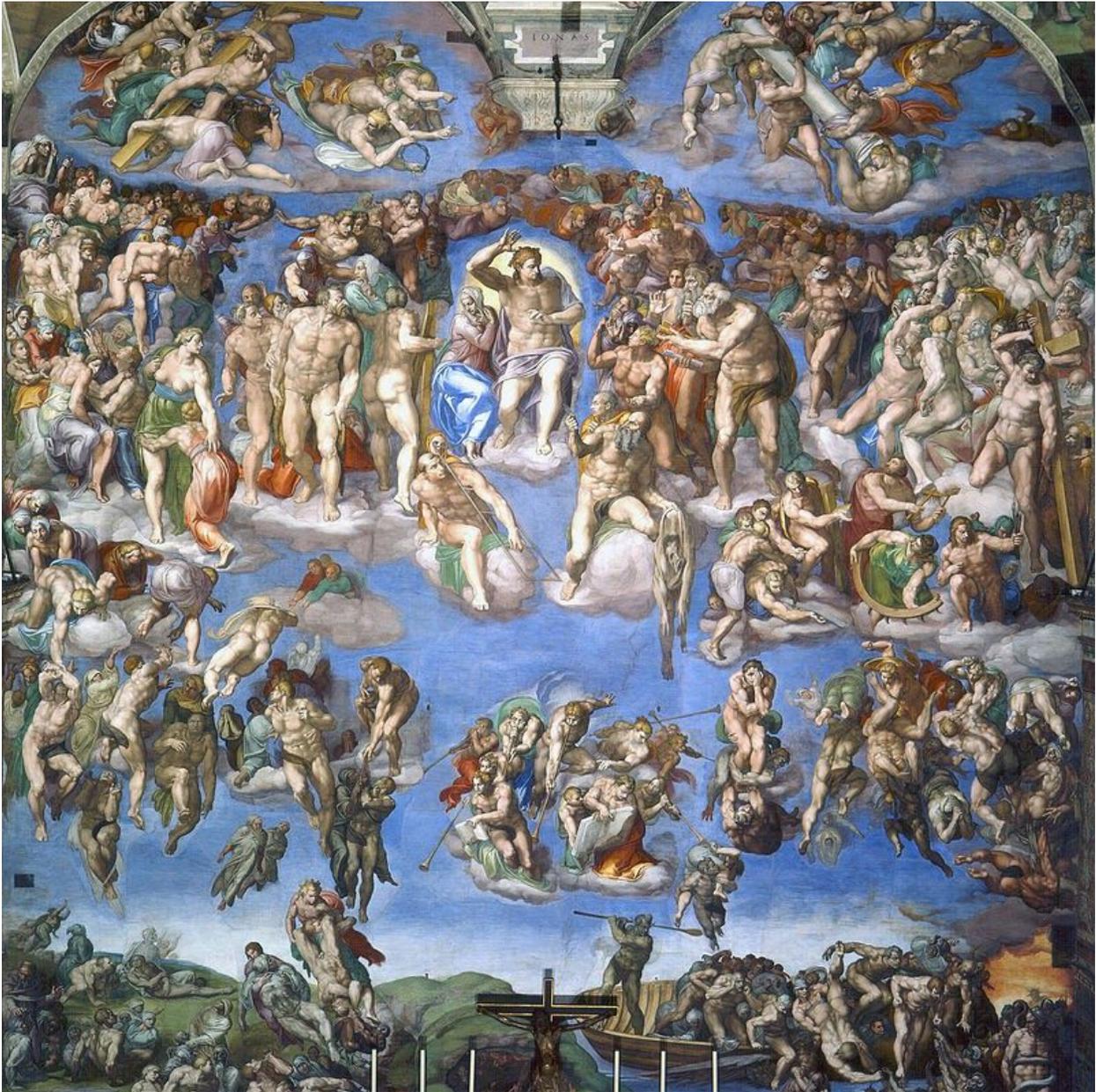


Morning & Evening Devotions

Hillsdale First Presbyterian Church



November 1st - November 28th

Instructions for use:

The devotions which follow are designed to be simple, foundational, and unifying. They permit great flexibility, keep our minds fixed on the central teachings of our faith, and foster shared spiritual experience.

Each week, you will find devotions for morning and evening use. The same material is to be repeated on as many days as you feel led. This repetition may feel restrictive, yet it liberates us to dig deeply into the readings through revisiting them over many days. In the morning, you begin with a period of silence as you seek to collect yourself before the Lord. A morning prayer and a morning psalm reading follow. As you prepare yourself for the day, review the Ten Commandments and remind yourself of God's will for your relationships. The time concludes with the Lord's Prayer, a reading or singing of the Gloria Patri, and another period of meditative silence.

