

Falls Fellowship



What is prayer?

Most people would probably agree that in layman's terms, prayer is simply talking with God. A formal definition I found online is: "A solemn request for help or expression of thanks addressed to God or an object of worship."

The Bible tells us we should pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18), so it follows that God wants us to talk with Him on a regular basis. But how do we do this? Many of us probably learned this prayer when we were little:

Now I lay me down to sleep
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.

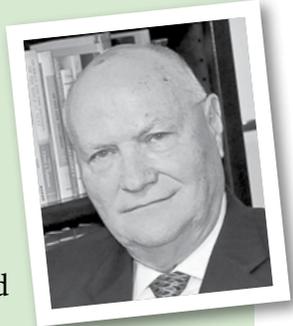
At the end, you might also ask God to bless members of your family or ask for help on something. The prayer above is more of an opening to get you going, but if you can't think of anything else to say, it can also stand on its own. It works great for children because it rhymes, and it is pretty easy to remember. It can work for adults too if you don't know how to get started, but I'd like to lay out the components of a basic prayer for adults and then give an example that can be used. It's very simple:

1. The opening
2. Asking for forgiveness
3. Giving thanks
4. The ending

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The Season for Giving

Someone told me the other day that Christmas is the season for giving. Whereas I have heard that said before, I asked the person what "The Season for Giving" meant. She said, "Oh, you know, it means giving presents, giving to support good causes like the Salvation Army, and 'stuff' like that." I wasn't satisfied with her response; I thought through the phrase and came up with several definitions for "The Season for Giving."



At the top of the list is the gift that tops all gifts: God's gift of Jesus Christ. His giving is captured in the most famous verse in the Bible, "For God so loved the world that He gave..." (John 3:16). God gave that we might find forgiveness of our sins and have life eternal through Jesus Christ. It was for him a

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Giving cont' ...

costly gift; his Son was executed by mean-spirited men who never learned the meaning of selfless giving. Life was all about them and preserving their prejudices. They have many relatives in America today.

The Season for Giving means we stretch ourselves and provide resources for hurting people. Look around you; you will see these people. I'm not thinking about the man who stands at the corner of a busy intersection holding a sign asking for help. Instead, I'm thinking about little children who do not have enough food each day, old people whose financial resources are gone and whose families have cast them aside, the young woman who works three jobs to support her children. Money, food, clothing are good gifts for these people. But our material gifts must not be a substitute for human compassion, the kind of compassion that embraces these people with love and with commitment to help them in their future. These people don't need help only at Christmas; many of them need help every day. A lady dying with cancer called me one day around Christmas time and asked if I knew of some families with children who could not celebrate Christmas because they did not have the means. I gave her some suggestions and she called me several days later to tell me about her gifts for a specific family. There were audible sobs in her voice as she said that giving to them was the greatest joy she felt at Christmas. She passed on a few days later. The gifts of love from a dying woman impressed upon me the marvelous story

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service December 24 at 5 PM

of Christmas. Don't forget to take a request from the Christmas tree in the vestibule and fulfill it; you will help a family celebrate Christmas.

The Season for Giving is about Christians telling the story of God's love and inviting the lost to come to Christ. Witnessing for Christ can be challenging for a Christian. Some Christians find it very intimidating to share their faith with people who do not know Christ. I have a solution for that problem: the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. You can help missionaries serving through the International Mission Board as they offer their witness for Jesus Christ often in foreign fields where the Good News of Jesus Christ has not been shared with them. You bear witness to Christ through your gift. One of the first things I learned in the Baptist church was our commitment to missions. Lottie Moon was a missionary in China for forty years. She was coming back home when she died aboard a ship in the harbor of Kobe, Japan. The story of this little woman, she was a little over four feet tall, has inspired the giving of millions of dollars for the work of foreign missions through Southern Baptists. Every dollar given goes directly to help missionaries on the field. We have envelopes you can use for your "Lottie" gift; another sign of the "Season for Giving."

I could list other ways to give at Christmas that truly make Christmas the "Season for Giving." These are suggestions; grasp one of them and make Christmas the "Season for Giving." Giving is transformative. It transforms the lives of those to whom we give. A dark and desperate situation may be changed by our giving and lives are transformed by the transformative power of God's love at work through us. In addition, giving transforms the life of the one giving. We become better people through our generosity. A heart filled with generosity does not have room for anxiety and depression. Yes, this is the Season for Giving. We give to help other people, but in the process, we are also transforming our lives.

