



Formation Devotional

January 30, 2020 Evening

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

Take a moment to slow down and turn your thoughts to God. Use this email as you are able, in whole or in part.

Call to Prayer

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." (Psalm 91:1-2)

Opening Prayer

God our Father, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world: Show them that your ways give more life than the ways of the world, and that following you is better than chasing after selfish goals. Help them to take failure, not as a measure of their worth, but as a chance for a new start. Give them strength to hold their faith in you, and to keep alive their joy in your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP 829)

Prayer of Examine

Turn your attention to Christ who is present with you now. With him, review the ordinary events and emotions of your day with gratitude.

1. Where did you move with or feel close to Jesus today?
2. Where did you resist or feel far from Jesus today?
3. Where is Jesus leading you tomorrow? Ask for joy as you follow him

Praying the Psalms

Prayerfully read the psalm back to God through faith in Jesus Christ.

Psalm 44

Come to Our Help

To the choirmaster. A Maskil of the Sons of Korah.

O God, we have heard with our ears,

our fathers have told us,

what deeds you performed in their days,

in the days of old:

²you with your own hand drove out the nations,

but them you planted;

you afflicted the peoples,

but them you set free;

³for not by their own sword did they win the land,

nor did their own arm save them,

but your right hand and your arm,

and the light of your face,

for you delighted in them.

⁴You are my King, O God;

ordain salvation for Jacob!

⁵Through you we push down our foes;

through your name we tread down those who rise up against us.

⁶For not in my bow do I trust,

nor can my sword save me.

⁷But you have saved us from our foes

and have put to shame those who hate us.

⁸In God we have boasted continually,

and we will give thanks to your name forever. Selah

⁹But you have rejected us and disgraced us

and have not gone out with our armies.

¹⁰You have made us turn back from the foe,

and those who hate us have gotten spoil.

¹¹You have made us like sheep for slaughter
and have scattered us among the nations.

¹²You have sold your people for a trifle,
demanding no high price for them.

¹³You have made us the taunt of our neighbors,
the derision and scorn of those around us.

¹⁴You have made us a byword among the nations,
a laughingstock among the peoples.

¹⁵All day long my disgrace is before me,
and shame has covered my face

¹⁶at the sound of the taunter and reviler,
at the sight of the enemy and the avenger.

¹⁷All this has come upon us,
though we have not forgotten you,
and we have not been false to your covenant.

¹⁸Our heart has not turned back,
nor have our steps departed from your way;

¹⁹yet you have broken us in the place of jackals
and covered us with the shadow of death.

²⁰If we had forgotten the name of our God
or spread out our hands to a foreign god,

²¹would not God discover this?
For he knows the secrets of the heart.

²²Yet for your sake we are killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.

²³Awake! Why are you sleeping, O Lord?

Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever!

²⁴Why do you hide your face?

Why do you forget our affliction and oppression?

²⁵For our soul is bowed down to the dust;

our belly clings to the ground.

²⁶Rise up; come to our help!

Redeem us for the sake of your steadfast love!

Old Testament Reading

Genesis gives the account of creation, and the reason why it is so amazing and so corrupt at the same time. The original intent of God for mankind is revealed: God creates the earth for mankind, and mankind for God. Though things go wrong in the beginning, God promises the nomad Abraham that there would be a people who would know Him and walk in His ways in the midst of a broken and rebellious world. The rest of Genesis unfolds in the way God forms this people in the ancient world.

As you read and reflect on this passage, prayerfully consider how God might be revealing himself to you this evening.

Genesis 22

The Sacrifice of Isaac

After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ²He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." ³So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. ⁴On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. ⁵Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you." ⁶And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. ⁷And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" ⁸Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So they went both of them together.

⁹When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. ¹¹But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” ¹²He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.” ¹³And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴So Abraham called the name of that place, “The LORD will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.”

¹⁵And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven ¹⁶and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.” ¹⁹So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba. And Abraham lived at Beersheba.

²⁰Now after these things it was told to Abraham, “Behold, Milcah also has borne children to your brother Nahor: ²¹Uz his firstborn, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father of Aram, ²²Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel.” ²³(Bethuel fathered Rebekah.) These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother. ²⁴Moreover, his concubine, whose name was Reumah, bore Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Relationships

- Thank God for the close friendships in your life in which you can love, counsel, and pray for one another.
- Thank God for giving us the greatest friendship: a love that laid down his life for his friends.
- Thank him for our union with Christ and how the Spirit transforms us to become more like Jesus in our friendships.

O God, the Father of all, whose Son commanded us to love our enemies: Lead them and us from prejudice to truth; deliver them and us from hatred, cruelty, and revenge; and in your good time enable us all to stand reconciled before you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP 816)

Benediction

Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel. (Luke 2:29-32)

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.