

EASTER TO TRINITY SUNDAY



Revised Common Lectionary /Scripture Citations for Year C - All Seasons
<http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/calendar/2024-25/?season=all&download=txt>

Welcome to the last leg of the Liturgy journey for year C: Easter to Transfiguration Sunday. Our hope is that individuals as well as group/class members will make use of this devotional material as it not only reflects the Sunday sermons but ensures that we take our learnings deeper. We do this with scripture readings, daily devotions, reflections on scripture and questions. May you hear His truths, ensure it is transformative and experience God's love for you personally.

Week 1: Sunday 20 April - The empty tomb.

Week 2: Sunday 27 April – Jesus appears to his disciples.

Week 3: Sunday 4 May – Jesus and the miraculous catch of fish.

Week 4: Sunday 11 May – Further conflict over Jesus's claims.

Week 5: Sunday 18 May – Jesus predicts Peter's denial.

Week 6: Sunday 25 May – The healing at the pool.

29 May – Ascension Day

Week 7: Sunday 1 June – Jesus prays for all believers.

Week 8: Sunday 8 June – Jesus the way to the Father.

Week 9: Sunday 15 June – Trinity Sunday.



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Week 7: Sunday 1 June ***Jesus prays for all believers***

Bring God into the meeting with prayer, lighting a candle, listening to a worship song.

The Lord's Prayer – Hillsong worship: https://youtu.be/nCxqjEz5hJ4?si=kbzrt5eh_DtkoAUg

Read the Bible readings provided:

Liturgical Date: Seventh Sunday of Easter

Calendar Date: Jun 01, 2025

First reading: * Acts 16:16-34

Psalm: Psalm 97

Second reading: Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21

Gospel: John 17:20-26

John 17:20-26

New International Version - UK

Jesus prays for all believers

²⁰ 'My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one – ²³ I in them and you in me – so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. ²⁴ 'Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. ²⁵ 'Righteous Father, though

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the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me.²⁶ I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.'

A reflection on the Bible reading by: REV ZAMANI SIKUPELA

"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. My they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them".

The Westminster Shorter Catechism provides an excellent biblical definition of prayer. It describes prayer as, *"offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgement of his mercies".*

Richard Rohr defines prayer as *"sitting in silence until it silences us, choosing gratitude until we are grateful, praising God until we ourselves are a constant act of praise".*

Prayer is important to many people, Christians or not. It seems to be intertwined with human DNA to seek divine help. It happens everywhere: at shrines, in exam rooms, on the football pitch, during travel, and in churches. The Bible itself is full of prayers and praying people. In fact, prayer is at the heart of all communications between God and his people. Such is the seriousness of prayer.

Whether we realize it or not, prayer is the encounter of God's thirst for him. Prayer enlarges the heart until it can contain God's gift of Himself. It is the means of sustaining a faith that at times can grow weak. It is our humble answer to the inconceivable surprise of living, and the power of prayer is enriching, uplifting to hear our God speak.

We look at John 17:20-26 as Jesus broadens the scope of His prayer. In the previous verses He prayed for His eleven disciples, but He also had the heart and the vision to pray beyond them. He moved His attention away from his disciples and to all those who will put their trust in him. He prayed for those who would come to faith by the testimony of His disciples. He goes to God on behalf of His people, in the manner an Old Testament High Priest would. In other words, Jesus prayed for us. In the previous verses He prayed for them and from verse 20 He prayed for us. He prayed for believers like you and me. Isn't that amazing? He not only has intimate knowledge of believers, but He also prays for them. That's something worth chewing on – the fact that Jesus Christ prayed for us.

He knew His intercession for them would prevail. He knows His intercession for us will prevail. He believed in the testimony of the disciples that others would hear from them and come to belief in Jesus through the testimony of the disciples. He didn't have a vague hope in what God would do through the disciples. He was full of confidence in the work of God through the disciples.

He prayed for unity: "that all may be one". The prayer is for community. This means, to be a follower of Jesus is to be a part of a greater whole. According to Jesus there are to be no solitary Christians or spiritual "lone rangers".

