

Travels, Trips, and Journeys: A Service of Word for Summer

Greeting

The God who created space and time, journeyed with us in human form, and travels with us still, be with you all. **And also with you.**

Prayer

Let us pray.

O God, our beginning and our end, you kept Abraham and Sarah in safety throughout the days of their pilgrimage, you led the children of Israel through the midst of the sea, and by a star you led the magi to the infant Jesus. Protect and guide us when we travel. Make our ways safe and our homecomings joyful, and bring us at last to our heavenly home, where you dwell in glory with our Lord Jesus Christ and the life-giving Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Psalmody: Psalm 139:1-12

¹ O LORD, you have searched me and known me.

² **You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.**

³ You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.

⁴ **Even before a word is on my tongue, O LORD, you know it completely.**

⁵ You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.

⁶ **Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.**

⁷ Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?

⁸ **If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.**

⁹ If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,

¹⁰ **even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast.**

¹¹ If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and night wraps itself around me,"

¹² **even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness is as light to you.**

PLANS AND PREPARATIONS

Reading: Ephesians 6:10-17 *Put on the armor of God*

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power; ¹¹ put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, ¹² for our^[e] struggle is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present^[f] darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.^[g] ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on the evil day and, having prevailed against everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand, therefore, and belt

your waist with truth and put on the breastplate of righteousness ¹⁵ and lace up your sandals in preparation for the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ With all of these, ^[h] take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. *A brief silence for prayer and meditation.*

Dialogue and Prayer

What should we pack as we begin our journey? **What should we bring along?**

The word of God to illumine our path.

The light of Christ to show us the way.

The gifts of the Spirit to share with those we meet.

The love of God to be our compass and guide.

Let us pray. God of our salvation, **you are the source of all our beginnings.**

As we plan for our journeys,

strengthen us through your word.

Orient our lives toward Christ, the bright Morning Star.

Send your Holy Spirit as our companion along the way.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

SETTING OUT

Reading: Genesis 12:1-9 *God calls Abraham and sends him out*

Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. ² I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”^[a]

⁴ So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. ⁵ Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother’s son Lot and all the possessions that they had gathered and the persons whom they had acquired in Haran, and they set forth to go to the land of Canaan. When they had come to the land of Canaan, ⁶ Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak^[b] of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. ⁷ Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. ⁸ From there he moved on to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east, and there he built an altar to the LORD and invoked the name of the LORD. ⁹ And Abram journeyed on by stages toward the Negeb.

A brief silence for prayer and meditation.

Dialogue and Prayer

God called to Abraham: **“Go! Set out! And I will bless you.”**

God calls to us: **“Come! Feel the water on your head!**

Hear the promise of new life. Spread my word through all the world.”

Let us pray. God of beginnings,
**you called Abraham and Sarah,
leading them to unknown places.
In the waters of baptism, you claim us
and send us out as your children.
Wash us with your grace
and shower us with your Spirit,
so that we journey into the world
overflowing with your love.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

ON THE ROAD

Reading: Mark 1:35-39 *Jesus travels and preaches throughout Galilee*

³⁵ In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷ When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." ³⁸ He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also, for that is what I came out to do." ³⁹ And he went throughout all Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons. *A brief silence for prayer and meditation.*

Dialogue and Prayer

On the Galilean road, Jesus stopped to reflect and pray.

We, too, long for rest and a balm for our souls.

Seeing those in need, Jesus healed, taught, and fed.

We are called to live as servants, loving our neighbors as ourselves

Holding the children close, Jesus blessed them;

for to such as these the kingdom of heaven belongs.

On the road to Bethlehem, the true light came into the world.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us and we have seen his glory.

Let us pray. God of incarnation,
**you entered our world as a tiny baby and you journey with us
through each stage of our lives.
Be with our children and youth who are growing in your love.
Guide us all as the years and decades pass.
Send us in the light of your grace and truth.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

WHEN THE WAY BECOMES HARD

Reading: 1 Kings 19:1-8 *Elijah in the wilderness*

Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. ² Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life like the life of one of them by this time tomorrow.” ³ Then he was afraid;^[a] he got up and fled for his life and came to Beer-sheba, which belongs to Judah; he left his servant there.

