

**Adoration**

A select few, such as Ezekiel and John, have seen visions of God's throne room. Yet, God continues to reveal himself through creation, his Son, his Word, his prophets, and his hurch throughout all generations. As we begin 40 days of prayer, it's fitting to start with adoration. Let us come before his throne and crown him with many crowns! Let us crown him through joy and sadness, trials and suffering. Let us crown him, for he is holy, faithful, merciful, and loving. Let us crown him, for he is worthy to receive all glory and honor forever!

"Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. Now, our God, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name." (1 Chronicles 29:11-13)

1. All praise to God - Father of our Lord Jesus, who blesses us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places because we're united with him! (Ephesians 1:3)
2. We exalt you, omnipotent God, who raised Christ from the dead and seated him on a throne above all powers, rulers, and authorities forever! (Ephesians 1:20-21)
3. Oh, the love of Jesus! Thank you for your extravagant love that is higher, wider, longer, and deeper than we can ever fully understand! (Ephesians 3:18)
4. All glory to God, who can do far more than we could ever ask or think by working within us by his Spirit! All glory to God in his church! (Ephesians 3:20)
5. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty - the one who always was, who is, and who is still to come! You are worthy to receive all glory! (Revelation 4:8 & 11)
6. Lord, your unfailing love is better than life itself; how I praise you! You satisfy me more than rich food! I praise you with songs of joy! (Psalm 63:3 & 5)
7. Thank you, Sovereign LORD, for your wise words that comfort the weary. Each morning you awaken us to open our understanding to your will. (Isaiah 50:4)

**Repentance & Forgiveness**

A few decades after Jesus rose from the dead, he gave a series of messages to the apostle John for seven churches in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). Of those seven churches, he exhorts five of them to repent. If, only half a decade after Jesus rose again, the vast majority of churches in the world needed to repent, what are the chances that Elmbrook *doesn't* need to repent of something? Perhaps, repentance is something we need to work into our regular rhythm and routine of “doing church.”

1. In Matthew 23, Jesus assumes the role of a prophet and denounces the religious leaders. Read Matt. 23:23. What might Jesus say to us today?
2. Rev. 2:1-7. How is Elmbrook like the church in Ephesus? How might we have "abandoned our first love"? How can we repent?
3. Does Elmbrook have a reputation for being alive, but is dead? What have we heard & not obeyed? What does repentance look like? Pray about it. (Rev. 3:1-3)
4. Isaiah 1:10-17. God says Israel's worship doesn't impress him. What is he looking for (v17)? How might this reflect Elmbrook? Pray about it.
5. Isaiah 58:1-10. What is true fasting according to Isaiah? Does Elmbrook need to fast? Ask God to lead us to be a kind of church in vs. 8-10.
6. Deuteronomy 30:1-4. God promises to restore Israel if they return to Him with all their heart & soul. How might we need to do that today?
7. Revelation 3:14-22. How are we like the church in Laodicea? What's God's great promise to them (v.19-20)? Pray that we'll be able to do this

**Lament**

Lament is part of the worship of God's people, where they brought to God their fear, anger, confusion, sorrow, regret, and frustration. It is said that a lament is a prayer in pain that leads to trust in God and his ways.

There are four movements in lament:

* We turn to God (Psalm 5:1)
* We bring our complaint (Psalm 44:9)
* We ask for help (Psalm 22:19-20)
* We state our trust in God (Psalm 74:12; 79:13)

This week, read the Psalm - add your complaint as you bring your lament to God.

