South Louisville Christian Church

Prayer Guide
One Hour of Prayer

YOUR PRAYER INSTRUCTIONS

On the evening before his death, Jesus prays the longest prayer recorded in the New Testament. What makes this the longest prayer is not just the number of words, but the fact that He includes people in the distant future when he prays for “those who will believe in me!” Jesus’ 1st century prayer included us, 21st century Christians!

He prayed for our unity, joy, protection from evil, and our sanctification (being set apart), so that through us the lost world would believe in Him. Jesus explains, “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. May 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.” John 17:20-23. This is truly the “Lord’s Prayer,” it contains what Jesus personally prayed for.

You see, the message the world so desperately needs to hear is in the hands of the church, our hands! And, if that message is to be credible, the people of the world must see Jesus’ love and unity in us. In other words, we must love one another before the world will believe our message that God loves them. Therefore, as you pray today you will be praying for what creates the “complete unity” that Jesus prayed for so long ago.

The following “guide” is provided to assist you in your personal hour of prayer. Your prayer time will include all of the elements of prayer that Jesus taught in his model prayer of Matthew 6. There are 10 separate “prayer-chairs” set up in our “upper prayer-room”--start at the first chair and move through each of them in sequence, one by one (1, 2, 3 . . . 10). There is a purpose and plan for each chair to guide your prayers—however, the actual words of the prayers will come from your heart. The person praying ahead of or after you may be in the room with you, but the room is only to be filled with prayers to God and not conversation.

Our prayers rise up from God’s Holy Spirit within each of us as individuals and collectively as His church, “. . . the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God’s people.” (Revelation 5:8).

You have come here because you believe in prayer and in the power of God to whom you pray! You may not know exactly how it does, but you believe that prayer works—this is essential for what you are about to do, “But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and
tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the
Lord.” (James 1:6, 7).

Now - turn off your cellphone, block out the things of this world, and focus your attention
on the only one you need to talk to for the next hour . . . God. Prayer begins by shifting
our minds from worldly to spiritual things. The time for each prayer chair will take you
approximately 5 minutes.

CHAIR 1 - SCRIPTURE READING – PREPARATION FOR PRAYER

- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-19
- Psalm 121
- James 4:2-10

Read and think (reflect, meditate) on each of these Scriptures. Pray for God’s Word to
be alive in you and to have an effect on the way you think, believe and live. Pray that
South Louisville Christian Church will be a place where the truth of God’s Word is
preached, taught and lived out everyday, by each of her members--together, in
complete unity!

A daily intake of Scripture is absolutely necessary for Spiritual health, just as physical
nutrition keeps us physically healthy. Please make a commitment to God to read from
His Word each day in the week ahead.

You may now turn the page and
move to the next chair.
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CHAIR 2 - PRAYER OF PRAISE TO GOD

“I will praise you, O LORD, with all my heart; before the ‘gods’ I will sing your praise. I will bow down toward your holy temple and will praise your Name for your love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all things your Name and your word. When I called, you answered me; you made me bold and stouthearted . . . . Though the LORD is on high, he looks upon the lowly, but the proud he knows from afar. Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life; you stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes, with your right hand You save me. The LORD will fulfill His purpose for me; your love, O LORD, endures forever—do not abandon the works of your hands.” Psalm 138

The chair in which you are now sitting is facing the direction Jerusalem is from Louisville—Daniel 6, 1 Kings 6, and 2 Chronicles 8 all reference facing Jerusalem and the temple for prayer—the temple is gone but Jerusalem was the place where the foot of God walked upon the earth and where He chose to put His Name. It is not unfitting to use this as a focal point of our prayers of “praise.”

“Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into His presence with singing! Know that the LORD, He is God! It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise! Give thanks to Him; bless His name! For the LORD is good; His steadfast love endures forever, and His faithfulness to all generations.” Psalm 100

“Praise” differs from “Worship” (Chair #5). There are many reasons for praising God, and the Bible also lists many ways to praise God. It does not appear that there is only one way to offer praise, but one thing does appear certain; we each must each praise God in some form! So, choose a means of praising God that is best suited for you—sing, shout, sit, stand, kneel, raise your hands, fall on your face, or whatever is sincerely an act of praise from you to God! Praise Him like you never have before, as though this may be your last chance to do so! Don’t be self-conscious, or others-conscious, be God-conscious—when no one else matters except God and what He thinks!

