

Campus Ministries 2026-27

Prayer Booklet





Dear Goshen College Student,

In your hands, you hold a collection of spiritual reflections and tools to use as you navigate your way through this school year. We're so glad you're here!

Perhaps the first question is, why pray? We live in a culture that is constantly bombarding us with voices clamoring for our attention—insisting that we are only valuable for what we have, what we do, who we know, or how we look. When we listen to these voices and believe them, we feel anxious, scattered, hopeless, and empty.

Prayer offers us another way. Rather than looking *outward* for our validation, approval, and affirmation, prayer takes our gaze *inward* to God's presence dwelling within us. Prayer invites us into a space where we take time to listen to God's voice. A time to rest in Presence. A time to remember who we truly are: **Beloved**.

The ways to use this prayer booklet are as endless as your imagination! Our hope is that you can receive this spiritual resource as an invitation and a gift to deepen your faith. Use this prayer booklet on your own, or with others. Doodle. Draw. Write. Read. Reflect. Discuss. Repeat.

Above all, remember that God is never far away, and is as close as your breath. Take time to be still, to set aside distractions, and listen for the voice that gently whispers "Beloved." Rest in that truth. Remember who you are, and *whose* you are. Know that your value can never be earned, bought, or taken away.

May you be filled with Peace and Power as you rest in Presence!



Turn to Page 5
for a personal
note from me!

—Jen Shenk, Campus Pastor

Jen

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Campus Ministries Resources

Bible Studies and Small Groups: Opportunities are available for students who are interested in meeting together in small group and Bible Study settings. Contact the campus pastor for assistance.

Chapel: Chapel meets twice a month at 10 a.m. in the Church-Chapel for 40 minutes where we come together before God in worship and seek to be continually formed into the image of Christ.

Fall/Spring Break Service Opportunities: Service opportunities often come up for Fall and/or Spring break. Watch for details on the Campus Ministries bulletin board in the Connector and in the daily Communicator.

GC Prayer Booklet: This resource offers devotions, a wide variety of prayer practices and a number of prayers from different traditions. For your free copy, stop by the Campus Ministries office in Wyse 101 or the Connector. It is also available on the Campus Ministries website.

Get to know an employee: The Campus Ministries website offers written and video interviews of employees' faith and vocation journeys.

Labyrinth: Located by East Hall, this tool for prayer invites you to meet God as you walk its winding path to the center and back. We also have an indoor cloth labyrinth available for use.

Local Churches Directory: Pick up your copy in the Connector, Union or by the Campus Ministries Office in Wyse 101. It is also available on the campus ministries website.

Ministry Inquiry Program: The Summer Ministry Inquiry Programs enables students to spend three months in a congregation or ministry setting working and exploring faith, vocation and leadership. This is coordinated through Campus Ministries and Career Services. Contact the Campus Pastor for more information.

Muslim Prayer Room: Located in the lower level of Kulp Hall, and open day and night, this space is set aside as a place for prayer and meditation for our Muslim students.

Outdoor Worship: We offer student-led monthly Outdoor Worship services in the warmer months, located on the Connector Lawn. As student interest dictates, we are happy to arrange for a variety of types of worship services that nourish your soul. Contact Campus Ministries to make arrangements.

Pastoral Care: A campus pastor is available to listen and offer spiritual support. You are welcome to contact her at jshenk@goshen.edu.

Spiritual Direction: Spiritual Direction is available for students who are interested in monthly support. Contact the campus pastor for more information. (jschenk@goshen.edu)

Vigils: Periodic prayer vigils are planned in response to troubling realities in our community and world. Watch the Daily Communicator for details.

Witmer Woods: Located on the west side of Main Street (SR 15) between the main campus and the College Cabin, Witmer Woods is a wonderful 18-acre arboretum of native shrubs and trees. This is an excellent place to spend time with God in nature.

Other resources



Pray As You Go

A great daily devotional you can listen to that takes around 10 minutes. Center yourself with music, prayer, and reflecting on scripture.



Lectio 365

Pause and pray the Bible. Lectio 365 is a free daily prayer app with morning, midday & night devotionals to help you experience God's presence in your life.



Anabaptist Community Bible

The official mobile study tool for the Anabaptist tradition, featuring the full text of the Common English Bible (CEB). Provides a 365-day reading plan that includes Old Testament, New Testament, and Psalms or Proverbs readings.



Chapel Music Spotify Playlist

A playlist featuring songs we'll be singing together in chapel. Listen and be inspired!



*"I praise you,
for I am
fearfully and
wonderfully
made."*

—PSALM 139:14



Campus Ministries 2026-27 Theme: **Wonderfully Made**

As I've been reflecting on this scripture, I knew I wanted to share my thoughts with you by hand. Because it's important that you know what you're reading on this page comes straight from my heart. ♥

Our Campus Ministries theme this year is "WONDERFULLY MADE" based on Psalm 139:14 (above). The entire chapter talks about how God knows us totally and completely. In fact - from the moment we were formed in the womb - we are seen, we are precious, & we are loved.

In a world filled with social media, online gaming and increasing AI, I believe it's more important than ever to remember our humanity - honoring God's image in ourselves and one another. For example: Get outside. Move your body. Sweat.

