

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: July 18 – 24, 2016

Lectionary Readings: Genesis 18:20–32; Psalm 138; Colossians 2:6–15 [16–19]; Luke 11:1–13

Prayer of the Day: *Almighty and ever-living God, you are always more ready to hear than we are to pray, and you gladly give more than we either desire or deserve. Pour upon us your abundant mercy. Forgive us those things that weigh on our conscience, and give us those good things that come only through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.*

This week's references come from the following sources. The appropriate resource will be referenced at the end of an entry by using the letters preceding each resource listed here.

- BB: Brendan Byrne, *The Hospitality of God: A Reading of Luke's Gospel*.
- BPS: Brian P. Stoffregen's commentary notes (Pr, Faith Luth, Yuma AZ) Crossmarks.com/brian
- DL: David Lose, Luther Seminary, WP and *In the Meantime*, www.davidlose.net
- DT: David L. Tiede, *Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament: Luke*
- JG: Joel Green, *The New International Commentary: The Gospel of Luke*
- JS: John Shea, *The Relentless Widow (Luke)*
- L: Lectionary.com
- LTJ: Luke Timothy Johnson, *Sacra Pagina: the Gospel of Luke*
- MVH: Mark G. Vitalis Hoffman, CrossMarks.com
- NISB: *New Interpreter's Study Bible*"
- RCB: Roberta C. Bondi, *A Place to Pray: Reflections on the Lord's Prayer*
- REB: Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*
- SF: *Spiritual Formation Bible*, (Zondervan)
- SFB: *Spiritual Formation Bible* (Renovaré)
- WP: Working Preacher, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN
 - David Lose (2010), Now President of Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.
 - Meda Stamper (2016), Leicestershire, England

Background information on this text:

- "Only moments earlier in the narrative, Jesus referred to God as 'Father' five times and declared his unique capacity to reveal this God to those whom he chose (10:21-22). In this short subsection on prayer, Jesus does precisely this: He reveals the fatherhood of God to his disciples and, in doing so, defines in what sense it is appropriate to think of God as 'father.' Within the world of Luke, Jesus has good reason to define in what sense God is 'father.' In an environment in which fathers wielded such far-reaching, coercive power, it was important that the fatherhood of God be qualified in terms of generosity, compassion, care, and faithful activity on behalf of God's children." (NISB, 1875)
- "The stunning conclusion is that the Father will give the Holy Spirit (v. 13) to those who ask, and this is the answer to the prayer for the kingdom itself (v. 2). This passage concludes the straightforward teaching on the way of the kingdom which began in 10:25...with the mention of the **Father** (v.) or **heavenly Father** (v. 13) and the assurance of the giving of **the Holy Spirit** (v. 13), Luke has also resumed his explication of the relationship of Father, Son, and Spirit of 10:21-22." (DT, 211)
- "Luke has a greater emphasis on prayer than the other gospels...Many times in synoptic events, Luke includes comments about Jesus' praying that are not found in the other gospels...Why this emphasis on prayer in Luke? Especially the number of times Jesus is pictured praying (and the apostles/disciples in Acts)? It may be that Luke was writing to a group of people unfamiliar with Christian/Jewish prayer, so he emphasizes the importance of prayer. If Jesus often prayed, how much more do we need to pray?" (BPS)

- “Read in isolation, Luke’s prayer is an unadorned series of five imperatives. The first two concern the holiness of God and the establishment of his kingdom. The final three ask for necessary provisions, forgiveness of sins, and freedom from testing. A reader who has been following the narrative can easily spot the ways in which the last four petitions express major themes of the Gospel.” (LTJ, 179)

Day 1

Luke 11:1-13

11He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” 2He said to them, “When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. 3Give us each day our daily bread. 4And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us to the time of trial.” 5And he said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; 6for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.’ 7And he answers from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.’ 8I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs. 9“So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. 10For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. 11Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? 12Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? 13If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

Read through the entire Gospel lesson:

- We invite you to continue journaling as a part of your devotional/meditative time.
- Jot down any words or phrases that stand out to you.
- What do you think God might be saying in this story? Record this in your journal.
- Pray the Lord’s Prayer as written in this Luke 11:1-4 several times a day, such as when you awaken, mid day, and at bedtime...or whatever rhythm works for you. At the end of the week journal about this experience.

Day 2

Luke 11:1-4

11He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” 2He said to them, “When you pray, say:
 Father, hallowed be your name.
 Your kingdom come.
 3Give us each day our daily bread.
 4And forgive us our sins,
 for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.
 And do not bring us to the time of trial.”