Now, speak your own words of praise to God from your heart—silently or out loud as a prayer of praise. “When [Jesus] came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: ‘Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!’ ‘Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!’ Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, ‘Teacher, rebuke your disciples!’ ‘I tell you,’ he replied, ‘if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.’” (Luke 19:37-40).
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Allow the Holy Spirit move you. Call out to God, either by the words spoken in your heart or the words spoken on your lips. The important thing is that we cry out to God in praise!

You may now turn the page and move to the next chair.
Thanksgiving and Praise are very closely related! We are to thank and praise God, not just for the blessings we have personally received, but especially the blessings that He is showering upon the South Louisville Christian Church. Be mindful of the past blessings and love that God has given to you in your lifetime, and to SLCC over the past 112 year history of her existence. Knowing what all God has gotten us through in the past helps give us greater confidence for facing the future!

“Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it ‘Ebenezer,’ saying, ‘Thus far the Lord has helped us.'” 1 Samuel 7:12

“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

Scripture gives us every reason to have faith and to trust God to provide, but sometimes we begin to put our trust in other things, or people, or even ourselves.

Take your “Ebenezer” stone from the wooden bowl (under your chair), this is to serve as a reminder to you of God’s help and your prayers in the days ahead—it is not magical and is not specially blessed—it is simply a reminder to you to pray, and that “thus far the Lord has helped” you!

“Let us approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” Hebrews 4:16

Now pray your prayer of Thanksgiving from a heart that is grateful and thankful for God’s grace, mercy and care!

You may now turn the page and move to the next chair.
CHAIR 4 - PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND SELF EXAMINATION

Is your heart hard or cold to the things of God? Persistent sin in our life can harden our hearts and cause our prayers to be ineffective:

“When you spread out your hands in prayer, I hide my eyes from you; even when you offer many prayers, I am not listening.”

Isaiah 1:15

“Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.”

James 1:23, 24

“Oh LORD, you have searched me and you know me. You know when sit and when I rise; you perceive by thoughts from afar. . . . Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

Psalm 139: 1,2, 23, 24

Examine your life, thoughts, attitudes and behavior—admit your sins and shortcomings to God in this prayer (. . . He already knows them). He will forgive you, but first you must be honest and admit that you have sinned—confess, repent and be forgiven.

Look long at yourself in the mirror in front of you, look into your own eyes and see yourself as the person you really are, not as the person you pretend to be or want to be. It is okay if you don’t like what you see, you are finally seeing what God already sees! He can always see inside your heart, not just the expression on your face.

“Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment . . .” Romans 12:3.

“Humble yourselves before the LORD, and He will lift you up.” James 4:10

Confessing, is admitting that we do need to change, then God will help you make the changes that are needed.

You may now turn the page and move to the next chair.
Praising God sometimes makes you want to stand and shout, “Hallelujah!” However, Worship often humbles us and makes us want to fall to our knees with tears in our eyes. Therefore, pillows are provided at this chair, just in case the Spirit leads you to kneel, bow or even lay face down, or just to sit humbly. “Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.” Psalm 95: 6, 7

“. . . let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our ‘God is a consuming fire.’” Hebrews 12:28. The Greek word for “reverence” is Aidos, which means: a sense of shame or grief coming from an acknowledgement of our imperfections.

TD Jakes helps us to distinguish Worship from Praise when he said, “The praiser is thanking God for his shoes, the worshiper says if I don’t have no shoes, if I don’t have no car, if I don’t have any house, if I never get anything, I worship You for who You are, I worship You because You are God, You don’t have to perform, You don’t have to impress me, You don’t have to play Santa Claus, but just because You are God, You mean so much to me, I’ll tear up my face and cry.” We simply worship God because we love Him and trust Him.

A person can ultimately worship only one thing. If you worship anything else, it puts God in second place, or in competition for first place in your life. Worship comes from our heart, and God sees clearly what is in our heart, even if we don’t, “The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” 1 Samuel 16:7. If God is looking into your heart, shouldn’t you also? “These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on merely human rules they have been taught.” Isaiah 29:13

Exodus 20, lists the big ten (Commandments) and number one is, “You shall have no other gods before me.” Seriously consider the things you value and hold most dear—these “things” can become your “gods”—your possessions will ultimately possess you! Do any of these things come before God in your life? Be honest with yourself and God. We can easily test ourselves by examining where and on what we spend the majority of our time and money. In Matthew 6:33, Jesus says, “But seek first [God’s] kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” Now, honestly evaluate your life’s priorities and discuss these with God in this prayer—when you have removed everything else that you worship, then you can worship God!

