

*As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.*

*May we together experience the presence of God*

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***We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord***



**Prelude**

**Welcome – Announcements**

**Opening Meditation**

We think prayer is something we know about. But do we? There are many who hear the common “sending our thoughts and prayers” and believe that it is a way of avoiding taking a stand and making the changes that need to be made. How do we redeem the idea of prayer? James doesn’t believe it is ineffectual. This epistle of doing, of putting your faith to work in the world, of living out salvation in ways that impact the world around you, also believes that prayer is a power we need to use. Prayer and action are not opposites but complements in the spectrum of responding in faith. Prayer can be a launching pad to action and then a reflection on the action done, and through it all, prayer is a way of being reminded of the presence of the Spirit in what we do.

Today we focus on prayer and how important it is to our spiritual life. So, let us begin our time together by opening our conversation with our Lord in prayer.

We praise you, O God, for though you do as you please, your pleasure is justice with compassion. We worship you, O God, for though you choose your servants as you wish, you elect people who are called to serve all in obedience to you. We are awed by the powers of nature but assured that there is no force or being that can overpower you. We are most grateful that you make yourself known to us through the healing and saving power of Jesus Christ, our Leader and Friend. Amen.

**A Call to Worship** *(based on James 5:13-20)*

Are any among you suffering?

**Then let us pray.**

Are any cheerful?

**Then let us sing songs of praise.**

Are any among you sick?

**Then let us turn to each other for God's healing touch.**

The prayer of faith will save us

**And God will lift us up.**

## Prayer

Leader: God whispers to each of us: you are my beloved, created in love for love.

**People: My spirit answers, here I am, Lord. Speak to me anew.**

Leader: Then let us gather, old and young, small and great, to dream God's dreams, receive God's power, and do God's deeds.

**People: Here we are, Lord. Shine the light of your love on us. Kindle your Spirit within us. Work your redeeming will in us, that the world may be one through the power of your love.**

## **Praise Hymn FWS #2193. "Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying" (Sing twice)**

Author: Ken Medema

Publication Date: 2001

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**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.**

## **We Hear God's Word**

**New Testament Reading..... James 5:13-20**

(New Revised Standard Version)

### **The Prayer of Faith**

13 Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. 14 Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. 16 Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. 17 Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. 18 Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest.

19 My brothers and sisters,[a] if anyone among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, 20 you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner's[b] soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

The word of God for the People of God, **Thanks Be to God**

### **Children's Message**

## **Faith Hymn FWS #2196. "We Walk by Faith"**

Author: Henry Alford (alt.)

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**1 We walk by faith, and not by sight;  
with gracious words we hear  
of him who spoke as none e'er spoke,**

**but we believe him near.**

**2 We may not touch his hands and side,  
nor follow where he trod;  
yet in his promise we rejoice,  
and cry, "My Lord and God!"**

**3 Help then, O Lord, our unbelief,  
and may our faith abound;  
to call on you when you are near,  
and seek where you are found:**

**4 That when our life of faith is done  
in realms of clearer light  
may we behold you as you are,  
in full and endless sight.**

**5 We walk by faith, and not by sight;  
with gracious words we hear  
of him who spoke as none e'er spoke,  
but we believe him near.**

### **\*Meditation\***

#### **Joys/Concerns**

#### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, who has rescued us from those who would destroy us. Your power and might are great, and your mercy is poured out on us whom you love. Our help is in your blessed Name, O you who have made heaven and earth.

We have been entrusted with the way of life, for your Word has dwelt among us. But we become so puffed up with our own importance that we ignore the simplest acts of mercy. You have called us to be like salt, adding flavor to life. Yet we lose our sense of mission and cease to be all you have called us to be. Deliver us from judgement and forgive our sin that we may live forever in your presence and sing your praises for eternity.

By the gift of your Spirit, help us to see that we share your task of evangelism with many people from many different places. May our work be done for the common purpose of spreading the gospel of Christ.

We lift up before you this day our brothers and sisters who are in distress. By the ministry of the laying-on-of-hands and anointing and prayer, we have confidence that, as your will directs, you will deliver them from evil, preserve them in all goodness, and bring them to everlasting life.

O God, turn our sorrow into gladness and our mourning into a holiday. Hear and answer us, for we pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord who taught us to pray...

## **Offertory/Doxology/Prayer**

God of the beginning, God of now, and God of what will be; in your claiming us as your own, you have given us the most gracious and powerful invitation – to pray to lift all that weighs on our hearts, with the confidence that you will hear. As we offer gifts to you this morning, we pray that you will dedicate them so that they might bring love, compassion, joy, and mercy to people who are in need. Then remind us that we are not done until we have offered to you the prayers of our hearts. In the name of Jesus, our rock and our redeemer. Amen. (James 5:13-20)

## **Departing Hymn UMH #670. “Go Forth for God”**

*Author: John R. Peacey (1975)*

*Publication Date: 1989*

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**Go forth for God, go to the world in peace;  
be of good courage, armed with heavenly grace,  
in God's good Spirit, daily to increase,  
till in the kingdom we see face to face.**

**Go forth for God, go to the world in love;  
strengthen the faint, give courage to the weak;  
help the afflicted; richly from above  
God's love supplies the grace and power we seek.**

**Go forth for God, go to the world in strength;  
hold fast the good, be urgent for the right;  
render to no one evil; Christ at length  
shall overcome all darkness with his light.**

**Go forth for God, go to the world in joy,  
to serve God's people every day and hour,  
and serving Christ, our every gift employ,  
rejoicing in the Holy Spirit's power.**

## **Sending Forth**

Let us go out into the world, understanding that we are not of it, knowing that we are your children and baptized in your Holy Spirit. So let us walk in unity, showing the world that knew not our savior that we are indeed one. We cannot be divided. We cannot be conquered. We will stand together.