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**GENERAL PRAYERS**

Come creator God and bring life to our worship. Shape our experiences, our thoughts and our feelings and make something new. Take our love and lives as our gift to you, who has given us all. And receive our praise to your glory. Amen

Out of darkness we hear your call to light. Through the storms we hear your calming word. From heaven you speak of love for us. From just ahead, upon the road, we hear your call to follow. As we hear your words spoken into our lives, so may we obey and live our lives for you. Amen

Gracious and Eternal god, give us wisdom to see you, diligence to seek you, patience to wait for you, eyes to behold you, a heart to meditate on you, and a life to proclaim you, through the power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (St Benedict 6<sup>th</sup> Century, adapted)

We ask you O Lord, to enlighten our minds, to open our hearts that we may know your will and be enabled to do it; through the grace of your Holy Spirit, and in the service of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

O God, you who seek in every age for loyal hearts ready to obey your call, grant that we be open to your voice so that when you call us we may respond gladly and readily, 'Here I am, send me', to the glory of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Thanks be to you, O Lord Jesus, for all the benefits which your life has brought us; for the pains and insults which you bore for us. O most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother, may we know you more clearly, love you more dearly and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen (St Richard of Chichester 13<sup>th</sup> Century, adapted)

Teach us good Lord, to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds; to work and not to seek for rest; to labour and not to ask for any reward, save that of knowing that we do your will, through Christ our Lord. Amen (St Ignatius Loyola 16<sup>th</sup> Century)

Grant O our God, that we may know you, love you and rejoice in you; and if, in this life we cannot do these things fully, grant that we may at least progress in them day to day, for Christ's sake. Amen  
(St Anselm 11<sup>th</sup> Century)

#### For discernment of God's Call

Lord God you call your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet un-trodden, through perils unknown; give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us, and your love supporting us; to the glory of your name.

**Amen.**

Free our minds, O God our Father, from all anxiety about ourselves that trusting you to meet our needs we may commit all our energies to the service of your Kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

#### The Spirit of Service

O God, our heavenly Father, whose Son Jesus took the form of a servant and became the Man for others; give to us the same spirit of serve and help us to follow in his steps, that with love and humility, we may give ourselves to those who need our help; for the glory of your name. **Amen.**

*(Frank Colquhoun)*

#### Evangelism

Lord, make us more effective witnesses for the gospel and deepen our understanding of the faith; that our convictions may be so strong that we shall want to share them, and so lucid that we shall know how to communicate them; for the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

#### The Call to Religious Communities

O Lord, who for our sake became poor, that we through your poverty might become rich; strengthen all those who, as your call and after your example, have left possessions, parents, hope of family, and their own wills, that they might take up the cross and follow you in the threefold way of poverty, chastity and obedience. Through the consecration of their lives and the power of their prayers may your Church be strengthened to be more perfectly conformed to your image: for you are alive and reign with the Father and the Spirit, one God, now and for every. **Amen.**

*(South African Prayer Book)*

#### Service Overseas

God, whose son Jesus Christ came to share our life on earth; hear our prayer for all who give service overseas, that in the spirit of Christ they may give of their best among those with whom they work and live; and through their service may be the cause of peace in the world be strengthened; for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

#### Increase in Vocations to the Ordained Ministry

Almighty God, you have entrusted to your Church a share in the ministry of your Son. Inspire the hearts and minds of many to offer themselves for the sacred ministry, that they may draw all people to your Kingdom through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty God, we praise you for those whom you have called to the ministry of the Church from age to age. May those whom you would use today know your will; give them understanding of the task

that awaits them; strengthen them as they prepare to fulfil your calling; and keep them humble and faithful in your service; for the glory of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

### The Ordained Ministry

Lord Jesus Christ, bless the bishops, priests and deacons of your Church: may they lead your people boldly, walk with them lovingly, and send them forth joyfully to proclaim the good news of your kingdom where you live for ever and ever. **Amen.** *(A.B.M.)*

Lord, our God, you have chosen ministers to serve you in your Church, and have given them a perfect example in the person of your Son; pour your blessing on your servants, that by word and deed they may proclaim your saving love, and so enable all your people to grow up into Christ, who is our Lord and Head for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### Selection and Training for Ministry

God our Father, by the power of your Spirit you call and equip your people for the work of ministry in the Body of your Son; guide those who have the responsibility of discerning where you would have each of us serve you; and bless the work of those who, through their teaching and example, prepare men and women for ministry, that the Church may be strengthened and your Kingdom. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### Those in Training