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and move to the next location.
CHAIR 6 - PRAYER OF REPENTANCE, ASKING GOD TO FORGIVE YOU, AND THEN FORGIVING OTHERS

You have now considered who God is, and have also examined who you are. Since you have confessed your sins, realizing what they are and how they grieve God, you must now do something about it, just being sorry is not good enough! In other words, repent and receive forgiveness! Salvation and forgiveness are free gifts from God, but they were not free—they come with a very high price!

God’s Son, Jesus, had to die to provide the forgiveness for your sins. This is God’s gift of grace—something we can’t buy or earn, we must, however, accept it as a gift from God. Matthew 27:28-31 explains, Jesus’ “cruel and unusual” death sentence “They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on His head. They put a staff in His right hand. Then they knelt in front of Him and mocked Him. “Hail, king of the Jews!” they said. They spit on Him, and took the staff and struck Him on the head again and again. After they had mocked Him, they took off the robe and put His own clothes on Him. Then they led Him away to crucify Him.” The crown of thorns in front of you symbolizes the cost of removing the spiritual death sentence from mankind—it helps us to consider the death Jesus had to die for us, it should also encourage us to live the kind of life He asks us to live for Him.

“Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin. As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.” 1 Peter 4:1,2. Accepting God’s grace demands changed attitudes and behaviors from us, repentance is how we are renewed and transformed from the patterns of this world, with the help of God’s Spirit.

Sin separates us from God, and our sins separate us from one another. In Matthew 5:23-24 Jesus tells us, “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.”

“So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves.” 1 Corinthians 11:27-29

In Matthew 6, Jesus explains it this way, “For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.” It all begins and ends with forgiveness! This is the time to get and to give forgiveness! Now that you have prepared your heart, mind and spirit, take the bread and cup of communion, the Lord’s Supper, and ask for and receive God’s forgiveness. Then pray for God to draw closer to you in the remaining portion of this hour.

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CHAIR 7 - PRAYER OF INTERCESSION, OR SUPPLICATION

Up till now you have been focused on yourself and your relationship to God, this has prepared you and your prayers to now be directed toward others and their needs. Intercessory prayer grows out of our genuine concern for others.

An important category of intercessory prayer is our prayer for those who are still outside of God's kingdom, whose prayers are non-existent or ineffective. We should pray for lost souls, for political leaders (even the ones you don’t like), and for our enemies. As Jesus said, “But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you . . .” Matthew 5:44.

Paul’s instructions to Timothy are still appropriate for us—“I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people.” 1 Timothy 2:1-6

Another category of intercessory prayers is prayer for our sisters and brothers in Christ. As Paul notes in 2 Thessalonians 1:2-4, this is an ongoing process as we mature as Christians, “We ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love all of you have for one another is increasing. Therefore, among God’s churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring.”

If we love God we must love others, in fact, the apostle John writes plainly, “Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen.” 1 John 4:20. Is there anyone you hate—hate is just intense dislike? But, the absence of hate is still not love! You must resolve this; it is limiting your relationship and the capacity of your heart to love God fully!

“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.” James 5:16 makes it clear that we are to bear one another’s burdens and pray for each other. Jesus carried your sins to the cross—whose burdens do you carry? Who trusts you enough to confess their sins to you? Is there anyone for whom you have been praying for a long period of time? Do you pray for more spiritual issues than physical ones? Who do you pray for everyday? What are the names of the unsaved people that you pray for?
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Jesus prayed an *intercessory* prayer for Peter, “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail.” (Luke 22:31,32). If Jesus prayed for others, we must also!

Please take one of the “Prayer Journal” books provided and begin today to keep a daily prayer journal. This will enable you to track your prayers and those for whom you are praying. Your journal will help you recognize the answers to your prayers as you look back. This will strengthen your faith in prayer in the future! Please intercede with prayers for the following people, they are the staff and leaders of SLCC and are therefore favorite targets for satan’s attacks, call out their names for God’s protection, strength and encouragement:

- Dr. Charlie Burgin’s wife Jeannie and Family
- Rick and Ronelle Burmleve and Family
- James Carey and Family
- Joey and Pat Davidson and Family
- Joe and Mary Douthitt and Family
- Pastor Theo and Reenita Dues and Family
- Paul and Melanie Gantzer and Family
- Carl Henry and Family
- Justin and Stephanie High and Family
- Jason and Heather Horn and Family
- Ray and Debbie Horn
- Brian Kallam and Family
- Rob and Janet Kallem and Family
- Ron and Melissa Matthews and Family
- Willie Montgomery and Family
- Bob and Janet Parrott and Family
- Jakie and Sharon Philpot and Family
- Jason and Michelle Philpot and Family
- Tom and Angie Sandlin and Family
- Danny and Naila Seow and Family
- Neil and Amy Seow and Family
- Logan and Edna Surles and Family
- Doug and Linda Taylor and Family
- Joe and Sara Trabue and Family
- Pat and Kendall Stone and Family
- Ed and Marci Wall and Family

Intercessory prayer is a very important, yet time consuming type of prayer and must be taken seriously and continued on a regular basis. We appreciate it when someone prays for us, and others will appreciate your prayers!

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CHAIR 8 - PRAYER OF PETITION

We are most familiar with this type of prayer! It's the one where we ask God for something—to take away or to give us something. This type of prayer is appropriate too, but it should not be our most common prayer, and we should pray for the needs of others as often as we pray for our own. “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.” Philippians 2:3,4

Our needs and the needs of others, both physical and spiritual, are to be included in our prayers. There are times when each of us is too discouraged, sick or spiritually weak to pray effectively and we will need the prayers of others, and they will need our prayers! 1 Corinthians 12: 24-26 explains God’s design, “But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.” As Christians we are to be united together as one body, in the good times and bad times of our lives.

Prayers of petition must meet some requirements to be answered. In John 14:13, Jesus explains, “And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” This is not a blank check, but it is a promise that when we pray for what will glorify Jesus in our life, when we ask what is in keeping with his teachings and life, we will receive it! But, just saying, “In Jesus’ name I pray,” does not make it so!

Ask God specifically for what you and others need, “In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.” Psalm 5:3. Keep a record of these requests in your Prayer Journal, and then wait in expectation! Rejoice sincerely when one of your petitions for another person is answered, just as you would as if one of your own petitions were granted!

“The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:5-7. Prayer lessens anxiety and gives us hope. Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” John 14:37

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CHAIR 9 - SILENT PRAYER (LISTENING)

Praying isn’t always talking.

“And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.” Matthew 6:7,8

“Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.” Psalm 46:10

Practice just sitting in God’s presence in silence, listening for the whisper of God’s Spirit speaking to you through His spirit that lives in your soul. It is most likely not an audible voice, but one that is spiritually discerned—“The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.” 1 Corinthians 2:14. This takes patience and perseverance!

For the next 5 minutes quiet your mind and just sit, resist the urge to fill your mind with thoughts or words, even words of prayer. As God says, “Be still,” quiet the noise that is constantly going on in your mind. Slow your breathing, take one deep breath and exhale it slowly. “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” John 14:27. Experience the “Shalom” peace of God.

1 Kings 19:11,12 “The Lord said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.” Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper.”

Listen with your heart, not your ears!

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CHAIR 10 - PRAYER FOR GUIDANCE AND DELIVERANCE

“In spite of this, you did not trust in the Lord your God, who went ahead of you on your journey, in fire by night and in a cloud by day, to search out places for you to camp and to show you the way you should go.” Deuteronomy 1:32, 33

God has always provided guidance for His people, ever since the beginning and He continues to do so! We must learn to trust Him more and follow wherever and whenever He leads. Pray for God to reign as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords over SLCC and each of us individually!

But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.” 1 Peter 1:15

Once again let’s remember Jesus’ prayer on the night before his crucifixion — “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. May they may be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” We often pray for Jesus to answer our prayers, this is one prayer that we can answer for Jesus by being united together as God’s children.

Spend the remainder of your hour finishing with a prayer for God to guide you personally, and to guide South Louisville Christian Church to where we need to be to please and glorify Him, and for Spiritual discernment to know God’s will when we see it. May God fill us with His love, grace and strength equal to our tasks!

May you know the blessing that comes from spending time in God’s presence! Remember, it is not our words, but our God who makes our prayers powerful!

Jesus had ascended back to Heaven and the believers were gathered together praying, and even though Jesus was no longer with them, the Holy Spirit that Jesus had promised was with them! “After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. All the believers were one in heart and mind . . .” Acts 4:31.32. May you leave your prayer time having been filled with God’s Holy Spirit!