

# **P.R.A.Y.E.R.**

## **LWML PRAYER SERVICE - 2012**

Authored by Reverend Barrie E. Henke

### **2012 Prayer Service Theme Verse**

*Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NIV).*

### **Goal Statement**

**Confident that God answers my prayers, I entrust all of my concerns to Him and share the joy of a confident faith with those whose lives intersect mine.**

This Prayer Service is divided into six parts. It is imperative that all six parts are adequately covered in order to convey the full impact of prayer dynamics upon the participants. The parts of the service are:

1. **P**raise God for His goodness and blessings.
2. **R**emember that I am a sinner and that I have a Savior.
3. **A**sk of any and all things that are on my mind.
4. **Y**ield these concerns to God's wisdom and gracious working.
5. **E**xcitement is the result of surrendering concerns to God.
6. **R**ejoicing is the expression of our trust that God is in control.

### **Author**



The author, Reverend Barrie E. Henke, has served congregations in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Oklahoma. He served as an Oklahoma District LWML Counselor from 2004–2010. He presently serves as Senior Pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Edmond, Oklahoma, and as President of the Oklahoma District of the LCMS since 2009. It is his expressed hope that those involved with this **LWML Prayer Service** will be emboldened by the Holy Spirit to pray aloud to God their concerns and be led by the Holy Spirit to share the excitement and joy grounded in a firm trust that God will answer their prayers according to His wisdom, timing, and graciousness.

# P.R.A.Y.E.R.

Authored by Reverend Barrie E. Henke

In 1982 the Reverend Erwin J. Kolb published through Concordia Publishing House a short study guide entitled, “A Prayer Primer: A Guide on How to Pray in Public.” It was intended to embolden timid prayers to pray aloud in public settings by structuring their prayer upon the acronym: **P.R.A.Y.** – **Praise, Remember, Ask, Yield.** Throughout my ministry I have seen great blessings flow from this simple encouragement that I am blessed to share my expanded version of it as the outline for the LWML Prayer Service 2012: **P.R.A.Y.E.R.** – **Praise, Remember, Ask, Yield, Excitement, Rejoice.** It is important for all participants to be reminded that God does not speak to us in prayer; instead, we speak to God in prayer. God assures us that He readily and continually speaks to us through His Word and Sacraments through which the Holy Spirit gives to us His divine counsel through very clear direction or sometimes His divine “nudging.”

One can find many quotes about prayer from a variety of sources, therefore making it impossible to include them in a time-conscious way for a Prayer Service. In my opinion one quote, though rather lengthy, by Johann Gerhard is all inclusive of the many ways in which prayer is viewed.

“If someone wants to describe adequately the usefulness of pious, earnest prayer, he will, in my opinion, surely find a beginning more easily than a conclusion. Pious prayer offered in faith is **familiar conversation** with God. It is a salutary **remedy** to all difficulties of life. It is the **key** to heaven and the **door** to paradise. It shows us how much we depend on God, and it is a **ladder** of ascension to God. It is a **shield** for our defense and a faithful **messenger** of the ambassador. It is **refreshment** in the heat of misfortune; it is a **medicine** during illness. It is a **winch**, drawing us to heaven, and a **vessel** that draws water from the font of divine kindness. It is a **sword** against the devil and a **defense** against misfortune. It is a **wind** that blows away evil and brings earthly benefits. It is a **nurse** that nurtures virtues and conquers faults. It is a great **fortification** for the soul and gives free access to God. It is a **spiritual feast** and a **heavenly delicacy**. It is a **consolation** for the dejected and a **delight** for the holy. It **grants knowledge** of the secret things of God and **acquires** His gifts. It upholds the world and rescues people. It is a **joy** for the heart and a **jubilation** for the mind. It follows God’s gift of grace, and it leads ahead into glory. It is a **garden** of happiness and a **tree** full of delights. It calms the conscience and increases our thankfulness. **It sends demons running and draws angels close.** It is a soothing **remedy** for the misfortunes of this life and the **sweet smell** of the sacrifice of thanksgiving. It is a **foretaste** of the life to come and **sweetens** the bitterness of death. Whoever is truly a child of God through faith will, with childlike trust, address his or her heavenly Father every day in prayer. The one in whose heart the Holy Spirit has made His home will, as a spiritual priest, daily offer to God this incense of prayer. There are four immovable truths on which our confidence to pray rests. Because of these, we may be certain that our heavenly Father mercifully hears our prayers. The truths on which our certainty rest are: (1) **God’s omnipotent kindness**; (2) **God’s unfailing truthfulness**; (3) **Christ’s intercession as our mediator**; and (4) **the Holy Spirit’s testimony.**”

