



Anglican Network in Canada

First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer – February 2014

"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 2014 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 7th**, 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 Quote

Prayer and praise are the oars by which a man may row his boat into the deep waters of the knowledge of Christ.

Charles Spurgeon 1834-1892

From time to time, we come across an article or blog post that speaks directly to our ministry of encouraging intercessory prayer within ANiC. The following is a case in point. It was posted on a website called *the Christward Collective*, "a community of pastors and theologians who span across the spectrum of Reformed and Evangelical fellowships in North America".

See: www.christwardcollective.com/christward/9-reasons-to-pray

Garth V. Hunt+

Nine Reasons to Pray

by Jason Helopoulos

Why should we pray? God already knows our hearts. He already knows our desires. So why pray? We could easily say it is because the Bible commands it. Paul goes as far as to say, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17)—that is reason enough. But let's explore a few other reasons for why we should pray.

1. We pray because we love:

A relationship of love is one of enjoying each other. If I say "*I love my wife*" but never speak to her, it is likely that I don't love her. If I love her, then I will want to talk with her, spend time with her, and desire her. This is why we see Jesus in passages like Mark 1, "*rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.*" He loves the Father. The Father loves Him, so He wanted to spend time talking with Him even before the day started.

2. We pray out of gratitude:

James says, "*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights*" (James 1:17). Paul says in Philippians that we are to "*be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God*" (Philippians 4:6). Like the one leper who returned to Jesus, we are to return to God time and again with thanksgiving. All that we have been given, all that we have received, is a gift from His hands. Prayer demonstrates and provides a vehicle for our offering gratitude.

3. We pray because we want to know God more fully:

There is nothing more lovely, nothing greater our hearts can seek, and nothing more fulfilling than God Himself. And as we speak with Him, we get to know Him more. As the Psalmist says, "*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). We want to know Him. We want to know God in all His glory. If that is the case, then like a young woman dating and trying to get to know a young man, we will want to talk with Him more.

4. We pray to know our own hearts more fully:

I think of Habakkuk's words, "*The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silent before him*" (Habakkuk 2:20). There is a real benefit in coming before the Lord in silence. It is true that we get to know Him more fully in prayer, but we also get to know ourselves more fully. How often we pray and are convicted by some sin that we didn't know was present before. We hear it uttered from our lips or find our minds entangled by it as we approach Him in prayer. Like Peter on the rooftop, we are made aware that what we have believed or practiced or dreamed or sought is unholy. Prayer lays open our hearts not only before God but before ourselves. God already knows what is in them; we often do not.

5. We pray to be conformed to His Image:

Some have said that prayer's purpose is not so that we might change God, but so that God might change us. And there is much truth in this. Calvin said that we pray in Jesus' name so "*that there may enter our hearts no desire and no wish at all of which we should be ashamed to make him a witness, while we learn to set all our desires before his eyes, and even to pour out our whole hearts.*" In prayer our hearts are shaped and molded, our affections are stirred, and our minds are transformed. The prayer closet is the academy of righteousness. One may enter as a truant and emerge a cadet.

6. We pray to acknowledge our dependence upon Him:

We are not independent beings. As Paul preached at the Areopagus, "*In him we live and move and have our being.*" We are and can be nothing apart from Him. Prayer recognizes that. Ursinus once commented that, "*Prayer is as necessary for us as it is necessary for a beggar to ask alms.*" A beggar is by definition one who asks for alms. We are people, human beings, created in His image; by very definition we are dependent and are to pray.

7. We pray to receive from Him:

James says, "*If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach and it will be given him*" (James 1:5). We ask to receive. Jesus follows his teaching of the Lord's Prayer in Luke 11 with the story of the man who is awoken from bed by a friend who desires three loaves of bread. And Jesus says, "*How much more the Father? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!*" This is all in the context of the Lord's Prayer, which is filled with asking to receive. We do pray to receive. And we have a Heavenly Father, who loves to give. He is the giver of all good gifts. If everything good comes from Him, then in prayer we rightfully seek and ask of Him.

8. We pray because God chooses to use means:

There are many who say, "*Why pray if God already predestines all things? Why pray for someone's conversion, why pray that God would heal my body, why pray for anything?*" We pray because God chooses to use means. He uses rain to make the grass grow. He uses the sun to light the world. He uses our prayers to accomplish His purposes. It is one of the most amazing and humbling realities in the universe, but it is true. God chooses to use us in accomplishing His purposes. Our prayers may be the very means He uses to save our children, to provide health to the person on the prayer list, or maintain unity in our local church. James says, "*The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working*" (James 5:16). We have no clue this side of heaven what our prayers are accomplishing for the sake of the Kingdom, our church, our families, or our person. Frankly, we would be overwhelmed in the present if we knew how purposeful, meaningful, and essential God has made our prayers. It is humbling. And it is terribly exciting.

9. We pray that God might receive glory:

When the lame man is healed in Acts 3 by the prayer of Peter, his response is to rise, leap in joy, and praise God. When God answers our prayers, we offer praise. God receives glory as men receive from Him and respond rightly.

Prayer is a gift from a heavenly Father, who loves to hear from His children. There are countless reasons to pray. Let's be a people of prayer. Never will one minute in prayer closets be a minute wasted or later regretted.



Praise God ...

- For the incredible gift that God has given us in prayer – immediate access to our Father at any time of day or night. Thank Him for the joy of sharing in the privilege of bringing His redemption purposes to fallen humanity.
- 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...

- Times where we have allowed busyness even in ministry to rob us of our time in prayer and thereby erode our effectiveness for the Gospel.

Please pray...

- 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, Ronald Ferris and Malcolm Harding (retired) – 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) – and our Dean of Multicultural Ministries, the Very Rev Dr Archie Pell..
- For all of our **ANiC clergy** and families, especially those experiencing spiritual and physical attack.
- 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.
- For **St Aidan’s Windsor** as they await word from the Supreme Court on their application to appeal lower court decisions.
- That God would continue His work in and through the **Anglican Church in North America**
- For **Archbishop Bob Duncan** (and wife, Nara); for wisdom as he seeks to give godly leadership and prepares to hand over responsibilities when he retires this summer. Also pray for the College of Bishops as they consider who God would have succeed Archbishop Bob as Primate of ACNA.
- For our **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 in the Anglican Communion.
- For the **Southern Cone** – Pray for Presiding Bishop Tito Zavala in his primatial duties and for this province which includes much of South America.
- For the Archbishop of Canterbury **Justin Welby**. 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 **Anglican Relief and Development Fund Canada (ARDFC)** – Praise God for providing all the funds needed to build a training and education centre in the Diocese of Recife (Brazil).
- For **Christians in the Middle East & Africa** facing increasing persecution as many countries embrace an aggressive, extreme form of Islam and others are besieged by Islamist terrorist groups.
- For **those who serve us and are in authority over us**: our police forces, our armed forces, our emergency responders, our municipal elected officials, our provincial MLAs and premiers, and our federal MPs and Prime Minister.