

What is Prayer?

Prayer is a “means of grace” through which we experience the presence and grace of God. In prayer, we make ourselves available to God, opening ourselves to the power of God’s love that heals and forms us into the image of Christ.

Christians understand prayer as spiritual communication with God. Like our human communication with one another, prayer involves both speaking and listening. In prayer, we talk to God, and God talks to us. Through prayer, we can actively share our hearts with God. But we can also pause and listen for God’s wisdom and guidance.

The Rev. Carmen Gaud, retired editor of El Aposento Alto (the Upper Room), says, “Prayer is communion with the Creator of the Universe, a conversation in which we receive as much as we communicate. In real prayer, we are not only expressing what is in us, but we are being transformed by the One to whom we speak.”

Common Methods for Prayer

*you can choose any of these you like for your own prayer life!

A.C.T.S. METHOD

Adoration – Praise the Lord for being an awesome God

Confession – Admit your sins to God, and ask for God’s forgiveness

Thanksgiving – Thank God for all the wonderful things God has done

Supplication – Bring requests to God for yourself and for others

P.A.R.T. METHOD

Praise – Give God glory

Admit – Confess your sins

Request – Ask God to meet your needs

Thanks – Give thanks for who God is and all God has done

P.R.A.I.S.E. METHOD

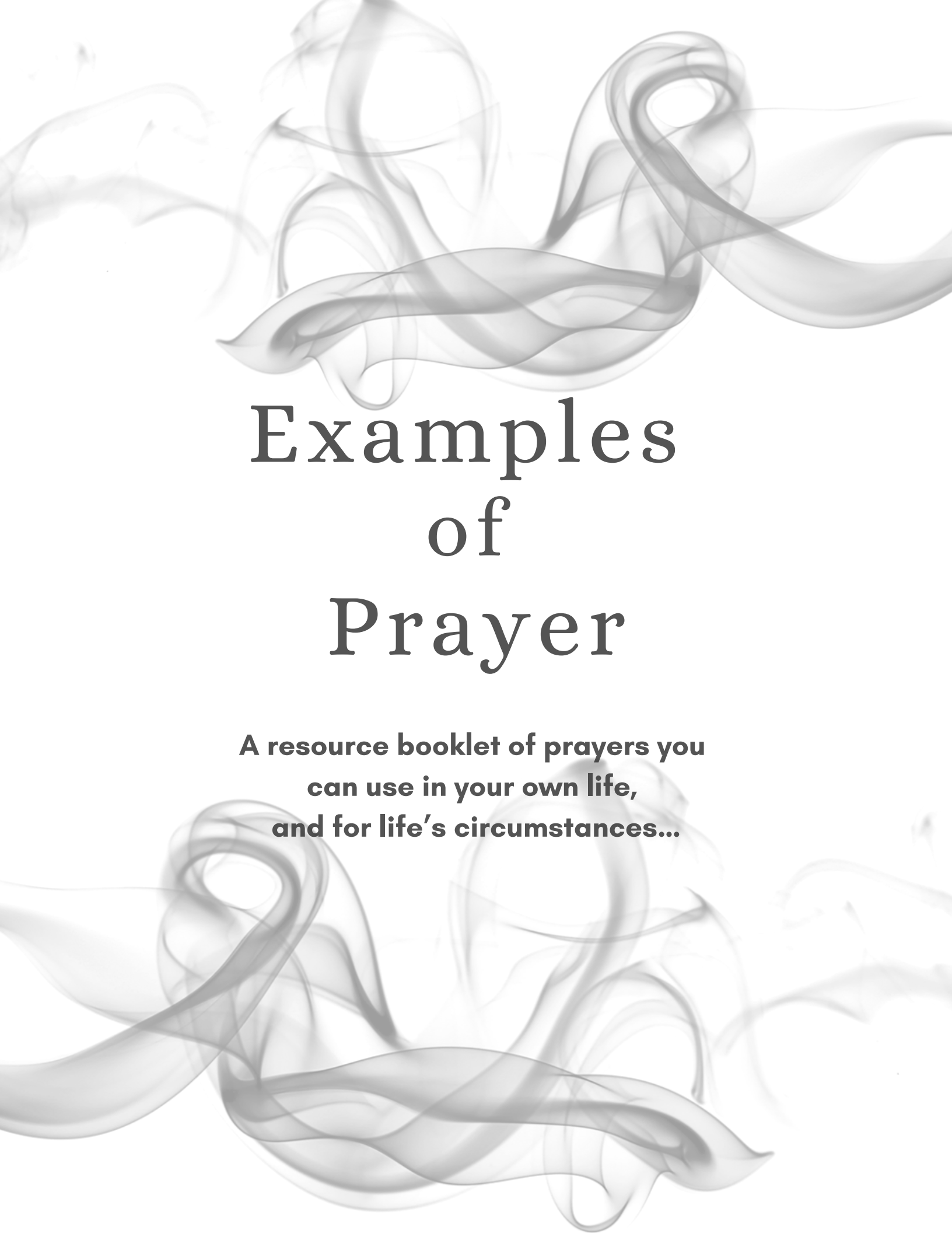
Praise – Give God glory

Repent – Confess your sins

Acknowledge – Submit to God’s will for your life today

Intercession – Pray for other people

Equip – Ask God to help you do the tasks before you today



Examples of Prayer

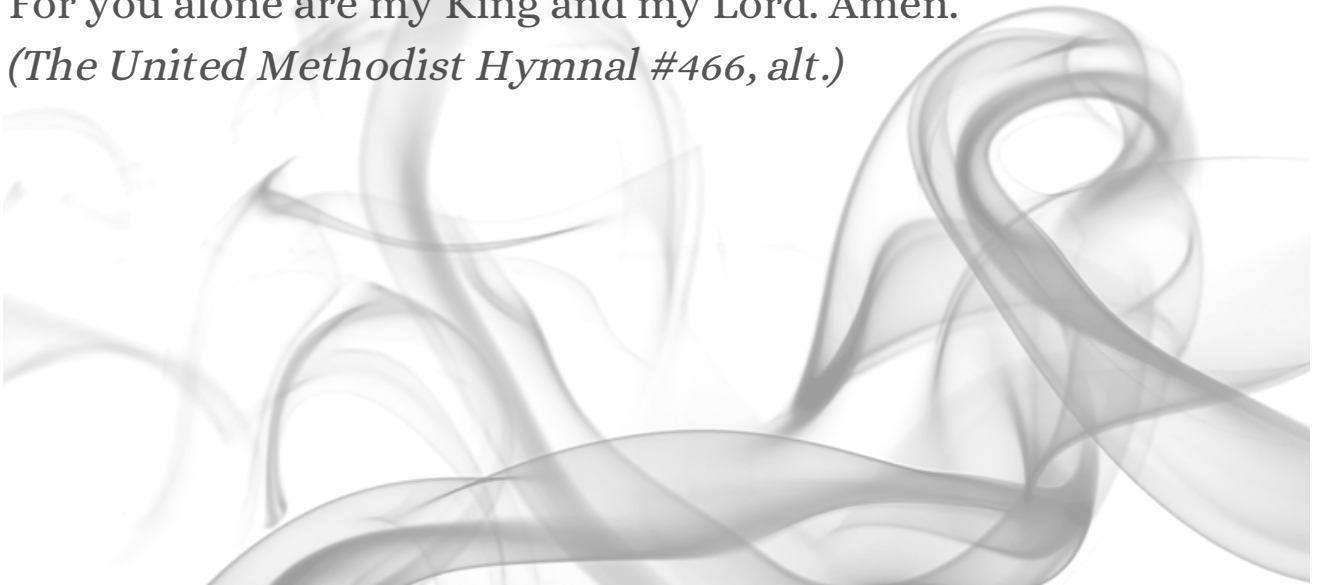
**A resource booklet of prayers you
can use in your own life,
and for life's circumstances...**

For Christ's Presence

Christ be with us, Christ before us, Christ behind us,
Christ in us, Christ beneath us, Christ above us,
Christ on our right, Christ on our left,
Christ where we lie, Christ where we sit, Christ where we arise,
Christ in the heart of every one who thinks of us,
Christ in every eye that sees us,
Christ in every ear that hears us.

