



# Anglican Network in Canada

## First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer – September 2010

*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 September 2010 1<sup>st</sup> 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, September 3<sup>rd</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

*"Each time, before you intercede, be quiet first, and worship God in His glory. Think of what He can do, and how He delights to hear the prayers of His redeemed people. Think of your place and privilege in Christ, and expect great things!"*

*Andrew Murray 1828-1917*

## The Worshipping Intercessor

The odds were stacked against them. Desperation and hopelessness were knocking at the door of their hearts. It had been hundreds of years since the parting of the Red Sea and the destruction of the Egyptian army, and miracles were scarce, to say the least. What was the kingdom of Judah to do? What indeed could they do against such an alliance of hostile forces?

II Chronicles 20 narrates this amazing story of a god-fearing king, Jehoshaphat, 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 not unaware of the futility of trying to defeat them in their own strength. Despite his fear, he "sets his face to seek the Lord, and proclaimed 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's 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 are on you."*

II Chronicles 20: 12 ESV

You see, the heart of a true intercessor is not poised towards presenting God with a great list of requests, injustices or complaints. The intercessor does not come to the throne of our God trying to convince him to be merciful or to keep his promises as if God were somehow reluctant to comply. Instead, as intercessors we should come into the

Lord's presence with praise on our lips and joy in our hearts, however desperate the circumstances we are facing. We should be worshippers first and foremost.

The content of the psalms reflects this principle. Throughout the Psalter there is a mixture of praise and worship, lament, personal petition, and intercession for the people of God. But, above all, the most important is worship. Of the many examples we could examine, let's look at a part of Psalm 144:-

*Blessed be the Lord, my rock, who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle; he is my steadfast love and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield in whom I take refuge.*

*O Lord, what is man that you regard him, or the son of man that you think of him? Man is like a breath, his days are like a passing shadow.* Psalm 144: 1-4 ESV

David begins in the worship of "his steadfast love" and the One who protects him in battle. He reflects on the frailty and insignificance of man compared to the Sovereign Lord. Only then does he begin to cry out to the Lord on his own behalf and that of his people: -

*May our sons in their youth be as plants full grown, our daughters like corner pillars cut for the structure of a palace; may our granaries be full, providing all kinds of produce; may our sheep bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our fields; may our cattle be heavy with young, suffering no mishap for failure in bearing; may there be no cry of distress in our streets!* Psalm 144: 12-14 ESV

As I think about my own personal prayer life and the prayer meetings that I frequently attend, I am aware that too often I jump right into the needs that are before me, and my investment in worship is perfunctory at best. What this reveals to me is that, even in prayer, so much of life is still about me and not about the One to whom I am praying. I'm frequently still the infant crying out, "Feed me, burp me, change me." Beginning a prayer time with worship changes the focus from me/us to the One who is always worthy of our praise and who delights in our expressions of adoration and thanksgiving.

Before you begin your next prayer time, consider reading out loud one of the many praise psalms like Psalm 95 (Venite) or 96 through 100 (Jubilate Deo). Psalms 103-104 are also dynamite, as are 144 to 150. You probably have your own favourites that would work just as well. But what I'm after here is a deliberate choice to begin with worship. I believe that spending time with the Lord as our focus first, and not just our needs and prayer concerns, will get our eyes off ourselves, increase our faith and make our times of intercession more fruitful.

So, what about Jehoshaphat and his desperate plight? The short answer is that God heard his cry for help and dramatically intervened. But I find it a great blessing to see how the King arranged his army. All they had to put their faith in was the God of their forefathers and a prophetic word that promised them that the battle was not theirs, but God's: -

*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". And **when they began to sing and praise**, the Lord set an ambush against the men of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir who had come against Judah so that they were routed.* II Chronicles 20: 21-22 ESV

Even in battle, the worshippers went first. So should it be with us. Amen.

