



CRC Day of Prayer

March 13, 2024

Synod has designated the second Wednesday in March (March 13, 2024) as the Annual Day of Prayer. On this date, all CRC congregations are requested to take time to seek God's leading, blessing, and transformation to become more like Christ.

This year, the prayer guide focuses on the many ministries of the Christian Reformed Church.

Why pray together with other CRC's around in Canada & the US?

We gather to pray on the same day as other CRC's in Canada and the US because we are part of a denomination together. Though there may be many miles and kilometers between congregations in Halifax in Nova Scotia, Canada and San Diego, in California, USA, or between Anchorage, Alaska and Miami, Florida, we feel close to each other when we know others are praying with us. Though we may have differences when it comes to language, social and cultural practices, economic situations, or local contexts, we find similarity when we gather for prayer as witnesses that we belong to our faithful savior, Jesus Christ.

What are we praying for?

As we pray for our congregations and the denomination, we will be praying the prayers that Paul prayed and requested. Paul's prayers are probably different from those we regularly pray in our churches. Many of our congregational prayers focus on everyday issues, such as healing, relationships, safety, and other personal issues. These are prayers for the physical, for here and now. These are good prayers and we should be praying them.

Paul's prayers are significantly different. They have a large, eternal, Kingdom perspective to them. They are transformational. As you read Paul's prayers, and consider the things Paul asked that churches pray about, we ask that you also pray them for your family, your congregation, the other churches in your community, your classis, and the CRCNA.

While we don't know the details of your unique families, churches, communities and classes, and can't include them in this guide, we can provide you with some specific ideas of how to pray these Pauline prayers for the ministries of the CRCNA. Prayer items for these entities can be found later in this guide.

What might this look like in my church? Ways to pray

Each church is different and each church prays together differently. Here are some ideas of what prayer might look like in your congregation:

- Early morning prayer gathering
- 24 hour prayer vigil with sign-ups for each time slot
- A special evening prayer gathering
- Prayer guides printed for members to bring home
- Prayer guides emailed or posted online so people can pray together in small groups

Use this guide in whatever way works best for your congregation. And if you have a particularly interesting or innovative way that you decide to incorporate these prayer items into your congregational life, please let us know by emailing communications@crcna.org.

Prayers Paul Prayed

1 Thessalonians 3:12–13

May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

2 Thessalonians 1:11–12

With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may bring to fruition your every desire for goodness and your every deed prompted by faith. We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:15–19

For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

Ephesians 3:14–19

14 For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Philippians 1:9–11

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

Colossians 1:9–12

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light.

Prayers Paul Requested

Philippians 1:19-20

for I know that through your prayers and God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

Colossians 4:3-4

And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

Ephesians 6:19

Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,

2 Thessalonians 3:1

As for other matters, brothers and sisters, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you.

CRCNA Ministries

ReFrame (formerly known as Back to God)

Our vision is that the lives and worldviews of all people around the globe will be transformed by God's gospel message. Relying on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we create contextual media resources that proclaim the gospel, disciple believers, and strengthen the church throughout the world in 10 major languages.

- Praise God for the renewed energy around the Arabic language ministry by new ministry leader, Youssef Adel. It's great to see the ministry take off after a dormant period.
- Praise God for the success of family conferences and local sources of funding for the Portuguese language ministry.
- Pray for the Russian language ministry with the ongoing war in Ukraine, and also for the unstable government situations in Burkina Faso and Niger related to the French ministry.
- The Hindi ministry continues to struggle with government scrutiny and the potential that their non-profit status and related ability to receive funding will not be renewed.
- Pray for wisdom as staff navigate a rapidly changing media landscape, specifically as generative AI continues to improve.
- This year, *Kids Corner* devotions have focused on the theme of "The Bible and Big Feelings," where young readers could explore Bible verses and reflections about worry, fear, anger, loneliness, hope, imagination, joy, and peace. Please pray for kids and families as they work on and grow in positive mental health.
- Pray for *Family Fire's* closed Facebook group of women whose marriages are in crisis. May God give them wisdom as they discern how to set wise boundaries around bad behavior in their relationships.

Thrive (formerly Congregational Services)

Thrive's purpose is to equip and encourage our congregations, to provide expertise, wisdom, and compassionate support to congregations while remaining attentive to a wide range of opportunities and challenges facing the church today."

Pray that Christian Reformed congregations:

- Would experience a season of renewal, both in personal and communal ways, in our love for Jesus Christ and in tangible expressions of love for our neighbors.
- Would experience continued growth in diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic communities so that together we embody the fullness of God's image and God's kingdom.
- Would embrace healthy practices for intergenerational mentoring and discipleship.
- Would become known for our healthy leadership practices, where the fruit of the Spirit is abundantly present and God's people are equipped for service throughout the kingdom of God.

Calvin University

Calvin University equips students to think deeply, to act justly, and to live wholeheartedly as Christ's agents of renewal in the world. Calvin University is a Christian academic community dedicated to rigorous intellectual inquiry. Calvin students study the liberal arts and select from a broad range of majors and professional programs. The university fosters scholarship that creates new knowledge, that performs creative work, and that sustains natural and cultural resources. A Calvin education, marked by scholarly engagement with enduring questions and emerging concerns, prepares students to answer God's call to live and serve in God's world as agents of renewal.

