

THE COMPASS

Family Devotional for October 2023

The Power of Prayer is Real

Activity

A Prayer Bowl

What is a prayer bowl? A prayer bowl is a bowl that holds your prayer intentions. Using a prayer bowl helps to give you focus, serves as a reminder to pray, and helps you to not forget anyone or thing you are praying for. The challenge this month is to use a prayer bowl for the month of October and see how your prayer life changes.

Have you ever had someone ask you to pray for them, and then you forget? It sounds like a good idea and you want to but maybe your prayer life isn't as strong as you would like it to be. Are you so busy that taking the time to pray seems impossible? A prayer bowl is a great way to work out your prayer muscles to strengthen your faith and your connection to God. A prayer bowl is also a great way to show your family that the practice of prayer is valuable and worthy of our time. All you need is a bowl (*or a mason jar, or a platter, anything to hold the prayers really – I often use a basket*) and some index cards or small pieces of paper.



To use a prayer bowl, you need to:

1. Place your prayer bowl where you sit daily. "Out of sight out of mind." Put it somewhere where you can't miss it.
2. Jot down the names of those whom you're praying for on a slip of paper and when possible include the date. When someone asks you to pray for them write it down and put it in the bowl. When you think about something you want to pray for, write it down and put it in the bowl. Encourage every member of your family to do the same.
3. Each day, either alone or with your family, go through the papers in the bowl and lift up those in need in prayer to God.

Using a prayer bowl will challenge and change your experience with prayer and your connection to God. Many families do not pray together. This activity is a good way to begin praying together when it is not a part of your routine. You can do this by yourself or with your family. You can do this every day or perhaps during Sunday dinner. How, with whom, and when are up to you. Some parents may pray with the bowl every evening but only pray with their children at Sunday dinners. That's fine. Do what works for you. Other couples may use the bowl every day. Wonderful. The more you use the prayer bowl the more you will benefit from the practice. Some people report being more mindful of their prayers throughout the day. Others say they feel more connected to God and each other. Others struggle through the process and yet by the end of the month may say they learned they simply need to pray more than they had been regardless of if they use a prayer bowl or not. Give it a try. See what happens. Find your way. Everyone is different.

Prayer

As there are so many different types of prayers. Anne Lamont wrote a wonderful book called *Help, Thanks, Wow: The Three Essential Prayers*. This is a good book for a contemporary conversation on prayer that is filled with meaning without being so theologically driven it's hard to understand. I highly recommend it. Here we will focus on two prayers. One is a prayer of thanksgiving, which Anne would call a *thanks* prayer, and another is a prayer of intercession, which Anne would call a *help* prayer, both from the United Church of Christ Book of Worship. A prayer of thanksgiving acknowledges the blessings we have received, but it doesn't stop there; it also gives thanks for answered prayer in the blessing of others. A prayer of intercession is the act of praying to God on behalf of others, or (if you believe in saints) asking a saint in heaven to pray on behalf of oneself or for others.

Consider using either of these prayers this month as a part of your devotions.



A PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God, we offer you thanks and praise for all the surprising graces which come to us, for those that sustain our lives and those that change them:

For food, familiar diets, and startling new aromas and tastes;

For homes, places of steady surroundings, and setting for redemptive love;

For friendships, old friends who are willingly open in their affection and their correction, and new friends who remind us that your spirited presence still dwells within us and others;

For tasks to perform, routine actions which we do well and which give order to our days and tasks at which we have failed which restore a needed humility to us; for Jesus Christ, and for all Christ has done and will do for us in our life as a congregation of Christ's people.

In the name of Christ we pray. Amen. (Author: Donald M. Proctor)

A PRAYER OF INTERSESSION

O God, the refuge of the poor, and the hope of the humble, the salvation of the needy; hear us as we pray for those who are worn by illness, for all who are wronged or oppressed, and for the weary and heavy-laden, that they may be strengthened by your grace and healed by your consolations. Let the dayspring from on high visit those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide their feet into the way of peace; through Jesus Christ. Amen.

(Adopted from the Evangelical and Reformed Hymnal.)



Sunday Scriptures

Look for our October Scripture Puzzler. We used the New Revised Standard Version (updated edition) to create the crossword. Read the texts for the month of October and find the answers to the puzzler.

