

ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER

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Lent/Easter 2024

Serving,
Supporting,
& Encouraging
Prayer

When I travel as part of my ministry I rarely if ever wear a clerical collar. There are a number of reasons for this, but the most important one is I don't know who I'm going to be sitting next to on the plane. On those occasions when I have had to wear a collar the conversation so often goes like this, "Oh are you religious" the temptation to make a smart-alecky answer is extremely high but no I graciously respond, "yes I'm an Anglican priest." That always leads to "I guess this flight will be safe because you're on board." The next comment is to tell you about their great aunt Dorothy who was a good Christian in a Baptist Church about 1000 miles from where you are-do you know her?

Invariably the next comment is "I don't go to church but I'm a better Christian than most of the people in the church." (By now I'm wishing I'd taken the train, even if it would have taken an extra 3 days.)

Among many things that are difficult with that comment is that it displays a profound misunderstanding of what a Christian is.

What criteria is being used to determine who is a "better" Christian? Is it based on attendance, adherence to specific doctrines, moral behavior, acts of service, or something else? It doesn't consider that at its heart Christianity emphasizes the importance of community and fellowship.

It is never about focusing on individual superiority as our gospels emphasize humility, love, and forgiveness over self-righteousness.

When we challenge people about Christianity it's important to do so with gentleness, respect, and a genuine desire for understanding and growth. Encouraging humility, empathy, and a deeper engagement with Christian teachings is actually what is needed to help a person understand what an inclusive and compassionate faith community is all about

I so often wish that I could explain to our critics that being a follower of Christ is not some kind of panacea that allows nothing wrong, nothing unhealthy, nothing difficult to happen to us. Our faith is not an answer to all of life's questions and problems, and it's certainly not an invitation to the easy life but rather will include testing, challenge, and temptation.

Like our Lord in the wilderness we too are called to navigate the wildernesses of our own lives – the seasons of uncertainty, doubt, and trial. In these wilderness moments, we may feel isolated and vulnerable, unsure of the path ahead. Yet, it is also where we experience the transformative power of God's grace, where our faith is deepened, and our spirits are renewed. God will not abandon us during our sojourns in the wilderness.

As we journey through life and its difficulties. sustained by prayer may we emerge empowered to live out our calling as beloved children of God, bearing witness to the transformative power of grace in our lives and in the world.

Journeying by
Paul Feheley,
National Director



A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Paul'.

"I used to pray that God would feed the hungry, or do this or that, but now I pray that he will guide me to do whatever I'm supposed to do, what I can do. I used to believe that prayer changes things, but now I know that prayer changes us and we change things."

~Mother Teresa

Let's Stay In Touch!

If you have moved, please let us know your new address.

If you prefer to receive your newsletter in your inbox, please let us know.

Send updates to
afpletspray@gmail.com

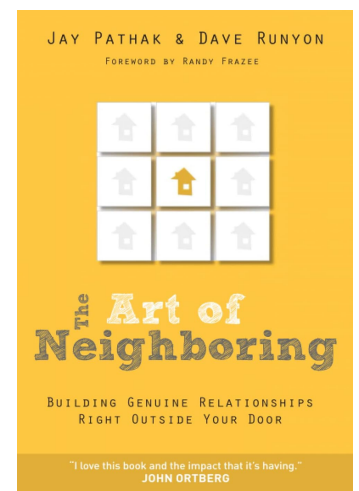


The Art of Neighbouring

By Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon; Reviewed by David Dow

In a world dominated by virtual connections and online social networks, "*The Art of Neighboring*" invites us to unplug and rediscover the joy of genuine, face-to-face relationships. While social media keeps us connected globally, this book reminds us of the immeasurable value in knowing and caring for the people who share the same physical space. It's a refreshing departure from the digital realm, offering a road map to cultivate a real sense of community right outside your doorstep. So, put down your devices, step out into the sunshine, and embark on a journey to create lasting connections with the people who live just a stone's throw away. Because in this age of digital chatter, there's something extraordinary about the laughter, shared stories, and warmth that can only be found in the art of neighbouring.