Background:

- 11:1-4 “what we call the Lord's Prayer but, given the intended audience and use might be better named the Disciples' Prayer - is briefer and simpler than that found in Matthew. While it

shares elements of the eschatological nature of the Matthean rendering – ‘your kingdom come’ ‘do not bring us to the time of trial’ - it also tempers these by omitting some phrases - God's ‘earthly and heavenly will’ and ‘deliverance from the evil one’ - thereby emphasizing the more down-to-earth concerns of securing ‘bread for tomorrow’ and tending a community formed by shared forgiveness. Thoroughly Jewish in character - doxology followed by petition - Jesus invites us to address the Holy One of Israel as pater, ‘Father.’ One addresses God, that is, akin to the way a child would ask a parent something of dear need and desire.” (DL)

- “The prayer itself has affinities to Jewish tradition, especially to the *Qaddish* and the Eighteen Benedictions. The former begins in a manner analogous to Jesus’ model prayer:

Exalted and hallowed be his great name
in the world which he created according to his will.
May he establish his Kingdom
in your lifetime and in your days,
and in the lifetime of the household of Israel,
speedily and at a near time.

The latter, constituting the chief prayer of Judaism, contains such parallel phrases as the following: ‘You are holy and your name is holy ...’ and ‘Forgive us, our Father, for we have sinned ...’, as well as the petition, ‘reign over us ...’ Within its Lukan co-text, the prayer Jesus teaches his disciples is integral to the socialization of the disciples in this new community who are taught to name God as Father. The habit of prayer along the lines counseled by Jesus would serve as an ongoing catalyst for community formation. Within the practice of such prayer, a premium would be placed on the infusion of a worldview centered on the gracious God, on dependence on God, and on the imitation of God, all understood against an eschatological horizon in which the coming of God in his sovereignty figures prominently.” (JG, 439-440)

- “Note that the Lord’s Prayer is in the middle of the Sermon on the mount in Matthew 5-7.” (MVH)
- 11:1-4 “What might be taken as a request for a correct ‘technique’ of prayer actually turns into a lesson on nurturing a relationship with God. Prayer along these lines would serve as an ongoing catalyst for the formation of persons into a community faithfulness.” (NISB, 1875)
 - “The context for the Lord's Prayer in Luke and Matthew are quite different. The audience in Matthew (6:5-15) seems to know about praying. Jesus says, "**When** you are praying,..." They seem to know **how** to pray and the importance of prayer, but they need further instructions about prayer. In Luke, the audience, (including the disciples,) doesn't know how to pray (at least as Jesus' followers). The disciples (and Luke's readers?) ask Jesus to teach them to pray. This introduction also suggests that we are defined by our prayers: Jesus' disciples would pray differently than John's disciples.” (BPS)
 - “...a shorter and in some ways older wording than that preserved in Matt...” (REB, 245)
 - “...The pattern for prayer that Jesus gives his disciples is short on our wants and big on God's wants. Half of what Jesus tells us to do in prayer is worship God, keep him holy, and ask that his kingdom and his will take shape, not ours. God the Father looms large. For us, it is enough that we get what we need for spiritual and physical sustenance, and that we ground our days in asking for and receiving forgiveness, as well as calling for freedom from evil and all that pulls us toward wrong...There is nothing here about material wealth or perfect health or things that get me more of me. Instead, it is about there being more of God.” (SFB, 1906-1907)
 - “This prayer has five petitions. Matthews’ version of this prayer (Matthew 6:9-12) includes seven petitions, including ‘May your will be done’ and ‘deliver us from the evil one.’” (L)
 - “I am also intrigued that most of the verbs are imperatives!
‘Let it be holy,’

'Let it come,'

'Give,'

'Forgive'

'Lead us not' is subjunctive with imperative force

What does it mean that we are 'commanding' God? Last week Martha was politely chastised for telling Jesus what he should do. It may be that these requests are asking God to do what God would do anyway." (BPS)

- 11:1-4 "...whenever I speak these words, 'our Father,' 'give us...our daily bread,' by virtue of my very baptism I am praying it as part of the people of God, and in return they are praying it with me." (RCB, 27)

- In v. 2b both verbs are second person plural -- y'all. The prayer is intended to be communal, rather than personal. Note also the plural pronouns in the prayer: 'our' and 'us.' This was given as a prayer to define 'us.' There seems to have been a prayer that defined the disciples of John. I would suggest that one way the prayer defines **us** as belonging to Jesus is not necessarily the words, but the fact that **we** pray it together.