Oct. 1 – Matthew 21:23-32 – The Parable of the Two Sons

Oct. 8 – Matthew 21:33-46 – Yet Another Parable at the Vineyard

Oct. 15 – Matthew 22:1-14 – The Wedding Banquet

Oct. 22 – Matthew 22:15-22 – Paying Taxes

Oct. 29 – Matthew 22:34-46 – The Greatest Commandment



Did You Know?

Did you know one of the two churches that merged to become Pilgrim UCC 45 years ago this March was named St. Mark's and they used to worship in the Rosenow Elementary School building? A document we have reports: "St. Mark's received its initial impetus through the far-reaching insight of the pastors, Rev. Karl and Martin Koehler, of Church of Peace, who realized the need for a church on the far east side of the city. Such factors as population movement, new housing, the construction of an elementary school in area where there is no Protestant Church as such, led to the prospect of establishing a church of our denomination on Fond du Lac's northeast side. With the Board of National Missions as the sponsoring institution, a tract of 3.38 acres of land at Wilson Avenue and Stow Street was selected as a future church site. Meanwhile, Rev. Koehler arranged for the use of the Henry Rosenow School for worship services, conducting the first service on June 8, 1958. The congregation adopted the name "St. Mark's Church," of the United Church of Christ, and received its charter with sixty-seven person singing it as Charter Members."

THE BIG QUESTION: Do you think the special connection Pilgrim UCC shares with Rosenow Elementary School now with our mentor program, coat and school supply drives, tending their flower garden (among other things), was inspired by the fact that St. Mark's started out worshipping in the Rosenow Elementary School Building? If so, how so? Do you have any stories to share?

CONTACT:

For questions about the youth group activities or the 2024 mission trip to Knoxville TN, please contact **Rachel Wicichowski** for more information at ra.burns@hotmail.com or 1-920-238-5919.

For questions about our Sunday school or Family Fun Nights, please contact **Karen Goodacre** for more information at karen.goodacre@pilgrimuccfdl.org or leave a message at PUCC at 1-920-921-0415.

For questions about confirmation, The Compass Family Devotional, or any other reason, please contact **Rev. Rob Van Ess** at rvaness.pilgrim@gmail.com or 1-920-273-9794.

YOUTH GROUP EVENTS

- Saturday, October 28, 2023 – Burial Chamber Haunted House Complex in Fox Crossing, WI (Neenah).
- Friday, November 17 – Sunday, November 19 – Knock-Knock Middle School Retreat at Daycholah Center.
- December 2023 – Make food to serve at the new Fond du Lac warming shelter. Time/date TBD.

MISSION TRIP TO KNOXVILLE, TN - JULY 7-13, 2024

Steven and Rachel Wicichowski, and Deb Wamser are chaperones. All youth 6th grade and older eligible to attend this life-changing spiritual journey. We are signing up youth now.

FAMILY FUN NIGHT ACTIVITIES - 6:00PM-7:30PM

- Friday, October 20 – Intergenerational Craft Night – Blanket Making
- Friday, November 17 – Chili Cook-Off and Game Night – Nikki Lipke: Defending Champion
- Friday, December 15 – Intergenerational Christmas Caroling – Jingle BINGO with cookies and hot cocoa



2023-2024 YOUTH MINISTRIES AT PILGRIM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

SUNDAY SCHOOL – We have a wonderful program for children offered after worship on Sunday mornings! Each class focuses on a Bible story, a lesson, or a way of living faith. We use art, music, prayer, and group activities to share stories that connect us with our God and our understanding of community.

CONFIRMATION – A small group that meets for approximately nine months of confirmation preparation during which young people participate in church activities and reflect on questions of faith and life, both alone and together with their peers.

