

The 1950's and early 1960's were an amazing time for church in America. We could open a building and people would fill the pews. That has substantially changed. Now church struggles with all the other events of the world for the hearts and minds of the people. We are following the model of Europe where few people attend worship on any given Sunday. Still, it is our God given effort to be the ones who present the Gospel to the people of our town and the world. In this struggle we are not alone. We are filled with a full measure of the Holy Spirit, Who works through us and the Word of God to cause conversion. Pray that God would bless our efforts.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

℟ O Lord God, You are the rock of our salvation and the fountain of all truth. We come before You, trusting that You will hear us. Accept our praise and thanks for Your kindness and undeserved Love. For the light of another day and the protection of this past night, we give You thanks. For making it possible for us to delight in Your Law and Gospel, we praise Your Holy name.

Grant us, as we come to You in faith and prayer, the indwelling of Your Holy Spirit. By His gracious influence allow us to escape the corruption that is in the world. Take us away from our lust and pride so that we will bear the fruit of true goodness. Help us as we search Your Word, so that we are able to grow in the knowledge of You and of Your will and in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us walk before You according to Your will, steadfast in faith and love, abounding in spiritual understand and patience, and strengthened for ever work of kindness and charity.

Bless our homes and defend us against all strife and discord. Grant that our children know and love Jesus as He came to give them abundant life. Give all parents the grace to lead their children to the feet of the Lord Jesus through their example of words and life.

We ask for Your mercy on all the sick, the sorrowing and the suffering in our congregation and among Your people. Support them in their trials and deliver them by Your goodness, that they will always trust in the comfort of Your Fatherly care, and being made whole in body and spirit, they may come to Your Holy house to praise You for Your grace.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. (**Time of silent prayer.**)

According to Your promise, the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. Give us diligence in truth and holiness so that we will always do the things of Your will, in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we pray.

© Amen.

PROPER TWENTY-FOUR

Chant Tone



Introit

Remember Your congregation, which You have pur | chased of old,* which You have redeemed to be the tribe of Your | heritage!

Remember this, O Lord, how the ene | my scoffs,* and a foolish people re | viles Your name. Do not deliver the soul of Your dove to the — wild beasts;* do not forget the life of Your poor — forever.

Let not the downtrodden turn | back in shame;*

let the poor and needy | praise Your name.

Have regard for the | covenant;*

arise, O God, de | fend Your cause.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son* and to the Holy — Spirit; as it was in the be — ginning,* is now, and will be forever. — Amen.

Remember Your congregation, which You have pur | chased of old,* which You have redeemed to be the tribe of Your | heritage!

(*Antiphon, Psalm 74:2a;
Psalm 74:18-19, 21, 20a, 22a*)

Collect of the Day

O Lord, almighty and everlasting God, You have commanded us to pray and have promised to hear us. Mercifully grant that Your Holy Spirit may direct and govern our hearts in all things that we may persevere with steadfast faith in the confession of Your name; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Gradual

He will command His angels con | cerning you* to guard you in | all your ways.

Bless the Lord, | O my soul,* and all that is within me, bless His | holy name!

(*Psalm 91:11; 103:1*)

ENTRANCE PRAYER: O God of all wisdom, God of all good desires, God of all grace and truth, send us a full measure of Your Spirit Who comes down from above that He can teach us to pray and to believe so firmly and fully in our prayer that we would pray without ceasing. Help us remember that You are indeed listening and responding to each and every one of our prayers and that by way of our faith You have given us the right and responsibility to come to You. Remind us that our prayer is a conversation with You, initiated by the Spirit and prayed through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

HAS THE THOUGHT OF "WEARING GOD OUT" WITH YOUR PRAYERS EVER OCCURRED TO YOU? Probably not! No matter how many times we come to God with the same issue, He never gets weary hearing from us. The parable of the worldly Judge is intended to teach us to constantly come to God with our prayer. Prayer is both a privilege and an obligation. The privilege is that our transcendent God provides us a method to come to Him, and He listens. The obligation is that once we have obtained permission to pray we are to constantly pray for ourselves, our church, our friends and our neighbors. We welcome all the faithful of God to this worship service of thanks and praise to God for the wonder of the life and person of Jesus. Be constant in your prayer that the Resurrection of Jesus would call everyone to faith. Pray for our country, our leaders, our world, our friends and especially pray for our congregation in this little corner of God's kingdom.

THEME OF THE DAY:

Persistent Prayer

INTROIT—(Antiphon, Psalm 74:2a;) Psalm 74:18-19, 21, 20a, 22a
This entire day consists of lessons completely new to the cycle of readings. Psalm 74 was written by Jeremiah and speaks of the destruction of the Temple, it is a complaint concerning the miseries we all suffer. Jeremiah saw the destruction and was in torment because of the promise of God that the Messiah would appear at the temple.

COLLECT

We pray that the Holy Spirit would lead us to "persevere." Persevere in our prayers and persevere in our faith that leads to eternal life.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON—Genesis 32:22-30

God's wrested with Jacob and blessed him. It seems odd that God would fight with Jacob and then have to cheat to beat him. Also curious is the fact that Jacob seems to know he was wrestling with God. Jacob, was not passive or submissive; he held his own. God had given him the name "Jacob," (sort of means, "cheat".) After the battle God changed it to, "Israel." This name is interpreted to mean that Jacob had been successful in his struggles with God and with men (likely a reference to the fact that he would soon be received back as a brother. In this blessing and name change, God sealed the prior promises and bound himself to go with Jacob in future struggles.

GRADUAL—Psalm 91:11, 103:1

Both of these Psalms were written by David. Our Gradual complements the main theme for these weeks (basically the month of September,) that God is always working in our best interest, even commanding the Angels to guard us. For this we praise His Holy name.

EPISTLE LESSON—2 Timothy 3:14–4:5

Even in chains, under the most dreadful circumstances, Paul, was still praising God for his life. In this specific circumstances Paul was preparing to be executed. 2 Timothy is Paul's last will and testament. Paul wrote this letter in AD 50, he was killed in AD 50. Fewer and fewer people, in the world, turn to God as the source of their faith and life. Paul was telling Timothy (and by inspiration us) to stay firm in our faith no matter what is happening. Paul did this by appealing to the Holy Scriptures, the Word of God. In our struggles with life, the place to turn; is always God, is always the Word of God, for He is our present and our future.

GOSPEL LESSON—Luke 18:1-8

Jesus, "told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart." Whomever collected up these lessons had an agenda.