

Call to Worship

May the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you rule the peoples with equity
and guide the nations of the earth.

**May the peoples praise you, God;
may all the peoples praise you.**

The land yields its harvest;
God, our God, blesses us.

**May the peoples praise you, God;
may all the peoples praise you.**

Prayer of Approach

God of all Providence, we give you thanks for all of life and the experience life brings us. We thank you for the joys, sorrows, trials, failures and triumphs. Above all we thank you for the hope we have in Christ, that we find purpose, salvation and fulfillment in him.

We praise you for the land that we share, its beauty, the rich resources with which you have provided for our benefit and stewardship. We thank you for all the different people: for our aboriginal people, for European, Chinese, Japanese and African settlers, and for new Canadians from around the world. We thank you for the gift of languages and cultures which bring mystery and beauty to our cultural fabric, which we cherish. Enable us to learn from one another and to rejoice in the variety of humanity you have provided us. May we all bring glory to you and your purposes, O God, as we seek to work in your Kingdom of Heaven, on earth. Hear our prayer, O God, help us O Spirit! Through Christ we pray. Amen.

Prayer of Confession

O God of all, provider of all, gather us as one, as we confess to you our sins,
in the confidence afforded by your grace.

O Give of Life, we rejoice in all we have, yet often we come to believe that what we have is ours by right and forget to give thanks for all that you provide. Forgive us, O God, for comfortably closing our eyes to the faces of those on need who seek us out as an answer to prayer.

Lord have mercy on us.

With full stomachs and warm homes, we often make token gestures to our neighbours, hungry and cold. We feel that we have done our part, given our share yet you have asked us to make sacrifice, in thanksgiving.

Christ, have mercy on us.

With our hands tightly grasped to our treasures on earth, we cannot reach out to our sisters and brothers who are oppressed around the world or even in our communities. Forgive us for clinging to our own possessions rather than to you and your providence. Make us whole that our spirit and confession may meet in harmony with our actions and sacrifices.

Holy Spirit, be our help, rest upon us and save us.

In the name of Jesus we pray, amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

Friends, while it is true we have all sinned, it is a greater truth that we are forgiven through God's love in Jesus Christ. To all who trust in God's forgiveness and humbly seek the mercy of the gospel I say, in Jesus Christ our sin is forgiven, fully. Be at peace with God, with yourself and with one another.

Hymn # 674 *In the Bulb*

1. In the bulb there is a flower,
in the seed, an apple tree,
in cocoons, a hidden promise:
butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter
there's a spring that waits to be,
unrevealed until its season,
something God alone can see.

2. There's a song in every silence,
seeking word and melody;
there's a dawn in every darkness,
bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future;
what it holds, a mystery,
unrevealed until its season,
something God alone can see.

3. In our end is our beginning,
in our time, infinity;
in our doubt there is believing,
in our life, eternity,
in our death, a resurrection,
at the last, a victory,
unrevealed until its season,
something God alone can see.

Prayer for Understanding

God of prophets and parables, as we gather to listen to the scriptures read and proclaimed, may we hear your voice, and in hearing, may our lives be transformed by your grace.

Scripture: Deuteronomy 8:7-18

For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land with flowing streams, with springs and underground waters welling up in valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, a land where you may eat bread without scarcity, where you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron and from whose hills you may mine copper.

You shall eat your fill and bless the LORD your God for the good land that he has given you. Take care that you do not forget the LORD your God, by failing to keep his commandments, his ordinances, and his statutes, which I am commanding you today.

When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them, and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, an arid wasteland with poisonous snakes and scorpions. He made water flow for you from flint rock, and fed you in the wilderness with manna that your ancestors did not know, to humble you and to test you, and in the end to do you good.

Do not say to yourself, "My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth." But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today.

Message

Do you ever forget something?

I forget where I put things. In a rush I put things down and then when I am in a rush I forget where I put them down.

It's funny I think being busy, being in a rush -stress these may all be part of being forgetful ... what do you think? It often happens with my keys. It's funny in a way ... keys are supposed to help me get where I am going, they are meant to help get me into my place ... but when you forget where your keys are ... you get stuck ... stuck until you remember your keys ...

Maybe you agree ... being in a rush is part of being forgetful.

Maybe I've lost you already and you can't remember what we're talking about. Can you remember? Or maybe we all have collective forgetfulness?

Collective forgetfulness. I think this is a thing. Don't you? This is why we collectively mark important things such as Remembrance Day and Thanksgiving ... in order that we collectively remember ... sacrifice and providence.

In our passage from Deuteronomy, we are reminded to thankful and no to become too prideful.

Do not say to yourself, "My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth." But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today.

It isn't just a problem for the people of ancient times, it is an everyday problem for people. We let pride and success go to our heads. This is why it's so easy to find quotes and books and instruction about how NOT to success lead to failure.

One thing that I often hear is that success often is related to core values, whereas failure comes from overstepping or taking too big a risk or going beyond the scope of business or expertise ... or plainly forgetting one's mission or goal.

In 2009 The New York Times almost went out of business. Today they are very profitable again because they remembered what they were: a news reporting agency. When they were facing bankruptcy one of the things they had to sell was their share of the Boston Red Sox. That's right ... Boston's baseball team was partly owned by the New York Times.

The New York Times sold their sox and many other assets unrelated to reporting and news and today they are a very profitable company again.

