



# Formation Devotional

April 30, 2020 Morning

Forming Worship, Life, and Ministry Together at Christ Covenant Church

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*Rejoice and be glad, for your father invites you into his loving presence. Use this email as you are able, in whole or in part.*

## Call to Prayer

Lord, be gracious to us; we long for you. Be our strength every morning, our salvation in time of distress. (Isaiah 33:2)

## Opening Prayer

Almighty God, whose Son had nowhere to lay his head: Grant that those who live alone may not be lonely in their solitude, but that, following in his steps, they may find fulfillment in loving you and their neighbors; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP 829)

## Confession of Sin

Eternal God, in every age you have raised up men and women to live and die in faith. Forgive our indifference to your will. You have commanded us to speak, but we have been silent. You have called us to do what is just, but we have been idle. You have called us to live faithfully, but we have been afraid. Have mercy on us and forgive us. Keep before us faithful people to follow so that living with courage and love, we may work for and inherit the kingdom promised in Jesus Christ. Amen.

*Take a moment to confess your sins, knowing that he hears you, and give thanks for his assurance of pardon through the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

If you are trusting in Christ alone for the forgiveness of sins and his everlasting life, hear his words of pardoning grace and give thanks offering yourself to him in worship: Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. "Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin." (Psalm 32:1-2, 5)

## Praying the Psalms

*Read the psalm prayerfully back to God by faith in Christ.*

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## Psalm 17

### In the Shadow of Your Wings

#### *A Prayer of David.*

Hear a just cause, O LORD; attend to my cry!

Give ear to my prayer from lips free of deceit!

<sup>2</sup>From your presence let my vindication come!

Let your eyes behold the right!

<sup>3</sup>You have tried my heart, you have visited me by night,

you have tested me, and you will find nothing;

I have purposed that my mouth will not transgress.

<sup>4</sup>With regard to the works of man, by the word of your lips

I have avoided the ways of the violent.

<sup>5</sup>My steps have held fast to your paths;

my feet have not slipped.

<sup>6</sup>I call upon you, for you will answer me, O God;

incline your ear to me; hear my words.

<sup>7</sup>Wondrously show your steadfast love,

O Savior of those who seek refuge

from their adversaries at your right hand.

<sup>8</sup>Keep me as the apple of your eye;

hide me in the shadow of your wings,

<sup>9</sup>from the wicked who do me violence,

my deadly enemies who surround me.

<sup>10</sup>They close their hearts to pity;

with their mouths they speak arrogantly.

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<sup>11</sup> They have now surrounded our steps;

they set their eyes to cast us to the ground.

<sup>12</sup> He is like a lion eager to tear,

as a young lion lurking in ambush.

<sup>13</sup> Arise, O LORD! Confront him, subdue him!

Deliver my soul from the wicked by your sword,

<sup>14</sup> from men by your hand, O LORD,

from men of the world whose portion is in this life.

You fill their womb with treasure;

they are satisfied with children,

and they leave their abundance to their infants.

<sup>15</sup> As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness;

when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness.

## **New Testament Reading**

John's gospel is reflective and geared for the Greek reader. The famous first line, "In the beginning was the Word . . ." sets the stage for an account that not only reveals that Jesus is the Son of God but also refutes the pagan mystery religions that were beginning to flourish around him. John exhorts his readers from the beginning that Jesus is the lens through which to see all of creation, and he ends his gospel by saying that even creation could not contain all of the things that Jesus did.

*Meditate on the passage, noting a few words or a phrase that stood out or a promise to meditate on today. Take them to God in prayer.*

## **John 20**

### **The Resurrection**

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. <sup>2</sup>So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." <sup>3</sup>So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. <sup>4</sup>Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran

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Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup>And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. <sup>6</sup>Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, <sup>7</sup>and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. <sup>8</sup>Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; <sup>9</sup>for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. <sup>10</sup>Then the disciples went back to their homes.

### **Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene**

<sup>11</sup>But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. <sup>12</sup>And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. <sup>13</sup>They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." <sup>14</sup>Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup>Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." <sup>16</sup>Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). <sup>17</sup>Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" <sup>18</sup>Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord" — and that he had said these things to her.

### **Jesus Appears to the Disciples**

<sup>19</sup>On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." <sup>20</sup>When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup>Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." <sup>22</sup>And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup>If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."

### **Jesus and Thomas**

<sup>24</sup>Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup>So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

<sup>26</sup>Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." <sup>27</sup>Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." <sup>28</sup>Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" <sup>29</sup>Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

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## The Purpose of This Book

<sup>30</sup>Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; <sup>31</sup>but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

## Prayers of Intercession

### Relationships

- Pray for healthy relationships between men and women at Christ Covenant and that deep friendships and marriages would be formed.
- Pray that Christians would not over or under value any one marital status. That we would celebrate our different giftedness and consider both marriage and singleness as God-ordained capacities for love and service to others.
- Pray that Christ Covenant would be a place where friendships across difference are cultivated (across gender, race, class, political and religious lines, etc.)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

## Benediction

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Corinthians 13:14)

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*Wonder what your next step in spiritual formation is? Consider getting involved in a Growth Group.*

*For a handy guide to the devotional elements and an archive of past issues, visit [ccotc.org/devotional](http://ccotc.org/devotional).*