Unfortunately, the numerous translations of this prayer has made it difficult for various Christians to pray it together without some embarrassment about some words and the length of the ending. The shift to the ecumenical translation printed in many newer hymnals has met with great resistance. It seems ironic to me that the things that God has given us for our unity in Christ: this prayer, Baptism, Holy Communion, and scriptures; have become sources of differences and even divisiveness among believers today." (BPS)

- 11:1 "Jesus was praying by himself. He was not in a prescribed place like the Temple or a prescribed time like sundown; he was just in a **certain place**...Jesus lives in a rhythm of prayer and action, swimming in both the waters of God and the waters of the world. He knows when he must turn toward God and when he must turn toward the incessant demands of the world. Now was the time to turn toward God." (JS, 207)

- "It is typical of Luke to place instruction in a biographically plausible setting. . .(LTJ, 177)

- 11:1 "His disciples must have been watching because they knew when **he had finished** praying. Whatever they saw when they watched him created desire. ...They want to pray the way Jesus prays." (JS, 207)

- 11:1 "This is a Lukan introduction in which the **Lord** at prayer is asked by his disciples to **teach** them **to pray**. The comparison as **John taught his disciples** indicates that Jesus' followers are requesting more than general instruction in how to pray. In Luke's presentation they are asking for instruction in the kind of prayer that is appropriate to 'the present time' (see 12:56) of Jesus' inauguration of the kingdom, just as John properly taught his disciples as the end of the era of the Law and the Prophets (see 7:28; 16:16). This setting stands in contrast to Matthew, where the negative examples of the 'hypocrites' and 'the Gentiles' prompt Jesus to teach the prayer.

Luke is consistently eager to identify divine guidance and authority being given at important junctures in the context of prayer... At this point in the narrative, the Holy Spirit has come upon Jesus and anointed him (see 3:21-22; 4:1, 14, 18; Acts 10:38) and Jesus can thus rejoice in the Holy Spirit (10:21)...But this Holy Spirit has not yet been sent by the exalted Jesus as the 'promise of the Father' on Jesus' disciples (see 24:49; Acts 1:4,8; 2:1-21). Jesus now teaches his disciples the prayer of the kingdom." (DT, 212)

- "The additional phrase, 'just as John taught his disciples' re-asserts the line of prophetic authority, and the special knowledge concerning communication with God that a prophet would be expected to have. . .The prayer Jesus teaches his disciples authenticates his prophetic mission, for it shows that what he proclaims and performs in his ministry expresses the deepest reality of his own relationship with God." (LTJ, 179)

- 11:2 “Jesus gives the disciples words to **say**. These words lack solemnity. Jesus does not have a flattering and deferential approach to the awesome reality of God. The opening address is familiar and immediate. It is as if Jesus is talking to someone incredibly close...Then this revelation of closeness unfolds into other words that disclose an interlocking unity between the Father and the ones praying, the children. After all, this is the way of praying of the beloved Son (Luke 3:22; 9:35).” (JS, 208)
- 11:2 “The address of God as **Father** has troubled some people as too specifically male and authoritarian. Of course this prayer comes from a patriarchal culture, and the whole Gospel of Luke is a testimony to the authority and power of God’s reign at work in Jesus. But Jesus’ use of the word **Father** was probably shocking to first-century ears because it was not as authoritarian or regal as they expected. Instead of praying to the ‘Sovereign Lord who made heaven and earth’ (see Acts 4:24) or the King of the Universe, as in many other contemporary prayers, Jesus prayed and taught his disciples to pray to God as **Father** or ‘your Father’ whose pleasure it is to give them the kingdom (see 12:30,32)...[Luke] clearly shares the understanding of the early church that it is God’s own abiding Spirit which invites and authorizes the kind of intimate speech that characterizes trusting children and loving fathers (see Gal. 4:6; Rom 8:15)...Luke’s understanding of the address brings the followers of Jesus within the intimate identity of will and purpose which characterized Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and God.” (DT, 212)
 - “Fatherhood... (and in the prayer Jesus teaches the disciples) is not concerned with identifying God as progenitor..., but with adoption and relationship—and with a reconstruction of one’s relationships within a ‘family’ or household whose head is God the Father. Because of the notion that authentic children represent in their character the nature of their father, the father-child relationship could be restricted so as to apply to particular groups of the righteous or even to righteous individuals—a usage already familiar in the Lukan narrative (cf. 3:7-9). Though often carrying connotations of authority (and thus, of the response of obedience), in this case ‘father’ actualizes other properties of this metaphor as well—for example, love, nurture, mercy and delight.” (JG, 441)
 - I believe that the address ‘Abba’ or ‘Father’ or ‘Dada’ or ‘Poppa’ refers to an intimate relationship that Jesus had with God, and the intimate relationship that we, who pray this prayer, also have with almighty God. That is another way the prayer defines us. We are people who have a father/child relationship with almighty God. I wonder if the words ‘Our Father’ have become so ‘churchy’ that we miss the radical character of those words? Is there some way that we can recapture the radical relationship that I think was intended by those words?
 On the other hand, how can we help children with abusive fathers understand and pray to their loving, heavenly Father?
 - “In Jesus’ language, the word for father is *abba*, but Luke uses the Greek word, *pater*. Both are a far remove from the usual Jewish treatment of God’s name. However, the idea of God as Father has Old Testament roots (2 Samuel 7:14; Isaiah 63:16; Jeremiah 3:19; Malachi 2:10).” (L)
- 11:2 “The petition that God’s name be sanctified [**hallowed**] is consistent with the scriptural convictions that God’s holy name has been maligned by a sinful people and must be vindicated by God’s judgment and eventual restoration of the chosen people...The passive voice is still a plea that only God can be the actor...” (DT, 212-213)
 - “Gregory of Nyssa...who wrote after the great persecutions of the early church, explained that what Christians pray for in ‘**hallowed be your name**’ is an ability to mirror the characteristics of God so that anyone looking at us can see in us something of who God is. (*The Lord’s Prayer*, p. 48.)” (RCB, 42)

