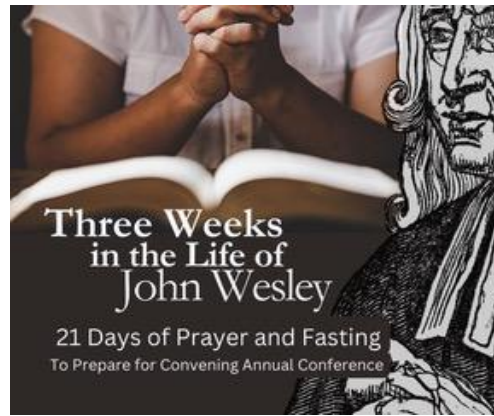


Three Weeks in the  
Life of John Wesley:  
21 Days of Prayer and Fasting  
to Prepare for the  
Convening Annual  
Conference



*My fear is not that our great movement, known as the Methodists, will eventually cease to exist or one day die from the earth. My fear is that our people will become content to live without the fire, the power, the excitement, the supernatural element that makes us great. ~ John Wesley*

“And when you pray ... “

~ Matthew 6:5a

## Prayer Guide - Week 2

## Day 8 – Monday, March 25, 2024

### Today's Scripture – Exodus 32:30-32 (NIV)

<sup>30</sup>The next day Moses said to the people, “You have committed a great sin. But now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.”

<sup>31</sup>So Moses went back to the LORD and said, “Oh, what a great sin these people have committed! They have made themselves gods of gold. <sup>32</sup>But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written.”

### Today's Prayer Focus

Moses' prayer for the sins of his people reveals the depths of his solidarity with them. If they cannot be forgiven, then he, too, wishes to be blotted out of God's book. Center your prayers this day on those priestly shepherds who, like Moses, are concerned for their people and willing to pray mightily for them. Pray for pastors of the GMC churches in the Northeast Annual Conference, and especially those who will be ordained this year. Pray that they will be persons who will live out their calling with integrity.

### Today's Suggested Prayer

(For the Clergy Leadership of the Church, from *This Day: A Wesleyan Way of Prayer*, by Laurence Hull Stookey. Copyright © 2004 by Abingdon Press. Used by permission. p. 143.)

God of grace:

To all clergy who have taken responsibility  
for the care of your church,  
give a love for the people of God  
equal to a love of the Gospel.

Let not discouragement or spiritual weariness  
overtake them  
and no temptation be put in their way  
that they cannot resist.

Enable them to trust you  
and to serve you with gladness  
all the days of their lives,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Day 9 – Tuesday, March 26, 2024

### Today's Scripture – Mark 11:20-25 (NIV)

<sup>20</sup> In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. <sup>21</sup> Peter remembered and said to Jesus, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!”

<sup>22</sup> “Have faith in God,” Jesus answered. <sup>23</sup> “Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them. <sup>24</sup> Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. <sup>25</sup> And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”

### Today's Prayer Focus

Jesus looked for fruit on a fruitless tree. Finding none, he declared that none would ever eat fruit from that tree again. And the tree withered. Center your prayers this day on the fruit Christ wishes the Global Methodist Church to bear. Pray for increased vitality in the churches already in the Northeast Annual Conference. Pray for church planters to be lifted up so that many hundreds, even thousands of new churches will be started in our region. Pray that all our churches would bear fruit and would spread scriptural holiness through this land. “Believe that you have received it,” Jesus said, “and it will be yours.”

### Today's Suggested Prayer

O Lord, Creator of heaven and earth,  
your divine plan for us was a Garden in which to dwell,  
a place filled with trees of every kind,  
each bearing fruit, good for food.  
Yet we turned away from your Word,  
and listened to words not of your Spirit.  
In many corners of creation,  
your church now ceases to bear fruit.  
In your mercy, cultivate again in us  
a hunger for the fruit of your Spirit.  
Lift up church planters in the Northeast,  
so that many more congregations may sprout and grow.  
Use the Global Methodist Church  
to spread scriptural holiness through this land,  
so that all may yearn to dwell in the Garden of your grace.  
We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

## Day 10 – Wednesday, March 27, 2024

### Today's Scripture – Luke 18:9-14 (NIV)

<sup>9</sup>To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: <sup>10</sup>“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup>The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. <sup>12</sup>I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’

<sup>13</sup>“But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’

<sup>14</sup>“I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

### Today's Prayer Focus

Jesus' parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector speaks to the perils of being confident in one's own righteousness. The sinner who knows his sin is closer to justification than the sinner who is pridefully unaware. Center your prayers this day on the mission field of the lost. Pray for the Spirit to work in the hearts of those who feel they are righteous because of their deeds. Pray for the Spirit to draw those who stand at a distance closer to Jesus, and to receive the assurance of the mercy they seek.