1. O Lord, you know our sins and our failures. We cry for mercy and forgiveness. With you is forgiveness and hope. I will wait for you. (Psalm 130)
2. Lord, we bring our sorrow and grief. Hear our groaning. Have mercy on us, heal us, deliver us. You are a God who accepts our prayers. (Psalm 6)
3. Lord, hear me. I'm weary and distressed. Be compassionate; show me your favor. I trust in your Sovereign purpose for your church and me. (Psalm 102)
4. God, where are you? We are discouraged, lonely & feel oppressed. Help us! We put our hope in you - our loving Savior, Redeemer, and God. (Psalm 42)
5. Lord, we need you and long to fully love you. Our hearts are divided, and we don't honor you. I trust in you, God of love who fully loves us. (Psalm 86)
6. Lord, I am overwhelmed with worries & challenges. Deliver me. I need strength, energy, wisdom. You are my shield. You sustain me. Bless us. (Psalm 3)
7. Lord, we grieve the things that have been done to us & the people we have become. We confess our sins. Let your unfailing love surround us. (Psalm 32)

**Supplication**

Our focus and priority in prayer are to seek God himself. In setting aside our wants and desires and calling upon him, we align ourselves with God's plan and purposes, his way, and his will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. When we pray in the name of Jesus, we open the door for God's power to be unleashed in our lives, in the lives of those around us, in the church, and in the world.

1. We would engage in strong personal & corporate prayer by seeking God first in all things. (Matthew 21:13)
2. Pray that God would break barriers of pride and grow us in attitudes of humility. (Philippians 2:5-7)
3. Relational healing where there is brokenness. (Psalm 147:3)
4. Strong loving fellowship and church ministry that releases God's power and brings glory to God's name (Acts 2:42-47)
5. Many would come to faith, grow as disciples, share the good news of Jesus and pass it on. (Psalm 78:4-7)
6. Elmbrook would be a place where lives are transformed and God's name is glorified. (Romans 12:2)
7. Unity in diversity as we respond to his call and serve the Lord together (1 Corinthians 12:12-14)

**Surrender**

This week we focus on the idea of surrendering our whole self to the will of God. Individually and as a church, we relinquish control of who we want to be and choose to become who God wants us to be. We submit to course correction and pray God will give us a posture of humility and a sensitivity to the Spirit as we do so. We are indifferent to anything but the will of God and surrender our whole self to him.

1. The gentle whisper of Jesus is calling us into deeper intimacy with God as we give up what we once were for who we are becoming. (Matthew 4:19-20)
2. Today, tomorrow, and the next, we choose to relinquish control of our selfish desires so that we can be a church on mission for Jesus. (Luke 9:23-24)
3. Time, talent & treasure are from God. We give up our desires to use them for our selfish gain, offering them for the gospel's advancement. (Matthew 6:21)
4. Relinquishing all temptation for self-glorification or false humility, we commit to Jesus being our one and only leader. (John 13:30)
5. In submission to the Spirit, we offer a teachable posture that responds to course correction, gentle nudges & prompts that edify our church. (Psalms 143:10 or James 4:7-10)
6. We are indifferent to anything but the will of God. Help us, Lord, to want nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else than your will. (Colossians 3:3 or Luke 1:38 or Luke 22:42)
7. We choose to abide in Jesus as we lay before him daily, recognize we are nothing apart from him, and submit to being shaped by God. (John 15:1-7)

**Armor of God**

In these final days of 40 days of prayer, we would do well to use the closing words of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians. Paul knew that the churches he was writing to had a high calling from God but were continually attacked by "spiritual forces of evil" that wanted to thwart God's work. This is not unusual; it is the norm. Let's pray for our life together as a church, thanking God for the "armor" he has given us both for protection and in our mission to live and spread the gospel. With humility, we look to "be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power."

1. The conclusion of Ephesians is a call to live in the strength and power that only God gives us. Let's pray for renewed strength from God. (Ephesians 6:10)
2. Our deepest struggles in life are not with people but with "spiritual forces of evil." Thank God that we can stand against such schemes. (Ephesians 6:11-12)
3. Thank God for "the belt of truth," "the breastplate of righteousness," and that God has equipped us to spread "the gospel of peace." (Ephesians 6:13-15)
4. Faith is our shield, salvation our helmet, the Word of God our sword. Pray that God would give us a deep understanding that comes from truth. (Ephesians 6:16-17)
5. Let's commit ourselves to continual prayer. Eyes wide open, praying intelligently "for all the Lord's people." We are one church in Christ. (Ephesians 6:18)