Cook something. Eat. Have a conversation with someone. Laugh. Cry. Sing. Think. Dance. Write (by hand!) Daydream. Take a shower. A machine cannot do any of these things. How profoundly wonderful and revolutionary it is to be human!

Ours is the pressing duty to remain profoundly human.
~ Pope Leo

A gentle reminder: if you are created in God's image, then every other human is too. This means our neighbor, the outcast, even our enemy is someone worthy of respect and love. In other words, living into our humanity is both an individual and a collective endeavor.

So this year, let's commit to being human together. You were not made to live behind a screen or be covered up by a filter. Your soul is not meant for algorithms or ChatBots. God formed you to love, serve, and grow in community with others. You are fearfully and wonderfully made - PRAISE GOD!

Jen —Jen Shenk, Campus Pastor

Wonderfully Made... To Love

Zeke Bodiker

Sophomore, Biology and Secondary Education major

"Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God... whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love." —1 John 4:7-8

We live in a time of division. Our world has become torn apart by politics and ideology. Now more than ever people care about being right or wrong, getting their way over trying to help others. The world has created a culture of competition, an "us versus them" narrative with no chance of compromise. This passage is a good way to recenter ourselves in Christ and help us think about how to show the love of God to others. Everyone is called to love one another as God loves each one of us. In fact, to truly comprehend God is to understand his never ending love for us. This passage is a reminder that we are created in God's image. To show we've been "born of God" is to show love to everyone.

The beginning of any new school year is always tough, it can be full of new experiences, new people, and new stressors. I'm sure everyone here reading this has had a time in their life when they got into a disagreement. In those times the feeling to win the argument and be right seems to trump all other ideas, to the point where the other person is almost dehumanized for you. In these times I return to this passage. It helps me realize that being right is not the end goal- instead we are called to love one another. We are created in God's image and God is love. Therefore if we are created in God's image and God is love, then we are also created to love.

We are created in God's image and God is love. Therefore if we are created in God's image and God is love, then we are also created to love.

In the end we know we will all fall short of being perfect and doing everything right all the time, but we can strive to love one another when things become challenging. The goal is not to avoid differences but to accept that everyone is unique and work to continue to show the love that we are made for.

My challenge for you is to work on showing love, as we are created to do, even if it isn't always easy. Don't take the easy way out – accept the call and strive to be love.



Wonderfully Made... To Love

Alyssa Munguia

Junior, Mathematics and Secondary Education major

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." —John 13:34

There are so many moments in life when we feel overwhelmed by how divided people can be. It can be so easy to stick with people who think like us, agree with us, or make us feel comfortable. Even in Christ-centered spaces, love sometimes feels conditional. Almost like it's based on performance, personality, or whether someone "deserves" it.

That is why Jesus' words in John 13:34 are both comforting and challenging: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." Jesus speaks these words to his disciples shortly before going to the cross. He already knows they will fail Him, misunderstand Him, and even abandon Him. Yet He still chooses to love them completely.

What stands out most in this verse is that Jesus does not call people to love only when it is easy. Instead, he points to his own example. His love is patient, sacrificial, forgiving, and intentional. He reaches people who feel forgotten, broken, and unseen. Rather than withholding love from imperfect people, Jesus moves toward them with grace.

This kind of love is deeply needed today. The world is filled with loneliness, comparison, conflict and fear of rejection. Genuine Christ-like love can seem rare, which is exactly why Jesus calls his followers to live differently. Loving others becomes one of the clearest and easiest ways to reflect the heart of God.

Living this out is not always simple. Sometimes loving others means listening, even when it would be easier to avoid. Sometimes it means offering forgiveness to them instead of judgment, or showing kindness without expecting anything in return. Love often requires patience, humility, and sacrifice. Yet even small acts of compassion can remind someone that they are valued and deeply loved by God.

Jesus' command is not simply about feeling affection for others, it is about choosing to live with grace and selflessness every day. In doing so, people become reflections of the love Christ first showed to them. When we choose to love the way Jesus loves, we create communities where we are all seen, valued, and deeply loved, and we become the people God created us to be.

Alyssa

Love often requires patience, humility, and sacrifice. Yet even small acts of compassion can remind someone that they are valued and deeply loved by God.

Wonderfully Made... To Serve

Kelsie Hankins

Senior, Psychology major

“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” —Ephesians 2:10

Mental health is something that is being discussed more and more in recent years, as the stresses and pressures of the world take their toll on each and every one of us. Unfortunately for me, I had finally reached a breaking point that sent me through almost a year of a mental health crisis. For various reasons leading up to this point and a few ongoing troubles, I was struggling so much that I could no longer play the sport that I loved, do the hobbies that I loved, or focus on anything, as I was always in a state of high anxiety and stress. My self-worth diminished almost completely as I battled challenges with my family, friends, school, and my sport, and eventually had to step away from most of these things in order to gather myself and get help.

Everyone goes through periods where they are struggling mentally with something, but during those past moments for me, I had always felt an underlying peace as I leaned heavily on my relationship with God and His guidance. However, during my year-long crisis, I tried and did everything to rely on my relationship with God but never felt that peace I once felt.

My solution to this was to do more and more for others in each area of my life, expecting that peace of serving others and producing good works to settle me. But since I drifted so far away from Him during my hardships, I felt my efforts only produced exhaustion within me.

