



# Grace Pasadena

May 2020

Daily Prayer & Weekly Examen

**Invitation to Worship and Prayer.** This month, we invite you to continue growing in rhythms and habits of worship and prayer. We offer you this simplified prayer guide, which includes modified offices (or times of prayer) for morning and evening. We also encourage you to revisit the Rule of Life guides and the practices we have looked at in previous months. (All guides are available at our website.) As we engage in worship, prayer and other Christian habits, let us remember that we do so because God has already called us to him in Jesus Christ and given us his Holy Spirit; we are already recipients of God's free and abundant grace! (Ephesians 1:3-10). We engage in worship, prayer and the other practices so that we can grow in our experience of God's presence and love, as well as our identities as his beloved children.

As we say often, pray as you are able. If you can pray morning and evening, then praise God. If you can keep just one office, then praise God. If you have only a few minutes to spare, then pray for a few minutes by focusing on one scripture reading or prayer of confession. If you do not feel much while praying, don't fall into the trap of thinking you have wasted time or did something wrong—God is still bearing fruit in us because his Word never returns void. (Isaiah 55:11) The goal is not a perfect life of devotion, but a regular habit of prayer. Echoing St. Paul in Colossians 4:2, Ronald Rolheiser writes: *"Love and prayer work the same. The neophyte's mistake is to think that they can be sustained simply through good feelings and good intentions, without the help of a ritual-container and sustaining rhythm. That's naïve, however sincere. Love and prayer can only be sustained through ritual, routine, and rhythm that incarnates the commitment. That's why the saints and the great spiritual writers have always said that there is only one nonnegotiable rule for prayer: 'Show up! Show up regularly!' The ups and downs of our minds and hearts are of secondary importance."*

Following the patterns of worship modeled by Israel and the early Church, Christians throughout the ages have always valued private and communal prayer. Both are needed and each informs and shapes the other. The offices can be easily adapted for use with others, including children. Make it a point to pray with others a few times a week. Dwell on a prescribed passage together. Confess together and to one another. Hop on BlueJeans for noon prayer with Pastor Marc and others. (Email [marc@gracepasadena.org](mailto:marc@gracepasadena.org) for the passcode.) Though we cannot be together, we can still continue steadfastly in prayer together. Thanks be to God!

**The Weekly Examen.** In addition to the daily office, we also invite you to engage with a contemplative practice called the Examen. It is a way of praying that is rooted in Psalm 139:23: *"Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!"* It takes seriously our experiences, emotions and thoughts, and it invites us to identify God's presence in them, especially the mundane and difficult ones. As a tool, the Examen helps us understand what John Calvin meant when he said, "Without knowledge of self there is no knowledge of God."

The Examen is helpful at all times, but such a practice seems urgent in our current situation. The weeks of sheltering-in-place have been full of anxiety, stress, fear, loneliness, boredom, and tremendous loss. They have also been full of unexpected joy. Engaging the Examen can help us see that God has been with us and fulfilling his promise to push back the darkness and to manifest the resurrection life of Jesus Christ in and around us. The Examen can help us uncover and remember the unexpected joy.

As we long for and prepare for the re-opening of our city and state, the temptation is to rush right out of this season and into the next one without thoughtful examination. As Clay Cooke, a friend of Grace Pasadena, asks: *"[Is] 'returning to normal' all we have to take away from this time? Is it all we should be longing for? In the midst of COVID-19's real calamities, anxieties, and injustices, is there anything humanizing—anything of love—that we should learn and take with us from our long days of shelter in place?"* The Holy Spirit can use the Examen to help us remember and not forget the Lord. (Deuteronomy 4:23; 6:12; 8:11) Let us remember and be rooted in the very life and love of our God.

This guide includes an Examen for each of the weeks in May. There are different variations. We recommend engaging the Examen once a week, either on Saturday or Sunday. It takes about 15-20 minutes. Though short, it is an opportunity to drink deeply from God's living waters.

***With much love for you all,***

The Pastors, staff and leaders of Grace Pasadena.