- taken from *Treasury of Daily Prayer*, pp 776-777;

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## **PART 1 – PRAISE**

### **The Invocation**

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

Leader: He is the God of our birth, the God of our Baptism, the God of our daily new beginnings!

People: **O come, let us praise Him! Alleluia!**

### **Everyone Sings:**

**“Praise to the Lord, the Almighty!”**

*Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 790*

**Tune: LOBE DEN HERREN – Stralsund, 1665; text by Joachim Neander.**

Text and music: Public Domain.

**Alternate Song: “Lord, I Lift Your Name on High!”**

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### **Our Expression of Praise – Martin Luther’s Explanation to the First Article of the Apostles’ Creed**

Leader: Our Father Almighty has made us and all creatures.

People: **It is my responsibility to thank and praise, serve and obey Him!**

Leader: He has given us our body and soul, eyes, ears and all our members, our reason and all our senses, and still takes care of them.

People: **It is my privilege to thank and praise, serve and obey Him!**

Leader: He gives us clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, spouse and children, land, animals, and all we have.

People: **It is my joy to thank and praise, serve and obey Him!**

Leader: He richly and daily provides us with all that we need to support this body and life.

People: **It is my blessing to thank and praise, serve and obey Him!**

Leader: He defends us against all danger and guards and protects us from all evil.

People: **It is my honor to thank and praise, serve and obey Him!**

Leader: He does all of this for us only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in us.

People: **It is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him!**

Leader: *I will praise You, O LORD, with all my heart;*  
People: *I will tell of all your wonders.*

Leader: *I will be glad and rejoice in you;*  
People: *I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.* Psalm 9:1-2

Leader: *O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!*  
People: *You have set your glory above the heavens.*

Leader: *From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise ...* Psalm 8:1-2a

### Everyone Sings: (2x)

#### “How Majestic Is Your Name!”

**O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth!**  
**O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth!**  
**O LORD, we praise Your name! O Lord, we magnify Your name,**  
**Prince of Peace, mighty God, O LORD God Almighty!**

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## PART 2 – REMEMBER

Leader: We have lifted our voices in praise of our glorious Triune God. But who are we to assume such a privilege? Remember what you are and who you are by nature.

People: **I remember and the remembrance is not good.**

Leader: King David remembered leading him to plead for God’s mercy, compassion and forgiveness.

People: *For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight ... Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.*

Psalm 51:3-4a, 5

Leader: Saint Paul remembered as he turned in trust to the saving work of Jesus Christ.

People: *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners – of whom I am the worst.*

1 Timothy 1:15

Leader: We, too, must remember what we are and who we are before God – sinners. We must remember that we are sinners not because we sin, but we sin because we are first of all sinners by nature.

People: **Our very nature is in a broken relationship with our Creator, which leads us to sin against Him and one another by choice, knowingly and unknowingly.**

**Everyone Sings:**

**“Chief of Sinners”**

**Chief of sinners – yes, I am! But for me God sent His Lamb,  
To redeem me from my sin – Those I choose and those within.  
I remember all too well I deserve but death and hell.  
Trustingly I offer praise And in faith I lift my gaze  
To the cross of Calvary Where my Savior died for me!  
I remember His great love Flowing to me from above!**

Melody, GETHSEMANE by Richard Redhead; LSB 611.