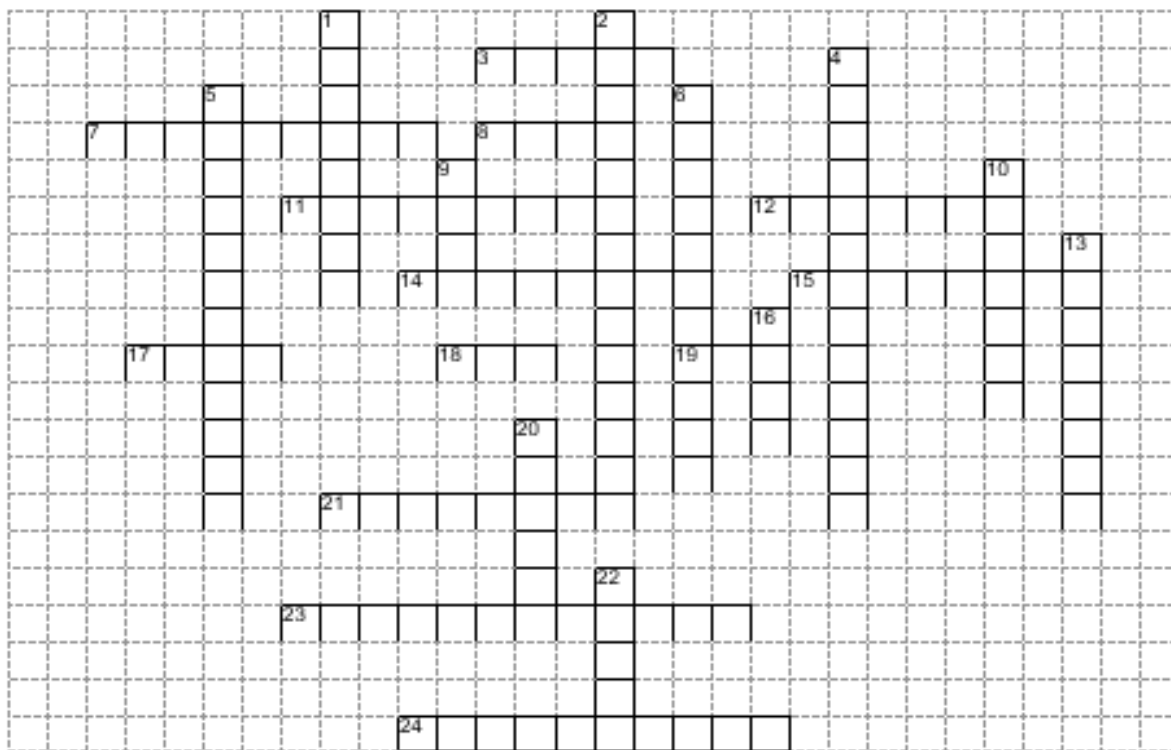
MISSION TRIPS – Our mission trips provide opportunities for students to explore their faith, experience God, and extend service to others. This is a transformational experience by which our youth get to know themselves by getting out of their comfort zones while being the hands and feet of Jesus. Last year we went to Cleveland, OH and next year the youth will choose between Knoxville, TN or Kansas City, MO.

FAMILY FUN NIGHTS – Intergenerational activities for the entire family. The entire church family is invited to come together for card or board games, a chili cook off, movie night, Christmas caroling, etc. Time to relax as a family and get to know each other better.

YOUTH GROUP – Our youth gatherings are designed as a "respite" from a socially pressured world for teens, and an opportunity to participate in the justice and fellowship ministries of the church. We strive to help our youth experience Pilgrim United Church of Christ as a supportive, trust-worthy, and loving community – a place that is safe and enjoyable to explore and respond to the spiritual side of being human, by building relationships and creating community.

THE COMPASS – A monthly family devotional to grow your faith and draw you closer to God. Each devotional has a theme and activity for the family to come together while learning more about our faith.

October Scripture Puzzler



Across

3. B. Franklin: "Nothing is certain except death and _____."
7. A device used to extract juice from crushed grapes is a _____.
8. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your _____."
11. The last day of the month.
12. A simple story used to teach a moral lesson.
14. "A second one like it: 'You shall love your _____ as yourself.'"
15. The legally recognized union of two people as partners in a personal relationship.
17. Who came in the name of righteousness?
18. "On these two commandments hang all the _____ and the Prophets."
19. The parable of the _____ sons.
21. The _____ commandment
23. Who questioned Jesus in the Temple?
24. A structure built to create an elevated observation point.

Down

1. Two Oct. scripture reading take place in a _____.
2. The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a _____ for his son.
4. 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the _____, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'
5. The angry king said: "For many are called, but _____."
6. The stone that the builders rejected has become the _____.
9. The greatest commandment and another one like it call us to _____ the Lord, our neighbor, and ourselves.
10. The Parable of the Wicked _____
13. The name of the coin brought to Jesus.
16. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your _____ and with all your mind."
20. Who do the pharisees ask if they should pay taxes to?
22. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your _____ and with all your soul and with all your mind."