They remembered who they were. They sacrificed ... especially the nonessential ... and today they are doing what their name says they should be doing: reporting the news. And their shareholders, I am sure are thankful and grateful.

It started with remembering who they were.

In our reading the Israelites are just about to enter the land and Moses is telling them how important it will be to remember who they were ... and whose they are ... and to remember this.

Remember says Moses ... to remember and be thankful.

The land is good. There will be plenty. The land will yield many good things. God says build homes and enjoy the flourishing of the flocks and the crops ... but when you become wealthy don't forget who brought you here.

Don't forget who gave you the land. And stay humble and thankful.

He says it will be easy to forget to be thankful when you're managing your households and your flocks and your vineyards and enjoying all that is now yours.

You will be working hard ... very hard ... and you'll admire your work ... and maybe sometimes in the business you'll forget who made it all possible because in all your hard work and effort you'll come to believe that you deserve everything you have ... because of your hard work alone.

You'll forget where you came from and you'll forget whose you are.

Here is a couple of things to remember:

when we forget to give thanks to God for all that we have, we forget about grace. Nothing happens without grace. Nothing grows ... nothing is fruitful ... nothing good comes to us ... except by the grace of God.

When we forget this we forget that it is God who lifts us up ... when we forget we believe by our pride that we have earned everything ... when almost everything is by grace. God provides.

when we forget to be grateful, we become entitled. Hard work may make some of us wealthy hard work also makes us feel entitled NOT ONLY to what we have but that which we can still get. When we forget to be grateful ... we forget to be thankful to God and we risk forgetting to be generous to our neighbours.

Moses warns the people ... don't forget. You're going to be busy managing your wealth and assets ... don't forget that you are God's people ... and the people of God never forget where every good thing comes from ...

Here is one of those quotes I was telling you about:

“Never let success get to your head; never let failure get to your heart.” -Anonymous

Moses would agree with the statement: never let success get to your head ... it is what these verses are all about. But more importantly Jesus would remind us that the other statement is also true: never let failure get to your heart ...

Moses says the statutes of God should never be forgotten and never leave your consciousness ... but Jesus would say ... that each of us is ... close to God's heart ... never forget that. And keep God closest in your heart.

And then Jesus would say also: even if something else takes God's place in your heart ... don't let that failure consume your heart. But when you remember whose you are ... rejoice ... and be thankful ... as we put down our pride of place ... let us also put down our shame in failure ... and let our hearts be full again ... full again with the gifts of God ... with hearts full be thankful ...

This is the key to remembering ... the key to remembering whose we are ... the key to remembering the source of every good thing ... the key to remembering to be thankful ... these are the keys ... don't forget the keys ... don't forget your keys ...

Offering

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Prayers of the People

O Ever faithful Lord, O Ever gracious Son, O Ever present Spirit,
For the many gifts you grant us and the privilege to enjoy these things;
For your daily provision and for the constant signs of your healing love;
For the hope amidst despair and the light which always shines;
For all these things, 'thank you' is just so inadequate
but it's all we have: ... to show our gratitude in word, in thought and in action.

So thank you, Lord and may our thanks move beyond words
to transform us into thankful folk, faithful folk, seeing folk,
folk who see need and see the need to act,
folk who love to live and live to love,
folk who serve you by serving others.

Help us to be amongst those
who include the excluded
and bring in those who are marginalized,
that when the opportunities come our way
to be healers of division and hurt,
to be peacemakers and restorers,
we won't be found wanting.

Loving, personal God,
We bring before you those people and issues that are closest to us
and that occupy our minds at this time ...
though apart, in our own homes, we pray now together for those who we know need your help
and blessing, hear us as we name them before you, Loving God ...

Mighty, wonderful Saviour,
we bring before you people and issues from around our world,
including those we'll never know personally
but who remain our sisters and brothers in you ...
though apart, in our own homes, we pray now together for those situations and crises that,
near or far, need your help in being resolved, hear us as we name them before you, Loving God

Transforming, healing Spirit
help us to make the light shine in dark places,
to make peace known in violent places,

and to bring hope to despondent places.
Our other prayers, spoken and silent
are brought to you now ...

And we pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray together saying:

Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done in earth,
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever. Amen.

Hymn #807 *We Plough the Fields and Scatter*

1. *We plough the fields and scatter
the good seed on the land,
but it is fed and watered
by God's almighty hand:
you send the snow in winter,
the warmth to swell the grain,
the breezes and the sunshine,
and soft refreshing rain.*

Refrain:

*All good gifts around us
are sent from heaven above;
we thank you, Lord, we thank you, Lord
for all your love.*

2. *You only are the Maker
of all things near and far;
you paint the wayside flower,
you light the evening star;
the winds and waves obey you;
by you the birds are fed;
much more to us, your children,
you give our daily bread. **Refrain***

3. *We thank you, our provider,*

*for all things bright and good,
the seedtime and the harvest,
our life, our health, our food.
No gifts have we to offer
for all your love imparts,
but that which you most welcome:
our humble, thankful hearts. **Refrain***

Blessing and Commissioning

Holy Spirit, Send us as you free us, from all fear and worry
that, ever trusting in your goodness, we may always praise your mighty deeds
and give you thanks for the bounty of your gifts.
Make us agents of thanksgiving and ambassadors of gratefulness. Amen.