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## Morning Prayer - Week of May 3<sup>rd</sup>

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### OPENING PRAYER

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight,  
O Lord, my strength and my redeemer. — *Psalm 19:14*

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

### MORNING PSALMS

4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	Psalm 63:1-11, 98
Monday	Psalm 41, 52
Tuesday	Psalm 45
Wednesday	Psalm 119:49-72
Thursday	Psalm 50
Friday	Psalm 40, 54
Saturday	Psalm 55

*\*For reflection: In what ways does the Psalm resonate with your heart, soul and mind? What feelings, thoughts and desires does the Psalm elicit? Offer all these to God.*

### GOSPEL LESSONS

Sunday	Mark 6:30-44
Monday	Matt. 5:1-10
Tuesday	Matt. 5:11-16
Wednesday	Matt. 5:17-20
Thursday	Matt. 5:21-26
Friday	Matt. 5:27-37
Saturday	Matt. 5:38-48

*\*For reflection: What do you notice about Jesus? What surprises you?*

### FINAL PRAYERS

*Offer prayers for yourself, city and world, as well as the needs of the day. Conclude with the Lord's Prayer and/or the following:*

Our Eternal Father of all mercy and giver of all grace, we call upon you to come in this time of weakness and deliver us from our trials. We acknowledge, O Lord, that the trials we face in life today, though they be burdensome to us, they are not beyond your reach. For through your Spirit, we trust all things will work for the good of those who truly love you. Comfort our distress and the anxiety of our despair; help us to find courage and faith to endure our hardships and trials. Yet within our trials, show us how to come closer to you. Let us find refuge in your comfort and delight in our hope. In thee, do we put our trust, and in the name of Jesus do we pray. Amen. — *A prayer from Rev. Dr. Lynn Hargrow*

*Look forward to Evening Prayer (last page)*

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## Weekly Examen

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**INTRO.** The Examen invites the Holy Spirit to help us identify and remember God's presence and grace in our lives. We often miss God's hand because our hearts and minds can be easily distracted by anxiety, fear, boredom, or cynicism. We can also miss God's presence because we expect God to act a certain way according to our own desires. The Examen helps us see the truth with fresh eyes.

To prepare, set aside 15-20 minutes. Find a quiet spot and put away your phone. Have paper (or journal) and pen ready. Think about this time as a mini-retreat in which you can drink deeply from God's fountain of life. When you are ready...

**1. ASK THE HOLY SPIRIT FOR LIGHT.** Begin your time by asking the Holy Spirit for counsel and guidance. (John 16:13) We need the Holy Spirit to help us remember the past rightly and to see it and ourselves as God sees. We are asking the Holy Spirit for knowledge and to lead us to new life. After a few minutes, then...

**2. GIVE THANKS.** Consider the last week (or last few weeks) and give thanks to God for them. Give thanks for the joys and sorrows. Each day is a day the Lord has made and given to us as a gift (Psalm 118:24). As we give thanks and acknowledge God as the giver of all things (James 1:17), the Holy Spirit cultivates in us humility and prepares us to see God in unexpected, mundane and even difficult circumstances. After a few minutes, then...

**3. REVIEW THE SPECIFICS OF THE LAST WEEK/LAST FEW WEEKS.** Recall the consolations (joys) and desolations (sorrows) of the last week or last few weeks. Pay special attention to the desolations and the feelings and thoughts that surfaced in those experiences. Ask:

- \* When did I feel exhausted, drained, angry, or hopeless?
- \* What aspects of my memories draw my attention or repel me?
- \* What aspects of my memories speak to my deepest desires?
- \* What experiences feel out of place or disorientating?
- \* When was I surprised by joy, love, patience, peace, etc... (i.e. the fruit of the Spirit)?

Pray through these experiences and related thoughts and feelings. Ask God to reveal what lies beneath them. Ask God to show you how he was present, and continues to be present, with you. After a few minutes, then...

**3.CONFESS YOUR SHORTCOMINGS.** As the Holy Spirit shines light on your experiences and related thoughts and feelings, ask the Holy Spirit for the courage to confess your sin. How did you react to your situations with attitudes and actions that turned you away from God and from others? Where did you sow and cultivate seeds of brokenness? Ask for forgiveness, remembering the Holy Spirit leads us to deeper freedom and fresh experiences of God's love. After a few minutes, then...

