

GOD SPEAKS

READ ISAIAH 61:1-3, 5-7

*This Word from God is excerpted from a study prepared by Rev. Dr. Peter Meier for **God's Sending Heart**, Study 23, "Now is the Time!" Download the entire devotion and book at thegreatsending.org.*

I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation, 2 Corinthians 6:2

We may be most familiar with these verses from Isaiah because we've heard them in the New Testament. In chapter 4, Luke tells us that Jesus is in the synagogue in His hometown of Nazareth. The attendant gives Jesus the scroll from Isaiah, which contains this chapter. Jesus reads the first two verses, rolls up the scroll, and hands it back to the attendant. He sits down. Everyone is watching. Jesus begins by saying, "Today, as you listen, this Scripture is fulfilled."

[Isaiah] told of the purposeful sending, with authority, of Messiah, the Anointed One. This is Jesus. This is what Jesus came to do, and this is what Jesus did... All of these word pictures [in this Scripture] are pictures of the beauty and wholeness we have in Jesus.

And our response? The result of Jesus' work in our lives is to glorify Him. We glorify Him as we participate in God's mission, partnering with God as those who are sent. Isaiah describes this purposeful sending in verse 5: Strangers will stand and feed your flocks, and foreigners will be your plowmen and vinedressers. Isaiah is talking about us. Gentiles have a role in the missio Dei. Together with the Jews, we Gentiles partner with God in building His Church!

God's work in us calls us to action. His work in us is beautiful beyond description. We rejoice greatly and exult in all He has done for us. God uses us to share His work with all the nations. Look around your neighborhood, community, workplace, school, where you hang out with your friends. Keep your eyes and ears open for those who are hurting and troubled, those who are captive to fear and despair. You have what they need! You have the Good News, which heals the brokenhearted! The LORD has appointed and sent you with authority to proclaim liberty to the captives and the time of God's favor!

Now is the time of the Lord's favor - now is the time to realign ourselves with God's mission purpose so that eternal joy will be theirs (v7)!

I greatly rejoice in the LORD, I exult in You, O God! As You anointed Jesus to carry out His work as Messiah, You have also anointed me in my baptism to fulfill my purpose, namely to share Your gifts with people in my life. Use me, O Lord, to speak of the Good News of Your healing and beauty so that others will recognize that they, too, are people You have blessed. Move them, in response, to live in righteousness and praise before all the nations! Amen.

Isaiah
61:1b

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners

CALL TO PRAYER

Luke 10:2

The harvest is plentiful,
but the workers are few.
Ask the Lord of the harvest,
therefore, to send out workers
into his harvest field.