- “I pray: ‘help me know truly that I do not have to prove that I am a person of value. My life is already holy to you, may I make your name holy by accepting my own worth with gratitude.’” (RCB, 47)
- “Torah law prohibits swearing falsely by God’s name (Leviticus 19:12) or profaning God’s holy name (Leviticus 21:6; 22:2; 22:32...)” (L)
- “Culpepper offers this explanation to the first two petitions:
The petition that God’s name might be sanctified is double sided. On the one hand, it is a prayer that God would act to establish God’s own sovereignty. On the other hand, it voices the longing for the day when all people will revere God. The second petition, therefore, is an extension of the first. If God’s name is sanctified, then God’s sovereignty and dominion will have been established (Ezek 36:22-23). [. p 234]
- Green (*The Gospel of Luke*) also comments on this petition: ‘Why must God sanctify his name? Because it has been profaned by God’s own people (cf. Lev 22:32; Isa 52:5-6; Ezek 36:29-21). God’s eschatological work to reestablish the holiness of his name, then, invokes shame on the part of his people and invites them to embrace practices that honor him’ (p. 442).” (BPS)
- 11:2 “The petition for God’s **kingdom** to **come** is therefore a restatement of the first petition. God’s reign is not merely a future event (see Mark 9:1). It is already being deployed in Jesus’ mission...It is unlikely that Luke knew the additional petition for God’s will to be done on earth. Since that petition corresponds so directly to Luke’s convictions, why would he have omitted it? God’s will is another aspect of God’s reign, and it is exactly the exercise of God’s will on earth which is being contested in the plot of Luke-Acts.” (DT, 213)
 - “God’s **kingdom** is not in one location; it exists wherever God’s will is done.”(NISB, 1706)
 - “The **Kingdom** is an infinitely desirable gift God will give in the future, and is already giving us as a gift in the present. The promise of the Kingdom is God’s promise that everything that appears to be irrevocably broken will be made whole, every wounded heart healed, every tear wiped from every eye...” (RCB, 54)
 - “This petition is closely tied to [‘hallowed be your name’]. God’s **kingdom** is the place where God’s name is revered and kept holy.” (L)
 - “. . . a prayer for the rule of God to be made effective in the world of humans; . . . and fits perfectly with Jesus’ ministry of proclaiming the arrival of the kingdom of God, a theme which has become more pressing in this section. . .” (LTJ, 177)
- 11:3 “The prayer for **bread** is obscured by the unusual Greek word *epiousios*, which is translated **daily**. It is possible that in ‘Q’ this Greek word already had rich associations with the bread of the heavenly banquet or the Lord’s Supper. Scriptural associations are also possible with the daily bread from heaven or the manna in the wilderness...But even with Luke’s understanding of Jesus’ ‘exodus’ to Jerusalem (9:31), such themes are not developed. Rather, in Luke’s story this traditional prayer would emphasize that both the Son of God (see 4:6-8) and his disciples (see 10:7-8, 38-42) would trust God and not require elaborate provisions.” (DT, 213)
 - “Inherent in the petition, beyond the hope that we will neither worry nor hoard, is a desire to be so fully awake to the day-to-day things of life that we will not miss Jesus’ presence with us by the power of the Spirit, even in the breaking of our bread (Luke 22:19; 24:30-35).” (Stamper, WP)
 - “In the petition about **bread**, Luke uses a present tense, which emphasis the continual giving of God (Mt and *Didache* have aorist). This and the change to ‘each day,’ seems to indicate a petition for God to take care of daily needs.

