

MARCH, 2021



prayer

GUIDE

A Guide for Your Prayer Time



"HE WAS A MAN OF SORROWS, ACQUAINTED WITH GRIEF..." -- ISAIAH 53:3

It was a year ago this month that we began "quarantine." We learned about social distancing, bought a mask (then MANY masks!), and waited for the pandemic to go away.

Twelve months later, we're still here. Almost every one of us – and everyone we know – has experienced sorrow and loss...isolation, anxiety, uncertainty, and (for some) tragedy.

When we try to pray during difficult times, it can help to remember that Jesus himself was known as a "man of sorrows." In Jesus, God came to walk where we walk and feel what we feel. So our prayers do not go to a distant healer who has never experienced pain, but instead to a friend alongside of us.

"OUT OF THE DEPTHS, LORD, I CRY OUT TO YOU..."

Of all the psalms in the Bible, most are songs of lament. Lament prayers (like Psalm 4 or Psalm 130) are "cries of belief in a good God, a God who has His ear to our hearts, a God who transfigures the ugly into beauty." (Ann Voskamp)

To pray such a prayer for yourself, start your prayer by giving a voice to any pain that is in your soul. Focus on feelings and emotions that are present more than specific events. Read Psalm 4 or Psalm 130. It also may be helpful to start by saying, "God, I feel..." or "God, I'm..."

Take notice: many people feel guilty about praying this way, but this is NOT a prayer that disappoints God! The Holy Spirit welcomes our feelings, understands our frustration, and (by placing in God's word so many psalms of lament) sanctifies the complaints of those who pour their hearts out to God.

HEALTH + CRITICAL ILLNESS

Praying for other people is a way to partner with them in their difficulties. Even if the person is not known, the act of praying beyond ourselves keeps us mindful that God's agenda is always much larger than our own circumstances. And (of course) God knows the person and their need, even when we do not.

You are invited to pray for those listed below. Of course, please add to this list the people that you do know.

Brice Baumgartner - struggling with kidney failure

Dave Stoop - still recovering from December stroke

Vinnie Sollars – upcoming hernia surgery

George Sollars – continued healing

Terry Hardison – at home on a ventilator with round-the-clock medical care

Gerry Chase – healing from lung issues

Additional Prayers for...

St. Andrew's leaders

The safe resumption of worship in the church sanctuary

Those affected by Covid19, those awaiting a vaccine or trying to cope with the isolation, anxiety and depression that often come with quarantine

THOSE IN GRIEF

The following persons from St. Andrew's have passed away during the last month – please pray God's comfort and strength for their families and friends...

Gloria Ryan

Ken Perry

David and Eleanor Frasier

John Middleton

Bob Huntsberger

"...YET I WILL PRAISE HIM." --

Psalms of lament begin with complaints to God, but they almost always end with praise. Like a parent who finds her young child crying, God invites us to share our complaints and sorrows, but after we do, we need to fall into God's arms.

Take a moment to read Revelation 21:1-4. While these past twelve months have caused disorientation and despair, we are a people who find our hope not only in this life, but in eternity. Remember the eternal promises God has given you!

"FOR THOSE WHO SERVE IN THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD"

THIS MONTH, PLEASE PRAY FOR FIRST RESPONDERS.

With all of the unrest and sorrow present in our world, we invite you to join us in praying for first responders this month. As our police officers, firefighters and healthcare workers strive to keep us safe and in good health, let us ask the Lord to provide an extra hedge of protection around them.

Lord, thank you for calling our sisters and brothers to work in the demanding positions that the frontline requires. As they put their health and often their life at risk to keep us safe, please watch over them. Glve them strength and keep them healthy. Comfort their families who worry for them. Help them to know how much they are valued as they live out the calling you have placed on their lives. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

TO ADD YOUR PRAYER REQUEST TO THIS GUIDE:

This Prayer Guide offers encouragement and lists prayer requests for St. Andrew's church family, mission partners and individuals who give permission for their names to be in print. Other requests are forwarded to prayer intercessors who pray daily.

To add or renew a prayer request, contact a church pastor or email Tracy Murphy tracym@sapres.org, or visit sapres.org.