



Michigan District Prayer Vigil

Prayer Guide

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.

If you find your mind wandering or if you have additional time, begin to meditate on one of the suggested Scripture passages 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

Dear Heavenly Father, Precious Lord,

We come to You now asking for the Holy Spirit's counsel in maintaining unity within our congregations and seeking Your guidance through this time of pandemic. Forgive us for the many times we try to go it alone, aim for our own selfish desires, and forget about our commitments to You. Help us to become the people You want us to be, to seek first Your kingdom, and make You the Lord of our lives.

Often, we are uncertain about what to do or which way to turn. We seek Your will, through the Holy Spirit, and ask You to open our hearts more fully. Show us how to develop a lifestyle in harmony with Your commands so that we may experience Your guidance in a special way. Show us where we may be used by You in overcoming obstacles within our paths. Bring peace upon our souls with the knowledge that You will use all difficulties for our betterment and for the growth of Your kingdom.

Lord, thank You first and foremost for sending Your Son, Jesus, to restore our relationship with You. Because of Him, we can now have life and live more abundantly. Let our eyes remain fixed on the motivation for all we do or hope to accomplish—the cross. May we never forget Christ's willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice by giving His life on our behalf in order to pay our sin debt. We look forward with gratitude to the journey that lies ahead and put our entire trust in Your open and enfolding arms.

In Your Son's Holy and precious name, we pray. AMEN.

Saturday, May 23 - Church Ministry

For the second day of our Michigan District Prayer Vigil, we are focusing on Church ministry. With the Word of God in your hands, and the song of our church upon your heart, God invites us into this time of prayer together as His Holy Christian Church on earth, and as brothers and sisters in Christ of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son +, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Read Acts 2:1–13

I.

The Church's One Foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord;
She is His new creation by water and the Word.
From heav'n He came and sought her to be His Holy bride;
With His own blood He sought her, and for her life He died.

Read Acts 2:14–36

Lord of the Church,
For the creation of Your Church, and the means of grace we are privileged to share, we give You our thanks and praise this day! By the presence and power of Your Holy Spirit, please keep our body of believers throughout the world in the one true faith—that Jesus Christ is both Lord and Messiah—and empower us to share that faith with others, through the ministries of our congregations, especially with those who may not know You as Lord and Savior.

II.

Elect from ev'ry nation, yet one o'er all the earth;
Her charter of salvation: one Lord, one faith, one birth.
One holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses, with ev'ry grace endued.

Read Acts 2:37–41

Lord of the Church,
We remember our baptisms this day, and the blessings of saving faith, the forgiveness of sins, and the promise of eternal life that You give in and through this special sacrament. May our baptismal faith lead us to repent of our sins, turn from our self-reliance and self-interest, and help us to rely more solely on You for deliverance in our day and for ministry during these trying times.

III.

Though with a scornful wonder this world sees her oppressed,
By schisms rent asunder by heresies distressed,
Yet saints their watch our keeping, their cry goes up, "How long?"
And soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.

Read Acts 2:42–47

Lord of the Church,

We live during times of deep division both within our church and also in our culture. May the truth of Your Word help guide our life together as a body of believers and may the grace of Jesus Christ be our source of peace and patience as we interact with other people during this time. May our beliefs and behavior reflect the grace and truth of Jesus, and may we find our unity as Your people gathering around Your Word and the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Gracious Father in Heaven, please add to our number daily those who are being saved through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

IV.

Through toil and tribulation and tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation of peace forevermore,
'Til with the vision glorious her longing eyes are blessed,
And the great Church victorious, shall be the Church at rest.

Read Ezekiel 37:1–14

Lord of the Church,

Even as we are separated during this time of sheltering in place, we pray that Your Holy Spirit would continue to breathe life and health into Your people; we pray that Your Holy Spirit would strengthen our resolve and ignite our passion to love; we pray that Your Holy Spirit would transform the spiritual death and decay of the people of this planet into the life and spiritual vitality that You have promised Your Church through Your sacrifice on the cross and Your rising to life again from the tomb.

V.

Yet she on earth has union with God the Three in One,
And mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won.
O blessed, heav'nly chorus! Lord, save us by Your grace
That we, like saints before us, may see You face to face!

Read John 15:26–16:15

Lord of the Church,

We pray for Your Holy Spirit to be with our church workers who are working in all kinds of contexts to love Your people, serve them in their times of need, and lead them to repentance, forgiveness, and faith that are found in a relationship of truth and trust in You. Please give Your strength, wisdom, compassion, and words of grace to those who minister to others in difficult and dire circumstances, those who are struggling with this virus, those who are near death, and those who have lost loved ones during this time. Lord, even as we are surrounded by disease and death, please keep us safe and healthy, help us to be kind and compassionate to those who are hurting, and lead us to those who are lost; that they may find their place with Your Church, and that they would profess saving faith in Your name!

We pray all of this in name of our risen, ascended, and returning Savior, Jesus Christ, our Lord; who lives and reigns with Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Closing Prayer

God, we thank You for the graciousness You extend to us as You hear our prayer requests. Sometimes we become confused about what You want from us. Sometimes we focus more on successful service to You rather than on having the proper relationship with You. Give us the understanding of how the words of Christ will allow us to come to a better understanding of what You want for us. We lay these petitions before You with anticipation and excitement about the way You will choose to answer them. Help us to continue in fervent prayer in the days ahead so we remain faithful for the rest of our lives. We give You all the praise and glory for what You are going to do in the hearts and minds of all in the Michigan District. In Jesus' name, AMEN.

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.