The word translated ‘**daily**’ (*epiousion*) is a puzzle to scholars. The ancient historian, Origen, thought that the gospel writers had coined the word. It doesn’t appear previously. Lowe and Nida (*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*) offer these possible translations:

necessary for existence
that which is needed for each day
that which is needed for the following day
that which is needed for the future.

The word is related to providing what is needed, perhaps today or perhaps in the future. Note also that the word 'bread' (*artos*) appears later in the text (v. 5) as does the word for 'give' (*didomi* in vv. 7, 8, 9, 13, 13)." (BPS)

- "...as various writers of the early church tell us, the '**daily bread**,' the necessary bread for life we pray for, is often the Eucharist, the very body and blood of Christ...This body and blood of Christ, this bread of our salvation, is our life, our life together and in God. It is healing for our ability to love the Lord our God with all our hearts and minds and strength and souls and our neighbors as ourselves..."

I pray for an awareness of the presence of God, which is my daily bread." (RCB, 85)

- 11:4 "We are **forgiving**' is present tense = continual action. Forgiving others is more than specific instances in one's life, but the lifestyle or attitude of the followers of Jesus." (BPS)
 - "...Luke's wording may tie the hope of the forgiveness of sins more directly to the disciples' remission of financial debts (see 6:36-38). In 17:1-10, however, it is clear that the mutual forgiveness of sins is expected to be a regular practice of the community even if it requires great faith. There is no place for pride in this position, only the recognition that those who pray in the way of the kingdom are themselves caught up in a system of grace and forgiveness. No case is made for people receiving or dispensing what they or others 'deserve.' (DT, 214)
 - "In Matthew, Jesus teaches the disciples to pray, 'forgive us our debts' (Greek: *opheilemata*) (Matthew 6:12). In Luke, Jesus teaches the disciples to pray, '**forgive us our sins**' (Greek: *hamartias*). Jesus speaks of 'sins' to talk about the ways that we offend God, but changes to 'debts' to talk about offenses that we experience in relationship to other people." (L)
 - "The sense is not that God waits to see whether humans forgive before offering forgiveness, but that human beings block the flow of God's forgiveness if they do not themselves lead forgiving lives." (BB, 119)
- 11:4b "We call upon our Father to protect us from whatever might threaten our lives or our relationship to the Father." (BPS)
 - "In Luke, the petition about temptation or 'testing' [**time of trial**] has particular impact. Jesus himself was 'led' by the Spirit in his wilderness 'tests,' but Satan did the testing (see 4:1-2)... this cluster of words indicates that the kingdom of God is caught up in a struggle of powers, and the faithful must pray to God to be protected from the trials of Satan (see Judas in 22:3 and Jesus' prayer for Peter in 22:31). This is not a struggle for humans to enter armed only with their 'free will.' Praying to be delivered from such 'testing' is acceptable even when God's will may be accomplished through it (22:39-46)." (DT, 214)
 - "Jesus experienced the trial of temptation in the wilderness (4:1-13). In another **time of trial**, Jesus will pray, 'Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me...' (22:42) –but the cup will not be removed. Christians frequently undergo trials. We need God's protection from the evil that would destroy us." (L)

Reflection Question:

- How do you pray? How do you prepare yourself for praying? When you pray, typically how much of your prayer is centered on your needs, on other's needs, and on God? How does your praying relate to your relationship with God?
- How is God's name being made holy in your life? In the life of your faith community?

- Journal about how you experience forgiveness in your life...being forgiven and giving forgiveness. What is your journey with God's forgiveness?

Day 3

Luke 11:5-8

⁵And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; ⁶for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.' ⁷And he answers from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' ⁸I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

Background:

