

OVERLAND PARK ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CLUB

COLLECTION OF LUNCHEON INVOCATIONS

February 21, 2000
Terry Goodman

When I was called to ask if I would do the invocation, or meditation, or thought for today, or whatever it is that we call it now, I was reminded (as has become our custom) to keep it politically correct and non-denominational.

With this in mind, let us pray that someday the importance of being politically correct will take a back seat to being spiritually correct.

Let us pray for the wisdom that allows us to encourage and celebrate the diversity of Rotarians around the world: Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and all others – rather than sterilize our petitions by denying our differences.

Let us pray that each of us becomes sufficiently secure in our own faith that we are not offended, or threatened, or somehow diminished by the open celebration of a different faith; and let us grow in the understanding that a commitment to diversity is, perhaps, the real tie that binds.

September 30, 2001
Lee Metcalfe

Let us turn to the source of spiritual strength that is within each of us and pray . . .

May those of us who have, share with those who have not,

May those of us who can, do for those who cannot,

May those of us who are loved, love those who are not,

And may we all live our lives so that the world is better off for having had us.

AMEN.

Sometime in 2001
Jack Swafford

A MORNING RESOLVE

I will try this day to live a simple, sincere and serene life, repelling promptly every thought of discontent, anxiety, discouragement, impurity, and self-seeking; cultivating cheerfulness, magnanimity, charity, and the habit of holy silence; exercising economy in expenditure, generosity in giving, carefulness in conversation, diligence in appointed service, fidelity to every trust, and a childlike faith in God.

In particular I will try to be faithful in those habits of prayer, work, study, physical exercise, eating, and sleep which I believe the Holy Spirit has shown me to be right.

And as I cannot in my own strength do this, nor even with a hope of success attempt it, I look to thee, O Lord God my Father, and ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Source: Forward Day by Day, a manual of daily Bible readings and devotions
Issued quarterly; published by Forward Movement Publications, an agency
of the Episcopal Church.

Undated
Lee Metcalfe

Let us each turn to our source of spiritual strength and pray . . .

May we have the wisdom to know what is right.

May we have the compassion to feel what is right.

May we have the strength to do what is right.

And may we have the character to defend what is right.

Amen.

November 19, 2001
Greg Musil

Daughter's Kindergarten Prayer:

If we all said a prayer,
For each other every day,
What a wonderful world this would be.

I will ask God to bless you,
And keep you in his care,
Knowing you'll do the same for me.

Brookridge Day School Blessing

April 8, 2002
Greg Musil

For Love

by John Wesley

Do all the good you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.

April 22, 2002
David Payne

Author G. K. Chesterson wrote,

“Romance is the deepest thing in life, romance is deeper even than reality.”

This quote is referring to what another modern author has called “The Sacred Romance” between God and us.

Please pray with me . . .

As a lover seeking his beloved, you are in hot pursuit of our souls. Though we imagine ourselves looking for you, more often we find ourselves in full flight from you. Even at the heights of our rebellion, you seek us out, following us into our own darkness. There where we thought we had finally escaped you, we run straight into your arms.

Thank you for your gentle pursuit. Our souls thirst to experience The Sacred Romance.

Source: The Sacred Romance, John Eldridge and Brent Curtis.

Undated
Greg Musil

Watch, O Lord, with those who wake, or watch, or weep tonight, and give
Your
angels and saints charge over those who sleep. Tend Your sick ones, O
Lord.

Rest Your weary ones. Bless Your dying ones. Soothe Your joyous ones,
and all for Your love's sake. Amen.