— Tom Jenkins

December Birthdays

4	Cheryl Jenkins
7	Derick Foster, IV
9	Parker Jenks
15	Mark Young
15	Taylor Bub
20	Barbara Barham
20	Phil Jackson
21	Rebecca Davenport
24	Sarah Tart
28	Nikki Creech





Newsletter articles needed

We have had a newsletter each month for the past three years.

But, we need news and articles from all of our committees to let everyone know what you are doing and when you are doing it.

Communication is very important, so send your news and articles to Frank at fbpowell@mac.com

Thanks!

symptoms have disappeared.

2. Maintain six-foot social distance except for family members living in the same household.

3. Use furnished hand sanitizer or wipes as you enter the church.

4. Pew Bibles and hymnals have been removed. Order of service and hymns will appear in your individual program bulletin.

5. Use your own face mask if you desire or disposable masks will be available for those wishing to use them.

6. Pews will be cleaned before and after each service.

7. Boxes to receive tithes and offerings are placed at the doors so we do not have to handle offering plates.

Some members fall into the category of having underlying conditions which make them uncomfortable to be in groups. We understand they may not be willing to attend now. Hopefully, this pandemic will soon pass and we can truly get back to normal worship services. During the month of December, Wednesday Bible study will be in the Fellowship Hall at 6 PM for supper and continue on Zoom at 7 PM for those who can not attend in person. If you plan on attending for supper please sign the sheet each week in the vestibule.



Mission Donations

We are still collecting non-perishable food during the month for Tri-Area Ministries, our local food bank. Please leave food in bags in the vestibule.

We will be collecting monetary donations for Lottie Moon during December.

Worship Precautions During December

The church is taking several precautions to make attendance as safe as possible during this Covid-19 pandemic. Even though we are not aware of anyone in our congregation who has the virus, we are aware you could have the virus and be without symptoms. Therefore, we are requesting that all follow these guidelines:

1. If you are ill, please do not attend until all your

Deacons

Kevin Barham, Chairman	919-618-4214
Hubert Jenks, Vice Chairman	919-270-8765
Alan Watkins, Secretary	919-793-5548
Mike Harris	919-746-5697
Victoria Neal	919-880-1888
Bill Upton	910-358-7303

Falls Baptist Church On Mission

Our church collected 270 pounds of food for November. We helped feed 2,400 hungry families as well. Thank you!

In December we will be collecting money for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. All of your contributions go to the International Missions Board.

Stay tuned for more ways you can help our missions team.

Prayer cont' ...

My example is about the same length as the children's prayer above:

Dear Lord,
Please forgive me for the sins I have committed since I last asked for forgiveness.
Thank you for everything you have given me.
In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

This is an easy prayer for people who say they don't know how to talk to God. It shows them how easy it is. It's a good prayer if you want to pray but just don't

know what to say. You can add in anything else on your heart — healing for sick family/church members, guidance in a decision you need to make, etc. Don't let lengthy, well-spoken public prayers you may have heard intimidate you or make you feel hesitant about talking to God. He wants to hear from you!

— Alan Watkins

New Additions to Our Church Library

New books have been added to our church library. The new titles are:

Where do we go from here? by David Jeremiah

The reason for my hope by Billy Graham

One wintry night by Ruth Graham

The Wish Book Christmas - Lynn Austin

Chasing Shadows - Lynn Austin

An Amish Quilting Bee: Three Stories - Amy Clipston,

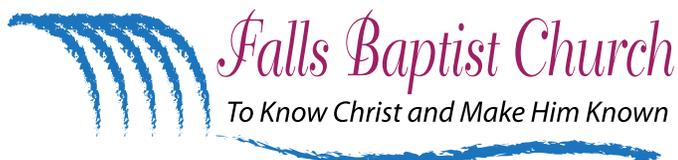
Kathleen Fuller, Sherry Shepard Gray

First Christmas on Huckleberry Hill - Jennifer Beckstrand- Jan & Mike Berenstain

Living Lights: The Berenstain Bears and the Joy of Giving

When the Righteous Rule: Bible Positions on Political Issues - John Hagee

— Alan Watkins



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