

Meet us at

## THE BRIDGE

11 a.m. Sundays  
Fellowship Hall

Pastor Rebecca Frank  
Leslie Williams-Blum, worship leader



CREATE IN ME  
A CLEAN HEART,  
O GOD.

*A word of introduction—*

In our Bridge worship service we're exploring prayer and seeking to experience the depth and power of prayer as people who follow the risen Christ. We're looking at scripture and the long tradition of Christian prayer. We hope to grow in our capacity to listen for God and to open our hearts.

This prayer journal is intended to be a resource for the journey. It's intended to be a simple (but not simplified!) invitation to spend time with God in scripture and in prayer. It's not a workbook or homework; there's not a "right" way to use it, and there are no right or wrong answers. It's an invitation: *Come and sit with Me for a few moments. Listen. Think. Ponder. Pray. Let's spend some time together.*

This week we approach possibly the most difficult aspect of prayer – that which puts the impetus back on us to take action. Some verbs are easier to pray than others; some actions are more difficult to carry out than others.

Yet we're reminded that with God, we have more than enough strength to do what he asks of us.

May your journey with God be full of grace and gladness!

Rebecca

## SATURDAY

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right, persevering, and steadfast spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence and take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and uphold me with a willing spirit.

Psalm 51:10-12

Make a list of those you need to forgive but haven't. For each one, determine if you believe God would forgive that person.

CREATE IN ME A CLEAN HEART,  
O GOD.

Are there any unforgiveable acts? If so, what are they?

## SUNDAY

<sup>9</sup>"This, then, is how you should pray:

" 'Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,

<sup>10</sup> your kingdom come,  
your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

<sup>11</sup> Give us today our daily bread.

<sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

<sup>13</sup> And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one.'

<sup>14</sup> For if you forgive others when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."

**Jesus, Matthew 6:9-14**

Does God forgive us for failing to forgive others?

Reading the prayer again, what action is Jesus asking us to take?

Is prayer more about asking and receiving, or more about listening and hearing? Why do you feel that way?

## MONDAY

<sup>9</sup> “Pray, therefore, like this: Our Father Who is in heaven, hallowed (kept holy) be Your name.

<sup>10</sup> Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

<sup>11</sup> Give us this day our daily bread.

<sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven (left, remitted, and let go of the debts, and have given up resentment against) our debtors.

<sup>13</sup> And lead (bring) us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

<sup>14</sup> For if you forgive people their trespasses [their reckless and willful sins, leaving them, letting them go, and giving up resentment], your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

<sup>15</sup> But if you do not forgive others their trespasses [their reckless and willful sins, leaving them, letting them go, and giving up resentment], neither will your Father forgive you your trespasses.

Amplified Bible

Notice the explanations given for various words throughout the prayer. How do these explanations further your understanding of what Jesus wants us to do?

## FRIDAY

### **Freely, Freely UMH #389**

God forgave my sin in Jesus' name,  
I've been born again in Jesus' name;  
And in Jesus' name I come to you  
To share His love as He told me to.

He said: 'Freely, freely, you have received,  
Freely, freely give;  
Go in My name, and because you believe  
Others will know that I live.'

All power is given in Jesus' name,  
In earth and heaven in Jesus' name;  
And in Jesus' name I come to you  
To share His power as He told me to.

He said: 'Freely, freely, you have received,  
Freely, freely give;  
Go in My name, and because you believe  
Others will know that I live.'

Carol Owens

Do you feel empowered to forgive? Why or why not?

## THURSDAY

Be gentle and forbearing with one another and, if one has a difference (a grievance or complaint) against another, readily pardoning each other; even as the Lord has [freely] forgiven you, so must you also [forgive].

Colossians 3:13

How does forgiveness fit in with today's political atmosphere?

At what point does our Christian duty to forgive outweigh our societal duty to seek justice?

## TUESDAY

Anger makes you smaller, while forgiveness forces you to grow beyond what you were.

Cherie Carter-Scott

Forgiveness is the final form of love.

Reinhold Niebuhr

Forgiveness is choosing to love. It is the first skill of self-giving love.

Mahatma Gandhi

The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.

Mohandas K. Gandhi

Do you consider yourself a forgiving person? Why or why not?

If Jesus so clearly wants us to forgive others their wrongs, why is this so difficult for us as humans to do?

When you pray, do you ask for God to forgive others their sins? Why or why not?

Think about who in your life has done something that you have not forgiven. What's holding you back?

## WEDNESDAY

He who covers and forgives an offense seeks love, but he who repeats or harps on a matter separates even close friends.

Proverbs 17:9

Then Peter came up to Him and said, Lord, how many times may my brother sin against me and I forgive him and let it go? [As many as] up to seven times? Jesus answered him, I tell you, not up to seven times, but seventy times seven!

Matthew 18:21-22

How many times are you willing to forgive those you love? How about those you don't know at all? Is there a difference? If so, why?