**4.RESPOND.** As you conclude, consider how the Holy Spirit is inviting you to respond. Is there a person you can seek out to extend peace and forgiveness? Are there practices and habits the Spirit is asking you to cultivate? How can you remember this time? Often times the response is a small act, but these small acts can often be the most difficult. Conclude by thanking God for his faithful love.

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## Morning Prayer - Week of May 10<sup>th</sup>

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### OPENING PRAYER

Send out your light and your truth, that they may lead me,  
and bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling. — *Psalm 43:3*

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment. You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

— *from Psalm 51*

### MORNING PSALMS

5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	Psalm 24, 29
Monday	Psalm 56, 57
Tuesday	Psalm 61, 62
Wednesday	Psalm 119:73-96
Thursday	Psalm 70
Friday	Psalm 106:1-18
Saturday	Psalm 23, 27

*\*For reflection: In what ways does the Psalm resonate with your heart, soul and mind? What feelings, thoughts and desires does the Psalm elicit? What song do you want to sing? Offer all these to God.*

### GOSPEL LESSONS

Sunday	Luke 4:16-30
Monday	Matt. 6:1-6; 16-18
Tuesday	Matt. 6:7-15
Wednesday	Matt. 6:19-24
Thursday	Matt. 6:25-34
Friday	Matt. 7:1-12
Saturday	Matt. 7:13-21

*\*For reflection: Imagine yourself in the passage. What's your reaction as you hear and see Jesus?*

### FINAL PRAYERS

*Offer prayers for yourself, city and world, as well as the needs of the day. Conclude with the Lord's Prayer and/or the following:*

Draw me, dear Jesus, draw me nearer unto Thee;  
Perils are lurking near me — Keep me close to Thee.  
Thou are my soul's salvation, Thee would I adore;  
Draw me, dear Jesus, draw me and I'll run after Thee.

— Verse 1 of "Draw me, Dear Jesus" by Garfield Thomas Haywood

*Look forward to Evening Prayer (last page)*

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## Weekly Examen

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To prepare, set aside 15-20 minutes. Find a quiet spot and put away your phone. Have paper (or journal) and pen ready. Think about this time as a mini-retreat in which you can drink deeply from God's fountain of life. When you are ready...

### **OPENING SONG OF PREPARATION. "CREATE IN ME A CLEAN HEART"**

Create in me a clean heart, O God and renew a right spirit within me  
Create in me a clean heart, O God and renew a right spirit within me

### **PRAYER FOR GOD'S PRESENCE & ILLUMINATION.**

"Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 18:12)

Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world. Shine the light of your Spirit on me as I consider my days sheltering-in-place. Help me to see this time as you see. Help me to see myself as you see. Help me to see my sin. Help me to see my joys. Help me to remember and remember well. Amen.

### **SEARCH ME. PSALM 139:23-24**

Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my thoughts.  
See if there is any wicked way in me.

*Prayerfully, consider your last month—week-by-week, day-by-day, hour-by-hour. Note ways in which you have seen God at work—in your city, in your church, in your circumstances, in your relationships, in your heart and soul. Also, note ways you have resisted God and his will.*

### **TEACH ME. PSALM 25:4-5.**

Show me your ways, LORD,  
teach me your paths.  
Guide me in your truth and teach me,  
for you are God my Savior,

*Prayerfully, ask God how your life concretely needs to change when we come out of this time. How are you being called deeper into love of God, and deeper into love of neighbor? Ask God, "How ought I to live?" (Notice ways in which your heart seems to resist or run away. This is often where the Spirit is teaching you to change in order to "lead you in the way everlasting" (Ps. 139:24)).*

### **TAKE ME. ROMANS 11:36-12:1**

From him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. This is your true and proper worship.

*Prayerfully, offer yourself body and soul—in thought, word, intention, and practice—as a living sacrifice to God, which is your true and proper worship. Surrender, asking God to take hold of your life. Consider the practices and habits the Holy Spirit wants to cultivate in you to keep you rooted in God's love. Consider the people to whom you must draw near.*

### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING.**

Finish your time with a prayer of thanksgiving for God's grace.

