

# **Praying the Psalms Together**

## ***Lenten Challenge & Practice 2023***

*You are invited to join in this spiritual practice as part of our Lenten devotion and discipline this year.*

**During Lent we often make time and space for God** in focused ways as we prepare for the celebration of Christ's Resurrection at Easter. Taking time through intentional reading, praying, serving others, or some other spiritual discipline, helps us connect with Jesus' own sacrifice for us on the Cross. That helps prepare us for the joy of new life and new creation.

### ***What is a Psalm Challenge?***

**This challenge is the spiritual discipline of reading/praying through all 150 Psalms** during the season of Lent. We'll use the schedule that the Psalter (Book of Psalms) lays out in the Book of Common Prayer, starting on page 582.

**We'll start on Ash Wednesday** and go through the morning of Holy Saturday. Try to make time in the morning and at night for your praying/reading. This is not a competition, so if you find you can only read once in a day, or you skip a day, try not to be hard on yourself or give up. Each day, as Christian people, we start anew.

**The important goal is to get to know the Psalms** in a deeper, prayerful way. These are the same Psalms that Jesus prayed, recited, and sang. Imagine yourself praying them with him.

### ***Why Should We Be Praying the Psalms?***

**The Book of Psalms** is an anthology of devotional poetry that covers the whole spectrum of human experience and emotion. They contain joy, tears, despair, anger, celebration, fear, jealousy, gratitude, aggression, doubt, a desire for revenge, prayers for protection, praise, and wisdom; and that is not a complete list!

**All of these feelings and experiences** are put forth clearly and honestly before God. Nothing is held back. The Psalms tell the truth about the human condition. Over time, we find ourselves in these words, and we remember that we are not unique in either our joy or our suffering. The season of Lent is a very good time to be honest with ourselves and with God.

### ***How Does This Work?***

**The table on the next page gives you** the date and the day of the cycle, and the assigned Psalms for Morning and Evening. We start on Ash Wednesday, February 22 with the Psalms for Day 22. Because of the way the calendar falls there are some slight adjustments. If you get confused, just follow the table below!

**You can read the Psalms** from your Prayer Book or your Bible. Forward Movement (publishers of Forward Day by Day) has a website where you can pray the Daily Office of Morning and Evening Prayer. It allows you to select the 30-Day Psalm Cycle and will automatically insert the right Psalms for you - <https://prayer.forwardmovement.org/home>. They also have an app you can download to your phone.

**If you have an audio version** of the Bible you could listen to the Psalms when you walk, drive, or ride the train. You could pray them together at a meal with others in your household. You can also sing the Psalms!

**The daily Lenten reflections** that will be emailed to you will be related to one of the day's Psalms in some way.

## **The Thirty Day Cycle of Psalms for Lent 2023**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning Psalms</b>	<b>Evening Psalms</b>
<b>2/22 Ash Wed</b>	22	107 Part I, 107 Part II	108, 109
2/23	23	110, 111, 112, 113	114, 115
2/24	24	116, 117, 118	119:1-32
2/25	25	119:33-72	119:73-104
<b>2/26 Lent 1</b>	26	119:105-144	119:145-176
2/27	27	120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125	126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131
2/28	28	132, 133, 134, 135	136, 137, 138
3/1	1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	6, 7, 8
3/2	2	9, 10, 11	12, 13, 14
3/3	3	15, 16, 17	18 Part I, 18 Part II
3/4	4	19, 20, 21	22, 23
<b>3/5 Lent 2</b>	5	24, 25, 26	27, 28, 29
3/6	6	30, 31	32, 33, 34
3/7	7	35, 36	37 Part I, 37 Part II
3/8	8	38, 39, 40	41, 42, 43
3/9	9	44, 45, 46	47, 48, 49
3/10	10	50, 51, 52	53, 54, 55
3/11	11	56, 57, 58	59, 60, 61
<b>3/12 Lent 3</b>	12	62, 63, 64	65, 66, 67
3/13	13	68	69, 70
3/14	14	71, 72	73, 74
3/15	15	75, 76, 77	78 Part I, 78 Part II
<b>Date</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning Psalms</b>	<b>Evening Psalms</b>
3/16	16	79, 80, 81	82, 83, 84, 85
3/17	17	86, 87, 88	89 Part I, 89 Part II
3/18	18	90, 91, 92	93, 94
<b>3/19 Lent 4</b>	19	95, 96, 97	98, 99, 100, 101
3/20	20	102, 103	104
3/21	21	105 Part I, 105 Part II	106 Part I, 106 Part II

3/22	22	107 Part I, 107 Part II	108, 109
3/23	23	110, 111, 112, 113	114, 115
3/24	24	116, 117, 118	119:1-32
3/25	25	119:33-72	119:73-104
<b>3/26 Lent 5</b>	26	119:105-144	119:145-176
3/27	27	120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125	126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131
3/28	28	132, 133, 134, 135	136, 137, 138
3/29	29	139, 140	141, 142, 143
3/30	30	144, 145, 146	147, 148, 149, 150
3/31*	[30]	144, 145, 146	147, 148, 149, 150
4/1	1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	6, 7, 8
<b>4/2 Palm Sun</b>	2	9, 10, 11	12, 13, 14
4/3	3	15, 16, 17	18 Part I, 18 Part II
4/4	4	19, 20, 21	22, 23
4/5	5	24, 25, 26	27, 28, 29
4/6 Maundy Th	6	30, 31	32, 33, 34
4/7 Good Fri	7	35, 36	37 Part I, 37 Part II
4/8 Holy Sat	8	38, 39, 40	

### ***Where Did the Psalms Come From?***

**The Psalms have been the backbone** and core of Christian worship since the earliest days.

**They are poetic prayers** written in Hebrew and are found in the Old Testament. Traditionally many of the Psalms are ascribed to King David. They are recited or sung in daily prayers at home and in Sabbath services in the synagogue.

**The Psalms were written in Hebrew.** Hebrew poetry differs from poetry in English. It doesn't use rhyme or meter. Instead, Hebrew poetry states an image or an idea, and then says it a different way. This brings out an additional facet or meaning to the idea. This poetic technique is called parallelism. When we read the Psalms we should read them as poetry filled with emotion, imagery, and allusion. They are not like reading a reference book or a "how to" manual.

**The first followers of Jesus** continued the practice of praying the Psalms, and they became integral to Christian worship, both in the Sunday liturgy and weekday worship. In the monastic communities all 150 Psalms are said or sung every week.

***Be Encouraged***

**May you find praying the Psalms** to be rewarding, even if the texts or the schedule is challenging. Sometimes we have to fast from some activities in order to make room for spiritual practices that will build up our faith.

**In praying the Psalms this way,** we will be joining with millions of Christians throughout the Anglican Communion who do this every day. May your Lenten journey will be a blessing to you, and that you in turn will be a blessing to others.

*With thanks to The Rev. Victoria Geer McGrath and the People of All Saints, Millington, who will be joining us in Praying the Psalms Together.*



