



2020 LWML Prayer Service Living in Love, Bearing Fruit

Christians are saved to serve. We are chosen and called to bear fruit for Jesus. We do this as we live in His love, not only in our home or church, but in the world, where it is often more difficult to love others. We are empowered by the love that Jesus showed us in His sacrificial death on the cross so that we would have life. Now we are blessed to live in His love, bearing much fruit for His sake. May this prayer service help us take time to reflect on His love for us, our love for Him, and how the fruit we bear is a result of living in His love.

Opening Hymn “Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty” *LSB* 901 (pay attention to v. 3)

Invocation

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Call to Worship

Reader: Jesus is the Vine and we are the branches.

All: We can only grow as we are connected to Him!

R: He has made us His friends because He loves us.

All: We gather in His love, as His friends, to worship Jesus!

R: Jesus has chosen each one of us and appointed us to bear fruit for Him.

All: Make us fruitful for You, dear Lord, so that others might see Your love in us!

R: Live in His love and celebrate His grace as we bear fruit for Jesus!

All: As You laid down Your life for us, Jesus, may we live our lives for You! Amen!

Hymn “Fruitful Trees, the Spirit’s Sowing” *LSB* 691

Confession and Absolution

P: We come with heavy hearts because we know that we have often failed to bear the fruit of Your love — toward You and toward each other. We have sinned in thought, word, and deed.

(A brief silence for reflection and for self-examination based on God’s Word)

P: We come this day seeking Your forgiveness and grace and asking to once again be made fruitful for You as we live in Your love.

All: Dear Jesus, we have failed to recognize Your love and grace, not bearing fruit, too often living only for ourselves. You call us friends, but, like Peter, we have betrayed our faith in You and denied You by the way we have treated others and lived. Forgive us, renew us, and restore us as Your friends in Your love. Enable us to bear abundant fruit, fruit that abides, so that many are touched by Your love and come to know You as Savior.

P: Jesus comes to us again this day and calls us His friends. In His mercy and grace He bore the cross and purchased our forgiveness by destroying sin and its power to hurt us. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and in His stead, I forgive you all your sins. In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to completion in the day of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Introit Psalm 107:1–9

P: *Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever!*

² Let the redeemed of the LORD say so,
 whom he has redeemed from trouble
³ and gathered in from the lands,
 from the east and from the west,
 from the north and from the south.
⁴ Some wandered in desert wastes,
 finding no way to a city to dwell in;
⁵ hungry and thirsty,
 their soul fainted within them.
⁶ Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
 and he delivered them from their distress.
⁷ He led them by a straight way
 till they reached a city to dwell in.
⁸ Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
 for his wondrous works to the children of man!
⁹ For he satisfies the longing soul,
 and the hungry soul he fills with good things.

**All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
 as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

P: *Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,
 for his steadfast love endures forever!*

Hymn “Jesus Loves Me” *LSB* 588

Old Testament Lesson Deuteronomy 6:4–9

P: ⁴“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. ⁷You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. ⁸You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

Discussion (optional)

1. What does it mean to love God with ALL your heart, soul, and might?
2. What is God’s expectation for those who have His words on their heart?
3. What are the implications for how we live out our faith in the world?

Prayer

R: Lord, help us to love You with all our heart, all our mind, and all our soul so all that we do reflects that love to the world. Thank You for Your Word of life. Help us teach it to our children and to the whole world, so that people might be connected to Jesus. Amen.

Hymn “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling” *LSB* 700, vv. 1–2

Epistle Lesson Romans 12:9–18

P: ⁹Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. ¹⁰Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹²Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. ¹³Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. ¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. ¹⁷Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. ¹⁸If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

Discussion (optional)

1. How can we genuinely live in the love of Jesus?
2. Why does Paul place such an emphasis on love within the body of Christ?
3. What is the natural outgrowth of such love and how is it displayed in us?
4. How might we live peaceably with all?

Prayer

R: We thank You for Your amazing love for us, and Your grace that empowers our love for others. Help us be people of peace with servant hearts filled with compassion. Allow Your love for us to overflow into the lives of those around us, so that our faith might be fruitful. Amen.

Hymn “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling” *LSB* 700, vv. 3–4

Gospel Lesson John 15:5, 12–17

P: ⁵ “I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”

¹² “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. ¹⁷ These things I command you, so that you will love one another.”

Discussion (optional)

1. What happens when a branch is severed from a vine, and what does Jesus’ illustration tell us about our faith life in Him?
2. What does it mean to be a friend of Jesus, and what might be some characteristics of this friendship?
3. How many commandments did Jesus give and what were they? Cf. John 13:34–35
4. Jesus chose us and appointed each of us to bear fruit. What is the fruit we are to bear?
5. How can we bear fruit for Jesus wherever He has placed us?

Prayer

R: Help us heed Your commandment to love, dear Jesus. And help us always remember that You have chosen us in grace, claimed us, and sent us to bear fruit for You in the world all around us. Thank You that we not only call You Lord, but have been made Your friends. Amen.

Hymn “I Love Your Kingdom, Lord” *LSB* 651

Apostles’ Creed

**All: 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 Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven**

**and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life ☩ everlasting. Amen.**

Additional Prayers

Lord's Prayer

P: Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:

**All: Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Closing Hymn "Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling" *LSB* 827

Benediction

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

All: Amen!

Sending

P: Jesus sends us into the world as friends, chosen to bear fruit for His Kingdom. Will you go then, in His power, to bear fruit as you live in love and shine His light for all the world to see?

All: Yes.

P: Then go forth in His grace, empowered by His Spirit to live in His love and bear abundant fruit for Jesus!

All: Amen!

**Written by The Rev. Dr. Gregory S. Walton,
President of the LCMS Florida-Georgia District**