### Today's Suggested Prayer

Lord God, Shepherd of the lost sheep,  
Father of the lost son.  
You rejoice in heaven  
when that which was dead is now alive,  
when that which was lost is now found.  
I lift up to you now [name(s)],  
who is far from you.  
By your grace,  
give (him/her) ears to hear your call in the night,  
eyes to see your hand of mercy reaching out in love.  
Softening (his/her) heart to receive your grace.  
Do this so that heaven will rejoice  
when one sinner repents.  
We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

## Day 11 – Thursday, March 28, 2024 (Holy Thursday)

### Today's Scripture – Matthew 26:36-41 (NIV)

<sup>36</sup> Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” <sup>37</sup> He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. <sup>38</sup> Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”

<sup>39</sup> Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

<sup>40</sup> Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. “Couldn’t you men keep watch with me for one hour?” he asked Peter. <sup>41</sup> “Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

### Today's Prayer Focus

In the darkness of the Gethsemane hours, Jesus confesses his soul is overwhelmed. If a way other than the cross was possible, Jesus asked his Father for it. “Yet not as I will,” Jesus said to his Father, “but as you will.” Center your prayers this day on God’s will for your life. Ask the Holy Spirit to not only discern what God’s will is for you, but also for the resolve and the strength to do it. The spirit may be willing, but the flesh is weak.

### Today's Suggested Prayer

(A Prayer for Service, from *Our Great Redeemer's Praise*, Copyright © 2022 by Seedbed. #708.)

Govern everything by your wisdom, O Lord,  
so that my soul may always be serving you  
in the way you will  
and not as I choose.  
Let me die to myself  
so that I may serve you;  
let me live to you  
who are life itself. Amen.

~ St. Teresa of Avila

## Day 12 – Friday, March 29, 2024 (Good Friday)

### Today's Scripture – Numbers 21:4-9 (NIV)

<sup>4</sup>They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; <sup>5</sup>they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!”

<sup>6</sup>Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. <sup>7</sup>The people came to Moses and said, “We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us.” So Moses prayed for the people.

<sup>8</sup>The LORD said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.” <sup>9</sup>So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived.

### Today's Prayer Focus

Moses prayed for the people who sinned by complaining against the Lord. He offered to them what the Lord said to provide – a bronze snake on a pole, lifted up high. Those who looked on it would live. Center your prayers this day on the support staff and volunteers who will serve in various capacities at Annual Conference, including hospitality, media, prayer, tech and worship. There will inevitably be hiccups in this new process of being in community together, and some will complain. Pray for patience for all, and pray that all stay focused on Jesus, lifted high on a cross.

### Today's Suggested Prayer

O God, you created each of us in your image,  
and your Spirit gives to each the gifts necessary  
for the building up of your Body.  
We give you thanks for the staff and the volunteers  
who will use their gifts to serve your people at Annual Conference.  
When events go awry in our time together,  
give patience to them and to those they serve.  
When things go well,  
give us all a heart of gratitude for your gracious hand of blessing,  
and for the simple acts of kindness we offer to each other.  
This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

## **Day 13 – Saturday, March 30, 2024**

### Today's Scripture – Romans 8:26-27 (NIV)

<sup>26</sup> In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. <sup>27</sup> And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

### Today's Prayer Focus

Despite all of our focus and all of our specificity in prayer, on this side of full redemption we often don't know what we ought to pray for. We are unable to see through the present darkness into the reality of God's future. Thankfully, the Spirit intercedes, carrying our trust in God to fruitfulness in prayer despite our weakness. Center your prayers this day on God's will for the Northeast Annual Conference and for the Global Methodist Church, however unclear it may be.

### Today's Suggested Prayer

O Holy Spirit, our Advocate and our Guide,  
intercede for us in our weakness now.  
With the Apostle Paul, we see through the glass darkly;  
the way forward for your people is not always clear.  
Take from us our hopes for the Global Methodist Church,  
as well as our fears.  
We want our dreams for this new denomination  
to align with the will of God,  
and our worries  
to have no part in the divine plan.  
We trust in you to use the fervency of our yearning to do God's will,  
to cover over any weakness we have in discerning it.  
Reveal to us only that which is necessary for us to carry out your plans,  
and grant us faith to know that you intercede for us  
even where we know not.  
We ask this in the name of Christ,  
who promised us you would come. Amen.

## Day 14 – Sunday, March 31, 2024 (Easter Sunday)

### Today's Scripture – Philippians 4:4-7 (NIV)

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! <sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

### Today's Prayer Focus

This Easter Sunday is a special day of rejoicing in the Church, but Paul's repeated encouragement is to rejoice always, at all times, in every situation. The Lord is indeed near, and the nearness of that presence should calm all anxiousness. Center your prayers this day on becoming a person of rejoicing, one who is not anxious, one who has the peace of God, and one who shares it.

### Today's Suggested Prayer

(Prayer of St. Francis, from *Our Great Redeemer's Praise*, Copyright © 2022 by Seedbed. #706.)

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.  
Where there is injury, pardon.  
Where there is doubt, faith.  
Where there is despair, hope.  
Where there is darkness, light.  
Where there is sadness, joy.  
O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much  
seek to be consoled as to console,  
not so much to be understood as to understand,  
not so much to be loved as to love;  
for it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
it is in dying that we awake to eternal life. Amen.

~St. Francis of Assisi