



Anglican Network in Canada

First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer June 2016

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 June 2016 First Friday Call to Prayer. Our aim is to provide you with teaching that we trust will be an encouragement to you. We will also provide you with praise items and prayer requests coming from within ANiC, ACNA and the Anglican Communion.

<p>We encourage you to set aside the first Friday, June 3rd, 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>Prayer Quotes</p> <p><i>"Whether we like it or not, asking is the rule of the Kingdom. If you may have everything by asking in His Name, and nothing without asking, I beg you to see how absolutely vital prayer is."</i> Charles Spurgeon 1838-1892</p>
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"The Harvest Is Plentiful, the Labourers Few"

For many months, I have been seeking to exhort ANiC parish members and, indeed, myself to take seriously the desperate need for us to pray for revival – a Great Awakening in our day. We have shared together on the plight of our North American culture that seems bent on self-destruction like so many civilizations of the past. Sinful humanity, driven by greed and fear, refuses to learn from history and rebels against any restraints whatsoever. At one level, it has always been thus, but this is our generation, our responsibility, and the Lord has placed His church in the midst of it all for His mighty and redemptive purpose.

As we struggled to know exactly how to pray for revival, the simple Scriptural prayer, "*Rise Up, O God*" provided us with an easily-remembered means of intercession on behalf of our church, our country, and the world. It reminds us that it is only God Himself, by sending a sovereign outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon us, that any lasting change will occur. There just isn't any Plan B!

But it's tough, isn't it! It's hard to be giving ourselves to prayer over such a vague and nebulous concept as "revival". If we're honest, we really have no clue what that might look like in the 21st century. And there are so many things right before us that require our prayers: our parish ministries, our families, our unsaved loved ones, illness and disease in our midst, decisions being made by governments at every level that are clearly unscriptural – there's just so much that it's overwhelming!

Recently, while attending the ordination of a friend, I was struck by a familiar and yet perhaps overlooked passage that is frequently read on such occasions. Let me share it with you:

*Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore **pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers** into his harvest."*
Matthew 9:35-38 ESV

With the obvious exception of His teaching on the Lord's Prayer, Jesus gave very few specific instructions about what to pray, but in this passage He is very clear. It springs from His heart of compassion for the people He saw who were "*harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd*". Is it any different today? Does this description not fit our society, and, indeed, those in the church who do not as yet put their faith in Jesus?

The commentator in the ESV Study Bible on this passage came to the same conclusion: “*The leaders (or shepherds) have failed in their responsibility, but Micah 5:4 predicted that the Messiah would “shepherd” his people. Given the helplessness and the need of the crowds, Jesus’ disciples are urged to pray earnestly that the Lord would send out labourers into His harvest, since many are ready to receive the good news of the kingdom—a prayer that is **as urgent today** as it was when Jesus’ original disciples heard His words.*” Surely it is absolutely paramount that we obey this command of our Lord!

Quite frankly, I was deeply convicted as I pondered this imperative from our Lord. As someone committed to praying for revival, how could I have overlooked this? Why was it not a regular part of my intercession when it seems so strategically vital to Jesus? I’ve read it many times and reflected with joy on the coming harvest of many entering into the Kingdom, but neglected to see my privilege and responsibility of being a part of the harvest process by specifically asking the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers. Maybe I’m the only one who’s a little slow on picking up on this, but somehow I doubt it.

So, as we seek to grow in our commitment to pray for revival, here’s another important weapon in our arsenal that the Lord has given us. If you keep a prayer journal or a prayer list to which you can add new prayer initiatives, let’s all add prayer for labourers for the harvest. It is important to note that this does not just include overseas missionaries (although that has been a traditional interpretation). It includes your parish neighbourhood and the mission field that the Lord has given your church.

At St George’s, Burlington, we’ve been seeking to really engage Alton Village, the new community into which the Lord instructed us to build our new church. Recently, we had a series of evening meetings to pray specifically for the needs of our new neighbourhood. It has really helped us to be able to visualize our mission field in a very specific way. Each evening, we stood in the window that faces the village, praying for families as they strolled or biked by, perhaps walking the dog or pushing a stroller. We prayed for children as they played on the swings at the park across the street. Some of our neighbours saw us standing in the window and, without any awareness of what we were doing, waved enthusiastically.

Amongst other things, we were asking the Lord of the harvest to give us His heart of compassion for these people and the rest of the inhabitants, so many of which are “*harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd*”!

