

# Prayer Gathering Service

*(index cards should be distributed along with the bulletins)*

Welcome

“The aim of ‘Praying Our Way Forward’ is to ask and listen for God’s leadership at this critical time in the life of our church.” (Bishop Al Gwinn) Prayer, always important, is especially so at this time in order to undergird our United Methodist Church and the Commission on a Way Forward. Every conference in The United Methodist Church has been assigned a week of prayer focused in these two areas: 1) Our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, and 2) the work of the Commission on a Way Forward. Each district in our Susquehanna Conference has been assigned a day this week when its laity and clergy members will pray for these two areas through both a 24 hour prayer vigil as well this prayer service. Let us now join together in the Call to Prayer.

Call to Prayer

Leader: O Lord, You tell us that wherever two or more are gathered in your name, you are with us.

**People: We gather in your name, O Lord.**

Leader: You tell us that whoever asks, will receive.

**People: We ask of you, O Lord.**

Leader: You tell us that whoever seeks, will find.

**People: We seek you, O Lord.**

Leader: You tell us that whoever knocks, the door will be opened.

**People: We knock at your door, O Lord.**

**All: O Lord, we gather together in your name during this time of prayer to receive your mercy, seek your wisdom, and find peace.**

Opening Hymn options

Come and Find the Quiet Center	2128
Lord, Listen To Your Children Praying	2193
Take Time to Be Holy	395

Opening Prayer (in unison)

**O Loving God, Your plans are for our welfare and for our good and not for evil. Guide us, your people, in our time of discernment with mercy, grace and wisdom so that we may do your will and foster healing and peace in our united church. Through Jesus Christ your Son, we pray. Amen**

Proclamation & Response

Old Testament Lesson Exodus 33:12-20  
Epistle Lesson: Philippians 2:1-4 or Colossian 2:1-7  
Gospel Lesson John 17:6-20

Prayer Hymn Options

Have Thine Own Way, Lord	382
Lead Me, Lord	473
As the Deer	2025

Silent Time of Reflection & Prayer (allow between 5 - 10 minutes)

You are invited to take this time to seek the Holy Spirit's guidance as we now pray for our mission of making disciples and for wisdom and discernment for the members of the Commission on a Way Forward. The scriptures read and these two quotes may help you in this time of reflection and prayer.

"Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart though we are not of one opinion? Without all doubt, we may. Herein all the children of God may unite, notwithstanding these smaller differences."<sup>1</sup> John Wesley

"In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, charity."<sup>2</sup> Rupertus Meldenius

Offering of our Hopes & Fears

Invite people to write a hope or fear they have pertaining to our mission or the

Commission on a Way Forward

Collect the index cards as our offering

Clergy may gather around/over the hope and fear offerings

Worship leader prays

Invitation to the Table

UMH 12

Confession & Words of Assurance

The Great Thanksgiving (from the A Service of Healing 1, *The United Methodist Book of Worship*, 618-619)

UMH 13

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<sup>1</sup> The Sermons of John Wesley - Sermon 39, "Catholic Spirit", <http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-sermons-of-john-wesley-1872-edition/sermon-39-catholic-spirit>

<sup>2</sup> German Lutheran theologian of the early seventeenth century, Rupertus Meldenius. The phrase occurs in a tract on Christian unity written (circa 1627) during the Thirty Years War (1618–1648), a bloody time in European history in which religious tensions played a significant role. <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/essentials-unity-non-essentials-liberty-all-things/>

The Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer

Closing Hymn options (if we can, join in a circle to sing or join hands in the pews)

They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love                      2223

Blest Be the Tie That Binds    557

Benediction

## Additional Items



### Exodus 33:12-20

12 Moses said to the Lord, “See, you have said to me, ‘Bring up this people’; but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.’ 13 Now if I have found favor in your sight, show me your ways, so that I may know you and find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people.” 14 He said, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” 15 And he said to him, “If your presence will not go, do not carry us up from here. 16 For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us? In this way, we shall be distinct, I and your people, from every people on the face of the earth.”

17 The Lord said to Moses, “I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name.” 18 Moses said, “Show me your glory, I pray.” 19 And he said, “I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, ‘The Lord’;[a] and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.

### Philippians 2:1-4

2 If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, 2 make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. 3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.

### Colossians 2:1-7

1 For I want you to know how much I am struggling for you, and for those in Laodicea, and for all who have not seen me face to face. 2 I want their hearts to be encouraged and united in love, so that they may have all the riches of assured understanding and have the knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ himself, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. 4 I am saying this so that no one may deceive you with plausible arguments. 5 For

though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, and I rejoice to see your morale and the firmness of your faith in Christ. 6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, 7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

John 17:6-20

6 "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; 8 for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. 9 I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. 11 And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I protected them in your name that [b] you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, [c] so that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. [d] 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 15 I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. [e] 16 They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

The Great Thanksgiving (from the A Service of Healing 1, *The United Methodist Book of Worship*, 618-619)

*The pastor may administer Holy Communion to all present who wish to share at the Lord's table, the people using A Service of Word and Table III (UMH) or one of the musical settings (UMH) and the pastor using the following.*

*The pastor, standing if possible behind the Lord's table, facing the people from this time through the Breaking of Bread, takes the bread and cup; and the bread and wine are prepared for the meal. The pastor then prays:*

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

*(The pastor may lift hands and keep them raised.)*

**People: We lift them up to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,  
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,  
Father Almighty (almighty God), creator of heaven and earth.  
In the beginning, when darkness covered the face of the earth  
and nothing existed but chaos,  
your Spirit swept across the waters.

