



Family Prayer



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The Family Prayer

***Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name.***

The Praise Prompt

***Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.***

The Priority Prompt

Give us this day our daily bread.

The Petition Prompt

And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

The Pardon Prompt

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

The Protection Prompt

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

The Promise Prompt

Amen.

Praying the Lord's Prayer as a Family

As a church family, University Heights is seeking to discern God's purposes and plans for our future. As we seek God's guidance and direction, this booklet is offered as a guide for use by families at home and by church prayer groups throughout the week. Its purpose is to provide a pattern for both family prayer times and prayer group meetings.

In response to a request from the disciples to teach them to pray, Jesus gave us what has often been called the Lord's Prayer. Although better described as the Model Prayer, it is actually a family prayer. In other words, it was meant to be prayed by the group of disciples as a whole, which is evidenced by the use of plural pronouns scattered throughout – our, us, and we. With that in mind, the Lord's Prayer provides a pattern for corporate prayer, whether in the family or church setting. Using the Lord's Prayer as our guide, we join with the first disciples and ask: "Lord, teach us to pray."

“Our Father”

The Praise Prompt

Psalm 100:4-5 (NIV) – Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

When we pray ***“Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,”*** we focus our attention away from ourselves and upon God. In the process, we acknowledge who He is (Our Father in heaven), and seek to set Him apart with praise (hallow His name). In other words, **“Our Father”** is a prompt to praise and worship God at the very beginning of our prayer.

The book of Psalms is filled with examples of how to praise God. Unfortunately, the church today has lost the art of praising God in prayer. Too often, we rush into prayer with a to-do list for God. We seldom take the time to focus on the Person we are addressing and praise Him for who He is. In the Lord’s Prayer, that very thing is Jesus’ first order of business. Jesus instructs us to begin with: ***“Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.”***

With respect to how we should praise and worship God in prayer, *Psalm 145* is instructive in its artistry. In that Psalm, the writer: (1) exalts various names and titles of God; (2) extols various attributes of God; and (3) examines the past actions of God. The following pages include *Psalm 145* and suggestions for these different categories of praise and worship. However, the goal is not to limit our praise to those suggestions. Use them to get started and allow Holy Spirit to make other suggestions.

Praise Suggestions

Psalm 145 (NIV)

¹ I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name forever and ever. ² Every day I will praise you and extol your name forever and ever. ³ Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom. ⁴ One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts. ⁵ They will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty, and I will meditate on your wonderful works. ⁶ They will tell of the power of your awesome works, and I will proclaim your great deeds. ⁷ They will celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness. ⁸ The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. ⁹ The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made. ¹⁰ All you have made will praise you, O LORD; your saints will extol you. ¹¹ They will tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might, ¹² so that all men may know of your mighty acts and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. ¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The LORD is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made. ¹⁴ The LORD upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down. ¹⁵ The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time. ¹⁶ You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing. ¹⁷ The LORD is righteous in all his ways and loving toward all he has made. ¹⁸ The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. ¹⁹ He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them. ²⁰ The LORD watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy. ²¹ My mouth will speak in praise of the LORD. Let every creature praise his holy name forever and ever.

Praise Suggestions (contd.)

Exalt His Names

Praise and worship God by focusing on His revealed names.

We praise You, O God, because You are...

Jehovah Jireh – The Lord Provides

Jehovah Rophe – The Lord Heals

Jehovah Nissi – The Lord Our Banner

Jehovah Rohi – The Lord My Shepherd

Jehovah Shalom – The Lord Our Peace

Jehovah Tsidkenu – The Lord Our Righteousness

Jehovah Shammah – The Lord is Present

Jehovah M'kaddesh – The Lord Who Sanctifies

Praise and worship Christ by focusing on His “I am” statements.

We praise and worship You, Lord Jesus, because You are...

The Bread of Life (John 6:35)

The Light of the World (John 8:12; 9:5)

The Gate/Door (John 10:7)

The Good Shepherd (John 10:11,14)

The Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25)

The Way, the Truth and the Life (John 14:6)

The True Vine (John 15:1)

Praise and worship God for who He is.

We praise and worship You because You are...

Creator, Redeemer, Savior, Friend, Comforter, Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, the Lamb of God...

Praise Suggestions (contd.)