Please join Calvin University in praying for:

- The Calvin University campus to radiate the truth that the joy of the Lord is our strength (Neh 8:10)
- Everyone in the Calvin University community to practice radical hospitality to all who visit our campus (Romans 12:13)
- Calvin students, staff, and faculty to be kind and loving to each other, and forgive each other just as God in Christ forgave us (Eph 4:32)
- All students who do not yet know the Lord or who are doubting their faith, that they will be filled with all joy and peace in believing, that they may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13)

Calvin Theological Seminary

As a learning community in the Reformed Christian tradition that forms church leaders who cultivate communities of disciples of Jesus Christ, Calvin Theological Seminary serves the Christian Reformed Church in North America and wider constituencies by preparing individuals for biblically faithful and contextually effective ministry of the Word and by offering Reformed theological scholarship and counsel.

Please pray:

- For the Calvin Seminary community to not just know about Christ, but know Christ and be found in him. (Phil. 3:7-11)
- For the Calvin Seminary community to be rooted and established in love as a foundation of learning and growing in the love that surpasses knowledge, so that all may be filled to the measure of the fullness of God. (Eph. 3:14-19)
- For the Calvin Seminary community to continue to live in Christ, strengthened in the faith, overflowing with thankfulness, with knowledge firmly founded on Christ. (Col. 2:6-8)
- For Calvin Seminary students to have the power, love, and self-discipline to fan into flame God's gifts for ministry. (2 Tim. 1:6-8)

World Renew (Formerly CRWRC)

World Renew envisions a world where people experience and extend Christ's compassion and live together in hope as God's community. At World Renew, we join with the world's families to change the story of hunger, poverty, and illness. For more than 60 years, hundreds of thousands of people have shared in this calling: staff, local partners, global communities, and people like you. Every day, people like you give in response to a disaster, offer monthly support to Free a Family from poverty, or travel with our volunteer teams to help renew hope firsthand. Together, we change stories, and those stories change the world.

- World Renew is devoted to doing justice, and the primary way they go about that is through partnerships with Christ-centered ministries already at work in their local communities. Often, this looks like equipping the local church to more fully minister to those whom society has overlooked, studying Biblical truths to inspire change for good. Praise the Lord for the ways in which his people are increasingly grasping the truth that all people, no matter their age, ability, gender, or ethnicity, are created in the image of God. (2 Corinthians 13:8-9)
- World Renew celebrates the many places where Christ makes himself known through the kindness and generosity of his people. As a ministry of mercy, World Renew is called to share assistance with those who find themselves in dire situations due to conflict, drought, flooding, earthquakes, and more. Pray for those in crisis who will be recipients of food or supplies; for immediate relief, and for lasting solutions. And thank God for those workers who have dedicated themselves to this daunting task. (1 Thessalonians 1:2,3)
- World Renew tries to imagine the world as God intended it to be: with all of his people living in harmony and unity. Join World Renew and churches around the world in praying for an end to conflict, unrest, and oppression everywhere. Praise God for amazing stories of reconciliation and hope that World Renew staff have been able to witness through peacebuilding work, disaster response, and refugee resettlement. Pray for wisdom, resources, and a will for peace in even the most difficult of situations. (Ephesians 3:20, 21)

Resonate (formerly Home Missions and World Missions)

Resonate joins with a diverse network of CRCNA congregations and other partners locally and globally. We work to mobilize individuals and communities to participate in God's mission and work for the spiritual and social transformation of the world. We believe that the Holy Spirit is igniting a global gospel movement and we can join in by investing in these three critical strategies: Plant Churches, Send Missionaries, & Mobilize Congregations

- Pray for God to clear the way for new church plants in the United States and Canada. New churches are one of the best ways we have to reach people from different cultures and Resonate asks you to pray for open hearts and minds among church planters, Resonate church planting support staff, and congregations considering becoming parent churches.
- Pray for God's blessing on more than 30 new missionaries serving around the world, including many recruited through collaboration and partnerships on the mission field. Pray especially for their support-raising and that our congregations will help them thrive in ministry.
- Pray for God to reignite passion for mission within the Christian Reformed Church. Ask God to raise up leaders from all generations to help connect their church to what God is doing in their community. Pray for Resonate staff working as coaches, facilitators, and recruiters to build relationships across all our congregations!
- Give thanks for a church that gives so much love and support to missionaries, church planters, campus ministers, and ministry leaders in more than 40 countries.

Office of General Secretary

The Office of General Secretary comprises the core denominational staff and programs that are needed to make a denomination run. This includes the General Secretary himself, but also staff who put together the annual yearbook, run the denominational survey, prepare candidates for ministry, plan and run synod, and so much more.

- Pray that the staff members of the Office of General Secretary would have perseverance as they respond to the many requests from councils, classes, synod, and our denominational boards.
- Pray for wisdom as our staff members start to plan for synod and receive communications, overtures and other materials for Synod 2024
- Pray that the Holy Spirit would renew the hearts and minds of all the staff and leaders in this office, so they could best serve the churches from a position of deep connection to the Lord.