



Anglican Network in Canada

First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer November 2015

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit.
1 Thessalonians 5:16-19 ESV

Welcome to our November 2015 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.

We encourage you to set aside **the first Friday, November 6th**, 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

"Will not your prayers accomplish that which my preaching fails to do? Is it not likely that the Church has been putting forth its preaching hand but not its praying hand? Oh dear friends! Let us agonize in prayer."

Charles H. Spurgeon 1834-1892

For this month's meditation I have taken excerpts from the workshop that I presented at our ANiC Synod held last week in Vancouver. If you are interested in watching the entire presentation, you can do so by clicking [here](#).

Garth V. Hunt+

"If My People . . ."

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me".
Revelation 3:20 ESV



Christ at Heart's Door by Warner Sallman

This well-known verse from Revelation has been a comfort and blessing to millions of Christians over two millennia. It has also given inspiration over the years to several famous paintings. Many evangelical churches have prints, like the one showed here, hanging in their Sunday School classes.

Because the painting is depicting Jesus standing at a door and knocking, I have always assumed that it was about the individual unbeliever being urged to accept Jesus' invitation to have the Saviour come into his life. Certainly that was the interpretation of my childhood Sunday School teachers, and it definitely has validity.

But if we take time to examine the context, this verse is taken from Jesus' strong, challenging word of conviction and admonition to the Laodicean church. Let's look at the entire passage:

"And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: 'The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation. "I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you

may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.” Rev 3:14-20 ESV

Wow! What a word! Jesus says to the church at Laodecia that they are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold; that they consider themselves to be rich and prosperous, needing nothing, and are far from being desperate for God to bring a mighty revival in their midst. They are not recognizing that they “*are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked*”. They don’t even realize that Jesus is on the **outside** knocking on the door of their church!

Friends, dare we even ask the question? Could this be the door of my church, our church that he’s knocking at? Am I, are we really satisfied with the level of passion for the lost in our own hearts, and, indeed, the hearts of the people of our churches? Is there a growing level of restlessness and desperation for more of God’s presence in our worship services and ministries? Or are we self-satisfied, comfortable and content with what we’ve achieved?

The verse right before this, verse 19, says: “*Those I love, I discipline, so be zealous and repent.*” His counsel to the compromised church is: “*Buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; white garments that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, **that you may see.***” Rev. 3:18 ESV

In Rhonda Hughey’s helpful book, *Desperate for His Presence*, she says: “*One of the fundamental differences between the non-Western world and the Western world is the level of desperation in the lives of God’s people. This is a critical component in our pursuit of transformation in the West. The master key of holy desperation for the presence and ministry of Jesus is required in order for us to move out of our complacent, satisfied existence.*”

Throughout the years, men and women whom God has called to repent and intercede on behalf of their nation and their church have begun by meditating on 2 Chronicles 7:14:

“If My people who are called by My name (will) humble themselves, and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”
2 Chron 7:14 ESV

It’s important for us to understand the context of this verse. It’s written at a time of great celebration for the nation of Israel. There is a huge sense of fulfillment and satisfaction at the dedication of Solomon’s temple, this magnificent structure unlike anything ever seen before! Finally, God has a home more worthy of His greatness – no longer merely dwelling in a tent.

The king has prayed a long prayer of dedication, and then God shows up in power!

As soon as Solomon finished his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. And the priests could not enter the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord filled the Lord’s house. When all the people of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory of the Lord on the temple, they bowed down with their faces to the ground on the pavement and worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord, saying, “For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.”
2 Chron 7: 1-3 ESV

In the midst of great rejoicing, God takes Solomon aside and makes covenant promises to him based on his obedience to the Lord, and also gives dire warning should he or his heirs stray away. But, even if they strayed, the Lord promises a way back – always, a way back.

“If My people who are called by My name (will) humble themselves, and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”
2 Chron. 7: 14 ESV

Let’s take a closer look at this verse...