In Ephesians 2:10, though, we learn that we are God’s work and that through our relationship with Him, we produce good works that glorify Him and serve others. Additionally, God tells us that He has already made a plan for us and our lives long before the successes and failures that we currently face.

Although it didn’t seem like it during the time, I now look back on that very difficult year and know that the struggles I faced will one day help others get through their own. I also know that those times shaped my character for the greater good of my life. So, as you fight through whatever challenges (mentally, physically, or spiritually) that you are facing now, remember that these hard times will one day serve as hope for others and produce good works for them. God has already planned how you will serve and change the world in advance!

We are God’s work and through our relationship with Him, we produce good works that glorify Him and serve others.

Kelsie 

Wonderfully Made... To Serve

Ziwe Ncube

Senior, Business major and Marketing minor

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." —1 Peter 4:10

In my sophomore year, I rearranged my entire dorm room at 2am. I moved my desk three times, rotated my bed, adjusted the lights, and spent way too long debating where the plants should go. I was a ministry assistant, and I had committed to hosting a bi-weekly ministry time. All I had was some tea and my guitar.

The problem was, I couldn't shake the feeling that it wasn't enough.

Meanwhile, the other ministry assistants were visiting the retirement home, running open Bible studies and organizing events with real impact. There I was, brewing chamomile in my dorm room, wondering if lighting and a chord progression counted as ministry. That slow, creeping whisper would set in: maybe your particular combination of gifts just doesn't add up to much. It was a quiet and persistent feeling.

I think a lot of us carry something like that. College puts you in rooms full of gifted and determined people and makes you wonder where exactly you fit.

This where 1 Peter 4:10 lands differently for me. Peter doesn't say to earn your gift. He says you've already received it. The question is just what you do with it. When the word steward is used, I keep thinking about a sower tending a garden. A sower doesn't create the seed. Rather, they work the soil, they plant with intention and water faithfully, even on the days when nothing visible is happening yet. The harvest isn't the sower's job. Faithfulness is.

So I stopped comparing my garden to everyone else's and started tending mine. I talked to my campus pastor, who helped me workshop the idea, which led to recruiting other students who played instruments and could sing. A dorm room became a biweekly student-led campus worship gathering, with space and ambiance and voices that weren't just mine. What started as uncertainty became something I could have never imagined on my own. The gift was never really mine to contain—it was always meant to be poured out as a steward of God's grace taking its own particular form through me. Your gift (not someone else's version of it) is a specific expression of God's grace meant for the people around you. Stewarding it faithfully means trusting the process to God, and simply being obedient with what's already in your hands.

What gift is already in your hands right now that you've been waiting to feel more confident about before you tend it? What would faithfulness look like today and not, someday?

Ziwe

Your gift (not someone else's version of it) is a specific expression of God's grace meant for the people around you.

Wonderfully Made... To Grow

Keegan Wyse

Junior, Broadcasting major

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

—John 16:33

When I was 16 I struggled with mental health. I felt an emptiness and felt more alone than I ever had before. I was confused, because there was nothing inherently wrong with my life; I had no explanation for feeling this way. I soon came to realise that it's okay to feel sad, or to struggle without knowing what causes it. I found God when I was at my lowest and he showed me the way to find peace within myself and within my situation.

Maybe you too find yourself in a very difficult place, whether you are dealing with family problems, mental health, or the loss of a loved one. You may feel like you're in a hole and you can't get out this time and you have never felt more alone and you don't know where to turn. It may feel impossible to overcome.

Following Jesus does not mean life will be easy. Everyone deals with struggle in many different capacities. Some show it more than others, but that doesn't make it not as hard.

In hard times, it is important to understand that God is there for you in the midst of your struggle. God understands you because he created you. He will guide your feet, light your path, and walk with you on your journey. Remember that you are never alone, because Jesus too struggled, suffering and giving his life so that we may live. Ultimately Jesus overcame the greatest struggle of death and gives us new life in Him.

In order to find your peace through your struggle, you must take action in order to grow, and take heart to overcome. Through God you can find the strength to work your way through adversity.

Jesus tells us we will face troubles in this world. It is our challenge to accept this and grow as an individual.

In order to find your peace through your struggle, you must take action in order to grow, and take heart to overcome.



Wonderfully Made... To Praise

Dahlia Thut

Sophomore, Environmental Science and Sustainability major

"The people I formed for myself, that they may proclaim my praise."

—Isaiah 43:21

This past May term, I had the opportunity to travel to Guatemala for the Youth and Resilience class. During our three weeks there, we visited museums, migrant shelters, education organizations, universities, and more. I was learning about Guatemalan history, practicing my Spanish, and genuinely enjoying my time, until an all too familiar question crept into my mind: Am I studying the right thing?

This was a question I had asked myself many times throughout my first year at Goshen, one that had even led me to switch majors twice. I never expected it to follow me all the way to Guatemala.

Even in an intentional space, during a time of purpose, I was feeling lost and full of doubt. Usually the thought would pop into my head on a quiet bus ride back after visiting an organization that was especially inspiring. Maybe you should study history instead, or switch back to public policy...there are so many people you could help, there is so much more you could be doing.

