

PENTECOST

Pentecost - worshipping with joy; inviting the Spirit to be poured out on you.

Devotionals for 29 - 31 August & 1 - 4 September 2021

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful. And kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And you will renew the face of the earth. During Jesus's last days on earth, He promised His followers that "the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things" (John 14:26)

Prayer for the New Church Year

Adapted from - https://www.rclbenziger.com/sites/default/files/pdf/2016_PrayerForNewChurchYear.pdf

Monday, Tuesday, 30 - 31 August 2021:

Prayer: Let us pray. God of all time, today we begin on 5 September 2021 a new Church year. It will be a year full of grace and celebration. Help us to celebrate it well in our prayer and in our living. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

God's Word advises us to use our time wisely because He knows that there are many things in life that can distract us from what truly matters. Do not waste your time so that you look back with regret - you do not know what tomorrow holds!

For everything that happens in life—there is a season, a right time for everything under heaven:

- A time to be born, a time to die;
 - a time to plant, a time to collect the harvest;
- A time to kill, a time to heal;
 - a time to tear down, a time to build up;
- A time to cry, a time to laugh;
 - a time to mourn, a time to dance;
- A time to scatter stones, a time to pile them up;
 - a time for a warm embrace, a time for keeping your distance;
- A time to search, a time to give up as lost;
 - a time to keep, a time to throw out;
- A time to tear apart, a time to bind together;
 - a time to be quiet, a time to speak up;
- A time to love, a time to hate;
 - a time to go to war, a time to make peace.

What good comes to anyone who works so hard, all to gain a few possessions? I have seen the kinds of tasks God has given each of us to do to keep one busy, 11 and I know God has made everything beautiful for its time. God has also placed in our minds a sense of eternity; we look back on the past and ponder over the future, yet we cannot understand the doings of God. Ecclesiastes 3:1-11 (The Voice)

Reflect and write down your responses: what is your favorite time & why:

- of day
- of the year
- of the Church year

Our time is in your hands - *For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.* Jeremiah 29:11

Wednesday, 1 September 2021:

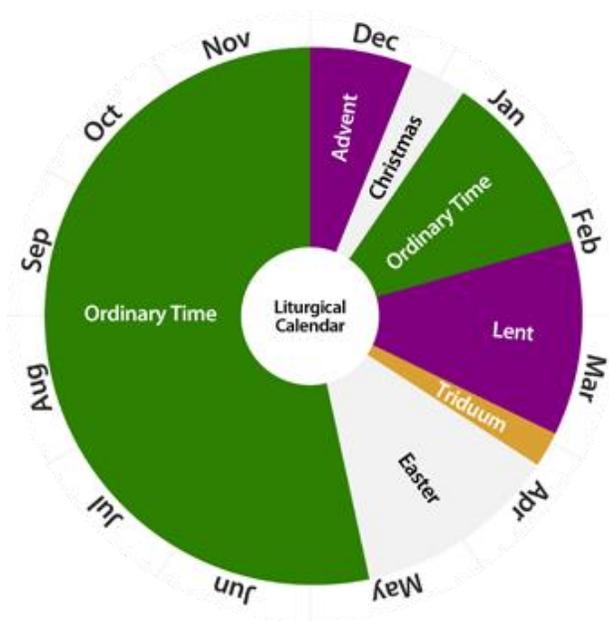
We plan the way we want to live, but only God makes us able to live it. Proverbs 16:9

Respond to the following statements:

1. As we celebrate the new Church year, with its seasons and feasts, help us remember –
2. As we watch the news and hear about what is happening in the world, help us remember -
3. As we think about our lives, our families, and our future, help us remember -
4. When we get up in the morning, and go into the day, help us remember –
5. When day comes to an end, and night time comes, help us remember –
6. When we look at the sun, the moon, and the stars in the sky, help us remember –
7. When we put on a watch, look at a clock, or check to see what time it is, help us remember –

Prayer: Loving Father, I know it is You and only You who possesses the power to direct my steps. I pray that my plans would align with Your plans for my life. I know and trust that the plans You have for me are good. I pray that You will direct each and every one of my steps, allowing me to be influenced by the Spirit and Your grace. May all my steps glorify You, and may I never doubt the plans You have for me. In Jesus Name, amen.