I have found it so helpful personally to be able to “see” our mission field, and so it is into this field that we can and must ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers, knowing that His answer to our request may well include us. I am also aware that not every ANiC church can easily identify the mission field to which the Lord has called you. But, if you haven’t done so, please make it a matter of prayer. Do ask Him to show you the geographical area or demographic that has been given to your parish. I have every confidence that He will gladly answer this prayer.

I will close with this quote from the classic bible commentator, Matthew Henry. Expounding on this passage, Henry said:

Christ is the Lord of the harvest. Let us pray that many may be raised up and sent forth, who will labour in bringing souls to Christ. It is a sign that God is about to bestow some special mercy upon a people, when he stirs them up to pray for it. And commissions given to labourers in answer to prayer, are most likely to be successful.

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Praise God ...

- 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. Especially we praise the Lord for the continuing faithful witness by the GAFCON primates.
- For the **harvest fields** – neighbourhoods, communities and demographics – He is entrusting to us.

Please pray...

- For a **major awakening**, a sovereign move of God in our churches and across our nations like has not been seen in our lifetimes. **Rise Up, O God** we pray. Intervene, O Lord, in the midst of our decaying culture and society! Raise up **an army of intercessors** who will call out to you for a mighty visitation of your power and presence! Send out **labourers into the harvest**, O Lord!
- That God would reveal to us the depth of His love and that His perfect love would cast out our fears.
- For **“God's Word Written”**, a conference designed to grow in Christian leaders a deep confidence in the Bible and a clear understanding of what the Bible teaches about itself as God's word written. This is a very important gathering for ANiC as it fits strategically into our 5 ministry priorities under “Biblically Grounded”. The conference is being held **in Vancouver, June 14 – 16**. Pray that all who God is calling to attend will heed the call; pray that the necessary finances would be provided for those who might find the travel costs difficult, and pray that God will have his hand mightily upon all aspect of the conference. (For more info on the conference, [click here](#).)
- For our primate **Archbishop Foley Beach** (& Allison) - Pray for great wisdom, discernment, courage and strength as he gives leadership to ACNA in the days and months ahead.
- For **Bishop Charlie Masters** (& Judy) – Pray for our diocesan bishop as he leads ANiC. May God grant him courage, wisdom and vision. Pray also for spiritual protection, and spiritual and physical renewal.
- For **Bishop Don Harvey** (& Trudy) – Pray for Bishop Don in his roles as ANiC's episcopal vicar and senior chaplain to the ACNA College of Bishops.
- For **ANiC's suffragan bishops**: Stephen Leung (& Nona) and Trevor Walters (& Dede). Pray for discernment, energy and grace as they care for their clergy and congregations. Also pray for Bishops Ron Ferris (church planting in Langley, BC) and Malcolm Harding (retired in Brandon, MB).
- For our **Archdeacons**: the Venerables Ron Corcoran (Vancouver Island), Dan Gifford (BC), Bruce Chamberlayne (Alberta & BC Interior), 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 **ANiC clergy** and families, especially those experiencing spiritual and physical attack.
- For the **Anglican Relief and Development Fund Canada** (ARDFC) as it raises funds for farming tools, seeds, goats and agricultural training to address malnutrition and extreme poverty in 3 villages in Burundi - as well as for emergency aid appeals for Syrian Refugees, Myanmar flood relief, and earthquake relief in Nepal.
- For the Canadian federal government as it considers the question of **assisted suicide**. Pray that the voices speaking on behalf of Life rather than death will be heard, voices such as the palliative care doctors. Pray for legislation that is pleasing to God and a blessing to our nation.
- For **Canon Andrew White** and his ministry team in the Middle East. Pray for continued courage, safety and the provision of basic needs for them and the people that they serve.
- 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, MPPs and premiers, and our federal MPs and Prime Minister.

- For **God's wisdom for world's leaders** with regard to North Korea, South Sudan & Sudan, Eritrea, Nigeria, Somalia, Libya, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Ukraine and European nations reeling from recent terrorist attacks. Pray for the hundreds of thousands of **refugees** who are seeking safety and asylum in Europe and here in Canada. Pray for those churches and communities that are welcoming refugees that they may be a witness to God's compassionate care, both by what they say and do.
- Pray for **protection of innocent civilians** – adults and children – who so often are the victims in today's warfare. Pray especially for the many **Middle Eastern, African, South Asians, and North Korean Christians** who are brutally persecuted for their refusal to renounce their faith in Jesus.