

DEVOTION for March 22, 2020

*“Pray then, in this way: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one.” - Matthew 6:9 NRSV*

Are you ever uncertain when you pray? Sometimes that happens doesn't it? What IS a prayer anyway? Are tears prayers? Can music be prayer? Laughter? Can prayers be expressed in shouts, or groans, or screams or sobs?

The following is a prayer written by Robert Martin Walker. I think a refresher on prayer is appropriate for this time in which we live.

*“We are afraid to put certain thoughts and feelings in our prayers because we believe they might be unacceptable to you, God. So we clean up our prayers and use nice words and overly formal language. We are afraid of offending you with our real thoughts. Or we fear that if you knew our deepest and darkest thoughts, you wouldn't want anything to do with us.*

*“Yet the prayers of your children in the Scriptures are honest and sometimes raw. Abraham pleaded for the life of his son, Isaac. Moses prayed in anger and frustration for the rebellious Israelites. The psalmist brought the full range of human emotions into his poetic prayers. And your son prayed to escape the agonies of the cross and death.*

*“Teach us to be totally honest in our praying, God. Reassure us that there is nothing we can say that you haven't heard before and that you're not easily offended. Give us permission to bring all that we are – our true selves – before you.” Amen. - Robert Martin Walker, slightly adapted.*

God knows us better than we know ourselves, and chooses to delight in us. We are loved unconditionally. May your prayers encompass ALL of life!

*“Glory to God, who is able to do far beyond all that we could ask or imagine by his power at work within us.” - Ephesians 3:20*

Remember we ARE the church, even when we aren't personally gathered together. You are invited to spend time in prayer today for our congregation, our community, our country, and our world, knowing that we are united in prayer. One Body in Christ.

Pastor Melanie