We are one in Christ whether we agree with each other or not. To become a part of Christ is to become a part of the community; a part of the one. Jesus' prayer reminds us that our unity, our oneness is to be a sign to the world of God's love for us in Jesus Christ. Oneness and unity are about love. And if you have been part of a family, a member of a church, or a community, you know that within that love there can be disagreements and squabbling. We are human. But the mystery of the incarnation is that God desired unity with us so much, God became one of us. And in that moment, we were drawn into the oneness of God, the Creator, the Son, and the Spirit. It is with God's help that we can live into that oneness. And our oneness is to be a sign to the world of God's love for us in Jesus Christ.

In Jesus' prayer we also learn that the greatest benefit of Christianity is not the forgiveness of sins; that's simply a means to an end. The greatest benefit that we have is access to the presence of God and His Son. That is where Jesus wants us to be. He wants us to enter His presence.

Prayer is one of the highest expressions of love. To pray for someone is to demonstrate that you really care about them. Which is why it is so meaningful when someone walks up to you and simply tells you that they are praying for you. If someone is willing to take your cares to the Lord, that's love. So, Jesus' love for His faithful followers is demonstrated by the mere fact that He prayed for them. You can know that Jesus loves you because He prays and intercedes for you. Then we can rest in Him, with the rest of loving obedience and of surest confidence.

If Jesus prayed, we ought to pray as well. Prayer is important in the life of a believer. It helps us find peace when we are anxious. It encourages us to express thankfulness in all circumstances and allows us to experience the comforting and healing power of prayer when we come together as a community of believers.

When we pray, it is not so that we can get what we want from God. Rather, prayer is a way to connect with Him and realign our hearts with His. Prayer is one of the most important aspects of our lives as followers of Jesus, and it should not be taken lightly. It is not something we should only do at church. It is something we can and should do every single day. Like in any relationship..... if we don't spend time with God the relationship will suffer. Prayer is a way for us to spend time with God. It is a way to connect with Him. It helps us to stay close with God. Prayer also helps us to grow in our relationship with God.

When we pray, we are inviting God into our lives and asking for His guidance. And if you are like me, I need His guidance every day.

Questions for group discussion:

1. How would you define prayer?
2. Is prayer important for us? Why?
3. Which Jesus' prayer is applicable to us?
4. Is unity a problem for believers now?
5. Is it important for believers from various denominations to put aside their doctrinal differences and be united in Christ?

Prayer

Lord, teach us to pray today! Teach us how to commune with you in prayer and show us what we can do to spend more time in prayer today than yesterday. Thank you, Lord! AMEN!

Daily lectionary readings:

Monday, June 02, 2025: [Psalm 29](#); [Exodus 40:16-38](#); [Acts 16:35-40](#);
 Tuesday, June 03, 2025: [Psalm 29](#); [2 Chronicles 5:2-14](#); [Acts 26:19-29](#);
 Wednesday, June 04, 2025: [Psalm 29](#); [Ezekiel 3:12-21](#); [Luke 9:18-27](#);
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Thursday, June 05, 2025: [Psalm 104:24-34, 35b; Isaiah 32:11-17; Galatians 5:16-25;](#)

Friday, June 06, 2025: [Psalm 104:24-34, 35b; Isaiah 44:1-4; Galatians 6:7-10;](#)

Saturday, June 07, 2025: [Psalm 104:24-34, 35b; 2 Kings 2:1-15a; Luke 1:5-17;](#)

Family Time:



Written by Magogodi Nkuna

Week 7 **Unity among believers**

Read: John 17:20-26

Jesus prays for his followers, asking God to unite them with him and with each other, just as Jesus and God are one. He wants them to experience the same love and unity that he shares with God, so that the world will believe that God sent Jesus.

Application:

Here are some lessons we can take from Jesus' prayer:

1. Unity is key: Jesus emphasises the importance of unity among his followers, just as he and God are one.
2. Love and unity are contagious: When we experience God's love and unity, it spills over into our relationships with others.
3. Our unity reflects God's character: When we are united, it demonstrates God's love and character to the world.
4. Pray for unity and love: Jesus' prayer shows us the importance of praying for unity and love among believers.
5. We are representatives of Jesus: As followers of Jesus, we represent him to the world. Our unity and love for one another reflect on him.

Close in prayer.