

Anglican Fellowship of Prayer

Serving, Supporting, and Encouraging Prayer

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Summer 2023

The Gift of Prayer

Paul Feheley, National Director

Dear friends,

I have referred in other newsletters to the work that I do for The Episcopal Church. I am the Middle East Partnership officer and beginning on the 22nd of April I had an extensive trip in the region arriving home on the 18th of May. I had the privilege of being in Jerusalem and in Jordan as well as Iraq, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Cairo to name just a few places where I visited.

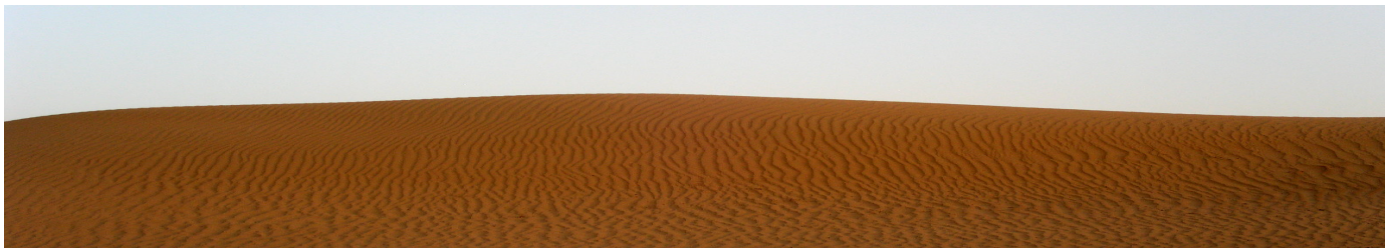
Inevitably when you are away for that long there are a number of blessings and some very difficult moments. Blessings include being able to worship with the community St. Georges in Baghdad and St Paul's in Kuwait, visiting labour camps in Dubai, learning of the refugee work in Egypt and observing important interfaith work in Abu Dhabi.

Among the more difficult things were occasions of lost luggage for six days, being denied boarding on certain flights, continuing concern for my mother (she turned out to be ok and celebrated her 102 birthday the day after I got back) and bouts of illnesses that always proved frustrating and some instances of loneliness.

Each day I continued my practice of morning and evening prayer which have been a foundation of my life for more than four decades. On this trip I found that I needed a lot of extra pray time to help overcome the difficulties. Many nights after I was in bed and lights were out, I found a calmness and peace in talking to God. My conversations were simple and direct- sometimes asking for help, other times just wondering why and still others just pouring out what was deep within me. My conversations didn't automatically get me to sleep or stop me from worrying but they did provide a source of support and sharing that was desperately needed.

The other part of these prayers was asking my wife Jenni to also pray for the things that were causing anxiety and angst. To share burdens and have a prayer partner is a true blessing.

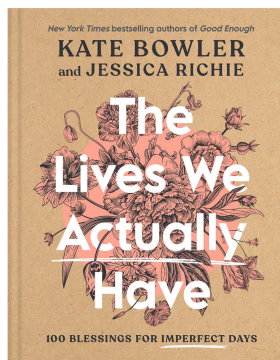
None of this sounds revolutionary in terms of prayer practices- it isn't and probably many of you have used the quietness of the evening to talk with God. In my case it was yet another rediscovery of great gift that prayer is and what a true difference it makes in our lives because God is always there and indeed always listens.



“The Lives We Have” by Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie

Reviewed by Laura Marie Piotrowicz

Co-workers Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie focus this book on offering blessings for imperfect days – which is most every day, if we’re honest. Coming from a strong faith foundation, and with outlooks of authentic hope and gratitude, they recognise that some days are great, some are ordinary, and some are “garbage.” Yet every day is an opportunity to receive and extend blessings, for “Blessings put our spiritual house in order, even when our circumstances are entirely out of order.”



Like most books of blessings, reading through this collection is like being hugged by someone who loves us, and who accompanies us where we are, with wit and warmth. It is not a book to read cover to cover, but to discern a blessing (from practical titles in an easy-to-scan table of contents).

The contents will bless the reader, evoke emotion, invite contemplation, inspire thought. It is a meditative encouragement for delighting in God’s presence in the lives we actually have. “The act of blessing is the strange and vital work of noticing what is true about God and ourselves.”

"A generous prayer is never presented in vain;
the petition may be refused,
but the petitioner is always, I believe,
rewarded by some gracious visitation."

- Robert Louis Stevenson

"Desert flower collage" CC BY 2.0 Renee Grayson. Source: Flickr



Let Us Pray!

