

# Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

16 August 2015

**Then you shall  
call, and the LORD  
will answer;  
you shall cry for  
help, and he will  
say, Here I am  
(Isaiah 58:9, NRSV).**

Pulpit Evangelist

Ken Knowlton: 428-3494

Elders

Greg Briggs: 428-8756

John Cunningham: 428-0895

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:30 P.M.
Wednesday Evening Class	6:30 P.M.
Thursday Ladies Bible Class	10:00 A.M.

*Great are the works of the Lord,  
studied by all who delight in them. Psalm 111:2  
Please silence your cell phones and other electronic devices.*

## The Model Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13, Modern English Version (MEV)

“Therefore pray in this manner:  
Our Father who is in heaven,  
hallowed be Your name.  
Your kingdom come;  
Your will be done  
on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts,  
as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For Yours is the kingdom and the  
power and the glory forever.  
Amen.

## Prayer as Aching and Yearning

Scot McKnight

In the Lord's Prayer our desires are reordered into the ways of God and the ways of the kingdom. For seventeen years I taught college students a course called "Jesus of Nazareth." We begin each class period

by reciting the Jesus Creed [Matthew 22:37-40, -ns], and we end each class period by reciting the Lord's Prayer. I cannot tell you the number of times I have repeated, just after our recitation of the Lord's Prayer, how appropriate a line or two is for what we discussed that day. In other words, I stand with those who see in the Lord's prayer an essential guide to the message admission of Jesus. It falls short, of course, of being a compendium to Christian theology, though some have with ingenuity, if not downright manipulation, tried to wring all of Christian theology from this prayer. That won't do, but it will do to emphasize that this prayer expresses the heart of Jesus' kingdom vision. The Lord's Prayer teaches us to pray, not to theologize, but there is a theology at work in the Lord's Prayer, and that theology is the essence of Jesus' vision.

As such, it reorders our desires. We learn in the recitation, memorization, and repetition of this prayer to yearn for God's glory and for God's name to be held in highest honor, and we learn to long for God's kingdom (not ours) and for God's will (not ours) to be done. Then we learn to yearn and ache for the good of others. We learn that each person will have sufficient food, that each person will find reconciliation with God through forgiveness of sins, and that each person will be protected and preserved by God's grace from the snares of temptations and the grasps of evil (or the evil one). When we are done, our

desires have been reordered to God and to others, and in having those desires we find ourselves as God made us to be: beings designed to have proper loves, that is, love for God and love for others.

Does prayer make a difference, and if so, how? Is God changeable? How should we pray, and is there a better way to pray? It is too simplistic to propose, as Luther once did, that prayer does not enter into some form of an interactive relationship with God. Thus, he writes:

The reason He commands it [prayer] is, of course, not in order to have us make our prayers an instruction to Him as to what He ought to give us, but in order to have us acknowledge and confess that He is already bestowing many blessings upon us and that He can and will give us still more (Luther, *Exposition of the Lord's Prayer*).

Undoubtedly this is true, but it is inadequate as a basis for our theology of prayer. The biblical facts are clear: God's unchangeability, not the least of which is to withdraw judgment upon repentance, is more often part of the biblical narrative than the rather rare comment that God is unchangeable, which pertains to God's utter faithfulness to promises. Good examples include Exodus 32:14; Psalm 106:45; Amos 7:3-6; Joel 2:13-14; and Jonah 4:2. Other biblical facts are also clear, though it is not often clear how we ought to bring them into a cohesive and compelling order: humans are in some sense free, with the stronger position believing in libertarian free will, while at the other end we have some form of compatibilism. As Calvin expresses this compatibilist view, which is undergirded by a view not unlike the citation from Luther above: "Keep hold of both points, then: our prayers are anticipated by Him in His freedom, yet, what we ask we gain by prayer" (Calvin, *Harmony of the Gospels*)....

Prayer changes things, and I believe the biblical models of prayer, from Abraham to David to Elijah to Isaiah to Jesus to Paul and the early churches, affirm this interactive model in which prayer sometimes alters the path of history within the overall plan of God *in response to the prayers of God's people*.... Our yearning and our aching for God's name to be hallowed, for God's kingdom to come, and for others to experience the blessing of God can prompt God to actions that satisfy those yearnings and aches.

Scot McKnight, *Sermon on the Mount*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 191, 187-88.

## News:

Fellowship Meal today after services.

June Kowlton has passed away. June was wife of Lawrence Knowlton, Ken Knowlton's brother.

Services will be on August 22, 10:00 A.M. at the Miami church building.

Dede, Jonda Gardner's granddaughter, had surgery on Friday, August 14. The surgery was treatment for nerve impingement in her hand and elbow. If the treatment is successful, Dede may elect to have a similar surgery on the other arm.

Ed Curry is being treated for heart problems.

Ken Cocke is being treated for a mysterious infection and fever.

Jillian, Billie Martin's daughter is suffering from depression. She has much difficulty finding motivation to look for a job.

Jacey, Pete and Cindy Waller's granddaughter, has a back surgery in her future. Doctors are studying her condition in order to determine and recommend the best treatment options for Jacey.

Ani and Nick Self have health issues and emotional needs.

Billie Martin's coworker Bonnie Tracy lost her daughter last week. She has experienced several family losses in the recent past and the grief is weighing heavily upon Tracy and her family.

PJ Waller will be having back surgery.

Ken Knowlton is recovering from dental work.

Mike Cavassos' twin brother Mark is receiving treatment for a heart aneurysm.

## Extended prayer list:

*Tatyana Knowlton—macular degeneration*

*Ken Cocke—back and shoulder pains. Infection*

*Janet Radar—nursing home*

*H.L. Boling—general health and complications from leukemia*

*Mike Cavasos—constant pain, foot surgeries*

*Sandy Cavasos—degenerative disk disease*

*Nic and Ani Self—health and personal needs*



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<http://saffordchurchofchrist.org>