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

- That He alone is worthy of our worship, adoration and praise.
- For His faithfulness in the past.
- That He is our Abba Father and delights in hearing from us and responding.
- For the privilege of conversing with our Heavenly Father 24/7.
- For the privilege of engaging in the spiritual battle through prayer.
- 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 His blessing on ANiC, for how He has led, and for the future He has planned for us.
- For our churches, for the Anglican Network in Canada (ANiC) and for the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA).
- For the many ANiC “projects” and church plants – the small, but growing congregations of faithful Anglicans – He is adding to our number.
- For faithful Anglican 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 pray; for not being persistent in prayer.
- For failing to worship and being self-focused in our prayers.
- For not regularly upholding our leaders and those in positions of authority and influence.
- For not seeing prayer as a privilege and a delight.

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

- That we would grow in our love for our Lord and learn to delight in communing with Him in prayer.
- That we would develop a passion for those around us who need our Lord.
- That the ministries of our churches; that we would become more intentional in reaching out to 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 those suffering under the attack of the enemy in our congregations and families. Pray for victory in Christ and healing where needed.
- For **ANiC clergy** and their families, especially those experiencing spiritual and physical attack. May the joy of the Lord be their strength.
- 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 Asian Ministries outreaches in the Vancouver area to Chinese restaurant workers
  - For the community outreach initiatives of Good Shepherd House (Sioux Lookout, ON)
- For the many **ANiC congregations** that have lost their places of worship or have been forced to appeal to the courts and face the possible loss of their buildings. May they demonstrate love to those who persecute them.
- For the **legal team** and parish leaders involved in court proceedings.
  - **For the Sept 13-16 case in the BC Court of Appeal involving Vancouver-area parishes.**
  - For the case involving St Aidan’s in Windsor, ON.
  - For St George’s (Burlington, ON), Good Shepherd (St Catharines, ON) and St Hilda’s (Oakville, ON) in their dispute with the Diocese of Niagara.
  - For St George’s and St Alban’s in Ottawa facing possible litigation.
  - For a change of heart on the part of the leaders of dioceses pursuing ANiC parishes. May they relent and work with parishes to reach amicable, mutually beneficial settlements.

- For sufficient donations to ANiC's legal defense fund to allow continued support for congregations facing legal attack.
- For Biblically-faithful Anglicans in Canada who feel isolated in liberal churches and dioceses as well as for those who feel they can no longer remain in the Anglican Church of Canada. May they find Christian fellowship and spiritual nourishment.
- For the recovery of a lively orthodoxy in the **Anglican Church of Canada (ACoC)** and for those who believe they are called to remain in the ACoC to pray and work for reformation and for a renewed commitment to Jesus Christ and His inspired Word.
- For the leaders of the **Anglican Communion Alliance** (formerly Anglican Essentials Federation), **Anglican Essentials Network**, and **Anglican Essentials Canada** as they provide support for orthodox Anglicans still within the Anglican Church of Canada (ACoC).
- 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 witness.
- For **Archbishop Gregory Venables** (and his wife, Sylvia) as they have been facing adversity; for God's peace, protection, renewal and blessing.
- For God's blessing on the Province of the **Southern Cone** which graciously provided a temporary "home" for ANiC when we needed Primatial oversight.
- For God's blessing on the **Anglican Church in North America (ACNA)**:
  - For **Archbishop Bob Duncan** (and wife, Nara)
  - For the other ACNA dioceses.
- For the 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 **Anglican Relief and Development Fund Canada (ARDFC)**; for generous contributions to ARDFC's malaria prevention initiative in Kenya.
- For the Covenant process and the realignment underway in the **Anglican Communion**. May the Lord clearly lead and may His will be done.
- 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, drought, famine and poverty – especially those in Muslim countries who face discrimination, harassment and violence.
- That God would revive us, our church and, ultimately, our nation.
- For **those in authority** over us and who service 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 members of Parliament 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 and emergency response personnel who daily risk their lives for our protection; and
  - For those who selflessly serve our country in the military – as well as for their families at home.



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