

Serving the Kingdom Daily Office
Week of June 1-7

Morning

Intro

Welcome to the Practice of the Daily Office. In this season of disruption and uncertainty, we invite you to join us in a rhythm of prayer. How might our days be grounded more deeply in God's presence if we pause each morning, mid-day, and evening for silence, scripture, and prayer?

Silence

Let's begin in silence.

Take a deep breath.

Remember, right now, you are in God's loving presence. However you are beginning this day, whatever emotions you are feeling, the Lord is with you. Psalm 139 says there is no where we can go to escape God's loving presence.

Take another deep breath. God is closer than the air we breathe.

Take two minutes of silence to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Scripture

Now I invite you join me in a time of prayer. As we seek to cultivate spaces for the kingdom of God to grow in this world, let us watch and listen for opportunities to serve those around us.

Remember, God longs to partner with you to bring about God's kingdom purposes in the world. Consider that truth for a moment. The creator of the universe is inviting you to join the work of living the kingdom into every corner of human existence. How does this make you feel? Do you feel honored or grateful? Maybe you are anxious or you feel the weight of this invitation. Perhaps it is some other emotion or a mixture of emotions.

Take a moment, and offer a prayer based on your feelings.

Now let's ground our prayer in these words of Jesus spoken after washing his disciples' feet. Listen to these words. Wade into them and begin to listen for the Lord's specific invitation to you today.

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.

Now I invite you to continue listening to God. Who in your life might God be moving you to serve? Be open to whomever God brings to mind. It may be someone obvious, or maybe you will be surprised.

Take a moment to notice *who* God is bringing to mind. Is it someone in your home or a neighbor? Maybe it is a family member outside your home. Is God bringing to mind a specific friend? Perhaps God is inviting you to serve someone you find difficult or would consider an enemy.

Who is God moving you to serve?

Would you now consider *how* God might be inviting you to serve this person? Is there some way you might show God's love to her or him? Maybe God is helping you notice a need of theirs that you can meet. How can you honor his or her dignity and a beloved image bearer?

Finally, I invite you to get specific and make a plan for your act of service. How will you do it? When will you serve the person God brought to mind? Remember, the spiritual practice of service is not about us. How will you be sure to focus your serving remains on the other person? You might even consider how you could serve them in secret.

When you have decided, would you offer a prayer, inviting God's kingdom to come, God's will to be done as you serve.

Prayer

May your kingdom come, Lord. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Mid-day

Silence

We pause now in mid-day. Perhaps much has happened already today, or maybe the day has begun slowly. However, this day is unfolding. Let us begin our mid-day prayer in silence. Take a deep breath. Remembering what Paul says, "In God we live and move and have our being."

Take another deep breath.

Take two minutes of silence to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Prayer for the Kingdom

Would you now pray this prayer from Mary McLeod Bethune.

Father, we call Thee Father because we love Thee. We are glad to be called Thy children, and to dedicate our lives to the service that extends through willing hearts and hands to the betterment of all mankind. We send a cry of Thanksgiving for people of all races, creeds, classes, and colors the world over, and pray that through the instrumentality of our lives the spirit of peace, joy, fellowship, and brotherhood shall circle the world. We know that this world is filled with discordant notes, but help us, Father, to so unite our efforts that we may all join in one harmonious symphony for peace and brotherhood, justice, and equality of opportunity for all men. The tasks performed today with forgiveness for all our errors, we dedicate, dear Lord, to Thee. Grant us strength and courage and faith and humility sufficient for the tasks assigned to us.

Evening

Silence

This evening we pause once again to recognize and rest in the loving presence of God. Take a deep breath. In Matthew 28, Jesus promised, “surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Take another deep breath.

Take two minutes of silence to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Scripture

Now, I invite you to read with me to the Word of God from First John.

They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the road?” But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.

Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, “Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.”

He took a little child whom he placed among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, “Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.”

Read this passage again. Is there a word or a phrase that stands out? Is the Holy Spirit drawing to your attention any particular part of this passage?

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Consider what God has for you in this passage. Pause now and listen to the Lord. What is God saying to you in this passage today?

Would you take a moment now and respond to God in prayer?

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.