⁴ But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die, “It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors.” ⁵ Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, “Get up and eat.” ⁶ He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. He ate and drank and lay down again. ⁷ The angel of the LORD came a second time, touched him, and said, “Get up and eat, or the journey will be too much for you.” ⁸ He got up and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God.

A brief silence for prayer and meditation.

Dialogue and Prayer

We sit like Elijah alone in the wilderness. **“It is enough, O Lord.”**

The troubles of life overwhelm our spirits. **“It is enough, O Lord.”**

The way seems too dark; the valleys, too deep. **“It is enough, O Lord.”**

God rescues us from despair and grants us strength.

“You are beloved, my precious child.”

Let us pray. God of our sorrows,

**when we grieve a loved one, face an illness, or lose a job,
the road seems long, lonely, and treacherous.**

**Comfort us in our despair, guide us through the wilderness,
and enfold us in your loving embrace.**

Grant your mercy and peace to all those in need this day.

In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

JOYFUL HOMECOMINGS

Reading: Philippians 3:12—4:1 *Pressing toward the heavenly goal*

¹² Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal,^[e] but I press on to lay hold of that for which Christ^[f] has laid hold of me. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, I do not consider that I have laid hold^[g] of it, but one thing I have laid hold of: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal, toward the prize of the heavenly^[h] call of God in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Let those of us, then, who are mature^[i] think this way,

and if you think differently about anything, this, too, God will reveal to you. ¹⁶ Only let us hold fast to what we have attained.

¹⁷ Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸ For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. ¹⁹ Their end is destruction, their god is the belly, and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship^[1] is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹ He will transform the body of our humiliation^[k] that it may be conformed to the body of his glory,^[1] by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.

4 ¹ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved. *A brief silence for prayer and meditation.*

Dialogue and Prayer

“Do not let your hearts be troubled.”

We believe in God, we believe in Christ.

“I go to prepare a dwelling place for you.”

You are the way, the truth, and the life.

“As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you.”

Lord, we abide in your love.

“You know the way to the place where I am going.”

Jesus, lead us in the path of your peace.

Let us pray. God of resurrection,
neither death nor life will separate us from your love.
Walk with us when our journeys lead toward home.
Strengthen us to follow the way of the cross
and bring us at last
into the joy of your heavenly kingdom.
In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Reflection

God’s word is a lamp to our feet
and a light to our path.

Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen

Prayers of Intercession

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation. *A brief silence.*

O God, we give you thanks for those who have traveled the path of faith: for Abraham and Sarah, who trusted in your promise; for Mary and Joseph, who acted according to your word; for Paul, who spread the good news of Christ. Lead us also in your way, your truth, and your life. God of the journey, **hear our prayer.**

Watch over all who travel. Grant rest and joy for their spirits. Be with bus drivers, flight attendants, pilots, road crews, and all who strive to make our travels safe and our homecomings joyful. God of the journey, **hear our prayer.**

You sent your Son into the messiness of our world. Smooth the pathways between people and nations, that together we will move toward your justice and peace. God of the journey, **hear our prayer.**

You walk with us on all the paths of life. Be with those facing hardship this day: the grieving, the poor, the lost, the sick (*especially*). Hold them in the palm of your hand. God of the journey, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

Offering

O Trinity of love and pow'r,
all trav'lers guard in danger's hour
from rock and tempest, fire and foe,

**protect them wheresoe'er they go;
thus evermore shall rise to thee
glad hymns and praise from land and sea. (ELW 756, st. 4)**

Thanksgiving for the Word

Let us pray.

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Blessing

The Lord watch over your going out and your coming in,
from this time forth forevermore
In the name of the Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ goes with you.
Thanks be to God.