

Preparing the Soil

For week beginning on July 4

Being in relationship with God is more than just a once-a-week event. Just like any relationship, regular communication is needed. I challenge you to create a daily routine to prepare your hearts for God's word. This is something that can be done in less than 20 minutes per day. It just requires a time and place of quiet (before the day begins or after the day has ended or even on the train coming home from work).

Instructions: - Monday through Saturday follow each step. Don't forget that the Bible is not a newspaper – it is God's word. Reading the same psalm for six days gives God a chance to speak to you with the same words but in six different days (and, potentially, six different circumstances).

I. Invocation (Pray this each day):

Almighty God, through your Son you opened the Kingdom of God to the world. Grant us vision and courage to follow your Holy Spirit, reaching out to those on the margins of society as did your Son, Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

II. Psalm 24 (Read this each day):

III. Daily Scripture Readings

Monday	Acts 8:4-25
Tuesday	Acts 8:26-40
Wednesday	Acts 9:1-22
Thursday	Acts 9:26-43
Friday	Acts 10:1-33
Saturday	Acts 10:34-48

IV. Prayers

Monday	For those in need of healing from <i>Yellow Pages</i>
Tuesday	For those serving in military and vets
Wednesday	For our shut-ins and caregivers and families in grief
Thursday	For our leaders in government and church
Friday	For family members and neighbors
Saturday	For yourself

V. Reflection Silent and/or written

VI: Hymn: *All Are Welcome* – ELW #641 (Sing each day): (For music, use this link.) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GlnVLP0qFEO>

Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions.

**Chorus: *All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.***

Let us build a house where prophets speak, and words are strong and true,
where all God's children dare to seek to dream God's reign anew.
Here the cross shall stand as witness and as symbol of God's grace;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus. **Chorus**

Let us build a house where love is found in water, wine and wheat:
a banquet hall on holy ground where peace and justice meet.
Here the love of God, through Jesus, is revealed in time and space;
as we share in Christ the feast that frees us. **Chorus**

Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger. **Chorus**

Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter. **Chorus**

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VII: Benediction (Spoken each day):

May grace, mercy, love, and peace flow through your life all the day long.
Amen.

The general idea and often the words of the benediction are taken from: *A Guide to Prayer* by Rueben Job and Norman Shawchuck, (The Upper Room: Nashville, 1983).