

## First Friday of the Month Call to Prayer – December 2014

*First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people . . . This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.* 1 Timothy 2: 1-4 ESV

Welcome to our December 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.

<p>We encourage you to set aside the first Friday, <b>December 5<sup>th</sup></b>, as a day of prayer and fasting 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 style="text-align: center;"><b>Collect for Christmas</b></p> <p><i>O GOD, who makes us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that as we joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold him when he shall come again to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with thee and the Holy Spirit, now and ever. Amen.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Book of Common Prayer</p>
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### Bishop Charlie's Call to Prayer

On Thursday November 6<sup>th</sup> in Ottawa, at the seventh Diocesan Synod of the Anglican Network in Canada, our new diocesan bishop, Charlie Masters, presented his first ever charge to synod. It was an address filled with joy, thanksgiving, delight in what the Lord has accomplished in our movement, and specific vision for our future. It included what has come to be known as Bishop Charlie's Five Priorities. (If you would like to read Bishop Charlie's entire charge to synod, you can find it [here](#).)

As he introduced them, the bishop said, "*My prayer is that these qualities or priorities might be established as the marks or the DNA of our life together and would always sustain us.*" On the prayer bookmarks that were distributed, Bishop Charlie has written, "*Pray that God will make our five priorities **a transformational reality** in the life of every ANiC congregation.*" He is asking every member of ANiC churches from coast to coast to stand with him in prayer concerning these strategic priorities.

If you were not at synod nor have had the opportunity as yet to attend one of the Bishop's cross-Canada Regional Gatherings, you may well be asking, "*What are these five priorities that you are talking about?*" Well, here they are in their simplest form, and it is my desire that we would learn how to pray for each one of these in turn:

The five priorities are as follows:

1. Bold Witnesses
2. Biblically Grounded
3. Loving Children
4. On Mission
5. Planting and Growing Churches

As a major part of the strategy in implementing these foundations, the bishop has established a team around each priority to give leadership under his oversight

#### 1. **Bold Witnesses**

In his comments surrounding this priority, Bishop Charlie made this statement. "*Unless we, as individuals, are equipped to share the gospel, in a way which is faithful to what the gospel is, and*

*dare to invite people to respond, there will be no harvest. Accordingly, it is my keen desire and conviction that we need to set our minds and our hearts towards training and equipping one another to know and be ready to share the good news of the gospel in a way which our family members and friends, our colleagues and our neighbours can understand."*

Our recent meditations on praying for revival in our church and in our nation fit so perfectly into this priority. Surely as we pray for a mighty visitation of God in our generation, we are also praying that the Lord will increase our passion to share the great news of the Gospel with those who have never really heard it. Training on how to winsomely give witness to the reality of Jesus' offer of amnesty to sinners like us is absolutely vital so that we can no longer say, "Well, I would share but I don't really know how, and I'm afraid of turning people off!" Also, we need to be asking the Lord to give us such a love for him and for the lost all around us that we will lose our fear of being ridiculed or rejected. Here is a sample of what our prayers around this priority might look like:

*Almighty God, you have lavished such love on us that we can scarcely find words to express our thanks. We ask you to give to each of us a deepened zeal to spread the Good News to those around us who do not yet experience your love for them. We have prayed over the past few months that you would "Rise Up" and bring a powerful awakening in our day. Now we sense, Lord, that you are asking us, too, to rise up, to overcome our timidity with the boldness of the Spirit. We deeply desire to respond to your call! Give to the leadership team around this priority effective training resources and the wisdom to know how best to apply them. Give to every ANiC church member the grace to see those around them with your eyes of compassion and sacrificial love. And may we see a glorious harvest in the days ahead. In Jesus' mighty name we pray. Amen.*

## 2. **Biblically Grounded**

As he introduced this second topic, Bishop Charlie said, "We rightly consider ourselves to be Biblical and Orthodox which is what we desire to be. But the truth is that in many ways we are still pretty weak and vulnerable in our knowledge of the Scriptures and in our capacity to be thoroughly transformed by the renewing of our minds through living in the Bible and allowing it to frame our lives. It is my hope and intention that every congregation will work very hard at helping every member of the congregation be more involved in the Bible so that our Biblical literacy grows and we are fully able 'to rightly handle the word of truth.'" (2 Timothy 2:15)