Let your blessing, O Lord, rest on those who are seeking to prepare themselves to be ministers of your Word and Sacrament. Give them a true understanding of the needs of the human heart and a sure faith in the adequacy of Jesus Christ to fulfil those needs. Keep them steadfast in the determination to devote their lives to bringing Christ to all; and help them so to use the time of their preparation that all their studies may be to contribute towards the fulfillment of their holy calling; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.** *(Emile. Fisher)*

### Celebrating Ministry

Father guide us by your Spirit to discover your call upon our lives.  
Grant us  
Humility to listen to your voice  
Courage to act when you call  
Faithfulness to follow where you lead  
And a selfless abandonment to seek your glory  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **AMEN.**

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Lord, time is your gift to measure and mark our lives.  
Grant us a willingness to offer all our lives to your service,  
That we might find ourselves awakened to your glory in others,  
Surprised to discover that you have gone before us,  
And the pace and poise in the everyday to discern you in all things,  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **AMEN.**

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Calling God,  
your voice was known in Creation,  
speaking light and life into darkness and emptiness.  
Your voice was known in a people,  
calling them to be light in the darkness of idolatry.  
Your voice was known in the person in Jesus,  
challenging followers to bring life to the world,  
and filling emptiness with purpose.  
Your voice still sounds:  
calling people to bear light to the world.  
We give thanks for those who hear and respond,  
and give of themselves in the service of your Kingdom.  
Many are the tasks, calling God,  
varied are the gifts, and endless the callings.  
We commit ourselves to you,  
that your Kingdom may come and your will be done. **AMEN.**

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God of the unknown journey,  
you call us to follow you,  
even though we do not know where you might lead us.  
You do not provide us an itinerary or map,  
but you do offer yourself as guide and travelling companion.  
providing us with all the nourishment and  
strength we need for the journey.

Loving God,  
you do not promise an easy path, blue skies,  
warm sun and pleasant company.  
You simply asked us to follow you.  
You said it was our decision,  
no demands, no pressure, no threats,  
no coercing or cajoling.  
Just an invitation, an offer of friendship,  
and the promise of your company on the way.

Sometimes we are frightened by your invitation.  
We like to know where we are going and why.  
The old familiar well tried routes, cleared by travellers of old,  
are much easier and more comfortable to follow.

Yet at every turn you face us with the request that you walk with us,  
but so often, as we tentatively step out with you,  
we are diverted by other voices, that call our names,

beckon us in all sorts of tempting directions,  
enticing us to linger in backwaters,  
dead ends and cul-de sacs of trivial pursuits.  
But nothing is lost, for you wait patiently for us,  
and in the noise and bustle of our lives we still hear your voice calling.  
"Are you still with me?"

### **Suggested Collect for use on Vocation Sunday:**

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified: Hear our prayer for your faithful people, that in their vocation and ministry each may be an instrument of your love, through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

### **LITANY OF GOD'S CALL**

- In the beginning, *God spoke and called all of creation into being.*
- All: And today, God is calling us to ministry.**  
*God called Abraham and Sarah to leave their comfortable home and set out on a journey.*
- All: And today, God calls us to step out in faith.**  
*With a burning bush, God called Moses to deliver the people out of slavery in Egypt.*
- All: And today, God is calling us to ministry.**  
*When Moses complained that he wasn't eloquent enough for the task, God called Aaron and Miriam to help Moses.*
- All: And today, God calls us to step out in faith.**  
*When Israel strayed from the path of righteousness, God called judges like Deborah to lead and guide the people of faith.*
- All: And today, God is calling us to ministry.**  
*God called the prophets: Isaiah, who worried that he had "unclean lips;" Jonah, who tried to run away from God's call; and Jeremiah, who thought he was too young.*
- All: And today, God calls us to step out in faith.**  
*Jesus called hard-working fishermen to leave their nets and become disciples.*
- All: And today, God is calling us to ministry.**  
*Jesus also called women—like Mary Magdalene and the sisters, Mary and Martha—to be his followers.*
- All: And today, God calls us to step out in faith.**  
*Even Paul, who once persecuted Christians, was called to proclaim the love of Christ.*
- All: And today, God is calling us to ministry.**  
*Centuries later, God's call came to the brothers John and Charles Wesley who founded the Methodist Movement as a witness to their faith.*
- All: And today, God calls us to step out in faith.**  
*Yes, even today, God is equipping us to serve faithfully.*
- All: And today, God is calling us to ministry.**

### **Prayer of Approach**

Welcoming God, you invite us to be partners in your purpose,  
not merely subjects to random chance, nor only submissive to natural order,  
but full participants in creating meaning in the universe.