While we have one more virtual gathering before breaking for the summer (see below), we are also looking ahead to the Fall, when we are continuing our popular *Let Us Pray* series that happens virtually each month on the third Monday of the month. Have an idea of someone you’d like to hear, or something you’d like to learn? Please send any thoughts or ideas to chairperson@anglicanprayer.org

June 19 –Prayer from the Primate’s Perspective

We are so pleased that Archbishop Linda will be able to be with us in June. Join us as we hear the Primate’s perspective on the different aspects of prayer in her life and ministry.

September 18 – While still finalizing the details for September, please reserve this date and plan to join us for another season of *Let Us Pray*. Our September newsletter will have all the details, so please watch for it.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87388880778?pwd=YWNXaIB4ZUJaMG5HRIM0ZnVWMIgVZz09>
Meeting ID: 873 8888 0778; Passcode: 997550

OR join by phone; find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/kcEOUrk2Ah>

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Current Work of your AFP Executive

Valerie Kenyon, AFP Canada Chair

Let Us Pray Video Resources

We have been so blessed to have wonderful speakers joining us each month at our *Let Us Pray* virtual gatherings. Perhaps you were not able to attend one of them, or did you enjoy our time together so much you'd like to share it with others? These recordings do not contain any personal details of participants, but isolate the presentation portion of the session, for use in *your* parish, deanery or Diocese. A perfect resource for a prayer gathering any time it suits your schedule. Please visit anglicanprayer.org approximately one week following the event to view this resource.



Internet a Little Sketchy – Still a Few Flash drives Left!!

Do you have trouble accessing the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer online resources due to inconsistent internet availability in your area? No worries. Just reach out to our Resource Coordination, Paul Dumbrille, at resources@anglicanprayer.org and we will send you all of our print resources on a flash drive. Availability is limited, so please don't hesitate in reaching out to us.

AFP Canada – Supporting the Work of our Diocesan Contacts

If you are a Diocesan Contact, you will have received this notice from the National Executive sent last month, but just in case, you did not, we have included it below.

With a desire to support the work of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer in Canada, the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (Canada) has recently approved, for the use of any approved/ appointed Diocesan Contacts, an annual reimbursement of up to \$250 for expenses consistent with the AFP purpose as noted below.

Receipts must be sent to the treasurer, Libi Clifford, at treasurer@anglicanprayer.org and will be presented to the Executive for approval. Receipts for 2023 should be submitted by December 30, 2023. Any questions about this, may be addressed to the AFP Chair, Val Kenyon at chairperson@anglicanprayer.org.

The Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (Canada) exists to encourage and enable the ministry of prayer in Canada. It is inclusive of all forms of expressions of Christian church life, whether they be lay or clerical, catholic or evangelical, monastic or secular, formal or informal. AFP (Canada) seeks to be a teaching resource to assist both individuals and congregations to grow in the life of prayer. It seeks to increase and strengthen the companionship of Christian prayer throughout the world.



"Peaceful River"
CC BY 2.0 by G. Lamar.
Source: Flickr

*From the rising of the sun to its setting
the name of the Lord is to be praised.*

~ Ps 113.3

Sensible Prayer - Touch

Paul Dumbrille

This is the first of a series of articles exploring the use of our senses in connecting with God.

If we restrict our understanding and the practice of prayer as being an activity only of the head, it can be likened to a bird trying to fly with one wing. We would be missing the richness of the use of the senses that God has given us. To “sense” something is to understand and experience life, gaining knowledge and achieving our potential. As we do with the physical world around in touching, tasting, smelling, seeing, and hearing, so, too, we can use our senses to learn about, and experience God.

In this article we explore the use of our **Sense of Touch** and prayer.

There are several ways of using the sense of touch in prayer, and most often we are inclined to our hands. Often people will hold on to a small cross, or other small smooth object when they pray. We can also hold a Bible in our hands, either open at a particular scripture passage, or just closed resting in our hands, to connect to the Divine Presence. It is a way of focussing on God and bringing Jesus into the particular time and space of the prayer.



For centuries, people have used prayer beads as an aid to prayer. The action of feeling the beads and moving from one bead to another provides an internal rhythm. Feeling the shape, the texture, the size of the beads, and the spaces around them relax us and helps focus our attention, which then brings us into greater silence and into contemplation, before God. There is an Anglican Rosary (pictured here) that is a blending of the Marian (Roman Catholic) Rosary and the Orthodox Jesus Prayer Rope.

Our sense of touch is not restricted to our hands. Our sense of touch extends to all parts of our body. Those in need of healing of body mind and/or spirit often find the comfort of God's presence using a Prayer Shawl, which has been knitted by hand, blessed by a priest, and given to them with a prayer.

We are encouraged to feel God in everything we touch.



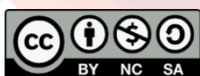
Paul explores the sense of sight in our next issue.

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Next Newsletter: September 2023
Submission deadline: September 1, 2023