If My people who are called by My name

To whom is God speaking here? Who is he calling to take these steps of returning? *"My People... who are called by My name"* It's us, the church, isn't it. Is there an admonition directed toward the godless culture around them? No, there is not! Have we ever considered that we, the church, might own some responsibility for the growing decay in our society due to our prayerlessness? We cannot, must not, point the finger at anyone else as I have such a tendency to do.

humble ourselves

"Sackcloth and ashes"? Well, I'm not sure what that would look like in today's culture. There is indeed the necessity of the regular discipline of fasting to subdue our fleshly appetites. But surely the most important way to humble ourselves is to honestly face our poverty and our desperate need for the Lord! *"Lord Jesus, we **are** poor, naked and blind! Despite our protests to the contrary, we are frequently 'lukewarm'. We have criticized as fanatical those who are more sold out to you than we are!"* As Jesus says to his beloved disciples as they celebrated their last Passover together, *"Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, **for** apart from me you can do nothing."* John 15:5

We can do nothing of eternal consequence without Jesus! It's so hard for us to accept this fact, but when we see it, we recognize our desperate need for Him!

pray and seek My face

God is looking not for mere tokenism but sacrificial prayer that costs us something. Am I willing to get up in the middle of the night to pray for revival? Am I willing to set aside one night a week to gather with others to pray for the residents of my neighbourhood? We need to seek God's face, not merely for him to **do** something, but out of desire for him alone, and we must not be satisfied with anything less than God's presence.

turn from our wicked ways

What are our "wicked ways"? Of what are we guilty that might have the Lord on the outside of our church door knocking?

- Are we apathetic towards the plight of the poor and marginalized in our communities?
- Is there complacency in our prayers for the lost in our families, communities, and nations?
- Now that the stress in leaving the Anglican Church of Canada is pretty well over, have we become "comfortable" and settled back into "church as usual"?
- Is there any **idolatry** in the way we do things? . . . the way we **have** to do things?
- Are we prepared to lay down anything that might be an obstruction to people coming to Jesus, or is church really about us and our personal preferences?
- Have we settled for false finish lines? Are we content with our own level of spirituality as compared to others?
- Have we been so busy that we've not even noticed that we're missing something?
- Clergy, is there any real unity in the believing churches in our city? Is there any real cooperation and sharing with other pastors in the city or are we guilty of Lone Rangerism and independence because we're the only ones that really get it?
- Are we praying regularly with other Christians for the families in our neighbourhoods or have we decided that our city is just too hard, unreachable with the Gospel?
- Are we confusing "desire" and evangelical theology for the willingness to pay the price?

I'm know there is much more in my own life than these, but perhaps you can begin to see the picture.

So, what does God say he will do if we are willing to obey him by our repentance? *"Then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land!"* God promises to hear our heartfelt repentance, wash away our sin, and bring restoration and healing. One commentator writes: *"Heal their land"* includes deliverance from drought and pestilence as well as the return of exiles to their rightful home. For the Chronicler, this includes the restoration of the people to their right relationship with God. Can you now see more clearly how the healing of the land is so dependent on "my people" returning to him in humility and desperation? Then, and only then, can we begin to seriously call upon the Lord for His manifest presence to bring revival! Amen.



Praise God ...

- That **forgiveness and healing** are always available to us, no matter how far we may have strayed from God's will and purpose for our lives and churches.
- 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...

- Our **"wicked ways"** as outlined in the meditation above.

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!
- For our primate **Archbishop Foley Beach** (& Allison) - Pray for great wisdom, courage and strength as he gives leadership to our province. May God glorify Himself through the ACNA.
- For **Bishop Charlie Masters** (& Judy) – Pray for our diocesan bishop as he leads ANiC. May God grant him vision, 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 **ANiC congregations** that are meeting in temporary rental facilities. May God comfort and pour out His blessing on them, giving them solid hope for the future.
- 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 **Canon Andrew White** and his ministry team in the Middle East. Pray for courage, safety and the provision of basic needs for them and the people 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 as a new government is formed.
- For **God's wisdom for world's leaders** with regard to the Ukraine, Syria, Iraq and other troubled nations. Pray for the hundreds of thousands of refugees who are seeking safety and asylum in Europe and North America.
- 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 East and African Christians who are brutally persecuted for their refusal to renounce their faith in Jesus.