gave rise to action; they obeyed the instructions of the Lord. Believing that they would not have to engage in open warfare because the Lord had said that the battle was His, Jehoshaphat sent the worship team out in front of the soldiers. Crazy way to run an army? Absolutely! Yet the Lord gave Judah that day a great victory against overwhelming odds . . . because He said that He would!

So, what can we take away from this event and apply to our own “impossible” situations? Is there “a Jehoshaphat agenda” that we, too, can use? Here are some thoughts gleaned from this story:-

1. Check our “desperate meter”. How desperate are we for the Lord’s intervention? Judah was facing potential annihilation.
2. Get serious about pursuing God’s answers. Call for a time of fasting and prayer. Fasting is an important element in our humbling ourselves before God. We should not neglect it.
3. Bring everyone together to declare our absolute dependence on God. Be humble enough to admit that we have no solutions of our own. There is no Plan B or second opinion.
4. Wait on God for His counsel. Expect to hear from Him. As happened in Jehoshaphat’s situation, the Lord may bring a prophetic word, or lead someone to a specific passage of Scripture that will throw fresh light on how we should proceed. In whatever way He chooses to bring us His counsel, we can be assured that He will show us the path.
5. Receive the Word with praise and thanksgiving, and then obey it, even if it seems to defy human logic.
6. Maintain an attitude of praise, even when facing the circumstances head-on. And remember the words of King Jehoshaphat: *“Believe in the LORD your God, and you will be established; believe his prophets, and you will succeed.”* Amen.



### **Praise God ...**

- For our ANiC parishes and diocese, and all other churches in our communities that preach the transforming Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- For the work God is doing in the life of our diocese and province: cleansing, restoring, transforming, healing and equipping.
- That we can depend fully and unreservedly on our loving Father for every aspect of our lives.
- For the reformation God is working out in global Anglicanism – and the entire Christian Church. In the midst of chaos, He is building His Kingdom and refining His bride, the Church.
- For the many ANiC “projects” and church plants – the small, but growing congregations of faithful Anglicans that He is adding to our number.
- For faithful Anglican Primates, bishops, clergy and laity – throughout the Communion – who are standing for truth even when their stand for Christ and His Word makes them targets of attack.

### **Confess if needed...**

- For failing to believe that the Lord has an answer for our situation, no matter how bleak it may appear.
- For looking to find solutions in our own strength and resources.

### **Please pray...**

- That each of us would recognize our desperate **need to be dependent on God** for all things.
- That even in times of prosperity and plenty we would **not forget our Lord God**.
- That we would demonstrate our faith in God’s goodness and sovereignty by cultivating **thankfulness** and expressing **praise** in the midst of loss, adversity or injustice.
- That we would have a **passion for souls** – for those around us who need our Lord.
- For the **ministries** of our churches; that we would become intentional in reaching our communities.
- For **Bishops** Donald Harvey, Stephen Leung, Charlie Masters, Trevor Walters, Malcolm Harding and Ronald Ferris – and their families. Pray for spiritual and physical protection and renewal, for wisdom, and for a daily closer walk with God.
- For our **Archdeacons**: the Venerables Ron Corcoran (Vancouver Island), Dan Gifford (BC), Paul Charbonneau (Ontario), Paul Crossland (Prairies), Michael McKinnon (New England, USA), and Darrell Critch (Atlantic Region & Quebec).
- For **ANiC clergy** and their families, especially those experiencing spiritual and physical attack. May the joy of the Lord be their strength.
- For **those suffering** under the attack of the enemy in our congregations and families. Pray for victory in Christ and healing where needed.
- For **new and forming ANiC congregations** as they attend to the many details of organizing and launching a parish – and for other congregations considering joining ANiC.
- For the **ANiC congregations** that have lost and are losing their places of worship. May God comfort and pour out His blessing on them. May they be filled with the joy of the Lord.
- For **Anglican Sojourner Fellowship** as it seeks to connect through various technological means isolated Christians who live where there are no biblically faithful Anglican churches – so that they are no longer “orphans” but “sojourners”, living in the world, but belonging and connected to each other through Jesus Christ
- For the leaders of the **Anglican Communion Alliance** (formerly Anglican Essentials Federation), as they seek to provide support for orthodox Anglicans still within the Anglican Church of Canada.
- For those in the **Zacchaeus Fellowship** who are giving testimony to the liberation God offers those held captive in sexual sin; for the Anglican Church of Canada to listen to their testimony.

- For strength and wisdom for the Presiding Bishop of the Southern Cone, **the Most Reverend Tito Zavala** and for God's blessing on the **Province of the Southern Cone**.
- That God would continue His work in and through the **Anglican Church in North America**
  - For **Archbishop Bob Duncan** (and wife, Nara), especially as his diocese deals with the ramifications of recent court decisions.
  - For the other ACNA dioceses.
- For **Anglican1000** and those engaged in **church planting** in Canada and throughout ACNA.
- For orthodox Primates and bishops – especially those in the **Global South** – who are courageously standing for Truth. Pray for spiritual and physical protection and for discernment, grace and strength as they lead in a torn Communion.
- For the orthodox **Primates** in the Anglican Communion – especially the GAFCon primates – as they prepare for upcoming FCA/GAFCon gatherings of orthodox global Anglicans in 2012 & 2013.
- For growing support of the **Anglican Relief and Development Fund Canada (ARDFC)**. For the ARDFC's new projects in Myanmar and Peru, focused on providing rural women trapped in poverty with the resources to establish micro-businesses that will generate income to support their families.
- For the **Archbishop of Canterbury**. May he pursue God wholeheartedly and seek the wisdom and discernment he needs to fulfill his responsibilities to the glory of God.
- For **suffering Christians** around the world in conditions of persecution, war and poverty – especially those in Muslim and communist countries who face injustice and violence.
- For those in **areas suffering from famine and natural disasters** – especially in East Africa.
- For God's protection of **Israel** as it is surrounded by those who seek its destruction.
- For peace in **Sudan** and in **South Sudan**.
- That **God would revive us**, our church and, ultimately, our nation.
- For **those in authority** over us and who serve our country. Pray for wise decisions that honour the Lord and promote the welfare of **our nation**. Pray specifically:
  - For those in **government** – both for our elected leaders creating laws and for civil servants in positions of responsibility – that they would uphold righteousness.
  - For **judges in our court system** who are charged with interpreting and applying laws;
  - For **officers of the law & emergency response personnel** who risk their lives for us.
  - For those who selflessly serve our country in the **military** as well as for their families at home.



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