

# Prayers for Living

## STUDY QUESTIONS

February 2023 (29 Jan - 25 Feb)



A series of 28 prayers to prepare and equip us for 28 everyday situations. From visiting a newborn baby, to weeding a garden, to struggling to hit an important deadline... As we anticipate Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent we build on our New Year theme **Communicate!** and start thinking about fostering meaningful interactions and being missional — how we communicate our faith day by day as living praying beings in community. In this Connect material we have chosen 12 of the prayers to focus on from the main list. Check out the [Resource Pack PDF](#) to see all 28 in the Daily Worship theme.

How can we prepare ourselves in daily life to be continual communicators of God's love in the midst of the joy, heartbreak, and wondering of day to day living?

Let us pray...

**SEEDS TO SOW:** Open-ended prompts to inspire creative responses to the themes. Perhaps a song, some drawing, or creative writing! They are short and sweet, simply a starting off place for you and your imagination, be encouraged to tailor and develop as suits you. Often they take the form of a question, to encourage reflection.

*These discussion questions adapt our monthly themes for small Connect Groups or personal Bible study (look up the [Prayers For Living Resource Pack](#) for more information on this month's theme). The questions are divided into 4 parts to correspond with the 4 weeks of the Daily Worship theme. They are offered as a guideline and there is no need to go through all the given questions in a single session, or in the following sequence. Feel free to pick and choose, or adapt to what interests you or your group.*

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### Part 1: Prayers for setting out

SEEDS TO SOW: WHAT TIME OF DAY DO YOU TEND TO PRAY?

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#### Read Psalm 122

*A prayer preparing for worship.*

We begin thinking about our mindset as we go to the house of the Lord. The psalm is written in the context of a journey that could take days. It reflects the idea of expectation and joy. Could you share what it is that gives you joy in worship? The last part of the psalm reflects on the gift of peace encountered in worship. What are the things we should pray for as we prepare for worship?

Why not try taking the time to write a prayer of preparation before the next time you go to worship?

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#### Read Isaiah 43: 1-7

*A prayer before visiting someone who is ill.*

This scripture passage is God's conversation of reassurance to all those facing illness and times of anxiety.

How should you approach a friend living with an illness?

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#### Read Micah 6: 8

*A prayer before doing the shopping.*

Would reading this verse immediately before stepping into the supermarket or opening the online shopping browser — change any of our purchases?

If so, should we try it?

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### Part 2: Prayers for daily life

SEEDS TO SOW: AS YOU GO THROUGH THE DAY, WHAT PROMPTS YOU TO PRAY?

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#### Read Psalm 5: 1-3

*A prayer for the morning.*

Waking up with God... What do you think that phrase means to you? Sleep is an amazing gift. It's not until you can't sleep that you appreciate how precious it is. It is even more wonderful to waken up from sleep. Are there any good habits that you have acquired in your morning routine? Have you any prayer hints?

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#### Read Psalm 19: 14

*A prayer for brushing your teeth.*

Considering the words that will be borne on our breath and pass over our teeth today. What would you include in such a prayer? What do you think the difference is comparing prayer and meditation?

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#### Read Matthew 5: 13-16

*A prayer to review the day.*

How have we been salt and light today? How valuable do you think such a prayer is in keeping us focused as disciples? How do we end the day if we feel we have contributed to tasteless conversations? Would you consider keeping a journal?

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### Part 3: Prayers for getting things done

SEEDS TO SOW: TRY KEEPING A PRAYER LIST OF PEOPLE TO REMEMBER

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#### Read Isaiah 40: 1-5

*A prayer before ironing.*

This passage is an invitation to become a healer. To whom is it that we are being called to speak words of comfort?

Exploring ironing as a metaphor for straightening out your life... Could it be an exercise used to pray about and think through ways to smooth out wrinkled lives? But is ironing itself a pointless chore? A waste of time? Or not?

What would your prayer before ironing contain?

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#### Read John 21: 1-14

*A prayer while preparing food.*

Taking time as we cook to remember that Jesus cooked too! Have you ever thought of the preparation that Jesus went to in order to cook the fish for this breakfast encounter? He used food to break the ice. He used the fish to gather his disciples around him and to mend a relationship with Peter.

How might we use prayer and food preparation to mend relationships?

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#### Read John 12: 1-8

*A prayer on receiving a gift.*

Right in the midst of our everyday we are often surprised by the generosity of others! Mary's gift to Jesus is full of love and devotion. Like Jesus, most people make a point of thanking friends for gifts. Why is it also important to thank God for the gifts that others bring to us? What could Jesus see that others couldn't see?

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### Part 4: Prayers for taking stock

SEEDS TO SOW: CAN IT EVER BE 'TOO EARLY' OR 'TOO LATE' TO PRAY?

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**Read Matthew 13: 1-23**

*A prayer in the garden.*

Using the garden as an analogy for our spiritual lives. This is the time of the year when we start thinking about planting and planning. Making space for new things to grow.

Discuss how the sower sows seeds seemingly randomly. What are the new areas of service we need to make room in our lives for in order that we may flourish?

Discuss the methods that can be used to help prioritise the things that matter.

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**Read Luke 22: 54-62**

*A prayer for kindling the fire, tending the flames, and clearing the ashes.*

A fireplace metaphor for Ash Wednesday. There is something prophetic about kindling a fire, tending the flames, and clearing the ashes. I have often thought about Peter at the fire warming himself, before denying Jesus. Then that Jesus look, as Peter rakes over the ashes of what once was. Days later around another fire — one Jesus had kindled — he would, hear a prophetic word about his own future, and the fire would ignite once again.

In some Christian traditions ashes are used as a visual sign of repentance on Ash Wednesday. Think of Peter raking over the ashes. How can the imagery help us reflect as we begin Lent?

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**Read Matthew 6: 25-34**

*A prayer before a deadline.*

A prayer of perspective. This passage of scripture helps us put our lives in perspective. Sometimes when we are under great pressure we need to release the valve. What does it profit us if we reach the deadline only to find we are dead on arrival. What advice is Jesus giving us in these verses about perspective?