



Formation Devotional

March 20, 2020 Evening

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

Lay your worries down to God and simply enjoy being with him. Use this email as you are able, in whole or in part.

Call to Prayer

Lord, you are the God who saves me; day and night I cry out to you. May my prayer come before you; turn your ear to my cry. (Psalm 88:1-2)

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son came not to be served but to serve: Bless all who, following in his steps, give themselves to the service of others; that with wisdom, patience, and courage, they may minister in his Name to the suffering, the friendless, and the needy — for the love of him who laid down his life for us, your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. (BCP 260)

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 116

I Love the LORD

I love the LORD, because he has heard
my voice and my pleas for mercy.

^aBecause he inclined his ear to me,

therefore I will call on him as long as I live.

³The snares of death encompassed me;

the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me;

I suffered distress and anguish.

⁴Then I called on the name of the LORD:

“O LORD, I pray, deliver my soul!”

⁵Gracious is the LORD, and righteous;

our God is merciful.

⁶The LORD preserves the simple;

when I was brought low, he saved me.

⁷Return, O my soul, to your rest;

for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.

⁸For you have delivered my soul from death,

my eyes from tears,

my feet from stumbling;

⁹I will walk before the LORD

in the land of the living.

¹⁰I believed, even when I spoke:

“I am greatly afflicted”;

¹¹I said in my alarm,

“All mankind are liars.”

¹²What shall I render to the LORD

for all his benefits to me?

¹³I will lift up the cup of salvation

and call on the name of the LORD,

¹⁴I will pay my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all his people.

¹⁵Precious in the sight of the LORD
is the death of his saints.

¹⁶O LORD, I am your servant;
I am your servant, the son of your maidservant.
You have loosed my bonds.

¹⁷I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving
and call on the name of the LORD.

¹⁸I will pay my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all his people,

¹⁹in the courts of the house of the LORD,
in your midst, O Jerusalem.

Praise the LORD!

Old Testament Reading

Exodus tells the story of the enslavement of God's people by the Egyptians. God raises up a deliverer named Moses to lead His people out of Egypt, but the Egyptians resist, and God answers with the ten plagues. Exodus also contains the Ten Commandments and instructions for a tent where God would meet His people. This was called the tent of Moses, or the tabernacle.

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

Exodus 8

The Second Plague: Frogs

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, "Let my people go, that they may serve me. ²But if you refuse to let them go, behold, I will plague all your country with frogs. ³The Nile shall swarm with frogs that shall come up into your house and into your bedroom and on your bed and into the houses of your servants and your people, and into your ovens

and your kneading bowls. ⁴The frogs shall come up on you and on your people and on all your servants.”””” ⁵ And the LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your hand with your staff over the rivers, over the canals and over the pools, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt!’” ⁶So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. ⁷But the magicians did the same by their secret arts and made frogs come up on the land of Egypt.

⁸Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and said, “Plead with the LORD to take away the frogs from me and from my people, and I will let the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.” ⁹Moses said to Pharaoh, “Be pleased to command me when I am to plead for you and for your servants and for your people, that the frogs be cut off from you and your houses and be left only in the Nile.” ¹⁰And he said, “Tomorrow.” Moses said, “Be it as you say, so that you may know that there is no one like the LORD our God. ¹¹The frogs shall go away from you and your houses and your servants and your people. They shall be left only in the Nile.” ¹²So Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh, and Moses cried to the LORD about the frogs, as he had agreed with Pharaoh. ¹³And the LORD did according to the word of Moses. The frogs died out in the houses, the courtyards, and the fields. ¹⁴And they gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. ¹⁵But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart and would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

The Third Plague: Gnats

¹⁶Then the LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the earth, so that it may become gnats in all the land of Egypt.’” ¹⁷And they did so. Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff and struck the dust of the earth, and there were gnats on man and beast. All the dust of the earth became gnats in all the land of Egypt. ¹⁸The magicians tried by their secret arts to produce gnats, but they could not. So there were gnats on man and beast. ¹⁹Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God.” But Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

The Fourth Plague: Flies

²⁰Then the LORD said to Moses, “Rise up early in the morning and present yourself to Pharaoh, as he goes out to the water, and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. ²¹Or else, if you will not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you and your servants and your people, and into your houses. And the houses of the Egyptians shall be filled with swarms of flies, and also the ground on which they stand. ²²But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where my people dwell, so that no swarms of flies shall be there, that you may know that I am the LORD in the midst of the earth. ²³Thus I will put a division between my people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall happen.’””” ²⁴And the LORD did so. There came great swarms of flies into the house of Pharaoh and into his servants’ houses. Throughout all the land of Egypt the land was ruined by the swarms of flies.

²⁵Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and said, “Go, sacrifice to your God within the land.” ²⁶But Moses said, “It would not be right to do so, for the offerings we shall sacrifice to the LORD our God are an abomination to the Egyptians. If we sacrifice offerings abominable to the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not stone us? ²⁷We must go three days’ journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the

LORD our God as he tells us.”²⁸ So Pharaoh said, “I will let you go to sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only you must not go very far away. Plead for me.”²⁹ Then Moses said, “Behold, I am going out from you and I will plead with the LORD that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, tomorrow. Only let not Pharaoh cheat again by not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.”³⁰ So Moses went out from Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD.³¹ And the LORD did as Moses asked, and removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; not one remained.³² But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and did not let the people go.

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Neighborhood

- Thank God for CCC’s Mercy Ministry Team and those the church is partnering with to serve the poor and marginalized in the city.
- Thank God for giving us his Son, whose sacrificial love we seek to demonstrate by loving our neighbors in the city well.

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP 69)

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26)

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.