



## Anglican Network in Canada

### First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer – February 2013

*"I love the LORD because he hears my voice and my prayer for mercy. Because he bends down to listen, I will pray as long as I have breath!"*  
Psalm 116:1-2 NLT

Welcome to our February 2013 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.

We encourage you to set aside **the first Friday, February 1<sup>st</sup>**, 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.

#### Prayer Quotes

Those who, in a day of peace, set themselves at Christ's feet to be taught by Him, may, with comfort, in a day of trouble, cast themselves at His feet to find favour with Him.

Matthew Henry 1662-1714

### Pleasures Forevermore

*You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*  
Psalm 16: 11 ESV

As we reflect on this verse of scripture, let me ask you a question: What goes through your mind when you hear the word "pleasure"? Do you think about the "simple pleasures" of life like a blossoming rose, a spectacular sunset, or an infant child's first smile? Or does it have a negative connotation – "worldly pleasures" that are to be avoided by Christians? Do we remember the words of the author of Hebrews who refers to "the fleeting pleasures of sin"? (Hebrews 11:25 ESV)

How about the word "delight"? It has the same potential to go either way, doesn't it? It depends on what we are "delighting in" as to whether it is a blessing or not.

In either case, they are not likely words that pop into our mind when we consider a typical Sunday morning worship service or a prayer meeting. They may not even be words that we would use to describe the dynamics of our personal relationship with the Lord Jesus. Does spending time alone with Him daily in prayer bring delight to your heart? Is it pleasurable - something that you look forward to? For many Christians, having a regular "quiet time" is driven more by a sense of duty and obligation – something that we need to do as part of Christian discipline – than out of delight. To call it pleasurable might be a stretch.

Over the last few years, as I have had the opportunity to lead the "*Pursuing Intimacy with God*" seminar in various ANiC churches, I have sought to expand our concept of the potential joys of being in the Lord's presence. One of the basic tenets of the seminar is found in this statement; "I believe that the Lord Jesus desires a level of intimacy with each one of His children that is deeper and more passionate than most of us have ever experienced!"

David, the Psalmist, understood this. Perhaps spending long hours out in the fields tending his father's sheep gave him ample opportunity to develop a growing intimacy with God, a delight and pleasure at being in His presence. Look at how he describes this:

*The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.  
The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.*

*I bless the LORD who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me.  
I have set the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.  
Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure.  
For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.  
You make known to me the path of life; **in your presence there is fullness of joy;  
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*** Psalm 16:5-11 ESV

**One thing** have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, **to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD** and to inquire in his temple. Psalm 27:4 ESV

*O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you;  
my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.  
So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, **beholding your power and glory.*** Psalm 63:1-2 ESV

Now some Bible commentators will tell us that the Psalm 16 passage is prophetic, that it is speaking of Jesus the Messiah, and that the “fullness of joy” and “pleasures forevermore at your right hand” phrases are referring to Jesus’ ascension as He returned to heaven and to His Father. Others may say that these joys are only accessible for Christians once we get to heaven.

Certainly it is true that, as long as we are in the presence and influence of sin, we cannot enter fully into the experience of these delights. But surely we can get closer than we typically do, and can experience more than we typically expect.

Mike Bickle, the director of the International House of Prayer (IHoP) in Kansas City, makes this startling statement. “God is the author of pleasure. He created us to enjoy physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual pleasures. . . . The devil tempts us with ‘counterfeit’ pleasures that are outside God’s will. The greatest pleasures available to the human spirit are spiritual pleasures that come to us when God reveals Himself to our spirit. This exhilarates our spirit at the deepest levels. We are liberated from the inferior pleasures of sin by experiencing the superior pleasures of the beauty of Jesus”.

Surely this is what David refers to in Psalm 27:4 above; “*One thing I have asked... to dwell in the house of the LORD (in his presence) all the days of my life to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord...*” David learned that there is no pleasure on earth that is comparable to the delight of gazing upon the beauty of our God, the beauty of holiness. Part of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives is to glorify Jesus and reveal his magnificence to the eyes of our heart. The Spirit will guide us into the presence of the Lord where we can rest and be at peace in total and absolute safety.

Now lest this all sound airy-fairy and way too mystical for you, let me encourage you to stop and think about the character of our heavenly Father as revealed in His Word. Doesn’t He deeply desire intimate companionship with His created beings, the very ones that He sent His Son to redeem? Isn’t that what the Garden of Eden was all about? Isn’t that what heaven, our eternal home, will be all about? If the devil works so very hard to seduce us with his “counterfeit” pleasures, surely they are not all that is available to us now. I believe that God has much more for us than we typically expect to receive.

May I encourage you to press into the Lord as you have your daily prayer time with Him. Leave aside your intercessory list for a few moments and ask Him to reveal to you more of His beauty, more of a growing fullness of joy in His presence, more of indescribable pleasures at just being with Him. My commitment to you, dear reader, is that you will not be disappointed.

**My soul will be satisfied** as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips, when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night. Psalm 63:5-6 ESV

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### Praise God ...

- That intimacy and friendship with each of His children is in the heart of the Father and that our daily time spent with Him can be so much more than mere duty or routine.
- For the work God is doing in the life of our diocese and province: cleansing, restoring, transforming, healing and equipping.
- 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...

- The times that we have not expected to experience the delight of the Lord’s presence in our quiet times; where we have not believed that “He is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think” (Ephesians 3:20 ESV).

### Please pray...

- That each of us would grow in our understanding of **delighting in the Lord’s presence** and that we would begin to experience the eternal pleasures at His right hand.
- That we would show our faith in God’s goodness and sovereignty by cultivating **thankfulness, vigilance in prayer**, and by expressing **praise** in the midst of loss, adversity or injustice.
- For a new visitation of the **Holy Spirit** upon our bishops and clergy, our parishes and our diocese. Pray that the fresh wind of the Spirit will bring renewal, healing and empowerment..
- For **Bishops** Donald Harvey, Charlie Masters, Stephen Leung, 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), Tim Parent (Ottawa Valley), 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.
- That God would continue His work in and through the **Anglican Church in North America**
  - For **Archbishop Bob Duncan** (and wife, Nara), especially for wisdom as he seeks to give Godly leadership through any growing pains our province may encounter
- **GAFCon Primates and Fellowship of Confessing Anglican (FCA) leaders** – Pray for the Lord’s courage and wisdom as they seek to guide the orthodox reformation and realignment that is taking place throughout the Anglican Communion. Pray for the global gathering this October in Kenya.
- For the new Archbishop of Canterbury **Justin Welby**, who will be enthroned March 21. Pray that the Lord will grace him with wisdom, courage and the faithfulness to follow the teachings of Scripture in his decision-making.
- For the **ANiC congregations** that have lost their places of worship and are meeting in temporary facilities. May God comfort and pour out His blessing on them. May they be filled with the joy of the Lord as they seek His guidance for more permanent worship facilities. Pray especially for St Aidan’s (Windsor, ON) as the congregation is still embroiled in legal proceedings
- For the **Anglican Sojourner Fellowship** as it seeks to connect and encourage isolated Christians who live where there are no biblically faithful Anglican churches.
- For the **Christians in Egypt** who are facing increasing pressure and persecution as the country moves in a decidedly Islamist direction.

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