



Lent Prayer Vigil At Home

Pray without ceasing. (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

Why a prayer vigil?

Prayer is something we all can give. In many places, the Bible encourages us to pray frequently. Jesus prayed often and instructed his disciples to be people of prayer, too. The word vigil comes from a Latin word that means “wakefulness.” For centuries, Christians have gathered before important events to pray. Prayer encircles stewardship of our time, thoughts, and lives.

Please join us in spiritual preparation and prayer as we observe Lent this year and pray for ourselves, our homes, our church, our nation and the world. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Maundy Thursday. Lent is a 40-day journey and a time of soul searching and reflection as we mark Jesus’ Passover from death to life.

The forty-day period is symbolic of many things: Moses and Elijah spent forty days in the wilderness; it rained upon Noah and the ark for forty days and nights; the Israelites wandered forty years in the desert; Jonah gave the city of Nineveh forty days to repent; Jesus fasted forty days in the wilderness with temptation. There’s a bit of wilderness in each situation. Each of us has been through our own kind of wilderness.

Guided prayer stations located throughout the sanctuary will provide Scripture and prayer suggestions.

Directions:

- 6 Prayer Stations are offered to help you pray.
- Decide if you would like to do the vigil all at once, or you could do one a week.
- Set aside a quiet place for the vigil. Perhaps you could light a candle.
- The vigil can be done alone or with others.
- The stations and scripture verses are gifts to help you pray rather than the “right way” or “only way” to pray. You may find yourself moving into your own thoughts and prayers.
- Consider using a journal or a piece of paper to record your thoughts and prayers.
- Please move through the stations at your own pace. You may spend more time at one station and move quickly through another.
- Feel free to skip a station, spend more time at one station than another, or simply sit in a pew or chair to pray. Some will be more meaningful to you than others.

***Thank-you for tending to your own spiritual life.
Thank-you for praying for our church and for the world.***

830 South Ave. West
Missoula, MT 59803
www.imluchurch.org



Symbolic items to gather before you begin.

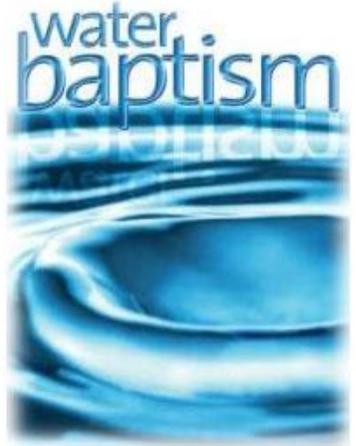
Prepare to write on the vigil pages or a journal or a sheet of paper.

You may use your own Bible for the Scripture, but it'.

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Scripture</i>	<i>Materials</i>
Entering God's Presence	John 13:8b Titus 3:4-7	Towel & soap; hand sanitizer.
Placing our Trust in God	Isaiah 40:27-31	Paper and pens for lists
Prayers for Pandemic	Ps 13:1-2 Matt. 4:23 Isaiah 53:4	Band-Aids OR paper to draw one. Pen/pencil
Our Lord's Prayer	Matt.6:9-13	Bible open to Matthew 6
Finding New Hope in Life	John 11:17-27;34-35;38-44	Something to wrap around your hand. Strips of cloth, or thin towels, or string or tape
Sent into the World	Proverbs 3:5-7	Labyrinth Image from last page.

Entering God's Presence

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." (John 13:86)



When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, God saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit God poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:4-7)

Reflection & Action

During pandemic, the cleanliness of surfaces, hands, and the air we breathe are on our minds daily. Our baptism is the promise and sign, that no matter how messy, ill, confused, depressed, or sinful we are, Christ washes us clean through his mercies every day.

*As powerful and important as they are,
our feelings and circumstances **do not** determine who we are.
Rather, we are God's children now, even in the changes and chances of life.*

Read the Scriptures above again.
As you read them, wash your hands with hand sanitizer
Or wash your hands in your sink.
Then, make the sign of the cross on your forehead
or over your head and chest.
Take a moment to rest in the hands of God.
Take a deep breath.
Pause from the outside pressures and responsibilities.