*\*This Examen is adapted from Clay Cooke and The School of Love.*

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## Morning Prayer - Week of May 17<sup>th</sup>

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### OPENING PRAYER

The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him. — *John 4:23*

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

*Repeat the prayer a few times, bringing to mind the ways you have participated in sin and death. Ask for forgiveness and be at peace.*

### MORNING PSALMS

6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter Psalm 93, 96

Monday Psalm 80

Tuesday Psalm 78:1-39

Wednesday Psalm 119:97-120

The Ascension Psalm 8, 47

Friday Psalm 85, 86

Saturday Psalm 87, 90

*\*For reflection: In what ways does the Psalm resonate with your heart, soul and mind? What feelings, thoughts and desires does the Psalm elicit? What song do you want to sing? Offer all these to God.*

### GOSPEL LESSONS

Sunday Luke 12:13-21

Monday Matt. 13:1-16

Tuesday Matt. 13:18-23

Wednesday Matt. 22:41-46

Thursday Matt. 28:16-20

Friday Matt. 7:22-27

Saturday Matt. 7:28-8:4

*\*For reflection: How does Jesus manifest God's love? What's challenging? Encouraging?*

### FINAL PRAYERS

*Offer prayers for yourself, city and world, as well as the needs of the day. Conclude with the Lord's Prayer and/or the following:*

When we get up in the morning Lord, we often hunger for food. Forgive us, as we should be hungry for thy word. As our physical being yearns for food, so does our spiritual being hunger and thirst after righteousness. Feed us, nourish us, that our thirst may be satisfied until we are filled to completion.

— *A prayer from Revered Etell Washington*

*Look forward to Evening Prayer (last page)*

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## Weekly Examen

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To prepare, set aside 15-20 minutes. Find a quiet spot and put away your phone. Have paper (or journal) and pen ready. Think about this time as a mini-retreat in which you can drink deeply from God's fountain of life. When you are ready...

**1. A LOOKING BACK.** *Ask the Holy Spirit to help you look back and the past two months and deliberately exercises the discipline of noticing.*

— Identify 3-4 major highlights, turning points, landmarks or other experiences.

**2. A LOOKING THROUGH.** *With the mind of Christ, discern the connections between the events. Take note of the themes and patterns, i.e. the deeper spiritual meaning of the experiences.*

— As you contemplate the connections, do you notice how God has been pursuing you and inviting you to experience his kindness?

**3. A LOOKING FORWARD.** Remembering the Holy Spirit renews our imaginations and desires, consider what God is leading you to in the next season and upcoming months.

— What habits and rhythms does God want you to cultivate? Which relationships have been a priority and will continue to be so? What good things from this time does God want you to hold onto?

**4. A LOOKING AROUND.** God created us for community. Drawing on the resources of community (the gift of "one-anothering"), determine the needed support and structure to press on.

— Determine accountability and support structures necessary for the next season. Determine the ways God wants us to be together when this season of sheltering-in-place ends.

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## Morning Prayer - May 24 to 31

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### OPENING PRAYER

O give thanks to the Lord, and call upon his Name; make known his deeds among the peoples. — *Psalm 105:1*

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God,  
holy and mighty, holy immortal One,  
have mercy on us.

*Repeat the prayer a few times, bringing to mind the ways you have participated in sin and death. Ask for forgiveness and be at peace.*

### MORNING PSALMS

7 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	Psalm 93, 96
Monday	Psalm 80
Tuesday	Psalm 78:1-39
Wednesday	Psalm 119:97-120
The Ascension	Psalm 8, 47
Friday	Psalm 85, 86
Saturday	Psalm 87, 90

*\*For reflection: In what ways does the Psalm resonate with your heart, soul and mind? How can you pray it for others today?*

### GOSPEL LESSONS

Sunday	Luke 12:13-21
Monday	Matt. 13:1-16
Tuesday	Matt. 13:18-23
Wednesday	Matt. 22:41-46
Thursday	Matt. 28:16-20
Friday	Matt. 7:22-27
Saturday	Matt. 7:28-8:4

*\*For reflection: How does Jesus manifest God's love? What is challenging? Encouraging?*

### FINAL PRAYERS

*Offer prayers for yourself, city and world, as well as the needs of the day. Conclude with the Lord's Prayer and/or the following:*