As I was struggling with these thoughts, I happened to receive an email from Jen Shenk, campus pastor and leader of campus ministries. She had sent us our assigned Bible verses to write our devotionals for this prayer booklet. I read my verse right away:

*"The animals of the field will glorify me, the jackals and the ostriches,
because I have given waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people.*

The people whom I formed for myself will declare my praise." (Isaiah 43:20-21)

Reading these verses, I realized that no matter what I study, no matter what I do after college, the most important thing is that I do it with love. Whatever the major, whatever the career, if you are living in love, then that is praise. God is love. Live into love as a form of radical praise. I challenge you: even if you feel certain about what you want to study and do after college, think about ways you might do it in the image of Jesus. How might love show up in your career? And how will you, how do you, live in a way that praises God?

***Live into love
as a form of
radical praise.***

Love others, praise God.

Dahlia

PRAYER PRACTICES

Writing a Dialogue: Meeting Jesus

BY **Marlene Kropf**

Begin by reading John 1:35-39 slowly and thoughtfully.

The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!" The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day.

Imagine the scene in which John and his disciples see Jesus passing by. Notice the details of the scene – the road, the town, the sky, and vegetation. Let yourself become one of the characters in the story, perhaps one of the two disciples. Become aware of the disciple's feelings as he or she follows Jesus. What is the disciple thinking? What does the disciple see in Jesus' face when Jesus turns around and speaks? How does it feel to ask Jesus a question? What happens as the disciples follow Jesus to the place where he is staying?

Begin writing the story as though you are there.

You can begin at any point in the action. When you come to the place where Jesus asks the disciples, "What are you looking for?" let yourself become a partner in the conversation. Answer Jesus' questions as if they are addressed to you.

For example, write:

Jesus: *What are you looking for? What do you want?*

Your Name: *Here you write whatever response seems like the one you would make to Jesus.*

Jesus: *Write Jesus' response to you.*

Continue writing the dialogue as long as you have something to say. Don't try to decide if the words are really the words of Jesus. Just write until the conversation is finished. There will be time later to reflect on what has happened in the exchange. Writing a dialogue is a way of trusting our imagination to lead us into a conversation with God. As a kind of prayer in which we both listen and speak to God, such dialogues can be a helpful discipline in hearing a personal word from God as well as helping to clarify our inner thoughts and motivations. In some cases, these dialogues can also be a way to discern God's direction in our lives.

Conversational Prayer

Here you are invited to carry on a conversation with God which requires both speaking and listening. You can start on either side of the paper, “Me” or “God.”

If you start on the “Me” side:

What is it that you want to say to God? What is on your mind? What are you struggling with right now? Write it down. Then go to the side that says “God.” Listen to what God might be saying to you. Write what you think God would say to you in response to what you have written. Then, go back to the “Me” side and respond to God. Continue this conversation back and forth for as long as you need to. Reread what you have written.

If you start on the “God” side:

What is it that God wants to say to you? Write it down. Then go to the side that says “Me.” Say what you want to God. Follow the same steps as above, going back and forth between the sides for as long as you need to. Then, reread what you have written.

ME

GOD

Examen

The Examen is a way of praying, in which you take time to be aware of God's loving presence, while quietly reflecting on two questions. The questions are opposite from one another.

These questions are designed to help us think about our day, our week, or our month, etc. in a way that recognizes both our joys and disappointments. It gives a way to name what disappoints, hurts, or scares us while at the same time declaring that there are things that bless, uplift, and carry us. It is a way of allowing God to be a part of our everyday ups and downs.

Here are some examples of questions you can use. Pick a question pair or two to use and then spend some time reflecting on each question. Share your thoughts and feelings with God, or your spiritual friend.

Example Questions:

- *What made me smile?*
- *What made me scowl or frown?*
- *For what moment am I most grateful?*
- *For what moment am I least grateful?*
- *When did I feel the most alive?*
- *When did I feel the most drained?*
- *What scared me?*
- *What made me feel safe & hopeful?*
- *What in my relationship with God is most helpful?*
- *What in my relationship with God is most challenging?*

Try with a pair of questions every night or at the end of every week as a way of strengthening your prayer life. You may want to design your own questions as well.

"Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive."

—Howard Thurman

A Breath Prayer

For centuries the breath prayer has existed as a way to connect with God. For some it is a way to befriend silence; it gives you something to do as you begin to experience holy silence.

As you repeat the prayer, its words eventually become background so you can be open to hearing what God might say. You can choose your own breath prayer and then repeat it over and over in rhythm with the inhale and exhale of your breath.

First choose a simple phrase that summarizes what you may need from your relationship with God right now. You might choose a line from a song or a phrase of Scripture, as long as it is not too wordy. Or choose something like:

- *Be with me, God*
- *Jesus, help me follow you*
- *Spirit, give me strength*
- *Gracious God, fill me with love*
- *Guide me, Savior*
- *Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me*

You may wish to simply pray this prayer for a few minutes or up to 10, 20, or 30 minutes...however long you feel this is beneficial to your soul. You might also consider praying a breath prayer as you walk, run, ride bike, or some other seemingly mundane activity.

Isaiah 12:2

Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid, for the Lord God is my strength and my might; God has become my salvation.

"We must learn to realize that the love of God seeks us in every situation and seeks our good."