- 11:5-13 "How should one pray? With persistence? Using this timetable? Jesus underscores the reality that the most important factor pertaining to the practice of prayer is accurate recognition of the One to whom one prays. First, he draws attention to normal practice in a Palestinian village, where friendship would ordinarily be enough to guarantee assistance with entertaining guests; in a rare instance, one might imagine that fear of humiliation in the village would lead one to open one's pantry on behalf of another who has houseguests (vv. 5-8)..." (NISB, 1875)
- 11:5-13 "The disciples have been taught the words of prayer. But more is needed. They must have the proper interior disposition. This proper interior disposition is based on a correct understanding of who they are and who God the Father is. Jesus provides this understanding by using a combination of story-images and injunctions. These ... connect to his prayer by using the image of father and children that is the core structure of the prayer. These story images are geared not merely to inform the disciples but to jolt them into the mindset that will make the words of the prayer effective." (JS, 209)
- 11:5-13 "The genius of the parable and of the sequence that draws from it is that it engages intense human feeling (the sense of shame; the sense of parental love and responsibility) and draws these directly into an attitude toward God. Jesus does not *tell* his hearers about God. He makes them *feel* something very deeply and then says, "That—multiplied a thousand and more times over—is how God feels about you! It is in the light of this knowledge that you should come before God in prayer." (BB, 121)
- 11:5-8 "This parable, which is only found in Luke, is connected to the previous prayer by the words for 'bread' (vv. 3 & 5;) and 'give' (vv. 3, 7 & 8)." (BPS)
 - "So also, Jesus intimates, should we make bold to offer our petitions to God, shamelessly calling on God to keep God's promises." (DL)
 - "These verses ... provide some relief from the intensity of the kingdom prayer while offering assurance of God's attentiveness. It is one of Luke's two stories of 'shamelessness' in prayer (see also 18:1-8), and both are comical stories in the tradition of the kind of 'shamelessness' for which the Cynic philosophers were famous. The man making the request is some kind of midnight fool, and the man in the house only responds to hush the noise. Not even their friendship can handle such ridiculous behavior. If even a poor **friend** responds to such a shameless request, who could imagine how the loving Father will respond to people who approach him in indelicate circumstances? The point is not that God will only respond to people who bang on the door at all hours, but prayer in many forms is appropriate to people in need, people who

do not have the luxury of propriety. The story anticipates the next verses, which reveal the surpassing grace of the heavenly Father.” (DT, 214)

- 11:5 “Villagers go to bed early and most families share a single room, so a late arrival would awaken a sleeping family.” (L)
- 11:5b-6 “Mideastern people take hospitality seriously. The traveler’s friend has an obligation to show hospitality—to provide an appropriate meal for the traveler. To fail in this obligation would bring shame on the host family.

Obtaining bread for a famished traveler would be difficult at night. Bread is baked daily only in the quantity required for that day, and there is no store where one can purchase bread in the middle of the night. If the host has no bread, a neighbor is the only recourse.” (L)

- 11:8 “The key word in this section, I think is *anaideia* ... This word only occurs here in the NT. It comes from two words: (1) the verb *aideomai*, which means ‘to feel shame, be ashamed or fear; to respect, reverence;’ and (2) the prefix *an* which negates the other meanings: e.g., ‘**not** to feel shame’ or ‘**not** to have respect.’

From a lexicon: the word means: ‘a lack of sensitivity to what is proper,’ and can be translated with ‘insolence, audacity, impudence, or shamelessness.’

The pronouns in this verse make it unclear who is acting shamelessly. Culpepper (*Luke, The New Interpreter's Bible*) makes these comments about this verse:

Following the normal meaning of the term, we may understand v. 8 as posing a comparison between the obligation of friendship and those of the honor-shame code. The ambiguous pronouns leave room for debate over whether the petitioner is shameless for begging for food in the middle of the night or whether we are to understand that the sleeper would be shameless for refusing a neighbor's request. Either reading is possible, but the latter is preferable. The situation is unthinkable not because of the petitioner's persistence but because honor demanded that a neighbor get up, awaken his whole family if necessary, and supply his neighbor's need -- if not from friendship, then at least to avoid being shamed. [p. 236]

Malina & Rohrbaugh (*Social-Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels*) agree: Western commentaries notwithstanding, there is no evidence that the Greek word rendered ‘importunity’ (RSV) or ‘persistence’ (NRSV) ever had those meanings in antiquity. The word means ‘shamelessness,’ the negative quality of lacking sensitivity (shame) to one's public honor status. Thus the petitioner threatens to expose the potential shamelessness of the sleeper. By morning the entire village would know of his refusal to provide hospitality. He thus gives in to avoid public exposure as a shameless person. (pp. 350-1)” (BPS)

- “There is substantial (if not universal) agreement among scholars that *anaideian* has to do with shame rather than persistence here — or, perhaps, a combination of shame and persistence. There is less agreement about whether it is the *host's* shameless asking or the *neighbor's* concern about being shamed that is involved here...

The movement in this story is from lesser to greater. If the reluctant neighbor will provide what is needed, a loving God is even more dependable.” (L)

- “Four times in these verses, the word ‘friend’ (*philos*) is used. There is the friendship between the two neighbors and the friendship between the first man and his midnight visitors. The story then suggests that there is a similar friendship between God and us -- we can approach God as a friend -- even waking him up from a deep sleep -- that is, if God ever slept.” (BPS)

Reflection Questions:

- What might this story look like in our lives today? What do you think are the implications for our relationship with God?