Almighty and everlasting God, our heavenly Father, whose mercy and loving-kindness are known to all who trust in Thee: We thank Thee for Thy unfailing promises to us Thy children. Generation after generation seek Thee, and are found of Thee. We cast ourselves upon Thee and are supported by Thee. We live secure in the sure and certain fulfillment of thy precious promises. In the midst of sorrow or joy, sickness or health, adversity or prosperity, grant, we beseech Thee, that we may never lose sight of Thee. And when the storms of confusion and uncertainty overtake us, speak peace to our soul, O blessed Lord, and enlighten our mind with Thy Holy Spirit. And when the way of our common life would tend to discourage and to embitter us, give us the grace and the patience to maintain a loving and a confident spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.— *From a prayer by Jesse Jai McNeil*

*Look forward to Evening Prayer (last page)*

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## Weekly Examen

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Create in me a clean heart, O God and renew a right spirit within me  
Create in me a clean heart, O God and renew a right spirit within me

### **PRAYER FOR GOD'S PRESENCE & ILLUMINATION.**

"Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 18:12)

Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world. Shine the light of your Spirit on me as I consider my days sheltering-in-place. Help me to see this time as you see. Help me to see myself as you see. Help me to see my sin. Help me to see my joys. Help me to remember and remember well. Amen.

### **SEARCH ME. PSALM 139:23-24**

Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my thoughts.  
See if there is any wicked way in me.

*Prayerfully, consider your last month of shelter in place—week-by-week, day-by-day, hour-by-hour. Note ways in which you've seen God at work—in your city, in your church, in your circumstances, in your relationships, in your heart and soul. Also, note ways you've resisted God and his will.*

### **TEACH ME. PSALM 25:4-5.**

Show me your ways, LORD,  
teach me your paths.  
Guide me in your truth and teach me,  
for you are God my Savior,

*Prayerfully, ask God how your life concretely needs to change when we come out of shelter in place. How are you being called deeper into love of God, and deeper into love of neighbor? Ask God, "How ought I to live?" (Notice ways in which your heart seems to resist or run away. This is often where the Spirit is teaching you to change in order to "lead you in the way everlasting" (Ps. 139:24)).*

### **TAKE ME. ROMANS 11:36-12:1**

From him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. This is your true and proper worship.

*Prayerfully, offer yourself body and soul—in thought, word, intention, and practice—as a living sacrifice to God, which is your true and proper worship. Surrender, asking God to take hold of your life. Consider the practices and habits the Holy Spirit wants to cultivate in you to keep you rooted in God's love. Consider the people to whom you must draw near.*

### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING.**

Finish your time with a prayer of thanksgiving for God's grace.

*\*This Examen is adapted from Clay Cooke and The School of Love.*

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## A Short Liturgy for Evening Prayer

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### OPENING PRAYER

Our help is in the name of the Lord,  
who made heaven and earth. — *Psalm 124:8*

### EVENING PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Most merciful God, we confess to you,  
before the whole company of heaven and one another,  
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed  
and in what we have failed to do.  
Forgive us our sins, heal us by your Spirit  
and raise us to new life in Christ. Amen.

### EVENING PSALMS

*Pray and sing one or more of the following:*

Psalm 4

Psalm 91

Psalm 121

Psalm 134

*\*For reflection: What peace is the Lord offering to you as the day ends?*

### EVENING SCRIPTURE READINGS

*Re-read one of the passages from the morning. Or meditate on one of the following verses:*

You, O Lord, are in the midst of us and we are called by your name; leave us not, O Lord our God.  
— *Jeremiah 14.9*

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. — *1 John 1:5*

The servants of the Lamb shall see the face of God, whose name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night: they will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for God will be their light, and they will reign for ever and ever. — *Revelation 22.4, 5*

*\*For reflection: What words of life and hope is God speaking to you as you prepare to rest?*

### FINAL PRAYERS

*Offer prayers for yourself, city and world, as well as the needs of the day. Conclude with the Lord's Prayer and/or the following:*

Save us, O Lord, while waking, and guard us while sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ and asleep may rest in peace. Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace: your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people; A light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel. — *based on Luke 2:29-32*

*or*

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who wake, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, give rest to the weary, sustain the dying, calm the suffering, and pity the distressed; all for your love's sake, O Christ our Redeemer. Amen.