—Thomas Merton, *Seeds of Contemplation*

Psalms 117:1-2

¹Praise the Lord, all you nations! Extol God, all you peoples! ²For great is the Holy One's steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever. Praise the Lord!

Lectio Divina: Praying The Sacred Texts

“Reading the Bible and praying the Bible are two very different undertakings. To pray the Bible is to apply listening and silence to the Word of God in order to hear God speak...The ancients realized that scripture, when read the right way, opens doors to a direct relationship with God.” (Creating a Life with God, pages 38-39.)

Lectio Divina is a way of praying Scripture. It dates back to the Middle Ages and has primarily been used among Benedictine monks. It “aims at giving an awareness of God’s presence through a fourfold process.”

This method can take five minutes or it can take several hours! You are encouraged to spend an equal amount of time with each part. Though any passage can be used, those that work well for this method of praying are often the Gospel stories and Psalms that range in length no more than ten verses.

Part I-Lectio (reading) Receive the word of God. Read the text twice, out loud or in silence, then pause for a moment. Read the text slowly again so that you can savor it.

Part II-Meditatio/Ruminatio (ruminate; mull over) Allow the word to be present. Read the text again slowly. Take notice of a word or phrase that strikes you in a unique way. After you read the text think about that word or phrase.

Part III-Oratio (speak) Articulate your response. Read the text slowly again pausing afterwards. During your silent pause take time to ask God, “Why does this word or phrase stand out to me today? What are you saying to me today?” Just wait and listen for a moment or two.

Part IV-Contemplatio (“contemplate”) Rest in the presence of God. Carry this prayer experience with you. Thank God for the word that was revealed to you today.

Some passages you might consider...

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| • <i>Psalms 1:1-6</i> | • <i>Mark 6:6b-13</i> |
| • <i>Psalms 15:1-5</i> | • <i>Mark 7:24-30</i> |
| • <i>Psalms 101:1-8</i> | • <i>Mark 12:41-44</i> |
| • <i>Matthew 6:25-34</i> | • <i>Luke 8:22-25</i> |
| • <i>Matthew 14:22-33</i> | • <i>Luke 9:23-27</i> |
| • <i>Matthew 20:20-28</i> | • <i>Luke 11:1-13</i> |
| • <i>Mark 4:35-41</i> | • <i>Luke 19:1-10</i> |

The Jesus Prayer

"Prayer is essentially an entering into that knowledge of the Divine love holding us."
— Simon Barrington-Ward, p.22

Turning our attention to God in an intentional way is the cornerstone of prayer. One prayer practice used over the centuries is the simple Jesus Prayer. This repetitive prayer invites the prayer to put her/himself in the presence of God and invite God's mercy to wash over the prayer and the world. Three different options are listed here:

*Lord Jesus Christ
Son of God
Have mercy on me.*

*Lord Jesus Christ
Son of God
Have mercy on me, a sinner.*

*Lord Jesus Christ
Love of God
Have mercy on me
and on the whole world.*

Instructions from *The Jesus Prayer: A Way to Contemplation** by Simon Barrington-Ward include the following:

How to begin:

- Sit comfortably, relax and breathe slowly
- Pray the words of the prayer out loud: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me," repeating the prayer over and over.
- Try to pray for ten minutes at first; gradually increase the time, if desired.

Additional Notes:

- When you find your mind wandering, let the words of the prayer bring you back to an awareness of God: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God..."
- You may choose to breathe intentionally as you pray, breathing in as you say the first half of the prayer (Lord Jesus Christ, Son/Love of God) and breathing out as you say the second half (Have mercy on me/Have mercy on me and on the whole world).
- Use this as a prayer of intercession by putting the name of a person, a group of people, or a situation in place of "me" as you repeat this prayer.
- Gradually let the prayer lead you into times of complete silence, resting in the love of God.

**The Jesus Prayer: A Way to Contemplation*, Simon Barrington-Ward, (US Edition: Pauline Books & Media, Boston, MA), 2011

Prayers Of Lament

Expressions of biblical lament can be found in numerous books of the Bible, particularly in Psalms. Of the 150 Psalms, nearly half can be categorized as a form of lament. These prayers can be for both individual and corporate settings. Though not all lament psalms follow the same format, there is often a common flow and movement among these prayers. See below. In these psalms, a critical turning point occurs in most of them when the plea or complaint turns to praise.

“The practice of lament gives you time and permission to vent your pent-up anger, your deep sadness, and your self-blame. You allow yourself to grieve in a way that leads to healing and renewal. As you pour out your grief, loss, pain, and anger in the presence of God, you discover that God hears your cries of anguish and comforts you. While you can’t remove the storms, quiet the thunder, or stop the lightning from striking, you can trust your tears to be the raindrops that release the clouds, allowing rays of sunlight to shine through. Before catching a glimpse of the rainbow, though, you have to brace yourself for the raging storm within.”*

Write your own “3-Act” psalm

Act I: Arguing with God

People get mad at God (or some other event/reality) and pour out their raw emotions.

Act II: Remembering God’s goodness

Gradually those who complained remember God’s help in the past and know that God has heard them.

Act III: Praising God

Those who lament realize they can trust God with their lives and they tell God, “Thanks!”