PRAYER

Holy God,
Grant me peace within,
Help me trust that I am exactly where I am meant to be.
Help me not forget that Your Spirit guides my way each day.
Help me use those gifts that I have received,
to pass on the love that has been given to me.
Help me be content knowing I am Your beloved child.
Grant my soul the freedom to sing, dance, to praise and love each day.
In and through the name of Jesus I pray. **AMEN**

Placing our Trust in God

Why do you say, O Jacob, and complain, O Israel,
“My way is hidden from the Lord;
my cause is disregarded by my God?”
Do you not know? Have you not heard?
The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the
ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired or weary, and his
understanding no one can fathom.
He gives strength to the weary and increases the
power of the weak,
Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;
but those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.
They will soar on the wings like eagles;
They will run and not grow weary,
They will walk and not be faint. (Isaiah 40: 27-31)



Reflection

Certainty can be overrated...

The great saints of old experienced significant doubts and struggled with imperfections. They did not become saints by moving from uncertainty to clarity. **They moved from uncertainty to trust.** They moved from failure to faithfulness, which means the ongoing presence of uncertainty.

- What makes it hard to trust God? How is trust different than belief?
- Often we join Isaiah asking, “Where is God?” How can you recognize God’s presence in your life?
- Read the verse from Isaiah again. What happens to the weary? Where can God renew your strength?

Action

In Isaiah’s passage, God is present without being asked.

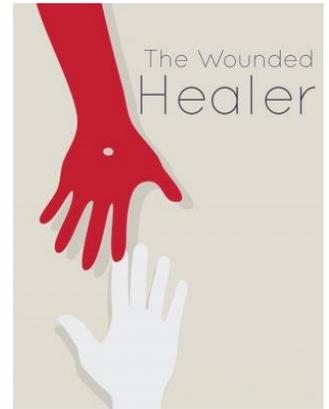
Make a list of all the places, times, and ways God has been present for you this past week.
Thank God for God’s presence, even when you can’t see it.
Where can you invite God into your life in the week ahead?

PRAYER

Holy God, you go before me, always to guide and direct my ways.
Go before me to show me the way,
Go above me to protect me.
Go behind me to push me into places I might not go myself.
Go beneath me to uphold and uplift me.

Dwell within me to remind me that I am not alone, and that I am loved beyond my wildest imaginings. I pray in Jesus’ name, *AMEN*

Prayers In a Pandemic



How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
How long must I bear pain in my soul,
and have sorrow in my heart all day long? (Psalm 13:1-2)

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and
proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every
disease and every sickness among the people. (Matthew 4:23)

Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases. (Isaiah 53:4)

ACTION

1. For each person you know, who contracted or is recovering from the Corona-Virus, write their name on a Band-Aid or draw a Band-Aid and write their names on it. You might consider focusing on a state, city, town or area.
2. Write the names of people you know who have died due to complications from Corona-Virus. Place a cross next to each name. (Or draw a large cross and write the names.)
3. Draw a large heart and write down or say aloud the names of health-care or essential workers you know.
4. Write down or say aloud the names of people you know who have lost a business, job or housing due to the coronavirus. Draw a candle or a flame next each name to symbolize that the light of Christ shines in the darkness.



PRAYER

Say your own prayer for healing, wholeness and direction during these days of pandemic; include those you named.

Prayer Conclusion:
Healer of our every ill,
protect and give insight to all who care for the ill,
Holy Light of each tomorrow,
give us peace beyond our fear, grant wisdom and insight to leaders
and those making decisions about our safety and wellness.
Spirit of all comfort,
be with those who mourn or ill, and bring us hope beyond our sorrow.
Mighty God,
give us strength to love each other,
to put aside differences that divide us
and to walk together bringing your love and mercy to all we meet. AMEN

Our Lord's Prayer

“This, then, is how you should pray:
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come,
your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.”

Matthew 6:9-13. NIV



Reflection

Sometimes, reading something that is very familiar in a slightly different version helps with reflection.