SET YOUR ALARM FOR 10:02

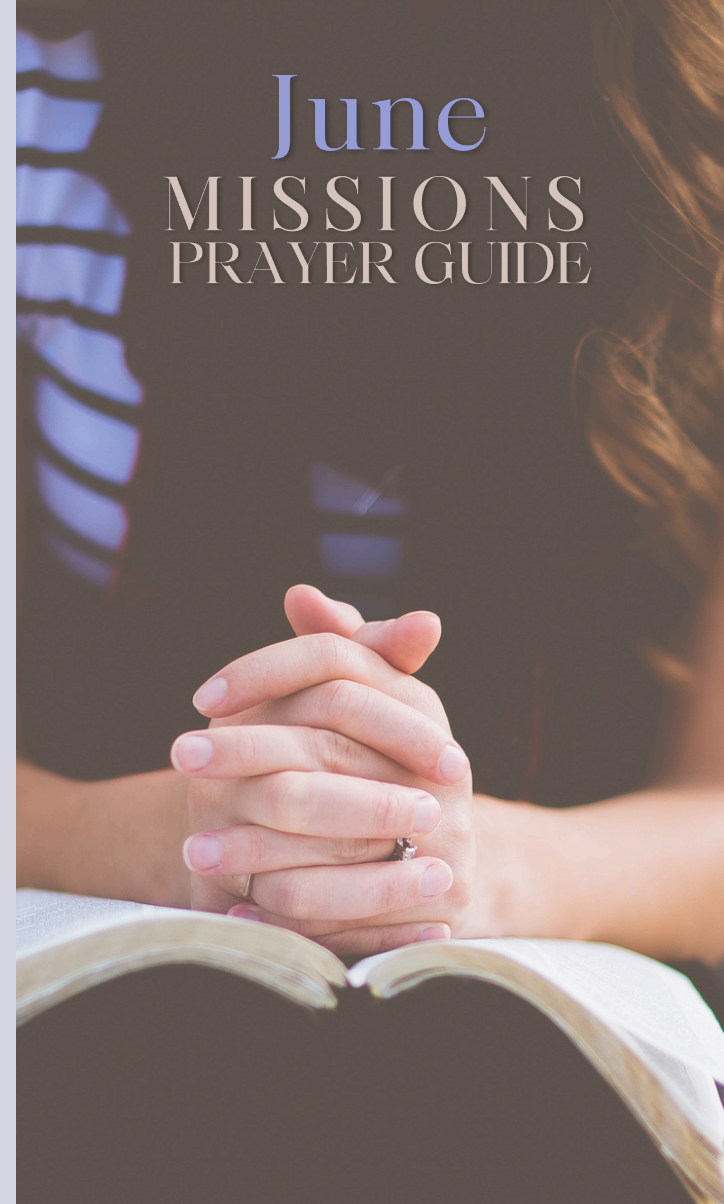


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June MISSIONS PRAYER GUIDE



**EQUIP, EMPOWER, ENGAGE,
CONNECTING PEOPLE TO JESUS.**



1 Lord Jesus, this week of our District Convention, I pray for a united and joyful spirit as we meet and work and that our convention work will result in greater fruit for Your Kingdom.

2 Holy Spirit, today I pray for our lay and pastoral Delegates to the Convention. Help them to adequately prepare and be ready to serve in these important roles. I pray also for the Resolutions which will come before these delegates that these Resolutions will further clarify our primary work together as the Florida-Georgia District of the LCMS.

3 Jesus, You are Lord of all creation! You have given each of us gifts to serve. I pray today for those who have been nominated to serve in District positions. Thank You for these servants, and bless the election process to provide us with dedicated leaders.

4 Lord Jesus, thank You for our District Staff and the Convention Committee as they make final preparations for the Convention today and tomorrow. Bless their work that our Convention will bring You glory and be used to equip, empower, and engage every congregation and member in living as Your Disciples who make Disciple-makers.

5 **Convention Day 1:** Holy Spirit, hear my prayers today for our District, for my Church, my community, and for those who don't yet know you. As Delegates and Guests arrive for the Convention, give us unity and joy in meeting and serving in Your Name. Bless the elections of President and Vice Presidents, Board members, and Circuit Visitors this evening.

6 **Convention Day 2:** Heavenly Father, today we gather around the theme "Compelled." Your love for us compels us to witness, make disciples, and connect people to Jesus, the true source of hope and life. Bless not only our gathering in Convention, but may the fruits of this gathering bring encouragement, motivation, and action to each congregation and member in our District!

7 **Convention Day 3:** Lord God, bless the ingathering and offerings given for our brothers and sisters of the Lutheran Church of Uganda. Use the generosity of Your people in our District to truly help in our sister church's worship, education, and mission. Bless their 150 congregations serving over 50,000 members with the joy of knowing and sharing Christ!

8 **Pentecost** - Holy Spirit, until every knee bows and every tongue confesses that Jesus is Lord, preserve Your Church throughout the world, reminding us that nothing will separate us from Your love and the glory that You will reveal to us on the last day!

9 Lord Jesus, I praise You for all You have done for my life and salvation. I want to honor You with my lips and my life; I want my heart to be fully devoted to You! Let me share that devotion today with someone who needs to know You as Savior and Lord.

10 Holy Spirit, keep me mindful that Jesus is coming again. Keep me prepared, watchful, and ready to welcome Him. Fill me with Your spirit of boldness to come alongside others in love and witness Your gift of salvation!

11 Thank You, Jesus, for cleansing me from the inside out. Protect me from the temptations of the Evil One, which lead me to sin. Let my life today be a demonstration of Your holiness, which is attractive to others, and through my life, let me be a wholesome witness to Your grace.