Extol His Attributes

Praise and worship God for His attributes.

We praise and worship You because You are unlike any other in heaven or on earth. You are:

Self-Existent, Self-Sufficient, Eternal, Infinite, Immutable (Unchanging), Sovereign, Transcendent, Righteous, Omniscient (All-Knowing), Omnipresent (All-Present), Omnipotent (All-Powerful), Faithful, Holy, Good, Just, Merciful, Gracious, Loving, Pure, and Perfect.

Praise and worship God for His love. (See, Romans 8:38-39)

We praise You, Father, because nothing can separate us from Your love, neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, nothing in the present and nothing in the future. There is no height we can ascend nor any depth we can descend where Your love does not reach. Thank You, Lord, that there is no power nor anything else in all of creation that can separate us from Your love in Christ Jesus.

Praise and worship God for His wisdom. (See, Romans 11:33-36)

We exalt You, Lord, for the depth and the riches of your wisdom. Your knowledge is unsearchable and Your wisdom is beyond comprehension.

Praise Suggestions (contd.)

Examine His Actions

Praise and worship God for what He's done for everyone.

We exalt and glorify You as the Lord God Almighty because:

- You created the universe out of nothing with nothing more than Your spoken Word.
- You chose to create us in Your own image and breathed into us the very breath of life.
- You gave Abraham and Sarah a son when it was impossible.
- You proved You are the One True God by displaying Your power to the Egyptian Pharaoh and rescuing Your people out of bondage.
- You brought down the walls of Jericho.
- You gave Gideon victory over thousands with only 300.
- You directed the stone from David's sling and struck down Goliath.
- But nothing can begin to compare to the power You displayed through the miraculous life of Your Only Begotten Son. Through Him, You defeated the enemies of sin and death by the almighty power of His resurrection.

Praise and worship God for what He's done for University Heights.

We exalt and glorify You as the Lord God Almighty because:

- You have provided for this church since its very beginning through the sacrifice and generosity of its members.
- You have blessed us with spiritual fruit throughout our existence.
- You have provided us with ministers who love You and serve us.

Praise and worship God for what He's done for you personally.

“Thy Kingdom Come”

The Priority Prompt

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) – *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

When we pray ***“Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,”*** we ask God to establish His rule and reign in each of our lives and in the world at large. We seek to put His kingdom first by surrendering to Him. We pray for His will to become our will. In short, **“Thy kingdom come”** is a prompt to pray for God’s priorities and the things that matter most to Him.

Scripture is clear about what matters most to God. God loves humanity and desires a relationship with every person. According to 2 Peter 3:9, God does not wish that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 1 Timothy 2:4 tells us that God desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. And in Luke 19:10 Jesus Himself said, “The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.” This is God’s highest priority and the church’s primary mission.

God’s highest priority prompts us to pray specifically for those we know who don’t know Christ and for the work of His church in the world at large. It includes praying for the ministries of University Heights as well as for the work of other individuals, churches, and organizations that seek to win people for Jesus Christ and meet human need. Suggested kingdom prayers are provided on the following page. Use them to get started and allow Holy Spirit to make other suggestions.

Priority Suggestions

Pray for the lost God has placed in your life (F.R.A.N.K. – Friends, Relatives, Associates, Neighbors, and their Kids).

Lord, pour out Your Spirit upon _____ and:

- Convict them of their sin and separation from You (John 16:8).
- Draw them to Yourself as we lift up Christ (John 6:44; 12:32).
- Open doors for us to present the Gospel (Colossians 4:3).
- Fill us with your Spirit and make us bold witnesses (Acts 4:31).

Pray for the ministers and ministries of University Heights.

- Our Ministers – Staff, worship leaders, SS teachers ...
- Our Ministries – Worship, Sunday School, Children, Youth, College and Young Adult, Hands Abroad, the coffeehouse, Joy Bags ...
- Summer Events – V.B.S., Super Summer, Kid's camp, Fall's Creek.

Pray for the work of others.

- Individual Missionaries and Missions Organizations.
- Other Ministries – FCA, Intervarsity, Navigators, BCM ...
- Other Charitable Ministries – Our Daily Bread, Mission of Hope ...