- In this prayer, Jesus instructs us to come to God as children, full of trust.
- Jesus showed us God's kingdom, a kingdom of inclusion and peace, a kingdom of mercy and love, and he wanted that on earth as it is in heaven
- Jesus has us pray for the necessary food, bread, something simple and nourishing.
- Jesus also wants us to know forgiveness from God, and to extend that to others.
- Jesus has us pray for protection and guidance away from sin and evil.

ACTION

Write down or draw a picture of the word or image from the Scripture that draw your attention. Then, write down or draw something specific that you have in mind for each such as:

temptation – name calling

daily bread – food and shelter

earth – clean waters

debts – money matters



PRAYER

Pray the version of the Lord's Prayer that is familiar to you,

Pause with each petition, do so slowly.

Let the prayer breath through your heart and mind.

Finding New Hope in Life

¹⁷“On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for 4 days. ¹⁸ Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem ¹⁹and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. ²⁰When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

²¹“Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.” ²³Jesus said to her, “**Your brother will rise again.**” ²⁴Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

²⁵Jesus said to her, “**I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; ²⁶and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?**”

²⁷“Yes, Lord,” she told him, “I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.” . . . ³⁴“**Where have you laid him?**” he asked. “Come and see, Lord” they replied. ³⁵Jesus wept. . .

³⁸Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. ³⁹“**Take away the stone,**” he said. “But Lord, said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.” ⁴⁰Then Jesus said “**Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?**”

⁴¹So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “**Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴²I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.**”

⁴³When he said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “**Lazarus, come out.**” The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with trips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, “**Take off the grave clothes and let him go.**” John 11:17-27;34-35;38-44

Rolling Stone:

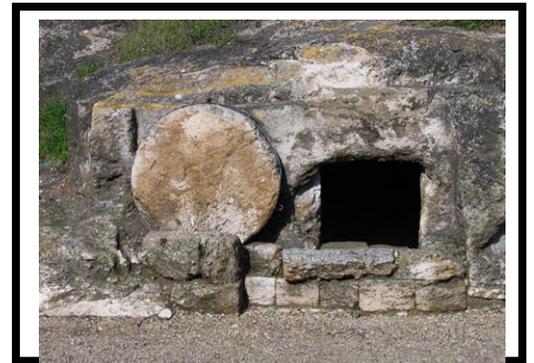
Are there places where you have something buried?

Something you are hiding from God?

Jesus came to roll the stone away and call us to new life, to free us of those things that bind us.

Jesus calls us to “Come out” . . .

away from those things where shame and guilt might bind us.



ACTION

- Take a cloth strip and bind your hand in a fist. (If you don't have cloth, simply make a tight fist and hold it.)
- Think of those things that you are holding away from God. Pause, and feel the heaviness. . . Now, as your hand is bound together, feel the tightness, feel the lack of freedom.
- Slowly, unwrap your hand. . . feel the blood moving through your hands bringing fresh strength,
- Renewed life. . . you have been unbound. . .

Closing Prayer

Bring to God those things that bind your heart.

There is no place you can go that God isn't already there.

Jesus calls to us ...to come out of the darkness.

Know that you receive the forgiveness and love that God holds for us.

You are called to new life.

Sending



**Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
and do not rely on your own insight.**

**In all your ways
acknowledge the Lord,
who will make your paths straight.**

(Proverbs 3:5-6)

ACTION & PRAYER

Use your finger to trace labyrinth on the next page.

RELEASING: As you move to the center, release to God the things that you stumble over in life, the things that block your walk with God, the twists and turns of life that confuse or frighten you.

RECEIVING: When you arrive at the center, ponder and receive what God gives to help you.

RETURNING: As you trace the labyrinth back toward the beginning, prepare your heart and mind to return to the world with the gifts, goodness, and presence of God for life's way.

Prayer:

O God, you have called your servants to ventures
of which we cannot see the ending,
by paths yet untrodden,
through perils unknown.

Give us faith to go out with good courage,
not knowing where we go,
but only that your hand is leading us
and your love supporting us
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Prayer Labyrinth