12 Father in heaven, You have called me as a Disciple, created, loved, redeemed, and sent by You to follow Jesus and make more disciples. Continue to equip me for this awesome task as I live out my vocation as Your witness to the praise of Your name.

13 Thank You, Jesus, for making Your saving Name known to those with whom I live, work, and play so that they, too, may know and share Your saving power. Open the ears and hearts of those who hear and see my witness to believe and praise You.

14 **Flag Day** - On this day, our nation remembers our national banner of Stars and Stripes. Thank You for the blessings we enjoy under it. Unite us, dear Lord, and let us use our national blessings to serve others and You, our Lord, our King, our Savior.

15 **Holy Trinity Sunday / Father's Day** - As we celebrate the gift of fathers today, we give You thanks, Triune God, for Your perfect love and care for us. Forgive our inadequacies to model that perfect love in our homes and families, and bless us with the heart to raise young men and women who know and follow You and desire to share Your love daily.

16 Lord Jesus, we know Your great love for the little children and those whom You called "the least of these." Help me never to look down on them but to become like them, child-like in my faith and trust in You. Jesus, place Your hands on me and bless me as I trust You and share my faith with others.

17 Lord Jesus, I praise You for all You have done for my life and my salvation. I want to honor You with my lips, and even more, I want my heart to be fully devoted to You. By Your Word and Spirit, keep me from placing human rituals and rules over Your Word.

18 Lord Jesus, You have taught me about eternal life. It is a gift from You because of Your great love for me. Keep me from living under the Law, thinking I need to do something to earn or deserve it. Instead, let me rejoice in my inheritance and live the life today that honors and praises You.

19 Today, Lord Jesus, I pray for an abundant harvest. I ask for more laborers in the harvest fields for that to happen. Open my heart and the hearts of all Your people to love, serve, and share the Good News of Jesus in our harvest fields.

20 Thank You, God, for the gift of life! Bless the work of Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries with moms and babies. Lead and guide their efforts to share Your redeeming love and grace with this special group of blood-bought souls.

21 Today, I pray for our pastors throughout the District, especially my pastor(s). Show them how best to lead our congregations and teams of ministers and lay leaders, encouraging, comforting, guiding, and discipling the disciple-makers.

22 Lord Jesus, Your Church is not about impressive buildings which perish. Your Church is about men and women, boys and girls who are Along-Siders, who help one another know and love You more. Help me to be active in serving and sharing Your love!

23 Holy Spirit, You have given me faith in Jesus, who sets me free! I rejoice that I am Your dearly loved child, a member of Your household forever! Jesus, You call me to be Your disciple; send me out today in that reality and truth, to the praise of Your Name!

24 Lord, there is so much suffering in our world. Please heal the sick and restore peace and life to weary souls everywhere, especially those known to me . . . Give me and my loved ones strength to endure trials and temptations.

25 Lord Jesus, give me a hunger for Your Word that is never fully satisfied but always desires more! Help me to love and to live the Scriptures as You did.

26 Jesus, as I become increasingly aware of the times in which we live - the end times - fill me with Your spirit of boldness to come alongside others in love and witness to Your salvation.

27 We thank You, Father, for our Partnership with the LCMS Mission Team in Puerto Rico (the FORO). Bless Rev. Adam Lehman and his family in San Juan metro, Rev. Jim and Angie Sharp, who serve as Caribbean area facilitators and local missionaries in San Juan, Rev. James & Deaconess Christel Neuendorf in Ponce, Vicar Paul Mroczenski and his family in Ponce, Rev. Gustavo and Ruth Maita in Mayaguez, and Ashley Lehr in Mayaguez. Pray for Rev. Sergio Maita and his family, who will move to Puerto Rico in the Fall.

28 Lord, often when I read Your Word, I forget what I just read and move on to the next thing. Show me how to apply it to my life, goals, and relationships, following You, Jesus, one step at a time.

29 Heavenly Father, make us good stewards of all creation and Your gifts to us. Help us manage what You have given to share with others and deploy Your resources wisely for Your mission.

30 Lord Jesus, give every one of Your followers, starting with me, a burden for the lost and a boldness in witness and service. Give every congregation the needed courage to be a truly sending church, training and deploying each member on Your mission.