*Bass, Dorothy & Don Richter, eds. *Way to Live: Christian Practices for Teens*. (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2002), page 251.

Psalm 22:1-2

¹My God, my god, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? ²O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest.

Be Still

Be still and know that I am God. — Psalm 46:10a

In our busy and noisy world, it can be difficult to slow down...to stop...to relax...to breathe...to be still. This way of praying gives you opportunity to do just that...be still. And to do it in a way that calls us to remember who God is.

To pray this prayer, you simply keep in mind the phrase “Be still and know that I am God,” but you will actually “chop off” words of this verse until you are in total stillness. Repeat each phrase in the quietness of your mind for one minute. Or you can do it for more or less time than that, but keep it an equal amount of time.

Repeat the following phrases each for one minute...for a total of five minutes:

Be still and know that I am God

Be still and know

Be still

Be

...silence...

Psalm 46

¹God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

²Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; ³though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult. *Selah*

⁴There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. ⁵God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns. ⁶The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter; God utters speech, the earth melts. ⁷The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. *Selah*

⁸Come, behold the works of the Lord; see what desolations God has brought on the earth. ⁹The Holy One makes wars cease to the end of the earth; God breaks the bow, and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire. ¹⁰Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth. ¹¹The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. *Selah*

Praying With Art

Spending time contemplating an art piece can be a way of entering into prayer. It can be a way of listening in prayer. It can be a way that Scripture comes to life for you.

- Choose a picture you would like to focus on. You may want to choose something related to a certain Scripture passage. Or select some paintings or drawings from religious art books or other sources.
- Sit down; make yourself comfortable. Ask God to open something up to you through this work of art.
- Spend time looking at the picture: notice color, texture, layers, the characters and scenery. Allow yourself to hone in on details.
- After some time, allow yourself to withdraw from looking at detail and look at the “big picture.”
- Ask what is this piece trying to portray? What is it saying?
- Allow yourself to be drawn in again, this time imagining yourself as a part of the scene. What character do you relate to? What emotion in the picture might describe where you are right now? What strikes you?
- Spend some time praying asking God what this means for you. It may be that this simply gives you a different view of Jesus or someone else to ponder. It may be a tool God is giving you to open up Scripture to you in a whole new way. It may be an insight into yourself. Whatever it is, thank God for it.

“Whatever may be the tensions and the stresses of a particular day, there is always lurking close at hand the trailing beauty of forgotten joy or unremembered peace.”

—Howard Thurman, *Meditations of the Heart*

“Do not think that love in order to be genuine has to be extraordinary. What we need is to love without getting tired. Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies.”

—Mother Teresa

“Earth is crammed with heaven.”

—Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Praying With Clay

Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. —Isaiah 64:8

It isn't always easy to put into words what we want to share with God. Sometimes it is downright hard to pray. Praying with clay can be a rich new way for you to experience prayer. You can use your hands to feel that you are sharing something with God.

- Choose a ball of clay to work with. Then make yourself comfortable.
- You may want to choose a Scripture passage on which to reflect, or simply use the clay to express some feelings or challenges you are experiencing.
- Try to get a bit lost in what you are doing, allowing God to enter into your process of creating.
- When you are done you may have a symbol before you or you may simply have worked some things out through the clay.

Psalm 8:1-9

¹O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. ²Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger. ³When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; ⁴what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? ⁵Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor. ⁶You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet, ⁷all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, ⁸the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas. ⁹O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Praying Through Drawing

Sometimes it is difficult to put into words what we are experiencing, what we want to share with God. Therefore, sharing with God through drawing can be helpful.

- It may help to capture emotions you are experiencing that are so hard to describe.
- It may be a special way to describe something you are struggling with.
- Drawing, like journaling, can be a special thing you can look back on and remember where you were spiritually when you offered such a prayer.
- Finally, try to think of this as a special offering to God. You are creating something as you pray. It is a gift that you share with God. It can be a symbol of your relationship with God and where you are in your journey.

Find a comfortable spot to spend some time drawing your prayers to God.

Psalm 139:1-6

¹O Lord, you have searched me and known me. ²You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. ³You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. ⁴Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely. ⁵You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. ⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.

*I swim inside this love on my inside
Love that was before there was a time
Love that will be after there will be a time*

—Rumi, *Radical Love*

Praying With Photography

Use your camera to help you see reflectively. With your camera in hand, take a contemplative walk, being present to the life and to the details around you. Be mindful of that to which your eye is drawn. Receive (as opposed to “take” or “shoot!”) each of these visual gifts with your camera. Choose the image that most draws your attention. Use this image as a starting point for reflection on the holy, the sacred, the presence of God in all things.

Sit reflectively with one image and ponder some of these questions:

- *What emotions does this image evoke in you?*
- *What might God be offering you through this image?*
- *What might God be showing you about yourself in this image?*
- *In what ways does this image call you to grow or to be transformed?*

Receive your awareness with thanks and gently transition back to your day.

Adapted from *Eyes of the Heart: Photography as a Christian Contemplative Practice* by Christine Valters Paintner (Sorin Books, Notre Dame, IN 2013)

Loving Kindness

We all need to practice being kind, particularly to ourselves. Only when we first reconnect with the infinite love—our original and inherent blessing—that is our ground of being can we extend that love to others through nonviolent actions. When we remember that we are love, we can truly wish even our enemies well. The Buddhist practice of *metta*, loving kindness, is a wonderful way to grow compassion for yourself and for others.