Salvation is of the Lord,
Salvation is of the Christ,
May your salvation, O Lord, be ever with us.
(*The United Methodist Book of Worship #529*)

Come, my Light, and illumine my darkness.
Come, my Life, and revive me from death.
Come, my Physician, and heal my wounds.
Come, Flame of divine love,
kindling my heart with the flame of your love.
Come, my King, sit upon the throne of my heart and reign there.
For you alone are my King and my Lord. Amen.
(*The United Methodist Hymnal #466, alt.*)



For God's Gifts

O Holy God, open unto me light for my darkness, courage for my fear, hope for my despair. O loving God, open unto me wisdom for my confusion, forgiveness for my sins, love for my hate. O God of peace, open unto me peace for my turmoil, joy for my sorrow, strength for my weakness. O generous God, open my heart to receive all your gifts. Amen.

(The United Methodist Hymnal #489)

For Guidance

O eternal God, in whose appointment our life stands, and who committed our work to us, we commit our cares to you.

We thank you that we are your children, and that you have assured us that, while we are intent upon your will, you will heed our wants.

Fill us with that compassion for others' troubles which comes from forgetfulness of our own; with the charity of those who know their own unworthiness; and with the glad hope of the children of eternity.

And to you, the Beginning and the End, Lord of the living, Refuge of the dying, be thanks and praise for ever. Amen.

(The United Methodist Book of Worship #512)

For Overcoming Adversity

Lord, we pray not for tranquility, nor that our tribulations may cease; we pray for your spirit and your love, that you grant us strength and grace to overcome adversity through Jesus Christ. Amen.

(The United Methodist Hymnal #531)

For Persons in Coma or Unable to Communicate

Eternal God, you have known us before we were here and will continue to know us after we are gone. Touch Name(s) with your grace and presence. As you give your abiding care, assure him/her/them of our love and presence. Assure him/her/them that our communion together remains secure, and that your love for him/her/them is unfailing. In Christ, who came to us, we pray. Amen.

(The United Methodist Book of Worship #629)



For Persons with a Life-threatening Illness

Lord Jesus Christ, we come to you sharing the suffering that you endured. Grant us patience during this time, that as we and Name live with pain, disappointment, and frustration, we may realize that suffering is a part of life, a part of life that you know intimately.

Touch Name in his/her time of trial, hold him/her tenderly in your loving arms, and let him/her know you care. Renew us in our spirits, even when our bodies are not being renewed, that we might be ever prepared to dwell in your eternal home, through our faith in you, Lord Jesus, who died and are alive for evermore. Amen.

(The United Methodist Book of Worship #628)

Most merciful God, you hold each of us dear to your heart. Hold Name(s) in your loving arms and tenderly draw them into your love, together with all who are living with life-threatening illness. Assure them that they are not alone, and give them courage and faith for all that is to come. Strengthen those who care for them and treat them, and guide those who do research. Nourish those who have lost sight of you, and heal the spirits of those who are broken. We pray this in the name of Jesus, who suffered and died, and then rose from the dead to lead us into new life, now and forever. Amen.

(The United Methodist Book of Worship #627, alt.)

For Persons with a Life-threatening Illness

Almighty God, we pray that Names may be comforted in their suffering and made whole. When they are afraid, give them courage; when they feel weak, grant them your strength; when they are afflicted, afford them patience; when they are lost, offer them hope; when they are alone, move us to their side; [when death comes, open your arms to receive them]. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

(The United Methodist Book of Worship #621)



For Protection

Dear Jesus, as a hen covers her chicks with her wings to keep them safe, protect us under your golden wings. Amen.

(The United Methodist Hymnal #691, alt.)

For Safety

Almighty and merciful God, of your bountiful goodness keep us from all things that may hurt us, that we, being ready in both body and soul, may cheerfully accomplish those things you command; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

(The United Methodist Book of Worship #523)

For Serenity

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other. Amen.

(The United Methodist Hymnal #459)

For Strength

O creator and mighty God, you have promised strength for the weak, rest for the laborers, light for the way, grace for the trials, help from above, unfailing sympathy, undying love. O creator and mighty God, help us to continue in your promise. Amen.

