

# Prayers of Thanksgiving

## **Martin Luther's Advice on Prayer**

The first requirement of a good prayer is that it give thanks to God and recall in the heart and in words the benefits you have received from God.

## **Giving Thanks with Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

O God, we thank you for the lives of great saints and prophets in the past, who have revealed to us that we can stand up amid the problems and difficulties and trials of life and not give in. We thank you for our foreparents, who've given us something in the midst of the darkness of exploitation and oppression to keep going. Grant that we will go on with the proper faith and the proper determination of will, so that we will be able to make a creative contribution to this world. In the name and spirit of Jesus we pray.

## **The General Thanksgiving, Book of Common Prayer**

Almighty God, Father of all mercies,  
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks  
for all your goodness and loving-kindness  
to us and to all whom you have made.

We bless you for our creation, preservation,  
and all the blessings of this life;  
but above all for your immeasurable love  
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ;  
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies,  
that with truly thankful hearts  
we may show forth your praise,  
not only with our lips, but in our lives,  
by giving up our selves to your service,  
and by walking before you  
in holiness and righteousness all our days;

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

### **Giving Thanks with Anne Bradstreet (1612-1672)**

My thankful heart with glorying tongue  
Will celebrate your name,  
Who has restored, redeemed, re-cured  
From sickness, death, and pain.

I cried; you seemed to take some pause,  
I sought more earnestly.  
And in due time you supported me,  
And sent me help from high.

Lord, while my fleeting time still lasts,  
Your goodness let me tell.  
And new experience I have gained,  
My future doubts repel.

A humble, faithful life, O Lord,  
Forever let me walk;  
Let my obedience testify,  
My praise lies not in talk.

Accept, O Lord, my simple gift,  
For more I cannot give;  
What you bestow I will restore,  
For of your alms I live.

-Anne Bradstreet, "My Thankful Heart with Glorying Tongue"

### **Giving Thanks with Walter Brueggemann (b. 1933)**

We are strange conundrums of faithfulness and fickleness.  
We cleave to you in all the ways that we are able.  
We count on you and intend our lives to be lived for you,  
and then we find ourselves among your people  
who are always seeking elsewhere and otherwise.

So we give thanks that you are the God  
who yearns and waits for us,  
and that our connection to you is always from your side,  
and that it is because of your goodness  
that neither life nor death

nor angels nor principalities  
nor heights nor depths  
nor anything in creation can separate us from you.

We give you thanks for your faithfulness,  
so much more durable than ours. Amen

- Walter Brueggemann, *The God Who Yearns and Waits for Us*

### **Book of Common Prayer: Thanksgiving**

Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us.  
We thank you for the splendor of the whole creation, for the beauty of  
this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love.

We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving  
care which surrounds us on every side.

We thank you for setting us at tasks which demand our best efforts, and  
for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us.

We thank you also for those disappointments and failures that lead us  
to acknowledge our dependence on you alone.

Above all, we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ; for the truth of his  
Word and the example of his life; for his steadfast obedience, by which  
he overcame temptation; for his dying, through which he overcame  
death; and for his rising to life again, in which we are raised to the life of  
your kingdom.

Grant us the gift of your Spirit, that we may know him and make him  
known; and through him, at all times and in all places, may give thanks  
to you in all things. Amen.

### **Giving Thanks with "Dear Abby"**

O, heavenly Father:

We thank you for food and remember the hungry.

We thank you for health and remember the sick.

We thank you for friends and remember the friendless.

We thank you for freedom and remember the enslaved.

May these remembrances stir us to service,  
that your gifts to us may be used for others. Amen.

## **Giving Thanks with the Early Church**

We give you thanks for all things, O Lord Almighty, that you have not taken away your mercies and your compassions from us; but in every succeeding generation you save, and deliver, and assist, and protect. What life is sufficient, what length of ages will be long enough, for us to be thankful? To do it worthily is impossible, but to do it according to our ability is just and right. Glory and worship be to you, through Jesus Christ, now and ever, and through all ages. Amen

-adapted from "Constitutions of the Holy Apostles," c. AD 375

## **Anonymous Prayer**

Gracious God, in the busy-ness of my day, I sometimes forget to stop to thank you for all that is good in my life.

My blessings are many and my heart is filled with gratefulness for the gift of living, for the ability to love and be loved, for the opportunity to see the everyday wonders of creation, for sleep and water, for a mind that thinks and a body that feels.

I thank you, too, for those things in my life that are less than I would hope them to be. Things that seem challenging, unfair, or difficult. When my heart feels stretched and empty, and pools of tears form in my weary eyes, still I rejoice that you are as near to me as my next breath and that in the midst of turbulence, I am growing and learning.