Begin by sitting in silence and finding the place of loving kindness within you. Then speak the following statements aloud:

May I be free from inner and outer harm and danger. May I be safe and protected.

May I be free of mental suffering or distress.

May I be happy.

May I be free of physical pain and suffering.

May I be healthy and strong.

May I be able to live in this world happily, peacefully, joyfully, with ease.

Repeat these affirmations as many times as you wish. When you are ready, replace the “I” in each statement with someone else’s name. You might begin with a beloved, then move in widening circles to send love toward a friend, an acquaintance, someone who has hurt you, and finally the whole universe.

PRAYERS OF OTHERS

A Reason to Pray

Whoever has not begun the practice of prayer, I beg for the love of the Lord not to go without so great a good. There is nothing here to fear but only something to desire. Even if there be no great progress, or much effort in reaching such perfection as to deserve the favor and mercies God bestows on the more generous, at least a person will come to understand the road leading to heaven. And if one perseveres, I trust then in the mercy of God, who never fails to repay anyone who has taken Him for a friend. For mental prayer in my opinion is nothing else than an intimate sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us.

—Teresa of Avila, a 16th century Catholic Spanish mystic

A Journey Blessing

The journey blessing of Mary MacDonald has a sense of the presence of the Trinity accompanying the traveler, that profound and totally natural experience of God as Trinity that is so much a mark of Celtic prayer:

God be with thee in every pass, Jesus be with thee on every hill,
Spirit be with thee on every stream,
 Headland and ridge and lawn;
Each sea and land, each moor and meadow,
Each lying down, each rising up,
In the trough of the waves, on the crest of the billows,
 Each step of the journey thou goest.

—*The Celtic Way of Prayer*, page 11

A Trinitarian Prayer of Protection

This prayer is from the Carmina Gadelica, a 19th century Scottish collection of hymns, prayers, and blessings.

The guarding of the God of life be upon me,
The guarding of loving Christ be upon me,
The guarding of the Holy Spirit be upon me,
 Each step of the way,
 To aid me and enfold me,
 Each day and night of my life.

—*The Celtic Way of Prayer*, page 27

Psalm 121

"I lift up my eyes to the hills - from where will my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. God will not let your foot be moved; God who keeps you will not slumber. The One who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all evil; The Holy One will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore."

Plea for Perseverance

Dear eternal, heavenly Father,
 I call upon you from the depths of my heart;
 do not let me turn from you,
 but keep me in your truth unto my end.
 Instruct and teach me,
 your poor, unworthy child,
 that I may press even unto death,
 through all sorrows, sufferings, anguish and pain.
 Let me persevere, O God,
 that I may not be separated from your love.
 Comfort me by your holy word,
 in which I firmly trust.
 I commend myself to you and your church.
 Be my Protector today,
 for your holy name's sake,
 through Jesus Christ. Amen.

—Anna of Freiburg, a 16th century German Anabaptist martyr
 zealous in her faith; drowned & burned

God's Encompassing Presence

God be in my head and in my understanding;
 God be in mine eyes, and in my looking;
 God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;
 God be in my heart, and in my thinking;
 God be at my end, and at my departing.

—Sarum Missal, a 16th century English church liturgical prayer book

Desire for Faithfulness

O God,
preserve us in your keeping,
that we may not faint and abandon your Word.
Let us enjoy the faithfulness which you have shown
through your Son Jesus Christ.
Kindle in us the fire of your divine love;
lead us to practice love as your dear children.
Let the light of your divine glory illuminate us,
that we may walk in it.

O God,
we ask you for one thing more:
send us your Holy Spirit,
endue us with power,
renew our hearts,
and make us strong in you
that we may obey you
and praise your name. Amen.

—*Prayer of Hans Langmantel and his manservant and maidservant,
16th century Dutch Anabaptist martyrs*

Peace Prayer

Lord make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master grant that I may
Not so much seek to be consoled, as to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned.
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.

—*attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, a 13th century Italian Catholic monk*

Prayer: I Have No Idea Where I Am Going

"My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always, though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone."

—Thomas Merton, *Thoughts in Solitude*

A Martyr's Prayer

Loving God,
 You have baptized us into one body
 and made us to drink the one Spirit.
 Now grant us pure and faithful hearts
 that we may serve one another diligently in love
 and find no cause to separate or divide.
 Call each of us to esteem others better than ourselves
 so we may remain together in peace and joy.
 Grant these mercies to us and all your people. Amen.

—Tijds Jeuriaenss, a 16th century Anabaptist minister.
In 1569 Minister Tijds was strangled and burned at the stake.

Source of All Being

Source of existence.
 Source of wisdom.
 Source of hope.
 Source of compassion.
 Source of desire for good.
 Source of unselfish love.
 Source of prayer.
 Source of justice.
 Source of eternal life.
 Source of all that I am.
 Today: I commune with my Source.

