

## **Prayers for September 22 and Sept 25, 2024**

As scattered grains of wheat are gathered into one bread, so let us gather our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

God our Savior, teach us to be wealthy in faith and extravagant with grace.

**Leader -God of Grace**

**Congregation– Receive our Prayer.**

God our Savior, sometimes it is hard to believe. We know in our heart you are good; we know the great stories of our faith tell how you watched over and rescued us from danger and evil. But when the long shadows creep over us, it is hard to see anything but darkness, and we wonder where you are . . .if You are. . .at all. Give us faith Lord, to see when we are blinded by that darkness. Give us light Lord when evil seems to be at every turn. Give us hope Lord, to trust and believe that even when all seems lost. You are still there. God please .... please send us rainbows!

**Leader -God of Grace**

**Congregation -Receive our Prayer.**

God our Savior, give us peace beyond our fear and hope beyond our sorrow. Give us strength to offer support and a spirit of compassion to all who are suffering in any way.

Today we especially pray for: Brayden, Brianna, Caleb, Darla, Denise, James O., Jerry S., Kristy, Larry, Lee, Lori, Nancy, Nathan, Oliver, Pat, Rachel, Tracy, Scott, Will and all those we hold in our hearts. As you welcome home your servants, Dakota Anker and Jerry Zimdars comfort their families and friends who will miss them.

**Leader -God of Grace**

**Congregation- Receive our Prayer.**

God our Savior, help us to come to you arguing nothing, pleading nothing, asking nothing, EXCEPT to be still in your presence. Give us the faith that will enable us to lay our burdens at your feet, and to leave them there in exchange for the peace that passes all understanding.

**Leader -God of Grace**

**Congregation– Receive our Prayer.**

God our Savior, when we encounter unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered people; help us to forgive them anyway. When we are kind, people may accuse us of selfish ulterior motives; help us to be kind anyway. Because it is how You want us to live our lives.

**Leader -God of Grace**

**Congregation- Receive our Prayer.**

**With everlasting thanks and joy for Your love and forgiveness we ask You to be with us till we meet again. This week help us to take every opportunity to be thankful for the blessings of each day. Help us to pay attention to how best we can be a gift to others. May we approach each day with SOUL – serving others, uplifting lives! We ask all in the name of Your Dear Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. AMEN.**

## **September 22, 2024 -THANK YOU – PART III**

**I'm thankful for. . .**

**MIRACLES-** You'll find them too.

Rebecca did. She has spent the last three years in pain. "On a scale of one to ten," the doctor explained, "she is a twelve every day." Rebecca's pancreas has shut down. After a dozen operations and changes in medication, no solution is in sight. Pretty tough challenge. But Rebecca is a tough kid. She is ten years old. She has fudge-brown hair, eyes that sparkle, a weatherproof smile, and a book of miracles. She showed it to me. I thought she was asleep. Her mom and I conversed in whispered tones in the corner of the hospital room. Homemade sketches hung on the walls. A covey of stuffed animals occupied the couch. Someone had sent a cookie bouquet. I eyed it.

"Mommy," Rebecca's voice was groggy. "What, honey?" "Can you show Mr. Max my Miracle Book?"

It's a spiral notebook, edges weathered, adorned with crayoned flowers, stars, and an occasional clown. In the handwriting of a child, miracles:

"I slept all night last night."

"Daddy snuck a puppy into the hospital."

"Mommy is going to place a Christmas tree in the corner."

Her body is in revolt. Her parents are concerned. The doctors are confused. But Rebecca has made a decision. She is going to thank God for miracles. If Rebecca can find reasons to say thanks, can't I?

So, the appreciation delineation continues.

**NAPS** -The miracle that happens on a couch on Saturday afternoons.

**Oh** – as in "Oh, it is beautiful." "Oh, it's a girl," "Oh, that tastes great." I've never said thanks for all the ohs. Which is a shame, for aren't there so many?

**PONDS** -flat circles of moisture.

**QUEENS, New York-** I ate Korean food there one July day and met the nicest folks. Never thought to thank God for them until now.

**RUNNING Water-** Hot showers. Flowing faucets. Flushing toilets. I'm never more than a few strides from good plumbing. How kind of God! Gratitude turns every shower into a celebration. Nothing silences grumps like gratitude.

I've read about the grumbling Israelites. "They began to speak against God and Moses. "Why have you brought us out of Egypt to die here in the wilderness? And we hate this horrible manna!" Had they forgotten God's deliverance? The Red Sea became the Red carpet. Manna fell like silver dollars. They danced the Jubilee jig and carried Moses on their shoulders. They were grateful at first. BUT, with the passage of time, ingratitude took over. So, they bellyached. They complained about the room service and pool temperature. It wasn't enough to escape slavery; they wanted manis, pedis, and facials. They turned sour and dour.

God responded with an object lesson for the ages. He unleashed snakes into their camp. Scaled vermin slid through their tents. Toxic fangs everywhere. Shades of Eden. The symbolism is inescapable. Ingratitude is a devil's brew. It will kill you.

The cure for ingratitude? Look up! Lift up your eyes! Look what God has done!

**Part III of Giving Thanks by Max Lucado**

**Part IV -next week**