In the silence of my soul, I thank you most of all for your unconditional and eternal love. Amen

## **A Litany of Thanksgiving, Book of Common Prayer**

Let us give thanks to God our Father for all his gifts so freely bestowed upon us.

For the beauty and wonder of your creation, in earth and sky and sea.  
we thank you, Lord.

For all that is gracious in the lives of men and women, revealing the image of Christ, we thank you, Lord.

For our daily food and drink, our homes and families, and our friends, we thank you, Lord.

For minds to think, and hearts to love, and hands to serve, we thank you, Lord.

For health and strength to work, and leisure to rest and play, we thank you, Lord.

For the brave and courageous, who are patient in suffering and faithful in adversity, we thank you, Lord.

For all valiant seekers after truth, liberty, and justice, we thank you, Lord.

For the communion of saints, in all times and places, we thank you, Lord.

Above all, we give you thanks for the great mercies and promises given to us in Christ Jesus our Lord; to him be praise and glory, with you, O Father, and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.  
Amen.

### **Giving Thanks with Sharon Jaynes**

Heavenly Father, I am so grateful today. My heart overflows with gratitude. For eyes that see. For ears that hear. For fingers that grasp. For knees that bend. For lungs that breathe. I am so thankful for my family, my home, my Savior. Today, I ask for nothing and thank You for all things. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

### **Giving Thanks for Heroic Service, Book of Common Prayer**

O Judge of the nations, we remember before you with grateful hearts the men and women of our country who in the day of decision ventured much for the liberties we now enjoy. Grant that we may not rest until all the people of this land share the benefits of true freedom and gladly accept its disciplines. This we ask in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### **Giving Thanks for the Beauty of the Earth, Book of Common Prayer**

We give you thanks, most gracious God, for the beauty of earth and sky and sea; for the richness of mountains, plains, and rivers; for the songs of birds and the loveliness of flowers. We praise you for these good gifts, and pray that we may safeguard them for our posterity. Grant that we may continue to grow in our grateful enjoyment of your abundant creation, to the honor and glory of your Name, now and for ever. Amen.

### **Giving Thanks with Veit Dietrich (1506-1549), a Confidant of Martin Luther**

Lord God, heavenly Father,  
We thank you for all your benefits.  
You have given us body and life  
and have graciously sustained us to this day.  
Do not take your blessing from us.

Preserve us from greed,  
that we may serve you only,  
love you and abide in you  
and not defile ourselves by idolatrous love  
of wealth or goods, but hope and trust only in your grace;

through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one true God, now and forever.

### **Book of Common Prayer**

Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you for the splendor of the whole creation, for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love.

We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving care which surrounds us on every side.

We thank you for setting us at tasks which demand our best efforts, and for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us.

We thank you also for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you alone.

Above all, we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ; for the truth of his Word and the example of his life; for his steadfast obedience, by which he overcame temptation; for his dying, through which he overcame death; and for his rising to life again, in which we are raised to the life of your kingdom.

Grant us the gift of your Spirit, that we may know him and make him known; and through him, at all times and in all places, may give thanks to you in all things. Amen.

### **Giving Thanks with the Psalmist, Psalm 100 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup> Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

<sup>2</sup> Worship the Lord with gladness;  
come before him with joyful songs.

<sup>3</sup> Know that the Lord is God.

It is he who made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

<sup>4</sup> Enter his gates with thanksgiving  
and his courts with praise;  
give thanks to him and praise his name.

<sup>5</sup> For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;  
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

### **Giving Thanks with David, Psalm 34:1-8 (NIV)**

- <sup>1</sup> I will extol the Lord at all times;  
his praise will always be on my lips.
- <sup>2</sup> I will glory in the Lord;  
let the afflicted hear and rejoice.
- <sup>3</sup> Glorify the Lord with me;  
let us exalt his name together.
- <sup>4</sup> I sought the Lord, and he answered me;  
he delivered me from all my fears.
- <sup>5</sup> Those who look to him are radiant;  
their faces are never covered with shame.
- <sup>6</sup> This poor man called, and the Lord heard him;  
he saved him out of all his troubles.
- <sup>7</sup> The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him,  
and he delivers them.
- <sup>8</sup> Taste and see that the Lord is good;  
blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.

### **Giving Thanks with Asaph, Psalm 50:14-15**

- <sup>14</sup> "Sacrifice thank offerings to God,  
fulfill your vows to the Most High,
- <sup>15</sup> and call on me in the day of trouble;  
I will deliver you, and you will honor me."