Text by Rev. Barrie E. Henke. Text and music: Public Domain.

Leader: We not only remember that we are sinners by nature and by choice, but we remember a divine truth:

People: **We remember Jesus! We remember that He is our Savior. It was for this purpose He came into the world – to save us from our sin!**

Leader: Remember the truth: *God demonstrates His own love for us in this:*

People: ***While we were still sinners, Christ died for us!*** Romans 5:8

**Possible interaction on the part of the participants:**

Take the hand of the person next to you, or in front, or in back, then trace on their palm with your index finger a cross while saying,

**“You are God’s child redeemed with the precious blood of Jesus.”**

Leader: King David remembered God’s mercy and sang:

People: ***Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;***

Leader: *Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.*

People: ***Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.***

Leader: *Hide your face from my sins*

People: ***And blot out all my iniquity.***

Leader: *Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*

People: ***Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.***

Leader: *Restore to me the joy of your salvation*

People: ***And grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.***

Psalm 51:7-12

Leader: *Since we have now been justified by His blood,*  
People: ***How much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through Him!***  
Romans 5:9

Leader: Remember: we are sinners who have been given a Savior!  
People: ***Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb. Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God forever and ever. Amen!***  
Revelation 7:10, 12

### Everyone Sings:

<b>"Lamb of God"</b>	<b>LSB 550</b>
<b>Text and Tune: Twila Paris; © 1985 Straightway Music; admin. EMI.</b>	

### PART 3 – ASK

Leader: By grace we have been made children of God. We are to approach Him as dear children approach their loving Father. Jesus says,  
People: **[Jesus said] *If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.***  
Matthew 21:22

Leader: A child climbs up into father's lap with a request in mind. It may be something grand or something very small. Tell me, children, what would the father do?  
People: **Listen and hug. That's what fathers do.**

Leader: What if your requests are too big, like world peace or a cure for cancer?  
People: **[Jesus said] *If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.***  
Matthew 21:22

Leader: What if your request is for the soul of a loved one to be saved?  
People: **[Jesus said] *You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.***  
John 14:14

Leader: What if your requests are too small, like a good night's sleep for yourself or your spouse, or those misplaced keys, or eye glasses, or that piece of paper with the number written on it? Would you, should you bother God with those tiny requests?

People: ***Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.***  
Philippians 4:6

Leader: What if your requests are too selfish and self-centered, something that you really want but can't afford it, or something intended to just make you feel better about yourself and your life?

People: *This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.* 1 John 5:14

Leader: “Anything” is a big word when it comes to asking God in prayer. But that is His desire for us as we confidently come to the throne of grace through Jesus Christ. He invites us to approach Him as we would a loving father. That means asking our heavenly Father for anything and everything that is on our mind. But in prayer we do not attempt to bargain with God or manipulate Him. Instead, “we ask anything according to His will” and in so doing we open ourselves to His will being worked. Of what does Jesus remind us after He tells us not to worry about the things of this world?

People: *‘Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.’* Matthew 7:7-8

### Everyone Sings:

**“Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God”**

**LSB 712**

**Text and Tune by Karen Lafferty. © 1972 Maranatha! Music; admin. Music Services (ASCAP).**

## **PART 4 – YIELD**

Leader: We speak to God in prayer, but God speaks to us in His Word and Sacraments. Through His Word He reveals His answers to our prayers. It is very important to remember: when we pray, we do not pray answers, we pray requests.

People: **God has the answers, we have the requests.**

Leader: Our Lord’s invitation to us is to confidently bring all of our wants and needs in Jesus’ name to our Heavenly Father and be assured that He hears us. Then we are to trust Him to answer according to His gracious wisdom, way, will and timing.

People: **God’s will for me in Christ Jesus is that I may be joyful always, pray continually, and give thanks in all circumstances.** Thessalonians 5:16-18

Leader: Even when we falter in finding the right words to speak, our Father sends a Helper to guide our prayers ... even wordless prayers or tear-stained prayers.

