

Sunday - Worship, Pastors, Church leaders as they lead during this new form of worshipping

## **Introduction**

Thank you for choosing to participate in this Prayer Vigil.

Your passion for prayer is evident in the sacrifice of time you are making today. As you come to Him, be certain and confident that God will hear and answer these prayers. He will provide you with all you need to put Jesus' words into practice.

For the second day of our FLGA District Prayer Vigil, we are focusing on our walk together, our worship and our church workers. We have almost 200 congregations in our District. Some have been worshipping together for over 100 years, others for just a few. We have congregations in big cities and rural areas, by the water and near the mountains. Today we pray for these worshipping communities. The people, that by Your grace, fill our sanctuaries.

If you find your mind wandering or if you have additional time, begin to meditate on one of the suggested scriptures relating to the Vigil's theme. They are listed for you on the last page of this document. May this time of prayer and meditation with our Lord open your heart more fully and prepare you for the many challenges and blessings that lie ahead!

## *Opening Prayer*

Gracious God, in Your Word, we are reminded how it "is good for us to gather" as Your loved and redeemed people. Lord, we have missed being in community with each other, singing Your praises, praying, growing and then being sent out. Yet even more importantly, we treasure Your presence with us in Word and the Sacrament of Your table. For those who still cannot meet together, be with them in these days when it is not possible. When we must be apart for reasons of safety, we trust that You surround us with Your protection. Help us to celebrate the ways that we can be connected and continue to experience Your promise "that where two or three are gathered together in Your name, You are present." Encourage us in connecting as we are able, reaching out to our neighbors in love with the hope of Christ. Lord in Your mercy.

Guide our congregations, Pastors and all those who serve Your Church, as we consider how best to prepare and respond in our congregations, families, workplaces, and communities. Give us courage to face these days with faith, not fear! Lead us to respond boldly with compassion, concern, and acts of service, trusting that You abide with us always. Lord in Your mercy.

Lord, we are called to be Your servants. Yet we have nothing to offer except the desire to honor You and be workers in Your harvest. We are but frail broken vessels, yet You chose us. We therefore pray, grant us Your Holy Spirit, that we would not speak our own words, but Your Word. We pray this not for our own benefit or pleasure, but that others too may know of Your love, power and protection. Lord in Your mercy.

Give us courage to confess the name of Jesus Christ before all men. Help our congregations and each of us as individuals to care for them, to act as neighbors to them and to share with them what You have given to us. Send us, Lord as witnesses of the Good News of Your love made known in Jesus Christ. Lord in Your mercy.

God, You are our peace and our strength, we pray for Your Church, our local congregations, our nation and the world as we face the uncertainties around the corona virus. Protect the most vulnerable among us, especially all who are currently sick or in isolation. Grant wisdom, patience, and clarity to those on the front lines, whether in healthcare, government service or in the many other essential services that meet the needs of Your people. And Lord, watch over them and protect them as they perform their duties. Lord in Your mercy.

Keep us, dear Lord, under the shadow of Your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful and lift up all who are hurting and struggling. Provide for Your peoples' needs as You provide the resources for the mission and ministry of Your Church. Lord, we pray this so that we may rejoice in Your comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from Your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayer offered by Rev. James Rockey, Amazing Grace Lutheran Church, Oxford, FL

## Specific Prayers

- Unity for congregations as they focus on the next steps.
- For congregation members who grieve the loss of other members from the COVID-19 virus.
- Comfort for those who are missing in-person gatherings.
- Thanksgiving for technology that allows people to continue to connect with other. Also, that the technology are using during these times will continue to offer creative ways reach new people.
- Assurance for those who wish to receive communion, but are unable to at this time.
- Continued spiritual growth as member continue to read, mark and inwardly digest God's Word at home.
- Encouragement for the children who haven't been able to attend Sunday School.
- For confirmands who have had their confirmation impacted..
- Solutions for the financial challenges our churches are facing.
- For volunteers as they look to re-enter their ministry, some with excitement, others with anxiety.
- Peace for family members who mourn the death of loved ones and who have been unable to attend funeral services.
- Guidance for church leaders, as they look to fill open pastorates and ministry and volunteer positions.
- Patience and understanding for everyone as difficult decisions are made that impact our churches.

- Discernment, as we seek God's will in every decision that is made.
- That the Holy Spirit will guide leaders to prepare and plan to re-open their ministries carefully and safely
- That the Holy Spirit will direct leaders to get ready for the post-COVID-19 world, for the church to recover and re-emerge in the strength of the Lord
- That the church and her leaders will proclaim the Good News, the Crucified, Resurrected, and Ascended Lord Jesus throughout the crisis – and after!

## Closing Prayer

Glorious God our Father, You are able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine. According to Your power that is at work within us, to You be glory in the Church throughout all generations, and in Christ Jesus, Your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen!

Closing prayer offered by Rev. Charles T. Reich, Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church, Winter Haven, FL

## Suggested Scripture Readings

- Matthew 11:28 : Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.
- Psalm 46:10 : Be still and know that I am God
- Psalm 145:4 : One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts.
- 2 Timothy 3:16 : All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness.
- Colossians 4:2 : Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.
- Romans 12:1 : Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.
- Mark 6:31 : Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.
- Luke 15:23 : Let's have a feast and celebrate.
- Mark 2:27 : The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.
- Ephesians 4:32 : Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.
- Philippians 2:12 : If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.