

THE LINK

29 Bedell Ave.
Saint John, NB E2K 2C1

September, 2016

Dear Friends,

I hope everyone had a good summer and that you are all reenergized and ready to take on the duties and responsibilities of another year. This is the time when students are returning to their studies and committees are gearing up for a new season. Are you taking on something new this year? Consider how God would use you. Is there a committee that could benefit from your experience and willingness to help? Is there someone who is lonely and needs to be visited? Are there neighbours that would benefit from an offer of help? Is there someone that needs a ride to church? How do you know where to give your time? Have you prayed about this? Perhaps God has a special place for you. If you ask Him sincerely, He will lead you to that place. How wonderful to be the Hands and Feet of Christ by showing God's love in the world. The blessings you will receive in knowing you are doing something special in His name are so many. I truly hope that you will experience them this year.

Betty

Take my hands and let them move, at the impulse of thy love.

Take my feet and let them be swift and purposeful for thee.

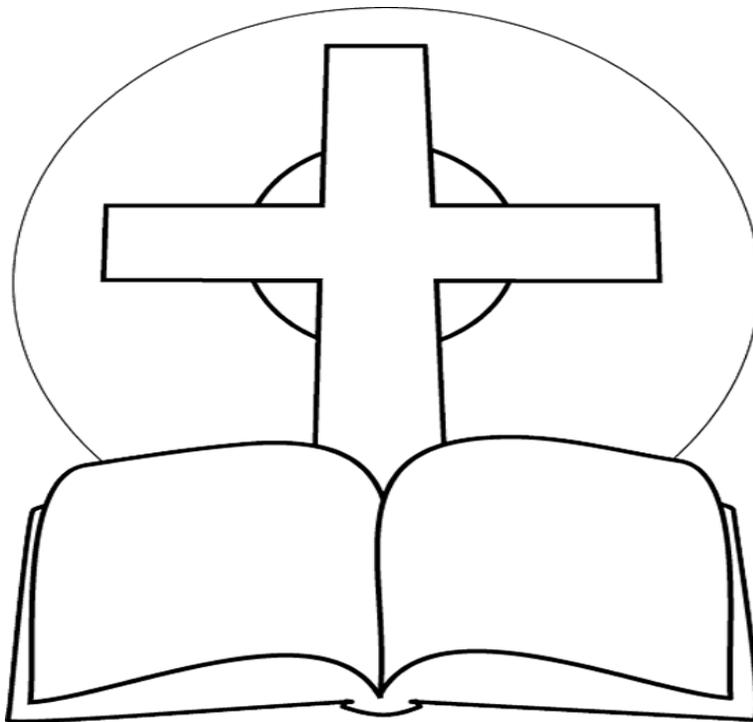
Take my will and make it thine, it shall be no longer mine.

Take my heart it is thine own, it shall be thy royal throne.

Scripture Passage Luke 11: 1-4

This is the passage where Jesus teaches the disciples the prayer we are familiar with as “the Lord’s Prayer”

1. He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.’
2. He said to them, “when you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come.
3. Give us each day our daily bread.
4. and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us to the time of trial.’



Study Luke 11: 1-4

1. What was Jesus doing before the disciples spoke to him? Can you think of other references to Jesus' prayer life? Check Mark 1: 35, Matthew 14: 23, Luke 6: 12., Matthew: 26: 36-40. What do we learn about Jesus and prayer from these passages?

What did the disciples ask of Jesus?

What do we learn of John from their request?

2. How did Jesus respond to their request?

How did he encourage them to address God? Is this how you think of God? Why is this important?

What does "Hallowed" mean? Do we always hallow the name of God?

What does it mean to ask for God's Kingdom to come? When will God's kingdom come? What will it be like?

3. What are we to request in verse 3?

What is meant by our daily bread?

How much are we requesting each day? Why just this amount?

4. What does it mean to ask for forgiveness for our sins?

How is forgiveness possible?

What is the condition attached to God's forgiveness for our sins?

Do we actually grant our forgiveness to those who have done wrong to us? Can you think of a time when you have actually forgiven someone? How did you feel after?

What does it mean to ask God not to bring us to the time of trial? What is our part in this?

Prayer is the Soul's Sincere Desire

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, unuttered or expressed,

The motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh, the falling of a tear,

The upward glancing of an eye, when none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech that infant lips can try;

Prayer the sublimest strains that reach the Majesty on high.

Prayer is the contrite sinners' voice, returning from their way,

While angels in their songs rejoice and cry, "Behold they pray!"

Prayer is the Christians' vital breath, the Christians' native air;

Their watchword at the gates of death; they enter heaven with prayer.

O thou, by whom we come to God, the Life, the Truthy, the Way;

The path of prayer thyself hast trod; Lord teach us how to pray!

Note: this was a favorite hymn during our NCF student meetings. The words have wonderful meaning and teach us much about the topic of prayer.