“Give Us This Day”
The Petition Prompt

James 4:2-3 (ESV) – *You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.*

When we pray **“Give us this day our daily bread,”** we acknowledge our dependence on God, even for our basic needs. We ask Him to provide just enough for today, lest an overabundance lull us into a false sense of self-sufficiency or independence. Whereas **“Thy kingdom come”** is a prompt to pray for what matters most to God, **“Give us this day”** is a prompt to present our petitions to God for what matters to us.

Our God is a giving God. Like a good parent, He loves granting requests and bestowing gifts. He enjoys watching us “open” one of His gifts, realize it’s from Him, and respond by giving thanks back to Him. It’s been said that it never hurts to ask. James 4:2-3 above reminds us that we sometimes fail to ask and, even when we do, we ask for the wrong things or with selfish motives. Psalm 37:4 says, “Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.” We should never be afraid to ask for anything as long as our ultimate delight is in Him.

As a church, there are many things for which we could ask. At this juncture, however, we especially need God’s wisdom, guidance, and direction for our future. Suggested petitions in that regard are offered on the following page. Use those suggestions to get started, but don’t hesitate to petition God for anything and everything He places on your heart – your personal needs or the needs of others.

Petition Suggestions

Pray over those working on the Master Plan.

- The Building and Grounds Committee – Jason Walker (*Chair*), Jerry Eckels, Jim George, Jim Irby, Keith Merrill, Jana Phillips, Marneth Pringle, Corey Redding, Chris Roark, and Paul Jones.
- The Gardens subcommittee – Larry Buie, Dick Lowery, John Mills, and Larry Swinney.
- The Trustees – Jim Ford (*Chair*), Mark Gregory, (*Treasurer*), Page Provence, Doug Hall, Carl Treat, Jim Freudenberger, Tanya Massey, John Bugg (*Pastor*).
- Integrated Architecture – The firm we hired to help us with master planning, specifically Nate Baker and Atticus Mullan.

Pray for the future of University Heights.

Father, please...

- Deepen and enrich our relationship with You.
- Reveal how and where You are working and have been working in and through our church and community.
- Speak by the Holy Spirit through the Bible, prayer, circumstances and the church to reveal Yourself, Your purposes, and Your ways.
- Give us faith to take action as You direct.
- Grant us the courage to make major adjustments in order to join You in Your work.
- Provide Your wisdom and clear direction.
- Protect our church unity throughout the process.

“And Forgive Us Our Debts”

The Pardon Prompt

1 John 1:9 (NKJV) – *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

When we pray **“And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors,”** we recognize that we are in daily need of forgiveness and, as with all relationships, our relationship with God requires maintenance. Psalm 66:18 says, “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear.” **“And forgive us our debts”** is a prompt to seek His forgiveness and repair any damage to our relationship with God or with others.

Although the blood of Christ covers our sin for eternity, we are still sinners in need of God’s daily grace. Whereas the prayer for daily bread focuses more on physical needs, this request concerns our greatest spiritual need – the ongoing need for forgiveness. 1 John 1:9 above is one of God’s greatest promises. God promises that, because He is both faithful and just, He will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. When we pray and confess our sins, we can rest assured that His pardon will be granted.

This area of prayer is one of the most neglected. Too often we pray blanket prayers asking for forgiveness without truly examining our hearts, attitudes, and actions. Prayers that take such a spiritual inventory are sometimes called prayers of examen. An example is provided on the following page. Allow the Holy Spirit to do some deep cleaning in your heart and life.

Prayers of Examen and Confession

1. Thought Patterns: Are there sinful thought patterns I need to confess/forsake? Are my thoughts impure, worldly, angry, critical, bitter, selfish, anxious or fearful rather than faith-filled? *Sunday*

2. Attitudes: Are there attitudes I need to confess/forsake? Am I lukewarm for Christ, prideful, anxious, doubtful, harsh, unkind, materialistic, jealous, prejudiced? *Monday*

3. Speech: Are there sins of speech I need to confess/forsake? Do I ever curse, tell off-color jokes, exaggerate, lie, brag, complain, speak critically or harshly to or about others? *Tuesday*

4. Relationships: Are there damaged/inappropriate relationships I need to confess/forsake? Are there people I've offended yet haven't obeyed God and gone to them? Am I harboring a grudge or bitterness? Am I a party to conflict or division in my church or family? *Wednesday*