Thursday, 2 September 2021



Romans 12:1-2 - *Brothers and sisters, in light of all I have shared with you about God's mercies, I urge you to offer your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice to God, a sacred offering that brings Him pleasure; this is your reasonable, essential worship. 2 Do not allow this world to mold you in its own image. Instead, be transformed from the inside out by renewing your mind. As a result, you will be able to discern what God wills and whatever God finds good, pleasing, and complete.*

Prayer: God of all time, may this calendar remind us that every day and every season are created by you. May this calendar invite us to celebrate the feasts and seasons of the new Church year with color, story, symbol, and song. As we celebrate the new Church year, open our minds and our hearts to learn more about you, about your Son, Jesus, and where you are asking me to serve in my church, serve my neighbors and all the saints who walked in your way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

At the beginning of this new Church year, God is waiting for you to invite him in. Especially at the beginning of each new Church year, our caring God wants to visit you and I anew and bring us to a new depth of spiritual life, a new depth of spiritual growth. People of God, we should be expecting that there's always more that God would want to do in us and through us for his people and his glorification. And as the heart, hands, feet, eyes, and ears of Christ let us serve our Creator and his people better; sharing God's love with those around you.

Christ has no body but yours,
 No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
 Yours are the eyes with which he looks
 Compassion on this world,
 Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
 Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
 Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
 Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
 Christ has no body now but yours,
 No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
 Yours are the eyes with which he looks
 compassion on this world.
 Christ has no body now on earth but yours. — St. Teresa of Ávila

Prayer: Wise God, I make plans but I know you are ultimately in control. I humbly ask that you direct my steps along the way. Give me a clear mind to know when you speak, so that I'm not confused by my selfish pride. Show me the path and give me focus so I don't get distracted. Amen.

Friday, Saturday, 3 - 4 September 2021

The first Sunday in September is the first day of the New Church Year. It marks a new beginning, a fresh start for the Church. In most prominent religions other than Christianity, there are celebrations of a new year, a new beginning. For example, the Native Americans would make all new pottery for their homes, then break the old pottery and begin using the new pottery. It's a time for spiritual renewal for them, as well as a physical renewal for the Native Americans.

For Orthodox Christians, this is our celebration of a New Church Year. The major church observations and Pentecost are nearly behind us; we look forward to renewing the cycle of remembering Christ's Holy Life. In the months ahead we will remember Christ's birth during the Advent and Nativity Season. We will celebrate His Holy Baptism, which made the waters of Baptism Holy and Life-Giving for us. We enthusiastically begin the cycle of the commemoration of Christ's Life over again.

There is wisdom in this renewing cycle. As we observe the seasons change, we also observe the Scripture readings and Events of the church change. Each reading, each Event is designed as an aid in teaching us the Holy Life of Christ and His Compassion for us. In the early church people were not educated like we are today. Many could not read and write. They depended on the church to teach them the Life of Christ. They looked to the Church to educate them in the way to follow the life of Christ.

The Holy Church responsive to the needs of the people, used Holy Icons (Symbols), Scripture, and Fasts, and Feast Days to teach the people. A person could enter a church and look at the Holy Icons and receive a beautiful sermon in color. A window to Heaven, a way to learn through sight and touch. Worship and respect of the Holy Icons, (teaching windows to Heaven), included kissing the icons as an act of showing their love for the saints depicted on the icons, not out of worship of the icon, but as a symbol of love and respect for Holy Things and people. The Saints depicted on Icons are not graven images, but Transfigured Images.

The first Sunday of the Liturgical year, let us make a pledge within ourselves to live this year with the Church and Christ as our focal point. Let us make an effort to put Christ first in our lives. When your life revolves around Jesus Christ, you will notice that everything falls into place as it should.

Many people look for different focuses in their lives, they often center their lives around things other than Christ. When a person centers their life around temporary things, they are almost always sorely disappointed by those temporary things, only to end up lost and disoriented.

A person that centers their life around Christ and His Holy Church will live a well-balanced life. The focal point of this person's life will always be there, it will be a shining beacon to lead them to the truth. Christ said, "*Seek Ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and its Righteousness, and all things will be added unto you!*" This is truth! Jesus Christ should be your focus for this new Liturgical year.

Why do people fail in their resolutions, why do people become dis-enchanted, and lethargic? It's because their resolutions are based on earthly things. They are based on things that will perish. When you make a resolution to focus on Christ, the object of your focus will never fail, He will never forsake you, He will never perish, and by making your focus on Him and His Holy Precepts and Teachings, you will never perish as well.

No matter what your profession, no matter what your marital status, no matter what position in life you currently hold, you are welcome to start over with a new beginning. Refresh yourself in the Holy Spirit of God, all of us have the ability to declare a new beginning and leave the past behind us.