In the evening, you begin with a period of silence as you call yourself back from the day's happenings. An evening prayer and an evening gospel reading follow. As you prepare to close the day, review the Apostles' Creed and rest in the enduring truths of our faith. The time concludes with the Lord's Prayer, a reading or singing of the Doxology, and another period of meditative silence.

You will also find a single question of the Westminster Shorter Catechism appended each week to the morning devotional time. Reflect on this simple question-and-answer concerning our Reformed faith throughout your days. On the final pages, you will find some discussion questions to accompany the Scripture readings.

In both the morning and evening times, you are invited to personalize and experiment. Share the time with others. Add extended periods of silence or changes in posture. Combine the devotion with other spiritual reading. Make room for extemporaneous prayer. May God's blessings in Jesus be yours as you make use of these devotions.

The image on the front page is Michaelangelo's The Last Judgment. The image was downloaded from Wikipedia.

All Scripture readings are from the KJV. Use of the word LORD in all caps represents the Hebrew name YHWH.

All prayers are taken from The Book of Common Prayer 2019 or The Book of Common Worship.

Morning Week One

Silent Meditation

Morning Prayer (A Prayer for All Saints' Day)

Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical Body of your Son: Give us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those ineffable joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer 2019

Morning Psalm

I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the LORD is good:

blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing...The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

Psalm 34:1-10; 22

The Ten Commandments

Do not have other gods besides me. Do not make an idol for yourself in the shape of anything in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth...Do not misuse the name of the LORD your God...Be careful to remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy as the LORD your God has commanded you...Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and so that you may prosper in the land the LORD your God is giving you. Do not murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not give dishonest testimony against your neighbor. Do not covet...

Deuteronomy 5:7-21

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our

debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.
Amen.

The Gloria Patri

To be spoken or sung:

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it
was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. World without end,
amen, amen.

Silent Meditation

*Please think upon **Westminster Shorter Catechism Q13** this
week:*

Q: Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were
created?

A: Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell
from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God.

Evening Week One

Silent Meditation

Evening Prayer

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings with your most gracious favor and further us with your continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name, and finally, by your mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Gregorian Sacramentary

Evening Gospel

And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile

you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Matthew 5:1-12

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. On the third day, he rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our

debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.
Amen.

The Doxology

To be spoken or sung:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him all creatures
here below. Praise Him above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son,
and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Silent Meditation

Morning Week Two

Silent Meditation

Morning Prayer

O God, whose blessed Son came into the world that he might destroy the works of the devil and make us children of God and heirs of eternal life: Grant that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves as he is pure; that, when he comes again with power and great glory, we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer 2019

Morning Psalm

Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the promises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come might know them,

even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.

Psalm 78:1-7

The Ten Commandments

Do not have other gods besides me. Do not make an idol for yourself in the shape of anything in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth...Do not misuse the name of the LORD your God...Be careful to remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy as the LORD your God has commanded you...Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and so that you may prosper in the land the LORD your God is giving you. Do not murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not give dishonest testimony against your neighbor. Do not covet...

Deuteronomy 5:7-21

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.
Amen.

The Gloria Patri

To be spoken or sung:

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. World without end, amen, amen.

Silent Meditation

*Please think upon **Westminster Shorter Catechism Q14** this week:*

Q: What is sin?

A: Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.

Evening Week Two

Silent Meditation

Evening Prayer

Lord, because you have made me, I owe you the whole of my love; because you have redeemed me, I owe you the whole of myself; because you have promised so much, I owe you my whole being. Moreover, I owe you as much more love than myself as you are greater than I, for whom you gave yourself and to whom you promised yourself. Lord, make me taste by love what I taste by knowledge; let me know by love what I know by understanding. I owe you more than my whole self, but I have no more, and by myself I cannot render the whole of it to you. Draw me to you, Lord, in the fullness of your love. I am wholly yours by creation; make me all yours, too, in love. Amen.

Anselm

Evening Gospel

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom

tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Matthew 25:1-13

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. On the third day, he rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

The Doxology

To be spoken or sung:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him all creatures here below. Praise Him above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Silent Meditation

Morning Week Three

Silent Meditation

Morning Prayer

Stir up, O Lord, the wills of your faithful people, that bringing forth in abundance the fruit of good works, they may be abundantly rewarded when our Savior Jesus Christ comes to restore all things; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer 2019

Morning Psalm

Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us. Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt. Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud.

