

# Prayer Practices

## St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church

### Morning Prayer

Every weekday at 8:30, half an hour long. We chant psalms, sit in silence, read the Gospel, sing some more, sing the Lord's prayer and walk out to the font for blessing. It's beautiful, quiet, a peaceful way to start the day—(at 8:30 there is parking, and feel free to park in our driveway or green spot).

### Contemplative Prayer

Meets every Sunday from **9:30 am to 10:30 AM** in the Chapel, off the rotunda under the wolf. Everyone is welcome.

**What is the purpose of the group?** We seek to develop a closer relationship with God as we practice silent meditation together through Centering Prayer or another form of Christian meditation. We use poetry and music to help deepen our experience.

**What happens during a session?** During our time together, we begin with an informal discussion, hear and reflect on a poem or other meaningful meditative words, and listen to a song which will lead us into 20 minutes of silent meditation using Centering Prayer or another form of Christian meditation. This is followed by saying the Lord's Prayer and offering prayers for others and ourselves in the sacred space.

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday** the Contemplative Prayer Group begins with a healing prayer litany and petitions for prayer. Individuals are invited to request healing prayer and/or anointing before or after the meditation period. Contact [Pat K.](#)

### Healing Prayer

Available **before and after Eucharist every Sunday**. By request at other times.

An opportunity to sit with one or more people, share a current need and receive both listening hearts and the question:

**How would you like us to pray for you?** Contact [Sara](#).

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Contact [Noreen nobrien3@earthlink.net](#) or [Pat K.](#)

### Prayer & Care List

All are welcome to join this Email list, through which we share requests for prayer and/or practical support for individuals in the St. Gregory's community. Contact [Sara](#) to receive these emails or to request prayer.

### Praying with Prayer Beads

Since the earliest times, people have used pebbles or a string of knots or beads on a cord to keep track of prayers offered to God. Virtually every major religious tradition in the world uses some form of prayer beads. Anglican prayer beads are typically made up of 33 beads: a *cross*, an *invitatory* bead, and four *cruciform* beads that separate four sets of seven beads called *weeks*. You can buy a set of Anglican prayer beads, or make your own. There is not single "right" way to pray with your prayer beads. It is up to you to choose or create your own set of prayers. Your prayers might be as simple as a deep breath or a single word. You might choose to use traditional prayers or bible verses. Or you might look to poetry, music, or other sacred writings for inspiration. Use the [booklet](#) available on the website or any of the videos, handouts, or audio recordings there to help you get started on your prayer journey.

### Sing & Sign Prayers

Prayer is something we do with our whole selves: body, mind, and spirit. One way we can deepen our prayer is to be intentional about how we use our bodies when we pray. We can use different body postures (kneeling, bowing, standing), gestures, and movements to express our prayers. Sometimes we interpret prayers using American Sign Language.

Incorporating ASL into our prayers may help visual and kinesthetic learners, pre-literate and pre-verbal children, and people who are hard of hearing participate more fully in the liturgy. Try it out! See website for video demonstrations.

### Sacred Stretch Breaks

It is *fantastic* to pray the [daily offices](#) (Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, etc.) from your phone, computer, or [Book of Common Prayer](#). It is *spectacular* to take classes at your local yoga studio. It's just not always possible. But it's almost *always* possible, even on the very busiest days, to take 90 seconds to stretch and pray. On the website you will find a few "sacred stretch breaks" to get you started. The first sequence in each set is extremely gentle. Others are slightly more vigorous. All are under 2 minutes.

## Check out these seasonal spiritual resources:

- PRAY with **Epiphany Prayers** from [Daily Prayers for All Seasons](#)
- REFLECT & SHARE on St. Gregory's Community [Baptism Blog](#), updated weekly throughout the season
- EXPLORE other resources for the season of [Epiphany](#)

[Daily Prayer for all Seasons](#) is a resource from the Episcopal Church created to help people weave prayer into the fabric of daily life. For each season of the church year, the book offers eight short services to pray over the course of each day, in a pattern akin to the monastic practice of "praying the hours". The services are short--it takes between one and seven minutes to pray each service. Members of St. Gregory's are creating these informal audio recordings to help you pray the hours with us even when you are on the go--driving, walking, working, or working out. Listen directly from this page, or download the audio files directly. The recordings aren't perfect--we're just a community of real people praying--but we hope they'll help you pray! We'd love your help recording the prayers and songs for an upcoming season of prayer! We'll meet in the large classroom across from the nursery for about one hour to read, sing, and record the prayers. All ages welcome (although it is helpful if you can read!) Contact [Sylvia](#).

- February 8; 9:30-10:30AM Lent Prayers
- February 22; 12:30-1:30PM Easter Prayers
- June 14; 9:30-10:30AM Ordinary Time Prayers (Part 1)
- June 21; 9:30-10:30 AM Ordinary Time Prayers (Part 2)

SGN Source <http://sgnsource.weebly.com>

Praying with Prayer Beads <http://sgnsource.weebly.com/praying-with-prayer-beads.html>

Daily Prayer for All Seasons <http://sgnsource.weebly.com/daily-prayer-for-all-seasons.html>

Sing & Sign Prayers <http://sgnsource.weebly.com/sing-and-sign-prayers.html>

Sacred Stretch Breaks <http://sgnsource.weebly.com/sacred-stretch-breaks.html>

### ***"The Most Important Word in the Bible."***

Sara's article [http://www.episcopalcafe.com/the\\_most\\_important\\_word\\_in\\_the\\_bible/](http://www.episcopalcafe.com/the_most_important_word_in_the_bible/)

*Remember, at the beginning of John's Gospel: "The Word was with God." And Proverbs: "When God fixed the foundations of the earth.....I was there, ever at play in God's presence, delighting to be with the children of humanity." In other words, before time began, before anything else, there was a with. And until the end of time, there is a with, as Jesus promises: behold, I am with you always. With is the most fundamental thing about God.*

*With. And so we open our worship saying: the Lord be with you. And so we proclaim that the Word made flesh came to dwell with us. And so we call his name Emmanuel, meaning: God with us. And so we bless our gatherings saying: the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all.*

**Notice: with, not for.**

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