

Preparing the Soil

For week beginning on November 27

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):

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming, strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

II. Psalm 85 (Read this each day):

III. Daily Scripture Readings

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| Monday | Isaiah 11:1-10 |
| Tuesday | Isaiah 40:1-5 |
| Wednesday | Isaiah 40:6-11 |
| Thursday | Mark 1:1-8 |
| Friday | Matthew 3:1-12 |
| Saturday | Luke 3:1-20 |

IV. Prayers

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| 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: *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* ELW 254 (Sing each day):
(For music, type "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" in your search engine.)
One example is: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K51_ARWrdPQ

1. Come, thou long expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.
2. Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.

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VII: Benediction (Spoken each day):

You have been reminded that Jesus Christ is your Lord and that you are God's servant. You are loved; you are forgiven; you are empowered; and now you are sent to live as God's faithful one. 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).