Luke 11:9-13

⁹“So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. ¹¹Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? ¹²Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? ¹³If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

Background:

- 11:9-13 “...Everyone is encouraged to recognize God’s expansive goodness (vv. 9-10). Finally, arguing from lesser to greater, he maintains that God’s goodness outstrips that of even the best human fathers (vv. 11-13). Jesus thus draws attention to his identification of God as the ‘Father’ whose graciousness is realized in the provision of what is needed—and, indeed, far beyond what might reasonably be expected.” (NISB, 1875-1876)
- 11:9-10 “are tightly worked sayings in which the passive voice reveals the work of God: **it will be given you; it will be opened to you.**” (DT, 215)
- 11:9 “The verbs are present tense, suggesting a continual asking, seeking, and knocking.” (L)
- 11:10 “It is successful because their acts of **asking, seeking, and knocking** open them to receive what is ready to be given. With an abundant and eager Giver, the key to a meeting between the asker and the Giver is the openness of the ones who ask...Learning how to pray the prayer of Jesus is learning the art of reception. This prayer is about allowing the Holy Spirit to create a bond between the heavenly Father and the earthly children, a bond that will jump-start the adventure of discipleship.” (JS, 210-211)
- 11:11-12 “raise[s] pointed questions which assume that even **evil** human fathers would never give **serpents** and **scorpions** (see 10:19) to **children** who ask for food. Only Satan gives such scourges...” (DT, 215)
 - “Luke’s pair of snake & scorpion was used earlier in 10:19 as symbols of the power of the enemy.” (BPS)
 - “Water snakes were sometimes caught in the fishing nets. When rolled up the scorpion would resemble an egg” (Evans, 183).” (L)
- 11:13 “...this passage is relying upon the conviction that ‘fathers’ at least know how to look out for their own.” (DT, 215)
- 11:13 “The **Holy Spirit** is the ‘promise of my Father’ (24:49, see Acts 1:4 ... By giving the Holy Spirit to the followers of Jesus, God will answer their prayer for the kingdom.” (DT, 215)
 - “Matthew 7:11 has Jesus promising good things to those who ask. Luke has Jesus promising the Holy Spirit.” (L)
- 11:13 “If giving stuff of physical life happens despite obstacles in the giver, how much more will giving the stuff of spiritual life happen when the Giver has no obstacles? The heavenly Father is completely predisposed to give the Holy Spirit, the reality that connects the human and divine worlds. There is no reluctance, inconvenience, or evil in God. The Father is willing, wanting, and waiting to give the Holy Spirit.” (JS, 210)
- 11:13 “I think that Luke is saying that those who have asked for the Holy Spirit can be certain that God has given it to them, whether or not they speak in tongues, have had an emotional high, or seen a bright light. It also prepares the readers for the events and Pentecost and the Spirit’s work throughout the Book of Acts.” (BPS)

Reflection Questions:

- When you ask God for something, how open do you think you are to listening to God’s side of the conversation?

- What 3 commands does Jesus give in verse 9? How are they different from one another? What is the promise (verse 10) that he gives? How do you understand these verses in your life?

Day 5

Reread the entire Scripture:

- Does anything significant or new stand out for you with this reading?
- After studying and meditating on this Scripture, what do you think God might be saying to you?

Reread the entire Scripture again.

- What prayer rises up in you (what would you like to say to God) after reflecting (listening to what God had to say to you) on this Scripture?

Reflection questions:

- How does this prayer (11:2-4) compare and contrast to the more expanded prayer of Matthew 6:9-13? What do you think is/are the reason(s) for the differences?
- If you have been praying this Lord's Prayer each day this week, take time to journal your experience.
- Think about what is happening in your life and the life around you. Then, in your own words rewrite each petition of the Lord's prayer as found in this week's reading. Pray the words of Jesus and add after each petition what you have written for that petition.
- Another exercise or practice for praying the Lord's Prayer is to pray it slowly pausing after each petition to listen for what God might be saying to you.

The Personal Sermon: a quote by Martin Luther
Found in *The Spiritual Formation Bible* (Zondervan)

“Frequently when I come to a certain part of ‘Our Father’ or to a petition, I land in such rich thoughts that I leave behind all set prayers. When such rich, good thoughts arrive, then one should leave the other commandments aside and offer room to those thoughts and listen in stillness and for all the world not put up obstructions. For then the Holy Spirit...is preaching and one word from [that] sermon is better than a thousand of our prayers. I have often learned more from one such prayer than I could have received from much reading and writing.” (p.1370)

A quote by Pastor Brian Stoffregen

“I think that in many ways prayer is like ... [a presence itself being helpful]. It's a relationship. It's the presence of daddy or mommy, not always saying or doing things to change the situation, but their presence can often change you as it brings their comfort and love to the situation -- and perhaps you are better able to accept what lies in the future with their support. You can live with the uncertainty of the ‘we'll see’ answer. Patiently waiting together to see what will happen.