You spoke but a word, and light was separated from darkness.  
And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*(The pastor may lower hands.)*

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

*(The pastor may raise hands.)*

Leader: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ:  
who lived among us and knew human pain and suffering;  
who called all who were burdened and heavy laden and gave them rest;  
who healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners;  
who cast out demons and showed us the way to you through faith;  
who took our suffering upon himself,  
that we might be cleansed of our sins and receive eternal life.  
By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection,  
you gave birth to your Church,  
delivered us from slavery to sin and death,

and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

*(The pastor may hold hands, palms down, over the bread, or touch the bread, or lift the bread.)*

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread,  
gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me."

*(The pastor may hold hands, palms down, over the cup, or touch the cup, or lift the cup.)*

When the supper was over he took the cup,  
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,  
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

*(The pastor may raise hands.)*

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,  
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving  
as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us,  
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**All: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

*(The pastor may hold hands, palms down, over the bread and cup.)*

Leader: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,  
and on these gifts of bread and wine.

Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,  
that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

*(The pastor may raise hands.)*

By the same Spirit heal us in body, mind, and spirit,  
cleansing away all that would separate us from you.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,  
one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world,

until Christ comes in victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,  
all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father (God ), now and forever.

Amen.

And now, let us pray together the prayer Jesus taught his disciples . . .

*(All pray the Lord's Prayer, using one of the forms in UMH 270–71, 894–96.*

*The pastor, still standing behind the Lord's table, facing the people, breaks the bread and then lifts the cup, in silence or with appropriate words.*

*The bread and wine are given to the people, with these or other words being exchanged:)*

Leader: The body of Christ, given for you. Amen.

Leader: The blood of Christ, given for you. Amen.

*(When all have received, the Lord's table is put in order.)*

### **Come and Find the Quiet Center (TFWS 2128)**

1. Come and find the quiet center

in the busy life we lead,

Find the room for hope to enter,

find the frame where we are freed:

Clear the chaos and the clutter,

clear our eyes that they may see

all the things that really matter,

be at peace, and simply be.

2. Silence is a friend who claims us,

Cools the heat and slows the pace,

God it is who speaks and names us,

Knows our being, touches base,

Making space within our thinking,

Lifting shades to show the sun,

raising courage when we're shrinking,  
finding scope for faith begun.

3. In the Spirit let us travel,  
open to each other's pain,  
let our loves and fears unravel,  
celebrate the space we gain:

There's a place for deepest dreaming,  
there's a time for heart to care,  
in the Spirit's lively scheming  
there is always room to spare.

**Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying (TFWS 2193)**

Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Lord, send your Spirit in this place.  
Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Send us love, send us power, send us grace.

**Take Time to Be Holy (UMH 395)**

1. Take time to be holy,  
speak oft with thy Lord;  
abide in him always,  
and feed on his word.  
Make friends of God's children,  
help those who are weak,  
forgetting in nothing  
his blessing to seek.

2. Take time to be holy,  
the world rushes on;

spend much time in secret  
with Jesus alone.

By looking to Jesus,  
like him thou shalt be;  
thy friends in thy conduct  
his likeness shall see.

3. Take time to be holy,  
let him be thy guide,  
and run not before him,  
whatever betide.

In joy or in sorrow,  
still follow the Lord,  
and, looking to Jesus,  
still trust in his word.

4. Take time to be holy,  
be calm in thy soul,  
each thought and each motive  
beneath his control.

Thus led by his spirit  
to fountains of love,  
thou soon shalt be fitted  
for service above.

**Lead Me, Lord (UMH 473)**

Lead me, Lord, lead me in thy righteousness;  
make thy way plain before my face.

For it is thou, Lord, thou Lord, only,  
that makest me dwell in safety.

### **Have Thine Own Way, Lord (UMH 382)**

1. Have thine own way, Lord! Have thine own way!

Thou art the potter, I am the clay.

Mold me and make me after thy will,

while I am waiting, yielded and still.

2. Have thine own way, Lord! Have thine own way!

Search me and try me, Savior today!

Wash me just now, Lord, wash me just now,

as in thy presence humbly I bow.

3. Have thine own way, Lord! Have thine own way!

Wounded and weary, help me I pray!

Power, all power, surely is thine!

Touch me and heal me, Savior divine!

4. Have thine own way, Lord! Have thine own way!

Hold o'er my being absolute sway.

Fill with thy Spirit till all shall see

Christ only, always, living in me!

### **As the Deer (TFWS 2025)**

1. As the deer pants the for water,

so my soul longs after you.

You alone are my heart's desire,

and I long to worship you.

You alone are my strength, my shield;

to you alone may my spirit yield.

You alone are my heart's desire,

And I long to worship you.

### **They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love (TFWS 2223)**

1. We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord

And we pray that all unity may one day be restored

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love

They will know we are Christians by our love

2. We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand

We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand

And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love

They will know we are Christians by our love

3. We will work with each other, we will work side by side

We will work with each other, we will work side by side

And we'll guard each one's dignity and save each one's pride

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love

They will know we are Christians by our love

4. All praise to the Father, from whom all things come,

and all praise to Christ Jesus, God's only son,

and all praise to the Spirit who makes us one.

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love

They will know we are Christians by our love

### **Blest Be the Tie That Binds (UMH 577)**

1. Blest be the tie that binds

our hearts in Christian love;

the fellowship of kindred minds

is like to that above.

2. Before our Father's throne  
we pour our ardent prayers;  
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,  
our comforts and our cares.

3. We share each other's woes,  
our mutual burdens bear;  
and often for each other flows  
the sympathizing tear.

4. When we asunder part,  
it gives us inward pain;  
but we shall still be joined in heart,  
and hope to meet again.