It is not enough to subscribe to an orthodox creed or to attend a church that believes in the Bible as God's word. Just as we would not ignore the details of a will leaving us a significant inheritance from a wealthy relative, so we should not miss the privilege and responsibility of steeping ourselves in "the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints" (Ephesians 1:18). There is too much at stake to be blasé because without being grounded in God's word we are much more vulnerable to deception and heresy. The knowledge of the Scriptures is our only anchor. Our prayers around this priority might be something like this:

*Heavenly Father, we ask you to give us a renewed love and passion for your word, the Bible. We are guilty of taking it for granted, and for leaving real knowledge of its teaching to the "experts"; the theologians and clergy. And yet, it is a gift to each of your children; the means by which we grow in our love for you and the means by which you protect us from sin and error. Forgive us for our neglect and lethargy. Give us spiritual eyes with which to read and understand your word. Establish discipline in each of us such that we may take care to feed our souls as well as we feed our bodies. Grant to the leadership team around this priority the wisdom to provide our preachers with the best possible training and tools for their weekly sermon preparation, and to help each parish member to become better grounded in your word. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen*

We will look at the last three of Bishop Charlie's priorities in our January edition. In the meantime, let's keep praying that God will make all these priorities a **transformational reality** in the life of every ANiC congregation!

## Thoughts on Revival Prayer

*In this feature, we will share thoughts on how we might be praying for revival in our church and in our nation. Do feel free to send me via email any insights you may have on how we might learn to grow in this type of prayer.*

### The place of prayer in revival

*“It is God’s will through His wonderful grace, that the prayers of His saints should be one of the great principal means of carrying on the designs of Christ’s kingdom in the world. When God has something very great to accomplish for His church, it is His will that there should precede it the extraordinary prayers of His people; as is manifest by Ezekiel 36:37. And it is revealed that, when God is about to accomplish great things for His church, He will begin by remarkably pouring out the spirit of grace and supplication (see Zechariah 12:10).”*

Jonathan Edwards, *Thoughts on the Revival in New England* - 1740



### Praise God ...

- **That He reigns supreme.** Despite the chaos and evil in the world, God is working out His purposes for His glory and our good!
- For the **privilege of interceding** on behalf of those around the world who are in desperate need.
- 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 incredible privilege of participating with him through prayer in his grand redemption plan.
- 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 grown weary and **allowed doubt and apathy to erode our fervour** in prayer for renewal in the Church and revival to sweep across our land.
- Our **fear in sharing Jesus with others** when we have opportunities to do so. Sometimes we have allowed embarrassment and fear of rejection to force us into silence.

### Please pray...

- For our new primate **Archbishop Foley Beach**. 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 new 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 new role as episcopal vicar to ANiC 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 for Bishops Ron Ferris and Malcolm Harding.
- 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 **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. Pray especially for the rector, Canon

Tom Carman, the leadership, and the people of **St Aidan's, Windsor, ON**, as they work through the financial impact of a surprisingly unfavourable legal decision.

- For the **Anglican Relief and Development Fund Canada (ARDFC)** as it raises the remaining funds for a pediatric ward for a busy health care centre in Yei, South Sudan. Pray also for peace in that troubled country.
- For **Canon Andrew White** and his ongoing ministry in the Middle East. Pray for courage, safety and the provision of basic needs for him, the ministries of St George's (Baghdad) and the people that they serve throughout Iraq, including the refugees in the north of Iraq.
- 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 the world's leaders** with regard to the Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Palestine, Israel and countries where Islamist terrorists are active, including Nigeria and Kenya. Pray that the evil one's agenda for violence, hatred and bloodshed would be averted. Pray for protection of innocent civilians – adults and children – who so often are the victims in today's urban warfare.