

September 2022 Prayer Calendar

Ritual Every Day "... we want life to have meaning, we want fulfillment, healing, and even ecstasy, but the human paradox is that we find these things by starting where we are. ... We must look for blessings to come from unlikely, everyday places." Kathleen Norris



9/1/22 Hebrews 10:24-25 Matthew 18:20 What is a RITUAL — intentional repetition of word or deed. Self-discipline. A good habit? It helps us express our deepest thoughts about life's events. They mark important milestones or relationships in life. They help us to remember and find healing. When words are inadequate, we turn to ritual. When words fail us, ritual reaches beyond language. Ritual unites us with others in a shared experience. Connection with others lends support on our journey.

9/2/22 2 Peter 1:5-8 Ritual is a tool to help remind us about our beliefs and faith, or to put our faith into action. Ritual can encourage us to be intentional in practicing our faith. Can ritual be meaningful even when we feel empty? How and when might ritual be helpful?

9/3/22 Psalm 100 Ritual does not have to be formal or of lofty thought, and it can be an act of finding the sacred in everyday things. Appreciating nature, counting our blessings, remembering acts of love, grace, or kindness. Take some time to remember and thank God for the ways you have been blessed today by His acts and deeds, and of others He has brought into our lives.

9/4/22 Psalm 51:1 1 Corinthians 13:1 Philippians 2:3-7 What are the purposes for ritual in our Christian lives? What is our motive in "performing" ritual - to glorify God, or to go through the motions to earn God's blessing? Is our faith based on gratitude, or fear/duty? On love, or judgment?

9/5/22 Psalm 145:2 What rituals do we observe in everyday life? For example, a particular phrase of love or blessing, our daily routine: the preparation of meals made with love, doing chores in a particular order, a bedtime ritual of tucking in, reading to, and praying with family, saying grace at mealtimes, calling a friend or loved one each day or week.

9/6/22 Psalm 5:3 Psalm 143:8 What happens if we miss out any of the routine, by choice or by necessity? Do you find ritual/repetition helpful in getting the day started right? Does an interrupted ritual leave us disoriented or confused?

9/7/22 Psalm 106:45 Luke 24:1-8 Many of our personal and family rituals are built on traditions and memories. They might be words, symbols, or gestures to honor/memorialize and remember family and friends. What meaningful rituals do you observe in your home and family life?

9/8/22 John 13:3-11 Acts 17:10-12 Looking for the **SACRED IN OUR RITUALS** is the intentional recalling of the blessings and graces of God, and to have a tool to use in our own prayer life to inspire our thoughts or to initiate conscious appreciation. How can we use the tool of ritual to invigorate our spiritual lives?

9/9/22 Matthew 26:26-30 What other examples of rituals do we observe during worship, in our prayer life, or in our secular life?

9/10/22 Romans 8:26 Hebrews 5:7 When we don't feel connected or worshipful, ritual can help us to "tune in". When we don't have the words — because of sorrow, pain, or disappointment — rituals can remind us to reconnect.

9/11/22 Hebrews 11:1-2 Hebrews 12:1-2 Sometimes rituals might seem empty repetition or noise in the background, but if we persevere, we can re-establish and strengthen our relationship with God. How can we avoid or overcome the trap of empty ritual?

9/12/22 Matthew 6:9-13 Psalm 46:10 PRAYER as a part of our routine or ritual ensures that we don't miss a day of talking with God. Listening for God is part of prayer. Rituals can be a template ensuring that we remember to praise and worship God instead of just launching into a "shopping list" of all our personal wants.

9/13/22 Psalm 66:19-20 Mark 11:24-25 Why pray? Prayer helps us to build a relationship with God and helps us to keep God's presence at the center of our spiritual growth and of our family life. Daily prayer is mentioned more than 250 times in Scripture. It is an important opportunity to share all aspects of our lives with God. We can express our gratitude to Him, confess our sins/"missing the mark" and ask for His help in overcoming sin. It is also an act of worship and obedience. We acknowledge that He is in control of our lives.

9/14/22 Matthew 6:5-15 Different types of prayer — a mnemonic or format to help our prayer to offer praise, worship, intercession, forgiveness, remember all our blessings as well as our needs. Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication.

9/15/22 Psalm 1:2-3 Hebrews 4:12 READING THE BIBLE

Choose a translation of the Bible that you find readable for devotions, or multiple versions for study purposes. Read a little every day. Pray for understanding before you start reading each day.

9/16/22 Psalm 119:105 2 Timothy 3:16-17 Why read the Bible? Why do we study the Bible? Why is the ritual of daily devotion/study important?

9/17/22 1 Timothy 4:11-13 We look to the Bible for encouragement, direction, instruction. Reading the Bible, studying the Bible and prayer are often used together in daily devotions.

9/18/22 Ephesians 4:32-5:2 The Bible teaches us about the example of Jesus: the ways Jesus exemplifies God's character, and how the Bible shows us how we should live.

9/19/22 1 John 4:7-9 1 John 4:19 Isaiah 30:18 Studying the Bible teaches us about the character of God. Look at some of the ways the Bible teaches us about God.

9/20/22 Psalm 111 Psalm 34 When do we turn to familiar scriptures in our joyful times? There are many Psalms of thanksgiving. What Scriptures do you think of in good times?

9/21/22 Psalm 23 When do we turn to familiar scriptures in hard or sorrowful times? Many find comfort in Psalm 23.

What is your favorite scripture that comforts and encourages you in hard times?

9/22/22 Acts 2:41-46 LITURGY What is liturgy? As we gather, the listing of ideas and phrases set the tone, focus, our attitude, & intentions, for worship or study. How can we enter liturgy to help us in our worship and study?

9/23/22 Psalm 8 Responsive Psalm Examples of liturgy - Many of the Psalms can be used as liturgy. Responsive Psalms are also sometimes used in our worship service. Focus on the liturgy during Sunday worship and how it introduces the focus or theme of the worship service that day.

9/24/22 Luke 22:19-21 Receiving and participating in the **SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION** is a ritual where we remember Jesus' sacrifice for us and for the communion with others in the faith. The liturgy we use also connects us to each other and to the first believers.

9/25/22 Matthew 3:13-17 Luke 3:21-22 BAPTISM Baptism - Jesus' baptism. What is baptism and what does it signify?

9/26/22 Acts 2:41 - 47 Why be baptized/join the community of faith? To obey Christ's command, to publicly profess our faith, & to commit to Christ's body, the church. Remembering our baptism and contemplating what it means to be a child of God reminds us that we are God's children, and He cares for us.

9/27/22 Romans 6:3-5 Why remember our baptism? Renew our commitment to live as God's people. How can we show our commitment to learn to be more like Christ today?

9/28/22 Apostles' Creed (umc.org) CREED— What is it? A statement of what we believe. See also the United Methodist Hymnal #880-889 Apostles' Creed

9/29/22 Psalm 145— Try reading a portion of scripture over and over. Read Psalm 145. Then read it slowly out loud one verse at a time pausing at the end of each verse. Read it again.

9/30/22 What other rituals are meaningful to you? Why, and how do you celebrate them?

Over the days and months ahead, think of ways to use the tool of ritual to enhance your prayer life and spiritual growth.