The Hands of Christ and Our Hands in Prayer

Recently I was privileged to lead a service in our church on this topic and would like to share some of the highlights with you.

If I were to offer you a 10 minute phone call to anyone in the world, who would you choose? This question was asked to some people in the last while and many answers were received including musicians, movie stars, political figures, royalty and a variety of people who have left their mark on our world. What if I were to offer you a call to Almighty God, the creator of the universe – the one who created you, who loves you unconditionally and who has a plan for your life? What if you could ask Him anything? Well the good news is that you can, and you are not limited to 10 minutes. God is waiting to talk with you now, today and every day. He longs to hear from you and to share something special with you. The line is always open – you will never be put on hold or get a busy signal. No special hardware is needed – not even a cell phone or computer – only a heart that longs to communicate with the living God.

For Jesus, prayer was an integral part of His daily life and His ministry. Jesus grew up in a Jewish home, where He would have prayed morning, noon and night as well as other times. The people of Israel recited the Shema 3 times a day “The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your might” as a reminder that God’s presence was always with them. Jesus grew up in a home of faith and was surrounded by prayer.

When we look at scripture we see many references to Him praying during His ministry. Jesus spent much time talking with His heavenly father. We learn that Jesus got up early in the morning and went to a solitary place to pray. [Mark 1:35]. We see that He prayed before important decisions [the choosing of the disciples Luke 6:12], after a session of healing or teaching [Matthew 14:23]. In one instance we are told that He spent the night in prayer. What was he doing before He was betrayed? He was praying in the garden of Gethsemane.

If Jesus felt the need for prayer in His life, how much more should we feel the need to speak often with our heavenly Father? We have a need for our spirit to connect with God’s Spirit. Some prayers involve words. Others do not. Prayer involves

acknowledging who God is and His presence with us. Perhaps you feel the arms of God holding you and are able to relax in that thought. We need to thank God for His goodness to us, and for specific blessings we have received. There are times that we experience some extraordinary beauty in God's creation and can only express a "wow" prayer to the Creator. There are prayers of confession when we acknowledge the wrong we have done and receive God's forgiveness. There are prayers of woe when we cry out to God, expressing feelings of loss, grief or distress. Those are times what He holds us tightly and gives comfort and special love. There are prayers of request. There are prayers for others. Even when we do not know what to pray for we can always bring the person to Him and place them in His arms. He knows everyone and their needs much better than we do. He knows us much better than we know ourselves. What a privilege to be able to bring those we care for to Him and leave them in His arms. What a privilege to rest there ourselves!

Paul tells us to pray without ceasing. How is that possible? I think that Paul meant that we need to be constantly aware of God's presence with us. Jesus was aware of His father's presence always and we can be too. Jesus promised to be with us always. We are never alone. God is constantly with us in every situation. How wonderful!

Prayer is not some kind of tool to get what we want or to bring things under our control. Rather, prayer is being aware of God with us always and yielding all that we are to Him. As Jesus prayed on the cross "Into your hands I commend my spirit." Let us commit our spirit to Him for now and for ever.

Betty

Upcoming Event – Saint John

Our annual Saturday retreat will be held on Saturday September 17 at the home of Betty Hitchcock, 29 Bedell Ave, Saint John NB. The topic will be "Living through times of Blessing and times of Stress, with Joy." We will gather at 9:30am, have a study in the morning, then lunch together another study in the afternoon and finish

by 3pm. There is no charge for the session and a light lunch will be provided. Everyone is welcome. We would ask that you register by September 11 by calling Betty at 648 9794 or email betty.hitchcock@rogers.com This is so we will have an idea of numbers for food. Please pray for this event and if you can come, we would love to have you share the time with us.

ADVANCE NOTICE - The Atlantic NCFC will have a workshop on Spiritual Care Saturday May 27, 2017 in Moncton. Please consider prayerfully if this is an opportunity you should attend. Doreen Westera from Newfoundland will be the leader. This same workshop was offered in other provinces in the western part of Canada last year and was well received. Please let others know about this upcoming session and plan now to join us next spring for a wonderful experience. Please contact Jan Locket [506 847 7629], or Betty Hitchcock [506 648 9794]

Donations for the work of Nurses Christian Fellowship Canada and should now be sent directly to Nurses Christian Fellowship Canada c/o Fronica Yiu,

38 Clydesdale Rd., Markham, ON, L3R 3S9 Cheques should be made out to Nurses Christian Fellowship Canada [not NCF] You may also contribute directly on line at the national website. Either way, you will receive an official tax receipt.

Submissions for The Link

You are invited to submit articles, letters, poems, etc. to be included in future issues of the Link. Please send submissions to Betty Hitchcock, 29 Bedell Ave. Saint John, NB, E2K 2C1 or email to

betty.hitchcock@rogers.com