



Formation Devotional

July 9, 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

For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God’s glory displayed in the face of Christ. (2 Corinthians 4:6)

Opening Prayer

Look with mercy, O God our Father, on all whose increasing years bring them weakness, distress, or isolation. Provide for them homes of dignity and peace; give them understanding helpers, and the willingness to accept help; and, as their strength diminishes, increase their faith and their assurance of your love. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP 830)

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 117

The LORD's Faithfulness Endures Forever

Praise the LORD, all nations!

Extol him, all peoples!

²For great is his steadfast love toward us,

and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever.

Praise the LORD!

Old Testament Reading

Numbers describes the preparations the Jews undertook to enter the land that God promised them. They come to the border of that land and send in spies, who are overwhelmed by the obstacles they see and bring back a report that the Jews won't survive there. God then forbids this generation of Jews to enter the Promised Land because of their unbelief, and forty years of wandering in the wilderness ensues.

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

Numbers 20

The Death of Miriam

20 And the people of Israel, the whole congregation, came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people stayed in Kadesh. And Miriam died there and was buried there.

The Waters of Meribah

²Now there was no water for the congregation. And they assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. ³And the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Would that we had perished when our brothers perished before the LORD! ⁴Why have you brought the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, that we should die here, both we and our cattle? ⁵And why have you made us come up out of Egypt to bring us to this evil place? It is no place for grain or figs or vines or pomegranates, and there is no water to drink." ⁶Then Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the entrance of the tent of meeting and fell on their faces. And the glory of the LORD appeared to them, ⁷and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁸"Take the staff, and assemble the congregation, you and Aaron your brother, and tell the rock before their eyes to yield its water. So you shall bring water out of the rock for them and give drink to the congregation and their cattle." ⁹And Moses took the staff from before the LORD, as he commanded him.

Moses Strikes the Rock

¹⁰Then Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels: shall we bring water for you out of this rock?" ¹¹And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his staff twice, and water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their livestock. ¹²And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them." ¹³These are the waters of Meribah,^[a] where the people of Israel quarreled with the LORD, and through them he showed himself holy.

Edom Refuses Passage

¹⁴Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom: "Thus says your brother Israel: You know all the hardship that we have met: ¹⁵how our fathers went down to Egypt, and we lived in Egypt a long time. And the Egyptians dealt harshly with us and our fathers. ¹⁶And when we cried to the LORD, he heard our voice and sent an angel and brought us out of Egypt. And here we are in Kadesh, a city on the edge of your territory. ¹⁷Please let us pass through your land. We will not pass through field or vineyard, or drink water from a well. We will go along the King's Highway. We will not turn aside to the right hand or to the left until we have passed through your territory." ¹⁸But Edom said to him, "You shall not pass through, lest I come out with the sword against you." ¹⁹And the people of Israel said to him, "We will go up by the highway, and if we drink of your water, I and my livestock, then I will pay for it. Let me only pass through on foot, nothing more." ²⁰But he said, "You shall not pass through." And Edom came out against them with a large army and with a strong force. ²¹Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his territory, so Israel turned away from him.

The Death of Aaron

²²And they journeyed from Kadesh, and the people of Israel, the whole congregation, came to Mount Hor. ²³And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron at Mount Hor, on the border of the land of Edom, ²⁴"Let Aaron be gathered to his people, for he shall not enter the land that I have given to the people of Israel, because you rebelled against my command at the waters of Meribah. ²⁵Take Aaron and Eleazar his son and bring them up to Mount Hor. ²⁶And strip Aaron of his garments and put them on Eleazar his son. And Aaron shall be gathered to his people and shall die there." ²⁷Moses did as the LORD commanded. And they went up Mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation. ²⁸And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments and put them on Eleazar his son. And Aaron died there on the top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain. ²⁹And when all the congregation saw that Aaron had perished, all the house of Israel wept for Aaron thirty days.

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Relationships

- Thank him for the rich and meaningful relationships Christians can have with one another because God first broke down the dividing wall of hostility and made us one.
- Thank him for all who faithfully walk with God, whether married or single, for a season or for a lifetime.
- Thank him for the opportunities at Christ Covenant that allow us to forge and cultivate friendships across the barriers that divide our society.

Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping; that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace. (BCP 134)

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.