(The United Methodist Book of Worship #524)

For the Sick

God of compassion, source of life and health: strengthen and relieve your servant(s), Name(s), and give your power of healing to those who minister to their needs, that those for whom our prayers are offered may find help in weakness and have confidence in your loving care; through him who healed the sick and is the physician of our souls, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(The United Methodist Hymnal #457)



For Those Who Mourn

Gracious God, as your Son wept with Mary and Martha at the tomb of Lazarus, look with compassion on those who grieve, [especially Name(s)]. Grant them the assurance of your presence now and faith in your eternal goodness, that in them may be fulfilled the promise that those who mourn shall be comforted; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(The United Methodist Hymnal #461)

For the Time of Death

O God, who gave us birth, you are ever more ready to hear than we are to pray. You know our needs before we ask, and our ignorance in asking. Give to us now your grace, that as we shrink before the mystery of death, we may see the light of eternity. Speak to us once more your solemn message of life and of death. Help us to live as those who are prepared to die. And when our days here are accomplished, enable us to die as those who go forth to live, so that living or dying, our life may be in you, and that nothing in life or in death will be able to separate us from your great love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

(The United Methodist Book of Worship #142)

Eternal God, you have shared with us the life of Name. Before he/she was ours, he/she is yours. For all that Name has given us to make us what we are, for that of him/her which lives and grows in each of us, and for his/her life that in your love will never end, we give you thanks. As now we offer Name back into your arms, comfort us in our loneliness, strengthen us in our weakness, and give us courage to face the future unafraid. Draw those of us who remain in this life closer to one another, make us faithful to serve one another, and give us to know that peace and joy which is eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(The United Methodist Book of Worship #157)

For Times of Illness

O God, who forgives our faults and heals our diseases, we cry to you. Our strength has been brought low, and we know not what the future holds. In our bodies, there is pain; in our souls, anxiety and unrest.

If it may be, restore us to health. We ask no miracle of deliverance, and if in the order of nature our suffering must continue, help us to accept it without rebellion.

If it must lead us toward the valley of the shadow, help us to fear no evil, but to go bravely into your nearer presence.

In your good keeping, all is well. Into your hands we commend our bodies and our spirits. Do with us as you will. Amen.

(The United Methodist Hymnal #460, alt.)

For Wisdom

O Wisdom on High, by you the meek are guided in judgment, and light rises up in darkness for the godly.

Grant us, in all doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what you would have us do, that we may be saved from all false choices, and that in your light we may see light, and in your straight path may not stumble; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

(The United Methodist Book of Worship #525)



For the Church

O gracious God, we pray for your holy Church universal, that you would be pleased to fill it with all truth, in all peace.

Where it is corrupt, purify it;
where it is in error, direct it;
where in any thing it is amiss, reform it;
where it is right, establish it;
where it is in want, provide for it;
where it is divided, reunite it;
for the sake of him who died and rose again,
and ever lives to make intercession for us,
Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

(The Book of Common Prayer, USA, 20th Century, alt.)

Most merciful Father, send your heavenly blessings upon this your Church, that all its members may dwell together in unity and love. Keep far from us all self-will and discord. Endue your pastors with righteousness, and enable them faithfully to fulfill their ministry, to bring again the outcasts, and to seek the lost. And grant to us so to receive their ministrations, and to use your means of grace, that in all our words and deeds we may seek your glory and the advancement of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(The Book of Common Prayer, USA, 20th Century, alt.)

For Creation

O most high, omnipotent, good Lord God, to you belong praise, glory, honor, and all blessing. For our brother the sun, who is our day and who brings us the light, who is fair, and radiant with a very great splendor; Praised be our Lord.

For our sister the moon, and for the stars, which you have set clear and lovely in heaven; For our brother the wind, and for air and clouds, calms and all weather; For our sister water, who serves us and is humble and precious and chaste; For our brother fire, by whom you light up the night, and who is fair and merry, and very mighty and strong; For our mother the earth, who sustains us and keeps us, and brings forth various fruits, and flowers of many colors, and grass;

For all those who pardon one another for your love's sake, and who bear weakness and tribulation; Blessed are they who peaceably shall endure, walking by your most holy will; for you, O Most High, shall give them a crown.

Praise and bless the Lord, and give thanks unto God, and serve God with great humility. Amen.

(Saint Francis of Assisi, Italy, 12th Century, alt.)