June 3, 2002
Patti Ritter

The Prayer

With Celine Dion and Andrea Bocelli
Lyrics by Carole Bayer Sager

I pray you'll be our eyes, and watch us where we go
And help us to be wise, in times when we don't know
Let this be our prayer, when we lose our way
Lead us to the place, guide us with your grace
To a place where we'll be safe

I pray we'll find your light
And hold it in our hearts
When stars go out each night
Let this be our prayer
When shadows fill our day
Lead us to a place
Guide us with your grace
Give us faith so we'll be safe

(We dream of a world without violence
A world of justice and hope
Everyone giving a hand to their neighbor
Symbolizing peace and fraternity)*

We ask that life be kind
And watch us from above
We hope each soul will find
Another soul to love

Let this be our prayer
Just like every child
Need to find a place, guide us with your grace
Give us faith so we'll be safe

*translated from Italian

Vern Barnett
July 1, 2002

Spirit of Generations, who 226 years ago inaugurated a great experiment with a self-correcting form of government and gave birth to a nation:

We are proud that from a rag-tag bunch of 13 colonies with insightful leaders, we have become a rich and powerful nation, bending ever more closely to justice and equality.

We are also humbled by the lessons we are learning about slavery, about, denying the vote to women for so long, about the lure of power in corporations and government, and about our place in the community of nations.

As we celebrate Independence Day, we pledge ourselves to your desire for expanding liberty and equity among all of us in glorious diversity, blessed to call America our home, in faithfulness to all peoples of earth.

God bless America!

Amen.

July 22, 2002
Joe McKenna

Adapted from Opening Words - by Tim Haley

Lord, amid all the noise in our lives,
we take this moment to stand in silence –
 to give You thanks for another day;
 to give You thanks for all those in our lives who have brought us warmth
 and love;
 to give You thanks for the freedoms we have as Americans;
 to give You thanks for the many gifts of life.

We know we are on our personal journeys here but a brief moment in time.

Lord, help us open ourselves, here, now and always, to the process of becoming
more whole –
 of living, loving and serving more fully
 of giving and forgiving more freely
 and of hearing and understanding more completely

 the meaning and purpose of our lives here on this Earth.

Amen!

August 19, 2002
Art Rubin

If you know anything at all about me, you know that I usually look for the humorous side of life. Now comes this new information, reported last week in The Kansas City Star, that laughter may, in fact, actually be good medicine. As reported, some of the benefits of laughter are:

- Aerobic workout for the heart and lungs
- Boosts the immune system
- Inspires creativity
- Enhances communication
- Enhances the possibilities for romantic success

(I seem to be the exception that proves that last item.)

Now comes Biblical proof – this from a well-respected clergyman who says:

Regarding the name Isaac, Abraham named his son Isaac, which means ‘laughter’.

Many dream of tranquility, and devote their lives to the goal of forging a tranquil world out of the chaos and strife that define its present existence.

But it can also be argued that the most tranquil existence is no existence; that if the goal of the Creator were tranquility, than this goal would have been equally – or better – served by not creating the world in the first place.

Little wonder then, that few of us derive any lasting satisfaction from tranquility. We want more from life than the absence of discord. We want joy; we want laughter in our lives.

Herein lies the ultimate purpose of life: to make the world a source of joy to God and Man.

May you live long and laugh often.

Amen.

October 21, 2002
Fred Goodman

Give us a quiet heart, and help us to hear the still, small
Voice that speaks within each of us. It calls us closer to you
And to grow in your likeness. It teaches us to do our work
Faithfully, even when no one's eye is upon us, so that we may
come to the end of each day feeling that we used its gifts
Wisely and faced our trials bravely. It counsels us to judge
Others less harshly and to love them more freely. It
Persuades us to see the divinity in everyone we meet.
Amen

(Adapted from Day by Day, a collection of thoughts by Chaim Stern.)

Solomon Melesse
November 25, 2002

A prayer with the following meaning:

Oh, preserve of Truth, guardian of Righteousness, and embodiment of Peace, Thou art the personification of Love and granter of Good. Millions of salutations to Thee. The light of truth burns spreading its light; Every part (of the body) and every cell sings your Glory. May every mind be peaceful and every life (exist) as beautiful as the Lotus. Millions of salutations to Thee.

May Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Jains, and Jews progress in the path of righteous life as brothers. Following your generous path, for you are the Love of our lives. Millions of salutations to Thee. You are the ultimate teacher. May there be the showers of infinite happiness. May the Lamp of Love burn with the fuel of our discipline and devotion. Grant us the boon of happy and peaceful lives. Millions of salutations to Thee.

From Sarva Dharma.....ALL FAITHS PRAYER
Hindu Temple of Greater Kansas City

Nate Harbur
December, 2002

One of the things I love about our Overland Park Rotary Club is that is is our policy and practice to be inclusive of religions in presenting our invocations. Struggle with God is a central theme in judaism, christianity and islam. Abraham is considered to be the father of all three religions. it is recorded in the book of Genesis that on his journey into Canaan, the grandson of Abraham, Jacob, lay down to rest by a stream when a messenger from God seized him in a mighty grip and wrestled with him until the light of dawn. The angel finally asked Jacob to let him go, but Jacob said he would not let him go until he blessed him. The angel asked his name and Jacob responded. the angel replied: “from this night you shall be called Israel, meaning: you have struggled with God and were not defeated. “

In the gospel of Mark it is written that while being crucified and shortly before he passed, Jesus cried out in a loud voice: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

A friend has recently introduced me to the beauty of Persian mystical poetry. One of these poets, Hafez was a fourteenth century Sufi mystical poet from Sharaz, Persia. He speaks of this struggle with God.

When i first began to love God
i thought i had fallen into the ocean.
but i was only on the beach.
Then i entered into the water,
and was thrown back on shore,
and then washed back out again into the waves.
God, why did i want this love?
and what is all this back and forth?

December 23, 2002

Pat Hill

Open our eyes, Lord
Especially if they are half-shut
 Because we are tired of looking,
Or half-open
 Because we fear to see too much,
Or bleared with tears
 Because yesterday and today and tomorrow
 Are filled with the same pain,
Or contracted
 because we only look at what we want to see

Open our eyes, Lord,
To gently scan the life we lead,
 The home we have
 The world we inhabit,
That is this season of hope and new possibilities
 We may find fresh vision
 And new courage,
For ourselves, all people
 And for all Your Children.

Amen.

Beth Pittman
February 3, 2003

I am honored to stand before you and ask that you bow your heads in prayer:

Only You, Dear God, and the seven astronauts of Space Shuttle Columbia, and countless others who have gone before us, know what You know. You are Eternal Happiness.

As seen on the Rotary wheel, You are the Hub of the wheel that is our universe. We are spokes of the wheel, spinning ever in a state of pursuit. The spinning is delightful at times, chaotic at times, and devastating at times. As long as You are at the center of our wheel, holding us together in your faith, grace and love, we will endure and be ever more prepared for our Eternal reward.

May we spend today and every day praising Your glory and listening intently for the inherent good which does come, even from tragedy.

In Your Name we pray.

Greg Musil
March 3, 2003

“A Prayer for Leaders”

King of kings, and Lord of lords,
We pray today for leaders and rulers,
May they be quiet in spirit, clear in judgment,
Able to understand the issues that face them.
May they think often of the people on whose behalf they speak and act.
Grant them patience, grant them courage,
Grant them foresight and great faith.
In their anxieties you God, be their security.
In their opportunities you God, be their inspiration.
By their plans and their actions may your kingdom come,
Thy will be done.

By Lilian Cox, the Complete Book of Christian Prayer.

“A Prayer for Those in Military Service”

Righteous God, you rule the nations.
Guard our brave men and women in military service.
Give us all compassion for those who will confront our military as enemies.
Keep our children, and us from hate that hardens,
 or from score-keeping with human lives.
Tough for a season our country might experience a time of war, let us live for peace,
 as eager for agreement as for victory.
Encourage those who serve this country and never let duty separate them from loyalty
to you, O Lord.

From the Presbyterian Worshipbook.

Greg Poth
January 6, 2003

God make my life a little light
Within the world to glow
A tiny flame that burneth bright
Wherever I may go.