People: ***In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.*** Romans 8:26

Leader: We can ask of God anything that flows from our heart, but we must also yield to His wisdom, His way, His will, and His timing.

People: **Yielding ... surrendering ... our concerns to God is tough!**

Leader: It takes trust to do so!  
People: *'Not my will, but yours be done!'* Luke 22:42b

Leader: How can you be joyful and give thanks when God doesn't seem to answer your prayer?  
People: **Trust in His faithfulness, goodness and love!**

Leader: That's right: keep on trusting Him and look for His answers.  
People: ***Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. His love endures forever.*** Psalm 136:1

Leader: When we yield or surrender our prayer concerns to our God, then we are releasing them into His omnipotent hands. These are the same powerful hands that crafted creation in six days, stretched out on a cross to redeem the fallen creation, and reach down to embrace His children today with grace, love and peace.  
People: **When I yield my concerns to God, it is as though I am saying, "Dear God, this is no longer my problem, now it's Your problem."**

Leader: He will answer your prayer. That's His promise!  
People: **And God keeps His promises!**

**Group Interaction:** At this point the participants may be asked to write on a slip of paper a particular concern that they have been carrying and for which they have been praying. They may be asked to bring them forward to be placed in a box – **GOD'S BOX** – then the lid is closed on the box as they relinquish ... yield ... surrender ... this particular concern to God. For added effect, the box could have a lock to be locked with the slips inside. They may even be invited to create a **GOD'S BOX** at home to do the same with their concerns each day.

### Everyone Sings:

**"God Moves in a Mysterious Way"** *LSB 765*

Melody, DUNDEE – Edinburgh, 1615; text by William Cowper.  
Text and music: Public domain.

**Alternate Song: "Have Thine Own Way, Lord!"**

Melody, ADELAIDE. Text by Adelaide A. Pollard; melody by George C. Stebbins.  
Text and music: Public Domain.

## PART 5 – EXCITEMENT

Leader: Once we have yielded our concerns to God, then life gets exciting! No longer do we have to be anxious about these concerns ourselves; now we have relinquished them to God's control. And He is the God who says,  
People: ***'Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear.'***

Isaiah 65:24

Leader: Excitement is a result of placing our concerns into the hands of the One who has the power and the wisdom to handle them. He may not answer immediately or in the way you have pictured in your mind. But He will answer. That's His promise! Remember the prayer of Saint Paul for his own health issues when he prayed about that thorn in his flesh:

People: *Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.*  
2 Corinthians 12:8-9

Leader: There was a "radio preacher" who ended each of his broadcasts with the encouraging phrase, "Keep looking up!" Those words ooze with excitement, and excitement coming from a yielding spirit to God's wisdom.

People: **Lord, as I yield my life concerns to You, empower me by Your Holy Spirit to keep looking up in excitement to see how You will work Your blessings in and through my life. Remind me of Your divine majesty and authority over all of my life's concerns.**

**Everyone Sings:**

**"Majesty"**

Words and music by Jack Hayford. © 1981 Ricksmith Music, c/o Trust Music Management, 6255 Sunset Blvd., Suite 723, Hollywood, CA 90028.

## **PART 6 – REJOICE!**

Leader: We have lifted up our hearts in **PRAISE** to our magnificent Triune God!

People: **We have REMEMBERED our sin and our sinfulness, as well as REMEMBERING that we have been given a Savior from sin – Jesus Christ!**

Leader: We have opened our hearts to **ASK** of our loving Father anything on our mind, both spiritual and material.

People: **We have YIELDED these concerns into the hands of our loving and gracious God.**

Leader: After all, as our Heavenly Father, He acts in love toward us and has the power to wisely fulfill for us our every need.

People: **But YIELDING is the toughest part of PRAYER!**

Leader: Yet, as we **YIELD** we have had our hearts filled with **EXCITEMENT**.

