

## PRAY EVERY DAY July 19, 2020 Resource

### *An Affirmation of Hope from Lamentations 3:22-24, NRSV*

The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

“The LORD is my portion,” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in him.”

### *Yeast Parable from Matthew 13:33, NRSV*

“The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

### *A Prayer by Walter Rauschenbusch*

Our Father, we thank thee for the food of our body, and for the human love which is the food of our hearts. Bless our family circle, and make this meal a sacrament of love to all who are gathered at this table. But bless thou too that great family of humanity of which we are but a little part. Give to all thy children their daily bread, and let our family not enjoy its comforts in selfish isolation.

### *The Bishop Sharma Lewis Read the Bible in 2020 Challenge*

More resources at [www.vaumc.org/2020BibleChallenge](http://www.vaumc.org/2020BibleChallenge)

July 8 – 28 “Fruit of the Spirit: Goodness”

July 20: Romans 12:2

July 24: Luke 6:27-31

July 21: Romans 12:21

July 25: Luke 6:43-45

July 22: Proverbs 3:27-28

July 26: Matthew 12:33-37

July 23: Proverbs 31:10-12

### *Small Group or Personal Study*

Read Matthew 13:33.

Use the questions below for small group or personal study:

- In Matthew 13:33 Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to yeast. There was no refrigeration to keep yeast dormant in Jesus’ day. The yeast they used was akin to sourdough starter which can be kept at room temperature, “fed” daily, and produce more yeast for making daily bread. The kingdom of heaven is like a living thing that grows every day when we create the conditions for it to grow in our lives. How are you creating conditions for the kingdom of heaven to grow in your life?

- What regular rhythms do you have for allowing the kingdom of heaven to grow in regularly like Jesus-day sourdough starter (prayer, scripture reading or study, corporate worship, Christian fellowship, fasting, silence, serving others, Holy Communion, etc.)?

- A frequent temptation is to treat the kingdom of heaven like modern day refrigerated yeast (or even modern sourdough starter!) to put the kingdom of heaven into states of dormancy and let it go cold by keeping it in the refrigerator. In what ways or relationships do you keep the leaven of heaven dormant in the fridge?

- The three measures of flour in the parable turn out to be a large amount – at least 50 pounds. Leavening that much dough could yield 100 – 150 loaves of bread. That is more than the woman in the parable could eat in a day. This kingdom of heaven work and grace is for the whole batch of our lives. Who are the people in your life (family, friends, neighbors, enemies, co-workers, service providers, church)?

- Who are those who you have been able to see raised up by the transforming power of heaven? Give God some praise and thanks today.
- Who in your 3 measures of flour still needs heaven leaven in their lives to raise them up in the grace of heaven? How might you mix some heaven into their lives?
- In the parable, Jesus ends it when all the 3 measures of flour had been leavened. The next part of the bread making process would be to wait for the leaven to work and make the dough rise. For some doughs, that waiting can take hours. When the kingdom of heaven gets mixed into our lives it can take time for God's grace to work, too. Where are you waiting for the kingdom of heaven to raise you up? In what relationships are you waiting for the kingdom of heaven to do its raising up work? Wait patiently and purposefully on heaven today in prayer for heaven to do its transforming work.

*Spend time in silence*

*Prayer for others and yourself*

*The Lord's Prayer*

*The Bishop Sharma Lewis Call to Pray at Noon Every Day*

Almighty God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

We thank you for your blessings, past, present and future. You are our rock and the source of our hope in all things and at all times. As Jehovah Jireh, our provider God, we ask you this day to stretch out your mighty hand and eradicate from the face of the earth forever this virus called COVID-19 (coronavirus) that is spreading rapidly from continent to continent.

We also pray that you, Jehovah Rapha, our healing God, would place your hand upon all of those who have been stricken by this virus and restore them to full health. Be with those who have lost loved ones and are grieving. Protect all who are caring for those with this virus and keep them from contracting it themselves. Calm our fears and provide us with your peace that surpasses all understanding. Strengthen us with the joy of the Lord and help us to hold firmly to the hope that only you can provide.

Unify us that we, the Virginia Annual Conference, may be able to experience anew the promise of your presence in and through the unity of our faith, hope and trust in you in the days ahead and forever. We offer this prayer in the mighty name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.  
AMEN.

*Share the Love of Jesus because It's All about Relationships*

How will you or how did you share the love of Jesus with neighbor today with no strings attached? Write it down and share about it this week in small group for support and prayer.

*A Prayer from the Salisbury Liturgy (13<sup>th</sup> Century)*

God be in your head, and in your understanding.

God be in your eyes, and in your looking.

God be in your mouth, and in your speaking.

God be in your heart, and in your thinking.

God be at your end, and at your departing.