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."
~ Ephesians 4:32



Supporting the work of our Diocesan Contacts: *A Reminder*

With a desire to support the work of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer in Canada, the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (Canada) has approved, for the use of any approved/appointed Diocesan Contacts, an annual reimbursement of up to \$250 for expenses consistent with the AFP commitment to encourage and enable the ministry of prayer in Canada.

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

Let Us Pray Video Resources

The perfect resource for a prayer gathering any time it suits your schedule. Please visit our website at anglicanprayer.org approximately one week following the event to view this resource.

Current Work of the AFP Executive by

Valerie Kenyon,
National Chair



Let Us Pray ~ *Some Changes in March and a Special Series for the Spring*

March 18th “A Passiontide Hour of Prayer and Reflection”

We are so pleased on **Monday, March 18th at 1pm** to be welcoming Dean Robert Willis, Emeritus Dean of Canterbury Cathedral to our *Let Us Pray* Gathering for A *Passiontide Hour of Prayer and Reflection*. Robert Willis served as Dean of Canterbury for over 20 years and, during the pandemic, became familiar to online audiences across the world for his Morning Prayer videos from the Cathedral - and the impromptu appearances of cats Leo and Tiger. Please plan on joining us for this very special hour in March.

We will be rounding out our “Let Us Pray” 2023/2024 season with a focus on what is involved in the development of and living into a Rule of Life. We will spend our spring sessions (April, May – *please note date change to fourth Monday* - and June) examining various aspects of a Rule of Life from perspectives shared by a Sister, an Oblate and an Associate from the Sisterhood of St John the Divine. Please mark these dates down in your calendar and plan to attend:

April 15	Rule of Life Series: an SSJD Sister’s Perspective
May 27	Rule of Life Series: an SSJD Oblate’s Perspective
June 17	Rule of Life Series: an SSJD Associate’s Perspective

Join Zoom Meeting online at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84453751334>

Or find your local number at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84453751334>

Looking forward to seeing you there.

“The purpose of silence in prayer is to remove some of the clutter, and to allow the breath of God to rise and speak in us.

~Rowan Williams

Sensible Prayer – Hearing

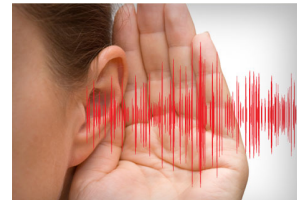
Paul Dumbrille

This is the fourth and final 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 Hearing** and prayer.

In prayer we should spend a majority of our time listening to what God is saying to us. I recently heard an interview with author, Ronald Rolheiser, in which he said that when we are faced with decisions or are searching for direction: our head tells us what we *should* do: our heart tells us what we *want* to do: and our gut tells us what we *must* do. God speaks to our head, our heart, and our gut.



My experience is that God often speaks to me through others when they speak to us. Hearing and listening are two different things. We can hear someone talking, but unless we focus and pay attention, and **listen** they are just noise. When we listen to what is being said we are engaging our mind and spirit on the content. Some of my most meaningful times of prayer have been prompted by listening to others speaking to me in conversation or in a presentation. I also sense God speaking to me when I listen to the reading of scripture or the words of worship services or podcasts.



Another powerful way God speaks is through listening to music. Most often through the sung words of hymns, songs and chants. However, often instrumental music triggers a closeness to God that I do not otherwise achieve. Prayer and Praise go together. In addition to sung words and music, spoken words, meaningful worship, which is, after all, a form of prayer, is often enhanced by such things as bells and singing bowls, all of which can lead to prayer and a powerful full connection to God.

As we use our sense of hearing to listen to God, may we be guided by the Holy Spirit in all that we do.

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Next Newsletter: June 2024

Submission deadline: May 31, 2024