People: **EXCITEMENT as we trust the Holy Spirit to remove these burdens from us and place them in the hands of our divine Burden Bearer.**

Leader: Trusting His power to fulfill, His gracious will for us, and His impeccable timing, we can **REJOICE!**  
People: **Let us REJOICE in the love of our God toward us!**

**Everyone Sings:**

**“Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee”**

**LSB 803**

Melody, HYMN TO JOY by Ludwig van Beethoven; text by Henry Van Dyke.  
Text and tune: Public domain.

**Alternate Song: “Rejoice in the Lord Always!”**

Melody, REJOICE. Text – Philippians 4:4; music – traditional.  
Text & Music: Public Domain.

Leader: *Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my sighing.*  
People: ***Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray.***

Leader: *In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice;*  
People: ***In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.***

Psalm 5:1-3

Leader: *But let all who take refuge in you be glad;*  
People: ***Let them ever sing for joy.***

Leader: *Spread your protection over them,*  
People: ***That those who love your name may rejoice in You.***

Psalm 5:11

Leader: Rejoice in the promises of God to you!  
People: **God keeps His promises! Let us rejoice!**

Leader: He promises that no matter how your requests will be answered by His gracious working, *in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*

Romans 8:28

People: **By grace we are His called ones. God keeps His promises! Let us rejoice.**

Leader: He promises that when troubles confront and burden you, they will not overwhelm you or separate you from Christ’s love because through the resurrection power of Jesus you are more than a conqueror through Him who loves you.

People: ***For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord!***

Romans 8:38-39

Leader: Rejoice! That is God’s promise!  
People: **God keeps His promises! Let us rejoice!**

Leader: *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again:*  
People: **REJOICE!**

Leader: *Let your gentleness be evident to all.* Philippians 4:4-5a  
People: **Praise His Name!**

Leader: *The Lord is near!* Philippians 4:5b  
People: **Remember our sins are forgiven! We stand confidently before Him on the Day of Judgment!**

Leader: *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.* Philippians 4:6  
People: **We ask of Him the concerns of our heart and yield them to His graciousness!**

Leader: *And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.* Philippians 4:7  
People: **Give us that peace, O Lord!**

Leader: Filled with God's peace in knowing that He is in charge, we approach life with excitement by trusting His gracious working and we approach our service within His kingdom with heart of rejoicing!  
People: **With excitement, O Lord, we serve You with gladness!**

Leader: Let us pray together the most perfect prayer taught to us by our Lord Jesus Christ:  
Everyone: **Our Father who art in heaven ...**

Leader: *Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.* 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

**Praise** Him for His goodness and love to you.  
**Remember** you deserve nothing good from Him except through Jesus' grace!  
**Ask** of your loving Father whatever is on your mind.  
**Yield** to His will, wisdom, and timing.  
**Excitedly** look up to Him with an expectant heart.  
**Rejoice** as you trust His gracious working and bask in His peace!

People: **We go out into the world with confidence trusting that God is in control. Amen and Amen!**

**Everyone Sings:**

**"Serve the Lord with Gladness"**

**Tune: ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS (LSB 662)**  
**Text: Prof. Ernest Lewerenz**

Serve the Lord with gladness! It is He alone  
Who redeemed us sinners, Guides us as His own.  
To enjoy the blessings Of His love and grace.  
Will at last in glory meet us face to face.

**(Refrain) Onward then for Jesus! Let this be our aim:  
“Serve the Lord with gladness!” Glorify His name!**

Serve the Lord with gladness! He gave us command  
To proclaim His Gospel Now in every land  
So that fellow sinners May, like us, be blest;  
Leading them to Jesus, We can serve Him best. (Refrain)

“Serve the Lord with gladness!” There’s no greater joy  
Than to serve the Master, Work in His employ  
As we build His kingdom Angels, too, rejoice  
Over every sinner Brought to hear His voice. (Refrain)