



# PRAYER MEETING

August 2



The Fruit of the Spirit: Gentleness

## **Welcome and Opening Prayer**

Leader

Our Father, we worship you in this day. We welcome you into our lives, for you are truth and unchanging goodness. Although this world and our lives are filled with changes and difficulty and circumstances we cannot control, you, O God, are present and active and always working toward redemption. You, O God, are righteousness and just.

You are also gentle and filled with compassionate mercy. Jesus, you displayed meekness even as you faced anger and injustice. Even as you died for sins on the cross. We know no other god like You, no other Savior, no other Lord. Powerful and gentle, righteousness and good, all-knowing and all grace.

We welcome you and stand in awe. We praise you and lift your name on high. May your gentleness disarm all hostility. May you be glorified and known. Have your way in this day.  
Amen

# Call to Worship

New International Reader's Version

Galatians 5: 13-14, 16-24

My brothers and sisters, you were chosen to be free. But don't use your freedom as an excuse to live under the power of sin. Instead, serve one another in love. The whole law is fulfilled by obeying this one command. "Love your neighbor as you love yourself."

So I say, live by the Holy Spirit's power. Then you will not do what your desires controlled by sin want you to do. The desires controlled by sin do not want what the Spirit delights in. And the Spirit does not want what the desires controlled by sin delight in. The two are at war with each other. That's why you are not supposed to do whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the authority of the law.

The result of sin's control in our lives is clear. It includes sexual sins, impure acts and wild living. It includes worshiping statues of gods and worshiping evil powers. It also includes hatred and fighting, jealousy and fits of anger. Sinful desire is interested only in getting ahead. It stirs up trouble. It separates people into their own little groups. It wants what others have. It gets drunk and takes part in wild parties. It does many things of that kind. I warn you now as I did before. People who live like this will not receive God's kingdom.

But the fruit the Holy Spirit produces is love, joy and peace. It is being patient, kind and good. It is being faithful and gentle and having control of oneself. There is no law against things of that kind. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed their sinful desires to his cross. They don't want these things anymore.

Today, Lord, we thank you and ask for the Holy Spirit's fruit of meek **gentleness**.



## **Music**

Quiet your hearts and minds as you listen to today's music. Open to God and listen to what the Holy Spirit might say to you.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTqO1rO- wc>

Sandra McCracken, With Great Gentleness

## **Praise**

“This day, we praise You, O God for your attributes and your works. We praise you for your gentleness, and ask that you would make us gentle, too.

## **Congregational Psalm/ Passages from Psalms**

Leader and people together

You have given me the shield of your salvation,  
your right hand supported me, your gentleness  
made me great.

*Ps 18:35*

He sent from on high, he took me; he drew me out of many waters. He rescued me from my strong enemy. They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but the LORD was my support. He brought me out into a broad place; he rescued me, because he delighted in me. *Ps 18:16-19*

Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love, for in you I trust. Make me know the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul. Teach me to do your will, for you are my God! Let your gentle Spirit lead me on level ground! *Ps 143:8-10*

But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. Turn to me and be gracious to me; give your strength to your servant.

Be gracious to me, O Lord, for to you do I cry all the day. Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you.

Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer; listen to my plea for grace. In the day of my trouble I call upon you, for you answer me.

*Ps 86:1-7, 15-16*

You have given me the shield of your salvation, and your right hand supported me, and your gentleness made me great.

*Ps 18:35*

## Reading about the word of the day

In my devotions this morning, a phrase struck a chord deep within my soul. I don't think I have ever noticed it before: "*Your gentleness has made me great*" (Psalm 18:35).

So many of God's ways are quietly and softly done. Without fanfare, behind the scenes, mundane mercies cascade down around us all the day and on through into the night.

Like snowflakes drifting down through winter morning stillness, most fall to the ground unnoticed. In the Hebrew, the word "Gentleness" itself has a rich pedigree.

Most commonly it is used to describe men and speaks of the kindly, humble gentleness that is often best learnt in the school of solitude, suffering, and disappointment. We all know someone clothed with this virtue.

When they are with us, this quietness lends a warm distance to their presence: attentive, observant, listening, but never aloof. As they drink in their surroundings, their tender gaze reaches beneath the surface appearance of things. They see reality in a way that often escapes the busy soul. What's more, they see us, right into our souls, we feel known and understood in their presence.



This is the way God is, and it is the way I want to be. How is God gentle? Well there are so many things we could say, aren't there?

Think of the Father; He is gentle." As a Father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him. He knows their frame. He is mindful that they are but dust."

Think of the Son. He is gentleness incarnate. See Him gathering little children up into His arms to bless them, weeping outside Jerusalem over the hardened condition of His soon to be murderers, reaching out His arms to hard-hearted Capernaum, “Come to me all you who are weary and heaven-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Supremely we see his gentleness, as they led him like a lamb to the slaughter, when like a sheep before its shearers, He was silent.

Or think of the Spirit, dove-like in His gentleness; so easily grieved by harsh, angry, bitter, resentful, malicious speech (Eph 4:29). Think of how gently he brings us to faith, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, renewing our wills, and persuading and enabling us to embrace Jesus Christ freely offered to us in the gospel.

*The Gentleness of God, The Kirk Presbyterian*

## **Scripture Reading**

At that time Jesus said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

“All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

*Matt 11:25-30*

**Reflect**

## **Scripture Reading repeated**

At that time Jesus said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

“All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

*Matt 11:25-30*

## **Individual Silent Prayer**

A time to pray and talk to God about what you heard and noticed. Pray for your needs. Pray thanks. Confess sin. Ask for help. Pray for others, for direction, for guidance, for God's glory.

## **Response**



## Responsive Reading

**Leader:** I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Eph 4:2

**People:** Let our gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Phil 4:5

**Leader:** Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Col 3:12

**Leader:** Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone.

**People:** But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior

**Leader:** This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone Titus 3: 1-2,4-6,8

**People:** Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

**Together:** But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. For it is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

1 Peter 3:8-9, 15-17

## **Prayer for the world**

**Leader:** Lord, we pray for God's lovingkindness to be the foundation of our hope

**People:** We pray for God's mercy in stopping the spread of this virus;

**Leader:** We pray for God's healing of those who are sick throughout the world and for those who mourn all who have died

**People:** We pray for God's strength for medical personnel serving tirelessly

**Leader:** We pray for God's insight to be given to researchers seeking solutions

**People:** We pray for God's wisdom to guide and direct civic leaders, health officials, and world leaders

**Leader:** We pray for God's peace to guard us from fear or anxiety

**People:** We pray for God's provision for those whose livelihoods and income have been affected by this crisis

**Leader:** We pray for God's creativity to make us agents of love and compassion, that all believers would display the character of Christ



**People:** We pray for racial reconciliation, justice, compassionate civil dialog, understanding, and true unity

**Together:** Lord, we pray for healing for our nation, that Your righteousness and truth and justice would be known, and that the Holy Spirit would draw people everywhere to the saving power of Jesus.

## **Apostle's 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; the third day He rose again 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 Christian church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting; Amen.

## Lord's Prayer

## Celebration of Communion

## Closing Prayer

“Thou hast the true and perfect gentleness,  
No harshness hast Thou and no bitterness;  
O grant to us the grace we find in Thee,  
That we may dwell in perfect unity.”

John Calvin 1500's