

## 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 (or go to <http://bible.oremus.org/>) and head to a place you won't be disturbed. Before opening up your bible, 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 with God. Chat, as openly and honestly as you can. Then, through the day, listen for God's response.

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

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## ST. ANDREW'S HANEY UNITED CHURCH

# Daily Scripture and Prayer Time

(January 29<sup>th</sup> to  
February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007)

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## Monday

### Scripture:

- 1 Kings 17.8-16
- Psalm 56
- 1 Corinthians 2.6-16

### Reflection:

I wonder what it would have been like to be the widow of Zarephath? A drought had hit, to the point that there was very little food – just a mouthful for her and for her son. She knew that, after it was gone, there was nothing. And yet, when the stranger Elijah asked her for water and food, she offered desert hospitality.

I wonder what she thought of his words? Contempt – that he would take the food from the mouth of her child? Resignation – that unless something miraculous happened, her life was at an end?

Hope? I wonder if she had any hope that 'the Lord your God' (not her god, but his) would feed her and her child.

Whatever her reason, she offered what she had... and God responded.

### Prayer:

Great God...  
when your prophets speak,  
I don't know quite what to do.  
When they ask me to offer  
what feels like my very life,  
in hospitality,  
I don't know quite what to do.  
Help me to hear your prophets.  
Help me to hear your words.  
Help me to live your love.  
Even when I don't know quite what to do.

I pray today \_\_\_\_\_, friends blessed by your love.

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

## Tuesday

### Scripture:

- 2 Kings 5.1-14
- Psalm 56
- 1 Corinthians 14.13-25

### Reflection:

Sometimes prophets call people to do extremely difficult things, on their way of turning to (or back to) God.

But, sometimes, prophets call people to do things that seem quite simple, but have great effect.

Naaman believed that the cure for his skin disease had to be encumbered by a difficult task. Something as simple as washing himself, seven times, in the Jordan river struck him as foolish. He was ready to take on a more difficult task... but wasn't quite ready to hear that he had only one relatively easy action to complete.

In our own search for wholeness and completeness, how often do we search out the harder path, believing that the only way is through work?

How often do we turn away from God's love, freely given, believing that we need do something to deserve it?

### Prayer:

River of Life...  
open me to your Presence,  
open me to your Grace,  
open me to your Peace,  
open me to your Love...  
that I may dive deeply into you,  
and arise healed and whole.

I pray today \_\_\_\_\_, friends blessed by your love.

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

## Wednesday

### Scripture:

- Jeremiah 1.11-19
- Psalm 56
- Luke 19.41-44

### Reflection:

I am really quite glad that I'm not a prophet. Take a look at how they were treated! On one hand they have a compulsion to speak as God has commanded them, while on the other, they're facing people who are hostile to what they are saying.

Whether Biblical – like Jeremiah or Anna – or contemporary – like the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King – often find themselves having to speak words of great power, in the face of people who don't want to hear what is being said. Often, the words that they are called to speak lead them to places of personal pain and loss.

So... why do they keep speaking? Is it simply because they are called to do so? Might it be that part of the reason they speak is the hope – faint as it might be – that the words will be heard, and new life will be born?

Who are the prophets speaking God's words into our lives? To what are they calling you?

### Prayer:

Sometimes, God, your call is frightening.  
Sometimes, I don't want to go  
where you send me or speak  
your words.

When you call me to be your prophet,  
build me up, I pray.

When you call me to listen to your prophets,  
open my ears.

I pray today \_\_\_\_\_, friends blessed  
by your love.

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

## Thursday

### Scripture:

- Numbers 20.22-29
- Psalm 138
- Acts 9.19b-25

### Reflection:

Sometimes, when lives are transformed, no one is quite sure what to make of the new situation.

Take Saul, for example. In the eyes of many who knew him, he was a well-respected member of the community, with the task of stamping out a heretical movement that threatened to do a great deal of damage to the order of God's world. When he returned from one of his missions, people suddenly saw a very different person... someone professing the very heresies he had worked to suppress.

I'm not sure if I've ever had a 'transformative moment' in my life. I do know, however, that someone with whom I was friends 10 or 15 years ago would find me to be quite a different person now, than I was then. How I speak and live my faith, while connected, is different.

What are the transformations that you have been through in your life? How much change have they meant, not only for you, but for those around you?

How are you changing now?

### Prayer:

God... what do I look like, in your eyes?  
Who is the person that you see?  
There are days I feel like I am growing,  
and other days I feel like I am stopped.  
How am I changing now?

I pray today \_\_\_\_\_, friends blessed by  
your love.

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

## Friday

### Scripture:

- Numbers 27.12-23
- Psalm 138
- Acts 9.26-31

### Reflection:

Do you ever get the feeling that the people who put the scriptural stories on paper (or the equivalent of their day) made some pretty big stretches to explain what they understood God to be doing? In the passages from Numbers (yesterday and today), we find Aaron and Moses – both faithful servants of God and the people – being told that they will not enter the land that God had given to the Israelites. Why? *Because at one point on the journey, each had quarreled with God.*

Most of us try, at some point in our lives, to find reason in something that is unreasonable. It may be connected with the death of someone we love – or a choice that was made – or a tragedy that could not be averted.

I wonder what would happen if, instead of trying to give meaning... or blame... we worked to live and learn from what *is*?

### Prayer:

God of my journey,  
walking behind me, walking in front of me,  
walking beside me...  
help me to see – not only the path in front,  
but the scenery around -  
the people, the sky... all creation!  
And, please... help me to see  
You.

I pray today \_\_\_\_\_, friends blessed by  
your love.

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

## Saturday

### Scripture:

- Judges 3.7-11
- Psalm 138
- Luke 4.42-44

### Reflection:

Have you ever wondered what happened after Jesus had moved on?

In Capernaum, Jesus had been teaching and healing. Luke's gospel, just prior to this passage, tells of Jesus' work to heal Simon's mother-in-law. People, here, were interested in his words and his abilities – to the point that, when he felt it was time to move on, they wanted him to stay with them. In Luke's telling, this was very close to the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

After being touched by him and his words, did the way people treated themselves and those around them, change? Did the moments of wonder and question take hold in the individuals and their community... or did he simply become a memory?

How about in your life? Have the words of Jesus of Nazareth... has the presence of the Christ... has the love of God – changed you? How?

### Prayer:

Breath on me, breath of God!  
Breath in me, Spirit of Christ!  
Fill my lungs with new life,  
that I may shout your joy,  
dance your praise,  
sing your song!

I pray today \_\_\_\_\_, friends blessed by  
your love.

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