



DAILY  
PRAYER FOCUS

*in Resuming  
In-Person  
Worship*



**Mississippi Conference**  
of The United Methodist Church

Living Out  
The **POWER** of We



## INTRODUCTION



All of us are struggling with the process of resuming in person worship in these days. Some have already resumed while others will not resume for some weeks yet. We are wrestling with when and with what it will be/feel like once we come back into the buildings that mean so much to us. We know it will be different; we know it will not be the same. We are afraid of what might be lost. We are afraid of the unknown—of what this new normal will be like. It is in moments like this that we are called to prayer. So, here you will find a resource that can be utilized in many ways—in personal devotional times or in more corporate ways. However they might be used the intent is to remind us that we are people of faith and that prayer is a powerful way to connect to the triune God who has walked with all people through difficult days in the past and continues to do so today. May these verses and prayers be a blessing for you in this time.

## PRAYING FOR MY PASTOR



**Daily Scripture:** *And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding. – Jeremiah 3:15*

O Lord, our God, I pray for our pastor/s who have not had to lead in such a time as this. Fill them with Your wisdom, love, and grace. I pray for wisdom in her/his actions and decisions and may we remember that we are all called to “do no harm.” May love always be the basis of all that is done in these days, and may it always glorify You. Lord, some may agree with decisions that are made and others will not, so I especially pray for grace—for my pastor, and his/her family, some who are close and some who are not.

I pray, that as he/she seeks to lead us in worship, bible studies, mission, etc. during these unusual times that you will fill him/her with you Holy Spirit so that you mission might be accomplished. May he/she not settle for what has been but look to what can be.

All this I pray in the name of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who leads and guides every day. **Amen**





## PRAYING FOR THE LAITY IN LEADERSHIP



**Daily Scripture:** *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. – Proverbs 3:5-6*

God of all who are called by You, I pray for those among us who have been elected to lead. I know the last thing they expected when they agreed to serve in the various positions of leadership was to have to deal with decisions about closing the doors of the building and then opening them again. Lord, give them wisdom and a spirit of humility in serving. May they be able to walk through these days with hope, grace and even joy.

When frustrations come may they remember that they are not alone in these days, but that you are with them as difficult decisions around the many things in the life of the church that all too often we took for granted—tithes and offerings, greeting people who enter the building, bulletins, and providing a welcoming and safe space for gathering as the body of Christ.

As they collaborate with the pastor may the spirit of love and understanding be upon all during these days. I pray all of this in the name of God who calls us all to the work of making disciples for Jesus Christ. **Amen**

## PRAYING FOR THOSE WHO LEAD OUR MUSIC MINISTRY



**Daily Scripture:** *Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; sing praise to his name, for that is pleasant. – Psalm 135:3*

God of the psalmists, I pray today for those who are involved in the music ministry of the church song leaders, choir directors, pianists, organists, all accompanists, and choir members. In these days when we have been unable to gather in traditional ways, I am grateful for the ways in which we have been able to share in the gift of music in different ways because music speaks to my soul in ways that nothing else can. Lord, I look forward to the day when the choir loft will once again be full but help me be patient and know that in time You will show us a way forward. I pray for those leading us in the days ahead to have the knowledge, wisdom, strength, and perseverance as they lead in the Spirit of the Living God. May the music continue to speak to my heart, head, and spirit and glorify the God of Creation and new birth for it is in Christ's holy name, I pray. **Amen**







## PRAYING FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH, FAMILIES, AND LEADERS



**Daily Scripture:** *All your children shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children. – Isaiah 54:13*

God who invites children into your kingdom, today I pray for children and youth. This is an especially difficult time for them to not be able to play and gather with friends, and cannot spend time with some family members due to distance or care for one another's health. Help them to be nurtured in special ways and to be assured of their safety. May they not be afraid or anxious, but may they be filled with a spirit of grace, joy, creativity, and love.

Lord, be with our youth as they lead us into new and creative ways to stay in touch with each other. May we utilize their gifts to the glory of Your Kingdom here on earth. Continue to guide them in Your ways in these days. Help us to be sources of hope and encouragement as we seek to apprentice them in their faith.

I pray for families. For some it is a time of struggle due to loss of jobs. For some it is a time of working from home and children whose schedule is disrupted—all at the same time. For all of us it is a time of realizing our need for one another. As a member of the body of Christ I am called to remember the commitment I made at the sacrament of Baptism and to help support and encourage all of God's children. So, Lord, help me live into that responsibility in a special way in these days.

