

Anglican Fellowship of Prayer

Serving, Supporting, and Encouraging Prayer

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The Servant Queen: A Model of Christian Life

Paul Fehleley, National Director

Many of us if asked would find it difficult to name heroes in our lives. It might even be more challenging if the question was posed to name a Christian hero. As difficult as the question is, I have no trouble in naming one- Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

This year The Queen became the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee, marking 70 years of service to the people of the United Kingdom, the Realms and the Commonwealth. Many extraordinary things will be written about her, all well deserved. My attribution of naming her a Christian hero has to do with the way the prayer and the Christian faith play such an essential part in her life, and it has always been that way. As a princess in 1947 she said: *"I declare before you all that my whole life whether it be long or short shall be devoted to your service... But I shall not have strength to carry out this resolution alone unless you join in it with me, as I now invite you to do: I know that your support will be unfailingly given. God help me to make good my vow, and God bless all of you who are willing to share in it."*

In her first Christmas broadcast in 1952, she requested: *"Pray for me ... that God may give me wisdom and strength to carry out the solemn promises I shall be making, and that I may faithfully serve Him and you, all the days of my life."* The queen also never hesitates to express a personal faith in Jesus Christ. As she said in her Christmas broadcast in December 2000: *"For me the teachings of Christ and my own personal accountability before God provide a framework in which I try to lead my life."*

As we all know the royal family as virtually every family can be a source of both great joy and great pain and anxiety In 2008 the Queen said: *"I hope that, like me, you will be comforted by the example of Jesus of Nazareth who, often in circumstances of great adversity, managed to live an outgoing, unselfish and sacrificial life ... He makes it clear that genuine human happiness and satisfaction lie more in giving than receiving; more in serving than in being served."*

Her personal faith also prompts her to work for peace and reconciliation internationally and in her own family. In 2011 she said, "Forgiveness lies at the heart of the Christian faith. It can heal broken families, it can restore friendships and it can reconcile divided communities. It is in forgiveness that we feel the power of God's love."

A book written in 2016 to celebrate her 90th birthday so rightly used the title *The Servant Queen and the King She Serves* (comps Mark Greene and Catherine Butcher). Her life has and continues to reflect Christ's love and teaching in all aspects of her being- A Christian Hero indeed.

Gracious God, we give you thanks for the reign of your servant Elizabeth our Queen, and for the example of loving and faithful service which she has shown among us. Help us to follow her example of dedication and to commit our lives to you and to one another through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Summer Blessings

Jan Richardson offers blessings, artwork, and reflections on faith in everyday life. Her work inspires and elevates, touching to our souls. As we enter into summer, with our times of work and rest, of sun and warmth, of new life in the gardens and our souls, I share some of her work. Here is a portion of her “Welcoming Blessing” to guide us into our summer season:

Let what comes, come.

Let the glass be filled.

Let the light be tended.

Let the hands lay before you
what will meet you in your hunger.

Let the laughter.

Let the sweetness that enters the sorrow.

Let the solace that comes as sustenance
and sudden, unbidden grace.

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Prayer for Peace: O God, it is your will to hold both heaven and earth in a single peace. Let the design of your great love shine on the waste of our wraths and sorrows, and give peace to your Church, peace among nations, peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts; through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Let Us Pray!

We are so pleased to be able to continue to offer our monthly virtual gathering, *Let Us Prayer*, a time to connect, to learn and of course to pray. The link for the June session has been included below. Please note that for our Fall sessions a new link will be issued in our next newsletter. All sessions begin at 1pm ET.

June 20 with Archbishop Anne Germond *Praying with Icons*

September 19 with Bishop Riscylla Shaw *Praying the Grandfather Teachings*

October 17 with Bishop David Lehman *Everything You Want to Know About Prayer and Shouldn't Be Afraid to Ask*

The link below is for our June 20th gathering. A new link will be included in the September newsletter for the Fall meetings. Please watch for it and save the dates.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82001408803?pwd=WXRmWFJZSHRLcUYwdGpUU1YvMmlxZz09>
Meeting ID: 820 0140 8803 Passcode: 359803

You can also join us by telephone at one of these numbers:

(with the same meeting ID and passcode): (778)907-2071, (204)272- 7920, (438)809-7799, (587)328-1099, (647)374-4685, (647)558-0588.

Please share this information with anyone who might be interested, and we look forward to your prayer and presence with us.

Playing in the Dirt *Laura Marie Piotrowicz*

"The question is not what you look at, but what you see." ~Henry David Thoreau

When we go into our gardens, we are playing in the dirt; and are given the chance to marvel at God's creation – and our role and responsibility in it!

Preparing a garden is a lot of work; as is tending the garden throughout the season: weeding, watering, pruning, weeding, more weeding, before harvesting.

Despite any challenges, we know that the potential outcome is worth the preparation, the initial work, and the regular tending. We see beyond the starting point of clumpy dirt to the possibility and promise of the future.

It's no wonder gardening is, for so many., a spiritual experience! We want to be fruitful and productive, a source of life and joy, a living out of our potential.

And yet, here we are, like an early garden: a work in progress – yet called to continual growth and possibility. We're called to see in ourselves that there is a great potential that has been given us, and that we are encouraged to make that a reality. We're called to see and celebrate the potential that is there, of what may become, when we allow God to tend to our growth.

*My garden has a "Grow, darn it!" sign in it...
how do we apply the same principle to our spiritual growth?*

*The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
the world and all who dwell therein.
For it is God who founded it upon the seas
and made it firm upon the rivers of the deep.
~Psalm 96.1-2*

A Prayer for Morning *Carol Knox*

Thank you, Holy One,
for a night of rest and a day ahead
that is full of possibilities
to see you all around me.

Stir up the power of the Spirit within me,
so that I may be Jesus' heart and hands and feet
to everyone I meet.

Bring to my awareness,
actions that can make this world a better place,
words that can encourage others,
and prayers that can bring me closer to you.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.



Being Still *by Paul Dumbille*

Many of us are much more comfortable praying in worship services, praying while moving, singing, and listening to sacred music, than heeding the words of Psalm 46: "Be still and know that I am God." Being "Still" is not something I have been particularly good at, but the Pandemic has led me to reflect on these words and practise "Stillness" more intentionally.

I recently learned from the writings of Fr. Richard Rohr of a simple way of being Still and intentionally connecting with the Divine Presence. It goes like this:

- 1) Find a quiet place, gently close your eyes and take a few deep breaths, slowly breathing in and breathing out. Prepare to pray the Psalm verse in five consecutively diminishing sentences.
- 2) Either aloud or quietly to yourself, say the words, "Be still and know that I am God."
- 3) Pause, and after taking several breaths, pray the words, "Be still and know that I am."
- 4) Pause, and after taking several breaths, pray "Be still and know."
- 5) Pause, and after taking several breaths, pray, "Be still."
- 6) Pause, and after taking several breaths pray, "Be."
- 7) Be quiet as long as you wish and when ready, pray, "Amen."

This way of prayer is not only useful for individual prayer but can also be used when praying with a group either in person or virtually online. The facilitator leads with each phrase and the group repeats aloud after each consecutively diminishing phrase. The pause between each phrase can be lengthened depending on your need or the needs of the group.



Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (Canada)

PO Box 43021, London, ON N6J 0A7

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newsletter@anglicanprayer.org

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