Let's take this opportunity today as the Holy Church begins a new Liturgical year, to start over, to remember the Grace we received from our Baptism, to dwell on things that are Holy and Righteous, to worship in Spirit and Truth, to follow the Holy Teachings of Christ, to make Him the very Center Point of our lives.

In other words, let's have a blessed new Church Year through the Grace of our Lord.

Talking to Our Heavenly Father - *If we have faith, our prayers will be answered.*

You're Not Alone, Let Us Pray with You & For You

- Fifth Avenue UMC, I humbly ask that we begin a season of unceasing prayer for Ms. Irina Johnson, daughter (in-law) of Ms. Barb Johnson. Ms. Irina has invasive breast cancer. She will have a surgical procedure on 16 September 2021. Ms. Irina believes in the power and healing of sincere and passionate prayer and ask that we journey with her and her family as God see her through this medical challenge. Cards and notes of healing, strength and comfort can be mailed C/O Ms. Barb Johnson, Ms. Irina Johnson, 190 Mayer Street, West Bend, WI 53090
- Mr. Ted Meilahn, restoration of strength and courage as he continues to have medical concerns; Cards and notes of care and prayer can be mailed to: 1085 Fondu du Lac Ave., Box 23, Kewaskum, WI 53040
- Our deepest and warmest comforts to the family of Ms. Julia Stettler, on her passing, 16 August 2021. Cards and notes of sympathies and comfort can be sent to Mr. Don Stettler, 107 Cedar Ridge Dr. #N313, West Bend, WI 53095
- Ms. Marilyn Liepert, continued prayers of healing and renewing of strength. Ms. Marilyn Liepert, 656 Wolcott St. West Bend WI 53090
- Ms. Trisha Funke, daughter of Mr. Ralph & Ms. Bonnie Hensel. Cards of encouragement and prayers for miraculous healing can be sent to her parents. Mr. Ralph & Ms. Bonnie Hensel, 629 Highland View Drive, West Bend WI 53095
- Mr. Martin Martinelli, returned to the parsonage as he awaits total knee replacement surgery, 2 September 2021. Card of encouragement can be mailed to: Mr. Martin Martinelli, 659 South 14th Ave. West Bend WI 53095
- Mr. Roger Sacia, is requesting prayers for healing; Mrs. Nobi Sacia words of encouragement and prayers for healing. Mr. Roger and Ms. Nobi have permanently relocated to Madison with their daughter. Their new address is: 1626 Jefferson Street, Madison WI 53711
- Mr. William (Bill) & Mrs. Ginger Hornung would love to hear from you! Cards or notes of encouragement or "just thinking of you" can be mailed to: W194N16744 Eagle Dr. Room 3, Jackson, WI 53037
- Prayers of encouragement and steadfastness for Ms. Jennifer Cechvala, as she beings her Spiritual Guidance ministry ~ a place to ...breathe, be still, become. 5th Ave. UMC (lower level of the church in the former children's library area).
- Mr. Ethan Schnell, Ms. Dot Edison's daughter-in-law's nephew. Ethan is going through extensive chemotherapy as he is battling cancer. Due to his compromised immune system, he is unable to be with his wife, who is pregnant with their first child. With conviction we pray for miraculous healing of Ethan's body and soul. May his pain cease, may his strength increase, may his fears be released as he is abundantly blessed with love and joy surround him. 500 Melrose Street, Morgan Town West Virginia 26505
- Mrs. Janice Liepert-Kempf, continued healing; alankempf33@gmail.com; 414B. South Pleasantview Road, Plymouth, WI 53073; phone number: 920.838.1830.
- 5th Avenue UMC's Laity, Laity Leadership, Pastor & Bro. Martin – Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.
- Bro. Bob Krell, continued prayer for healing; 804 Lenora Drive, West Bend, WI 53090
- Ms. Nancy Whitson, healing and strength; 922 Hickory Street, West Bend, WI 53095

Prayer: As we start our New Church Year, O Lord, we ask that You would enable us by the power of The Holy Spirit to place our lives entirely in Your Holy Hands. Grant us Lord, Your Divine, Saving Grace that we may live according to Your Holy Scriptures and instructions. Guide us, teach us, empower us with the strength to resist temptation. Establish our souls on firm, solid ground, that we may build upon a foundation unshaken by the woes of this sinful world. Cleanse us from every stain or defilement of flesh and spirit, that we may start our New Beginning revitalized by Your Holy Grace. Hear us, Heavenly Father, as we acknowledge that on our own, we do not have the power to make or follow through on any resolution. But by calling upon Your strength and guidance, we may accomplish this new beginning. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.

**Your humble Pastor & Servant Leaders,
Pastor Clarissa & Bro. Martin**