

WELCOME TO...

The Presbyterian Church of
Saint David
October 20, 2013

Early Morning Service

"A LIVING FAITH IN THE
SHAPE OF PRAYER-
PART 2"



*Holy One, dwell within us. **Whisper in our ears;**
Glimmer in our vision; **Write upon our hearts.**
We wait **with open ears, open eyes, open hearts.**
Amen*

Hymn: O God, defender of the poor (1-3)

3

Opening Prayer (inspired by Psalm 119:137-144)

*Your word is a lamp to our feet,
our guide through the dark,
**the wisdom and truth
that we follow each day.**
Your word is sweeter than honey,
yet sharper than swords,
is healing and justice
and ours to obey.*

**Your word is our understanding
of grace, peace and love,
the reason we gather
to worship today!**

*Assurance of Pardon: This is the good news that comes from God:
I will bear your prayers, I will answer with hope and peace, I will deliver you
from your sins. **Thanks be to God.***

Hymn: O God, defender of the poor (4-6)

3

Focus Reading Luke 18:1-8

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, 'Grant me justice against my opponent'. For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, 'Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.'" And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says.

And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

For Reflection and Conversation

In her most recent book, *An Altar in the World*, Barbara Brown Taylor, one of the most well-known and best preachers in the United States, confesses that she isn't very good at praying. In fact, she's so embarrassed about her lack of praying that when anyone asks her about her prayer life, she talks about the importance of prayer or changes the subject, or diverts the conversation back to the person who asked the question, hoping that no one will notice the she hasn't answered the question. "To say I love God but I do not pray much is like saying I love life but do not breathe much. The only way I have found to survive my shame is to come at the problem from both sides, exploring two distinct possibilities: 1) that prayer is more than my idea of prayer and 2) that some of what I actually do in my life may constitute genuine prayer."

Focus Questions by Kate Huey

1. Does prayer feel like a habit to you? Is that good, or not?
2. Who is "the widow" in your life situation, who may be asking for justice?
3. What do you think would happen if all Christians prayed for one hour each day?
4. How does your prayer life describe your belief in God?
5. Does it bother you to think of prayer as "bothering" God?

Prayer

Hymn: Our Father in Heaven 469

Invitation:

Come, all you who are loved by God, Come, and be fed with the food that God gives freely; Come, and quench your thirst from the Waters of Life; Come, and let your spirits be filled again with the goodness of your Creator.

Lord God, Giver of all good things, We hear Your invitation, we see Your gifts of life and grace. We have come, we have tasted and we know... God, You are good. Amen.

Hymn: Come my way, my truth my life 565

Prayer of Thanksgiving: *We gather here, Gracious God, with hearts of thanksgiving and praise. We give thanks for all the gifts with which you have blessed us:*

**for the Created world in which we live,
for family and friends with whom we share our lives,
for food on our plates and roofs over our heads.
for all those things that make life abundant ...time of
silent prayer... we offer our thanks and praise.** (we
continue in prayer)

Communion

Prayer following communion

You have refreshed us at your table, touched our deepest needs, and called us to a life shared in memory and hope. Send us forth with courage and joy in the name of Jesus Christ, that we too may become bread and peace for one another and the world. Amen.

Hymn: Sent forth by your blessing 775

Blessing: *May you continually wrestle with prayer. May you beseech the door of heaven with shameless boldness. **May our prayers produce, in us, a countenance of joy, a gracious demeanor, and a peaceful heart.** And may the God of hope, fill you with all peace, that you may abound in hope, assured that your prayers are heard by a loving and gracious God.*