Companion Christ, you invite us to be friends on the way, not merely slaves to your cause,  
nor only servants to your will, but full members in bringing love and peace to all.

Enabling Spirit, you invite us to be colleagues in community, not merely shells to be filled,  
nor only students to be taught, but full practitioners in ministering grace in the world.  
So, we come in response to your invitation, offering worship, demonstrating commitment  
and celebrating life.  
May our discipleship be renewed, our friendship strengthened and our love fulfilled;  
in the name and Spirit of Jesus Christ, we pray. **Amen.**

### **Prayers of Thanksgiving**

We bless you, great God for the life you have given us, for physical strength and mental agility  
for a place of our own in this world of great beauty and a part to play within the human story.  
We bless you for gifts and graces that heighten emotions and deepen our insight and strengthen  
our sense that life has a purpose centred for ever in your love.  
We bless you for the time that is ours and the opportunities given us to use ourselves and lose  
ourselves in the service of love.  
We bless you, great God for the life you have given us - may our lives become a blessing for others  
**Amen.**

We thank you, loving God for gifts and talents and opportunities to develop them.  
We thank you for the tokens of our love and the symbols of our service that we offer here today -  
for words suffused with meaning, seeking to express what in truth lies beyond words; for music  
that lifts us up expressing our longing for harmony on earth and our hope to share in the songs of  
heaven; for silence, rare and precious in which we strain to hear the whisper of your voice; for  
things made visible in composition of line and colour reflecting the beauty at the heart of creation;  
and for all the art and craftsmanship, the humble preparedness and openness to new experiences  
that your people have brought and gathered here today.  
There is so much among us for which we offer our thanks and our praise - but above all we give our  
thanks for Jesus and for this new life into which we are called in his name.  
**Amen.**

### **Prayer of Commitment**

*For one or more voices.*

Some are caught by the Good News, grace and glory  
of Christ alongside them in their daily life,  
and find a calling to be disciples of the Word and signs of God's presence.

Calling God, we pray for those whose hearts and minds  
are stirred by the call to be where they are.  
May the passion that dwells in them never compromise  
and the Spirit that fills them never weaken.

Some are attracted to the mystery, wonder and awe  
of holy places and the rituals of worship.  
and find a calling to be servants of the Word and Sacraments.

Calling God, we pray for those whose hearts and minds  
are stirred by the call to lead worship.  
May the vision that draws them never fade  
and the Spirit that fires them never die.

Some are challenged by the pain, tragedy and need  
of the real world and secular self-sufficiency  
and find a calling to be prophets of the Word and agents of God's justice.

Calling God, we pray for those whose hearts and minds  
are stirred by the call to work in the world.  
May the urgency that drives them never lessen  
and the Spirit that fills them never fail.

Calling God, we pray for ourselves,  
whose hearts and minds are stirred by your call.  
May vision, urgency and passion  
inspire and sustain us in our service,  
in the name and Spirit of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### **Post Communion Prayers**

Faithful God,  
may we who have celebrated this memorial of your Son's eternal sacrifice;  
evermore proclaim His cross and passion,  
not only with our lips but with our lives;  
through the same Christ our Lord. AMEN

Heavenly Father,  
whose ascended Son gave gifts of leadership and service  
to the Church:  
strengthen us who have received this holy food  
to be good stewards of your manifold grace;  
through him who came not to be served but to serve,  
and give his life as a ransom for many,  
Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN

## **BLESSING**

Almighty God,  
who for the salvation of the world gives to his people  
many gifts and ministries to the advancement of his glory,  
stir up in you the gifts of his *grace*,  
sustain each one of you in your own ministry; and the blessing ...  
*New Patterns of Worship*

Go forth from this time of worship listening for God's call in your life and empowered to respond faithfully.

Go forth from this time of worship knowing that you are being called to minister in God's name and that God will provide what you need to respond faithfully.

Go forth from this time of worship assured that God knows your name...God is calling you to new life...and God is calling you to Christian ministry.

Go forth from this time of worship ready to listen for God's call...prepared to be challenged...and encouraged to respond faithfully.