Psalm 123

The Ten Commandments

Do not have other gods besides me. Do not make an idol for yourself in the shape of anything in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth...Do not misuse the name of the LORD your God...Be careful to remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy as the LORD your God has commanded you...Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and so that you may prosper in the land the LORD your God is giving you. Do not murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not give dishonest testimony against your neighbor. Do not covet...

Deuteronomy 5:7-21

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.
Amen.

The Gloria Patri

To be spoken or sung:

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. World without end, amen, amen.

Silent Meditation

*Please think upon **Westminster Shorter Catechism Q15** this week:*

Q: What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created?

A: The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created was their eating the forbidden fruit.

Evening Week Three

Silent Meditation

Evening Prayer

O God, whose greatness knows no limits, whose wisdom no bounds, who peace excels all understanding; you who love and help us beyond measure - help us to love you. Though we cannot fully do so because of your infinite goodness, increase and deepen our understanding so that we may love you more and more; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Bernard of Clairvaux

Evening Gospel

For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several abilities; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents

came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 25:14-30

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. On the third day, he rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

The Doxology

To be spoken or sung:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him all creatures here below. Praise Him above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Silent Meditation

Morning Week Four

Silent Meditation

Morning Prayer (A Prayer for Christ the King)

Almighty and everlasting God, whose will it is to restore all things in your well-beloved Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords: Mercifully grant that the peoples of the earth, divided and enslaved by sin, may be freed and brought together under his most gracious rule; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer 2019

Morning Psalm

Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

Psalm 100

The Ten Commandments

Do not have other gods besides me. Do not make an idol for yourself in the shape of anything in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth...Do not misuse the name of the LORD your God...Be careful to remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy as the LORD your God has commanded you...Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and so that you may prosper in the land the LORD your God is giving you. Do not murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not give dishonest testimony against your neighbor. Do not covet...

Deuteronomy 5:7-21

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

The Gloria Patri

To be spoken or sung:

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. World without end, amen, amen.

Silent Meditation

*Please think upon **Westminster Shorter Catechism Q16** this week:*

Q: Did all men fall in Adam's first transgression?

A: The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity; all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression.

Evening Week Four

Silent Meditation

Evening Prayer

Most strong God, who is able to fight against you? I want you to help me fight against the flaming dragon of sin within me, that eats away my very soul. I want to have the strongest sword in my hand, fashioned by you, with the sharpest blade that will cut through the dragon's scales. And when I have slayed the dragon within myself, I want to offer a safe refuge for all who, like me, are frail and vulnerable. I will give them a sword to slay their own dragons, so that together we may live in joy and peace. Amen.

Hildegard of Bingen

Evening Gospel

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me

meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? Or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Matthew 25:31-46

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. On the third day, he rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

The Doxology

To be spoken or sung:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him all creatures here below. Praise Him above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Silent Meditation

Week One Questions

1. Psalm 34 seems to be out of step with our experience of life. Seemingly, we are not saved out of all of our troubles. Some of our experiences sure feel like desolation. How do you reconcile the confidence of this psalm with the hard realities of life in a broken world?
2. Review the Beatitudes, and ask God to bring to attention the one item that is most pressing for your current discipleship. Which Beatitude is it, and how would growth in that area bring change to some part of your life?

Week Two Questions

1. Psalm 78 speaks of telling the greatness of God to coming generations. Who did that for you? Was it a member of your family, or was it a close friend? Did you have a “spiritual” mother or father who shared the good news with you? Thank God for that person today!
2. The foolish virgins of the parable demonstrated a lack of preparation. They did not possess sufficient oil to welcome the bridegroom in the middle of the night. Obviously, the time to acquire such oil was in the days preceding the event. What might oil represent in this story? How can we grow our supply?

Week Three Questions

1. In Psalm 123, the Psalmist keeps his eyes fixed on God as he awaits the Lord's mercy. Waiting is hard. Abraham and Sarah became impatient as they waited on the Lord, and, consequently, Ishmael was born. What has been your experience of waiting on the Lord? Have you taken your eyes off of God during a period of waiting? What happened?
2. We often miss one of the most crucial details of the parable of the talents. The problem with the third man is that he believed his master to be unfair. He buried his talent because of his low view of the master's character. Have you ever been tempted to doubt the character of God? How do we know with certainty that God is good and intends good for his children?

Week Four Questions

1. We are commanded to enter through the gates of God with thanksgiving. The first question this week is simple - what is something for which you are thankful to God?
2. It is interesting to note that the judgment of the sheep and the goats involves the gathering together of the nations. And though the judgment here hinges on individual behaviors, it does suggest that God has national judgment for the nations. In your opinion, what are the qualities that commend a "nation" to God? How can you help bring those things about in your nation?