—Carmelite Breviary

The Lord's Prayer: Liberation Theology Version

Our Father and Mother
who is in us here on earth,
holy is your name
in the hungry
who share their bread and their song.
Your Kingdom come,
which is a generous land
flowing with milk and honey.
Let us do your will,
standing up when all are sitting down,
and raising our voice
when all are silent.
You are giving us our daily bread
in the song of the bird and the miracle of the corn.
Forgive us
for keeping silent in the face of injustice,
and for burying our dreams;
for not sharing bread and wine,
love and the land,
among us, now.
Don't let us fall into the temptation
of shutting the door through fear,
of resigning ourselves to hunger and injustice,
of taking up the same arms as the enemy.
But deliver us from evil.
Give us the perseverance and the solidarity
to look for love,
even if the path has not yet been trodden,
even if we fail;
so we shall have known your Kingdom
which is being built forever and ever.
Amen.

Hearer of All

You hear the jubilation
Of the happy-hearted,
And the questioning
Of the confused seeker.
You hear the shout
Of the angry one
And the last sigh
Of the dying.
The ear of your heart
Is always open to us.
Today: The Hearer of All listens to me.

—The Qur'an

Transformation

O my Divine Saviour

Transform me into Yourself.
 May my hands be the hands of Jesus.
 May my tongue be the tongue of Jesus.
 Grant that every faculty of my body
 May serve only to glorify You.

Above all,

Transform my soul and all its powers
 So that my memory, will and affections
 May be the memory, will and affections
 Of Jesus.

I pray to You

To destroy in me
 All that is not of You.

Grant that I may live

But in You, by You and for You,

So that I may truly say with St. Paul,

"I love now, not I,
 But Christ lives in me."

—Saint John Gabriel Perboyre, 19th century French priest and missionary
 to China, executed on September 11, 1840 for preaching Christianity

God's Pencil

I always say I am a little pencil in the hands of God. He does the thinking. He does the writing. He does everything--and it's really hard--sometimes it's a broken pencil. He has to sharpen it a little more. But be a little instrument in His hands so that He can use you any time, anywhere. . . . We have only to say Yes to Him.

—Mother Teresa of Calcutta, a 20th century Catholic nun

May I See You Today

Dearest Lord, may I see You today and every day in the person of Your sick, and, while nursing them, minister unto You. Though You hide Yourself behind the unattractive disguise of the irritable, the exacting, the unreasonable, may I still recognize You, and say, "Jesus, my patient, how sweet it is to serve You."

—Mother Teresa of Calcutta, 20th century Catholic nun

Protection for the Journey

“The path I walk, Christ walks it.” The opening words of a traditional 6th century poem attributed to St. Columba ask for the protection and support of Christ’s presence on this journey wherever it may carry us.

The path I walk, Christ walks it.

May the land in which I am be without sorrow.

May the Trinity protect me wherever I stay,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Bright angels walk with me – dear presence –in every dealing.

In every dealing I pray them that no one’s poison may reach me.

The ninefold people of heaven of holy cloud,

the tenth force of the stone earth.

Favourable company, they come with me,

so that the Lord may not be angry with me.

May I arrive at every place, may I return home;

may the way in which I spend be a way without loss.

May every path before me be smooth,

man, woman and child welcome me.

A truly good journey!

Well does the fair Lord show us a course, a path.

—*The Celtic Way of Prayer*, page 6

What we would like to do is change the world

—make it a little simpler for people to feed, clothe, and shelter themselves as God intended them to do. And, by fighting for better conditions, by crying out unceasingly for the rights of the workers, the poor, of the destitute—the rights of the worthy and the unworthy poor, in other words—we can, to a certain extent, change the world; we can work for the oasis, the little cell of joy and peace in a harried world. We can throw our pebble in the pond and be confident that its ever widening circle will reach around the world. We repeat, there is nothing we can do but love, and, dear God, please enlarge our hearts to love each other, to love our neighbor, to love our enemy as our friend.

—Dorothy Day

A Foolish Blessing

May God bless you with discomfort
 at easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships,
 so that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger
 at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people,
 so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears
 to shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger and war,
 so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and
 to turn their pain into joy.

And may God bless you with enough foolishness
 to believe that you can make a difference in the world,
 so that you can do what others claim cannot be done
 to bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor.

—A Franciscan Benediction

Psalms 23 Comfort

I am a child of God,
 I have everything I need.

This beautiful earth feeds my body.
 You feed my soul.

You guide me in the ways of Life,
 for You are Life.

And though I will walk through dark places, and eventually to death,
 I need never be afraid.

For You are with me always,
 In You I can find comfort.

With Your help, I can face whatever comes.
 My joy overflows.

Your goodness and blessing will be with me
 Every day of my life — and forever.

—23rd Psalm adapted by Christine Robinson, *Psalms for a New World website*

JOURNAL

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2026-27 Campus Ministry Student Leaders

Spiritual Connection Team:

Zeke Bodiker
Kelsie Hankins
Alyssa Munguia
Ziwe Ncube
Dahlia Thut

Inspired Singers

Anton Alstrom-Brookhyser
Azany Kamwa Fotso
Kadence Lentz
Nevaeh Link
Mackenzie Miller
Daniel Mtoka
Jory Umble
Keegan Wyse



Jen Shenk, *Campus Pastor*
jshenk@goshen.edu | 574.535.7776 | Wyse 121

goshen.edu/ministries

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