5. Actions or Habits: Are there sinful actions or habits I need to confess/forsake? Do I participate in immorality or pornography, abuse my body, put other people or things before serving God, violate God's standards by compromising my values, mistreat others? *Thursday*

6. Sins of Omission: Are there sins of omission I need to confess/forsake? Do I neglect daily Bible reading/prayer, rob God of tithes/offerings, tolerate personal sin, fail to be a witness? *Friday*

7. Self-Denial: Have I refused to die to self or relied on my own strength? Do I ignore what God tells me to do, insist on my way over His, let God prune my life, rely more on my own strength than Holy Spirit? *Saturday*

“Lead Us Not Into Temptation”

The Protection Prompt

1 Peter 5:8 (ESV) – *Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*

When we pray ***“Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,”*** we are reminded that we battle enemies both within and without. Not only are we susceptible to the weakness of our sinful nature, we also contend with the devil and the forces of evil (Ephesians 6:12). **“Lead us not into temptation”** is a prompt to seek God’s protection from ourselves and from evil itself.

Concerning our constant struggle against temptation, 1 Corinthians 10:13 says, “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and He will not allow you to be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation, He will also provide the way of escape, so that you may be able to endure it.” That is a promise we should be claiming as we pray ***“Lead us not into temptation.”***

Concerning the devil and his forces, James 4:7-8 says, “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.” Those verses suggest that submitting and drawing near to God is the way we resist the devil. In the words of the Psalmist, God is our rock and the fortress in which we take refuge; He is our shield and stronghold (Psalm 18:2).

The following page contains suggestions on praying for God’s protection from temptation and the enemy. Use them and let Holy Spirit add others.

Protection Suggestions

Pray for God's protection as we plan for the future.

- Lead us away from any path that is not Your will.
- Help us trust You with all our hearts and protect us from the temptation of leaning on our own understanding (See, *Prov. 3:5*).
- Protect us against disunity and strife within the church.

Pray for protection by donning the armor of God (Eph. 6:14-17).

- Strengthen us with the belt of truth.
- Protect our hearts with Christ's breastplate of righteousness.
- Fit us with shoes ready to share the gospel of peace.
- Grant the shield of faith to extinguish the fiery darts of the evil one.
- Protect us from temptation and doubt with the helmet of salvation.
- Fill our minds with the sword of the Spirit – the word of God.

Claim the promises of Scripture over temptation.

- Because our high priest Christ was tempted as we are, yet without sin, let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need (*Hebrews 4:15-16*).
- God, do not allow us to be tempted beyond our ability to resist and provide a way of escape so that we may be able to endure it (*1 Corinthians 10:13*).

“For Thine Is The Kingdom”

The Promise Prompt

Matthew 18:19 (ESV) – *Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.*

When we pray ***“For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever,”*** we remember that God has promised to answer prayer. Because God is the one who hears our prayers, we can trust Him with the answers. Because it’s His kingdom, He knows the best answer. Because He has all power, He is able to answer. Because He alone deserves glory, the way He answers will bring Him the greatest glory.

If we are honest, doubt is one of the primary reasons we fail to pray. We may doubt whether God actually hears us. We may doubt that our puny prayers can make a difference. We may doubt whether our prayers even matter, because He already knows what we need or has already decided the future whether or not we pray at all. We must not let doubt prevent us from praying or weaken our prayers.

When struggling with doubt, remember that God promises to answer, but sometimes He requires perseverance in prayer. (See, Matthew 7:7, “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.”) God forbid that we fail to see His kingdom come in power or rob Him of glory because we’re too skeptical or timid in prayer.

Conclude your prayer with a statement of faith in God’s promise(s). The following page suggests several promises to claim and space to add others.

Promise Suggestions

Claim God's promise to answer prayer.

- ***2 Chron. 7:14*** – If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.
- ***Matthew 18:19 (ESV)*** – Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.
- ***Mark 11:24 (NIV)*** – Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.
- ***John 14:13-14 (NIV)*** – And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.
- ***Phil. 4:6-7 (NIV)*** – Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
- ***1 John 5:14-15 (NASB)*** – This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us *in* whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests, which we have asked from Him.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