Prayer is the presence of God -- not that God will always change the situation, but knowing that God is with you, that God is going through the tragedy or suffering or depression or even death with you, not as a far off God, way out in space, but as your very close and loving father. ‘When you pray,’ Jesus says, ‘say Father.’”

Two quotes by David Lose, from a blog on Prayer

“Here’s my hunch: I think prayer has more to do with relationship than ‘outcomes.’ We pray, that is, because it is a vital way of remaining in relationship, just as we may pour out our hearts to a friend, lover, or family member not in the expectation that they are necessarily going to *do* something about it but because we need someone to share with. And as we share all these things the relationship grows stronger. I think that makes more sense to me. Prayer is about relationship.

Lately, though, I’ve been musing about prayer in another way. Perhaps prayer is also a way of attuning ourselves to God and our shared life. That is, among other things prayer is also a practice. It is a practice where we lift up to God our joys and concerns, dreams and fears, hopes and anxieties. And as we do so we are thinking about all these things in light of our relationship with God and our faith. That in turns means that every time we pray we bridge the gap between our ‘daily life’ and our ‘faith life,’

and

“Prayer is doing something, certainly, but it is also a way of being, and as we enter into prayer with our whole being, we are changed (and perhaps God is too) and things happen. Perhaps this also falls into the ‘mystery’ category but it’s been valuable to me to reflect on.”

Quote by David Lose, *Working Preacher* (2010)

“We ... tend to fixate on the mechanics of prayer: how, why, when. Jesus' instructions to his followers, however, focus on a different question: who ... Jesus seems more interested, at this point, in invitation than explanation. In this passage, that is, Jesus invites us into relationship with God through prayer, offering us the opportunity to approach the God whose name is too holy to speak and whose countenance too terrible to behold with the familiarity, boldness, and trust of a young child running to her parent for both provision and protection.

Prayer, according to both this passage and Luke's larger portrait of Jesus, is not primarily about getting things from God but rather about the relationship we have with God. . . While at other places in Scripture we are told that God knows our needs without being asked (Mt. 6:8), here we are invited to make them known, to speak them into existence in the confidence that whatever may happen, this relationship can bear hearing these things and may actually even depend upon hearing them.

. . . So while no matter carefully you craft your sermon you will not be able to address all of our questions about the ‘hows’ and ‘whys’ of prayer, you will be able to invite us into a deeper, more honest, and more trusting relationship with the God who desires to be known chiefly as loving parent, provider of all that is good and protector of all in need. While this may not give us everything we want, it at least gives us what we most need. Give us this day our daily bread; indeed.”

A quote by Meda Stamper, *Working Preacher*

“The point of prayer is not to change God’s mind but to shape ours, to make us fit for the kingdom, ready to live the only life possible in God’s household: one of love.”

¹I give you thanks, O LORD, with my whole heart; before the gods I sing your praise;
²I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness; for you have exalted your name and your word above everything.
³On the day I called, you answered me, you increased my strength of soul.
⁴All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O LORD, for they have heard the words of your mouth.
⁵They shall sing of the ways of the LORD, for great is the glory of the LORD.
⁶For though the LORD is high, he regards the lowly; but the haughty he perceives from far away.
⁷Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve me against the wrath of my enemies; you stretch out your hand, and your right hand delivers me.
⁸The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

	Literal Translation of Luke 11.2-4	Literal Translation of Matthew 6.9-13	The Good Old Version	Contemporary Version	Song Version of Lord's Prayer
Intr.	Father,	Our Father, the one in the heavens,	Our Father, who art in heaven,	Our Father in heaven,	Our Father, which art in heaven,
1	Let your name be hallowed	Let your name be hallowed,	Hallowed be thy name,	Hallowed be your name,	Hallowed by thy name,
2	Let your kingdom come.	Let your kingdom come,	Thy kingdom come,	Your kingdom come,	Thy kingdom come,
3		Let your will happen, as in heaven also upon earth.	Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.	Your will be done, on earth as in heaven.	Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
4	Our daily bread keep on giving us each day;	Our daily bread give us today;	Give us this day our daily bread;	Give us today our daily bread.	Give us this day, our daily bread,
5	And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves are forgiving all who are in debt to us;	And forgive us our debts, as also we have forgiven our debtors;	And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;	Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.	And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,
6	And do not bring us into temptation.	And do not bring us into temptation,	And lead us not into temptation,	Save us from the time of trial	And lead us not into temptation
7		But deliver us from the evil [one].	But deliver us from evil.	And deliver us from evil.	But deliver us from evil.
Con- clu- sion			For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.	For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever.	For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.
			Amen.	Amen.	Amen.