

## Some thoughts to start...

Engaging in the practice of faith is not always easy. For some people, sitting down and having an open, in-depth chat with God is not difficult. For many of us, however, it is.

What we're trying to do here is to give people a resource – to help them in their thinking about scripture, and in the practice of personal prayer.

Everything written here is simply a *suggestion*. If you find other practices more helpful, please use them!

Find a bible and head to a place you won't be disturbed. Take a few moments to sit quietly. In that quiet moment you might want to say to God, "What would you like me to hear today?"

Read each of the scriptures. Some people prefer to read silently, while others find it more helpful to read out loud. Take a few moments to reflect on what you've heard. (If you would like, the 'reflection' section is there to help start you off.)

Finally, take a few moments to talk with God. The printed prayer is there as a guide, but there may be other things you want to share. Chat, as openly and honestly as you can. Then, through the day, listen for God's response.

**This resource was initiated by St. Andrew's Haney United Church, Maple Ridge, BC.**

The suggested scripture readings are based on the Consultation on Common Text's *Daily Lectionary*.

If you'd like to share some thoughts about what you've read, head over to the 'chat space' at [www.standrewsuc.com](http://www.standrewsuc.com)

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## ST. ANDREW'S HANEY UNITED CHURCH

# Daily Scripture and Prayer Time

(April 30<sup>th</sup> to May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007)

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## Monday

### Scripture:

- Ezekiel 31.15-18
- Psalm 100
- Revelation 15.1-4

### Reflection:

Reading the words of the prophets is always a mind-bending experience, for me. When we at the Revelation of John into the mix, I move from mind-bent to mind-blown!

Part of it is that I know the writers used imagery and metaphor that had specific meaning for the people of their day. There are nuances (and probably some complete concepts!) that I will never be able to understand. I find that frustrating.

And yet, there is something powerful and poetic in descriptions like "what appeared to be a sea of glass mixed with fire". The vividness of the writer's language helps me to see their passion and vision of God's presence.

Sometimes, I wonder what I would see, if I were to look at our day-to-day world through prophetic eyes.

What would you see differently?

### Prayer:

Loving God,  
in my everyday living,  
I don't easily see through prophets' eyes,  
or hear their call...  
especially when the eyes or the voice,  
may be my own.  
Help me to see. To listen. To speak. To live.

Today, I remember and pray for \_\_\_\_\_,  
friends blessed by your love and compassion.

For your grace,  
with your love,  
and in Christ's name, I pray.

## Tuesday

### Scripture:

- Ezekiel 45.1-9
- Psalm 100
- Acts 9.32-35

### Reflection:

After reading the Ezekiel passage, I found myself thinking about land and space... and the words "you shall set aside for Adonai a portion of the land as a holy district... it shall be holy throughout its entire extent." (v.1)

Growing up, I was taught that all things were God's, and that human-kind were stewards of God's things – thus, all things are sacred. Sadly, one of things that I've found out about myself is that, unless a portion of those things are named as holy... I forget about the holiness of all.

Where are the "reminders of the sacred" in our lands and in our lives?

We could say that churches and temples and mosques and synagogues – named places of worship and reflection – are such reminders.

But what about in the lands and spaces for which we are responsible as individuals – our homes, our rooms, our yards?

Where are the "reminders of the sacred"?

### Prayer:

God of all times and all places,  
I know that you are here.  
I know that you are with your creation.  
I know that your presence makes the everyday holy.

But, sometimes, my knowledge doesn't connect with my living.  
Help me, I pray.

Today, I remember and pray for \_\_\_\_\_,  
friends blessed by your love and compassion.

For your grace,  
with your love,  
and in Christ's name, I pray.

## Wednesday

### Scripture:

- Jeremiah 50.17-20
- Psalm 100
- John 10.31-42

### Reflection:

I was taken with something in the Gospel passage, this morning. As Jesus was trying to help the people understand how he could say, "The Father and I are one," he invites them not to believe in him.... but to believe in God's works that Jesus was doing.

I wish I could hear his tone of voice. I wonder if Jesus was trying to get the people to move their focus off of him – and back on to God., because their focus was getting in the way of God's call?

How often does that happen to us – getting caught up in the representation, rather than the reality? Having our eyes so focused on a detail that we miss the overarching presence of God?

### Prayer:

Gracious God,  
my vision is sometimes narrow.  
My focus is sometimes so tight  
that I lose sight of those around me,  
and I lose sight of you.  
Open my eyes.  
Widen my vision.  
Help me to see.

Today, I remember and pray for \_\_\_\_\_,  
friends blessed by your love and  
compassion.

For your grace, with your love,  
and in Christ's name, I pray.

## Thursday

### Scripture:

- Ezekiel 2.8-3.11
- Psalm 148
- Revelation 10.1-11

### Reflection:

Have you ever read a passage of scripture that, as it settles into you, begins to make you feel uncomfortable?

Both the writer of Ezekiel and the writer of the book of the Revelation talk about divine words being "sweeter than honey". But, in Revelation, they also cause a "bitter stomach".

That makes a great deal of sense to me. Sometimes, sharing what we understand God to be saying is quite easy. But, at other times... when what we are doing is challenging what *is*, we can find that sharing God's call, as we understand it, is stomach churning.

Isn't getting past the bitter part of our call as followers of the Christ?

### Prayer:

Holy One,  
you are sweeter than honey  
on the honeycomb.  
Your words and your love,  
both lift *and* challenge me.  
Help me to speak and live your love.  
Today – and always.

Today, I remember and pray for \_\_\_\_\_,  
friends blessed by your love and compassion.

For your grace,  
with your love,  
and in Christ's name, I pray.

## Friday

### Scripture:

- Daniel 7.13-14
- Psalm 148
- Revelation 11.15

### Reflection:

I've been wandering the internet lately, looking at photographs of the infinitesimally small and the infinitely big. Well... not *quite* that small or that big – but things on the ends of the scales, as well as things that are at the scale of day to day life.

The only word I can come up with is, "Wow!"

The complexity of life, as well as its simplicity, are beautiful... and awe-ful.

From the quantum dance to the flow of galaxies... and everything in between – is a wonder.

How often do we marvel at it?

How often do we marvel *with* it – dancing with the wind, singing with the trees, celebrating with the stars.... celebrating, with them, God's love?

### Prayer:

God of all,  
in the rush of my world,  
I sometimes forget that it is *your* world.  
I sometimes forget to celebrate  
all that you have brought into being.  
So, today... I do.  
Wow!

Today, I remember and pray for \_\_\_\_\_,  
friends blessed by your love and compassion.

For your grace,  
with your love,  
and in Christ's name, I pray.

## Saturday

### Scripture:

- Daniel 7.27
- Psalm 148
- Revelation 11.16-19

### Reflection:

Kingdom. Dominion. Power. Reign.

I wonder if it would be fair to say that, for many people in the context of The United Church of Canada, these are words that make us uncomfortable.

Many of us see such terms as hierarchical and, especially in a group that has an ethic of inclusiveness, these words don't easily connect with our vision of God's household.

The image of a God who was King over all – as one who brought order to chaos... or even *imposed* order on it – was important to the people who first heard these passages.

What *could* God's Kingship mean in our lives?

### Prayer:

God....  
help me, please.  
Help me to find...  
order where it is needed....  
chaos where it is needed...  
my place, where I am needed.

Today, I remember and pray for \_\_\_\_\_,  
friends blessed by your love and compassion.

For your grace,  
with your love,  
and in Christ's name, I pray.