

Anglican Fellowship of Prayer



OPEN HEARTS, OPEN HANDS: GROWING A LIFE OF PRAYER TOGETHER

*PAUL FEHELEY,
NATIONAL DIRECTOR*

It has been a fascinating journey since I was appointed National Director of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer Canada (AFP) in June 2014. Over these past twelve years, we have witnessed remarkable changes in the way people learn, communicate, and engage with prayer.

When I began, the Fellowship's work was centred on pamphlets, printed resources, conferences, and gatherings where we shared our experience and understanding of prayer. Today, that work has moved online. The internet and social media have given us new ways of sharing resources, offering encouragement, and learning together about the gift of prayer.

We knew back in 2014 that the Fellowship would need to change the ways in which we operated. That does not mean leaving our history behind. Those who provided leadership over the years did a magnificent job, and we owe them an enormous debt of gratitude for the foundation they laid.

People learn in diverse ways. Some prefer to read; others learn through video, podcasts, or conversation. Our task has been to find new ways of making the timeless message of prayer accessible.

And yet, amid all these changes, the fundamental work of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer has not changed: We are called to share prayer and encourage people to pray, because prayer is at the very heart of our relationship with God.

Beginning in October and continuing through next May, we are launching what I believe is one of the most important initiatives of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer in the past decade.

Open Hearts, Open Hands has at its centre the simple request of the disciples: "Lord, teach us to pray." It is a request that feels particularly appropriate for our own time.

We live in an age of constant communication yet often struggle to listen. We face political confusion, economic uncertainty and a world marked by conflict and hostility. In the midst of all this noise, there is a need to return to the basics.

Many of us have prayed for decades and developed our own patterns of prayer. But there is always room for renewal. Sometimes we need to stop, listen again, and allow God to refresh our relationship with him.

Open Hearts, Open Hands is an invitation to do exactly that.

Over the coming months, we will explore some of the fundamental aspects of prayer and consider how prayer can shape the way we live and engage with the world around us.

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This is not a course for experts in prayer. It is an invitation for all of us—those who have prayed for many years and those who may be just beginning—to come together and learn again.

All the details can be found in this newsletter. I encourage you to take part and, just as importantly, to share this invitation with others.

Perhaps we come to this invitation because we ourselves are searching for a deeper relationship with God. Perhaps our prayer life has become routine, or we have forgotten how to pray. Perhaps, after many years of prayer, we find ourselves longing for renewal and a fresh awareness of God's presence.

Whatever our experience, ***Open Hearts, Open Hands*** is an invitation to begin again—to open ourselves to God and to one another. Together, may we open our hearts to God, listen for the voice that calls us his beloved sons and daughters, and discover again the peace that comes when we place our lives in his hands.

Lord, teach us to pray.



Session 1 Oct 5 Prayer: Why Bother? What Difference Does Prayer Make

Prayer as relationship with God – daily communion rooted in Scripture, sacrament, and worship. Exploring why Christians pray and how prayer forms and transforms us.

Session 2 Nov 2 Praying the Psalms

Learning to pray with and from the Psalms, which teach us honesty, lament, praise, confession, thanksgiving, and hope.

Session 3 Dec 7 Daily Rhythms of Prayer

Exploring the joys and challenges of praying throughout our day.

Session 4 Jan 4 Intercessions & Praying with and For Others

Standing in the gap for the Church, community, and the world. Examining intercessory prayer, corporate prayer, and the Prayers of the People.

Session 5 Feb 1 Prayer with Imagination

Learning to rest in God's presence and listen for God's voice. Exploring praying with the imagination, silence, stillness, and the contemplative stream within Anglican spirituality.

Session 6 Mar 1 Prayer in Times of Grief, Suffering and Discernment

Praying through grief, uncertainty, healing, and waiting. Engaging in honest prayer, pastoral care, discernment and hope in difficult seasons.

Session 7 Apr 5 Praying While Moving~Movement as the Prayer

We will be learning about the different ways in which motion (both indoors and outside) are incorporated into our times of prayer.

Session 8 May 3 prayer , Mission and Revival

Prayer as the foundation of evangelism, renewal, and spiritual revival. How prayer strengthens the Church and transforms communities through the work of the Holy Spirit.

THE CHURCH LITURGICAL CALENDAR

PAUL DUMBRILLE

Acknowledgement: Many of the ideas presented herein come from a recent book by Diana Butler Bass entitled: "A Beautiful Year", a book I highly recommend.

The church calendar invites us to live inside the story of Jesus and notice how time forms us spiritually. I'd like to suggest that we would do well to do more than learn dates and seasons.

Have you thought about what calendars represent or are based on? They are not just things we use to keep track of our To Do lists and appointments. They are a lot more than that. Calendars tell stories: who we honour; what we treasure; who we aspire to become. They are teaching devices, doing their work through cycles of repetition and ritual. Calendars mark and shape our experience of time.

The Secular calendar is very much a product of the Roman empire. It is based on the cycles of the sun and moon. Every month is named after a Roman God, pagan festival, emperor, or Roman Numeral. In many European languages the days of the weeks bear their Roman names. Knowingly or not, the Roman empire is with us every day of the secular calendar, inhabiting our memories and plans. What does it mean to our culture that we live guided by an imperial map, naming our days, weeks months years?

As Christians, the liturgical calendar we follow is guided by something different from the Roman calendar. In the ancient world the earliest followers of Jesus lived with the stories in two calendars: a solar calendar based on Roman imperialism, and a lunar calendar of feasts and they inherited from Judaism, with distinctive Jesus modifications.

From the Jews, early Christians learned that living differently, with different heroes, feasts and rituals, with a distinctive calendar, provided cultural and religious strength. Hence the development of a Christian liturgical calendar.

Our Church calendar is a liturgical cycle of stories and rituals based on the life and teachings of Jesus. We now use the Revised Common Lectionary, with readings from both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament. In a normal Sunday there is a reading from the Hebrew Bible, a reading from one the four Gospels {Matthew, Mark, Luke. or John}, and a reading from the other parts of the New Testament. It provides a pattern for worship, memory, prayer and discipleship.

The lectionary provides a schedule of texts for six seasons. Although the seasons remain the same, the readings vary according to a to a three-year cycle. The six seasons are: Advent; Christmas, Epiphany; Lent; Easter; and Ordinary Time (or the time after Pentecost). These seasons are not the same length.

The first five seasons occupy the first half of each liturgical year, and the readings tell the story of Jesus. The Pentecost story of the coming of the Holy Spirit brings the spirit of Jesus into the whole world, and beyond. It initiates the second half of the liturgical year, in which the readings invite us, in our ordinary lives, to live out what Jesus taught and showed. The focus after Pentecost shifts from hearing the story to embodying the story in our lives. This is no accident. How we live out our lives as the followers of Jesus needs to occupy our hearts and minds as much as the story of His birth, life, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension.

In conclusion, the church calendar forms our imagination over time. It keeps Jesus at the centre of our worship and memory. It balances story, ritual, scripture, and practice. It helps us resist being shaped only by the priorities of secular time. And It invites the whole Church to walk a shared rhythm together.





OPEN HEARTS, OPEN HANDS

Growing a Life of Prayer Together

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The **Anglican Fellowship of Prayer** invites you to a monthly gathering to deepen our life of prayer, through teaching, reflection, discussion, and guided prayer.

Join us as we cultivate rhythms of prayer that shape everyday life, strengthen faith, and renew the Church.

One-hour Zoom gatherings are held on the first Monday of each month at 1.00pm Eastern.

Visit www.anglicanprayer.org or follow us on Facebook for details and link

*Have a Blessed
Thanksgiving*



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