For those who are Sunday school teachers, children's ministry leaders, and youth leaders, I pray for love and grace as we all live into a virtual understanding of community and support. Continue to spark our imaginations for new and meaningful ways to stay connected with each other. May they not grow weary or discouraged, but instead be encouraged by Your calling upon their life to be a light in the darkness. In Christ's name, I pray. **Amen**

## PRAYING FOR OLDER ADULTS



**Daily Scripture:** *Even to your old age and gray hairs I am He, I am He who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you. – Isaiah 46:4*

God of the ages, I pray this day for those who have taught us, loved us, and witnessed to Your presence in our midst in the past. They have contributed to our faith journey in numerous ways. May we continue to learn from their wisdom and grace during these days. Help me to hear their stories of life's journey with a new listening spirit. May their courage to face uncertainty be a witness of your strength and presence in their lives.

Lord, be with those who are vulnerable to COVID 19, and help me to be sensitive to their particular needs during this time. Where there is fear, may I offer a listening and understanding ear. Where there is loneliness, may I offer a safe consistent presence. Where there is joy, may I offer the spirit of mutual celebration. Where there is grief over not being able to be with family, may I be a representative of the larger family of God in their midst.

As I am surrounded by such a wonderful cloud of witnesses, help me to be grateful for the lessons I've learned, the gifts I've been given, and the faithful witnesses I have been able to experience. In a spirit of gratitude and grace, I pray. **Amen**





## PRAYING FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS AND FIRST RESPONDERS



**Daily Scripture:** *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. – II Corinthians 1:3-4*

God, as the great physician, we know that you are the one who brings about wholeness and healing. We know that you are the one who has gifted certain people among us with the ability to be there in a crisis. Thank you for Your gifts in their lives and their willingness to use them.

Lord, we know that it is a heavy burden these health care workers and first responders bear. While taking care of people who are ill and then also being concerned about their own families. They have taken on roles of parent, child, priest, and friend for their patients who have no one with them. The burden is great, but Your word reminds us that we are yoked with you and you will carry us. I pray this day for Your strength to carry each physician, nurse, assistant, technician, therapist, cafeteria worker, ambulance attendant, EMT, and custodian as they seek to be the Light of Christ in the darkness. Give them your grace as they walk in weariness. Give them your wisdom as difficult decisions are made. Provide for them a hedge of protection of body, mind, and spirit. May I not take my own health for granted.

Holy God, above all things may I be the word of encouragement and love, not the word of frustration and distrust in these and all situations for it is in the name of Christ, the healer, I pray. **Amen**

## PRAYING FOR THOSE WHO HAVE JOINED US IN WORSHIP/BIBLE STUDIES ONLINE



**Daily Scripture:** *Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” – Matthew 28:16-20*

God of all, thank you for using this time as a new way to invite people into relationship with you. May I not forget that in your word you have called us to “go and make disciples.” Lord, we are grateful that you have provided opportunities for those who are pricked by Your prevenient grace to listen/watch/engage in worship services online on Facebook, YouTube, websites, etc. Help me to be wise enough to continue to reach out even as we move into in person worship in whatever form it may be.

May I be motivated by the POWER of Your Holy Spirit to speak to the hearts of those who need to experience Your love, grace, and mercy in their lives. Where there is need, may I be the hands and heart that provide. Where there is abundance, may I be filled with a heart of gratitude.

May the relationships that we already have, or the ones that will be, be a Holy time of growth and transformation. May we all continue to meet people where they are so that all may grow in faith and in our walk with You. In the Name of the One who calls us all, Jesus Christ the Lord, I pray. **Amen**







## PRAYING FOR THOSE WHO ARE GRIEVING



**Daily Scripture:** *For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

– Romans 8:38-39

God of mercy and compassion, I pray for all of those who grieve this day. I grieve for those who are grieving the loss of connection and community. I pray with those who have lost loved ones during these days of “sheltering in place” whether it be from COVID 19 or other causes. As people of faith in Mississippi we are accustomed to being there in person when someone in our community dies. We cook, we visit, we hug, we “show up,” but we have not been able to do this in the same ways as we have in the past. We have had to come up with other ways to show our love. We have gathered around the church/cemetery in our cars and, we have joined in “parades” around homes and churches, but it seems so inadequate. Remind us, Lord, of Your presence that reaches beyond our physical capacity. Remind us that Your Holy Spirit reaches beyond what we comprehend and that You heal with a balm that no one or nothing can take away. I claim Your word of hope and healing for me and for others today. And I pray in the name of Jesus who loves me and never forsakes me or any of Your children. **Amen**







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