God make my life a little flower
That giveth joy to all
Content to bloom in native bower
Although its place be small

God make my life a little song
That comforteth the sad
That helpeth others to be strong
And makes the singer glad.

God make my life a little staff
Whereon the weak may rest
That so what health and strength I have
May serve my neighbor best.

A poem by M. Bentham-Edwards

Undated
Greg Musil

As the soot and dirt and ash rained down, we became one color.
As we carried each other down the stairs of the burning building, we became one class.
As we lit candles of waiting and hope, we became one generation.
As the firefighters and police officers fought their way into the inferno, we became one gender.
As we fell to our knees in prayer for strength, we became one faith.
As we whispered or shouted word of encouragement, we spoke one language.
As we gave our blood in lines a mile long, we became one body.
As we mourned together the great loss, we became one family.
As we cried tears of grief and loss, we became one soul.
As we retell with pride of the sacrifice of heroes, we became one people.

We are:

One color
One generation
One faith
One body
One soul
One class
One gender
One language
One family
One people
We are The Power of One
We are United
We are America.

Frankfort (Kansas) United Methodist Church newsletter (2001)

January 27, 2003

Judy Gadd

Forever oneness who sings to us in silence
Who teaches us through each other,
Guide my steps with strength and wisdom.

May I see the lessons as I walk and
Honor the purpose of all things.

Help me touch with respect and
Always speak from behind my eyes.
Let me observe, not judge.

May I cause no harm, and leave
Music and beauty after my visit.

When I return to forever,
May the circle be closed and
The spiral be broader.

Amen.

March 17, 2003
Greg Musil

O God, you sent your Child among us to carry out a mission of love.
You send us among our sisters and brothers to continue that mission always.
Yet sometimes, we confess, we neglect the call.

Forgive us when we display a lack of interest in the plight of others,
when the horrors of their circumstances arouse more curiosity than
compassion.

Forgive us when we downplay our ability to make a difference for the better,
when we act as though the strands of common humanity end at town lines
or national borders.

Forgive us when we regard our outreach as optional,
when we place it somewhere other than at the heart of our faith.

Forgive and redirect us, we pray, so our service might be strong and our sense of
fulfillment deep.

AMEN.

Glen E. Rainsley, Hear Our Prayer, United Church Press, 1996, p. 90

March 31, 2003
Kristy Stallings

We pray today for the day when peace is known in all the world.
We pray that understanding will triumph over ignorance, that generosity will triumph over indifference, that trust will triumph over contempt, and that truth will triumph over falsehood.

Compassionate Spirit,

Bless the leaders of all nations.

Bless those in harms way.

Bless those who are suffering.

Bless those who are scared

Bless those who are dying and the lost and unknown dead.

Bless those who love and those who are helping.

Bless those who can do nothing but wait.

Bless those with limited information.

Bless those of limited understanding.

Bless those who, though well-intentioned, do wrong.

Bless us all and give us strength to be instruments of peace in all we say and do each day.

Greg Musil
April 21, 2003

Dear Lord,

The world you created is challenging.

We face too few issues that are black and white; most are clouded in gray.

Give us vision to see what is right.

We face decisions that are difficult and cause hurt or pain to some and benefit to others.

Give us judgment to do what is right.

We see short-term victories by violence and force and wonder whether that is the path to follow.

Give us direction to be firm but fair, tolerant yet principled.

We wonder about our values, our morality, our beliefs and our worthiness.

Give us faith.

Finally, Lord, we feel anxiety, we are nervous as uncertainty fills our world.

Give us your peace.

Amen.

Undated
Jack Swafford

A Prayer for God's Providence

Oh Lord, while it would be easy to surrender to doubt and fear, I choose to trust in your love. My confidence does not rest on any ability which I have to manage life. Although I am frail and my frame is dust, I am convinced that no situation is totally removed from your purpose.

Your faithfulness energizes me when my resources become exhausted, enabling me to find new possibilities in the most unlikely places. My days are often clouded by destructive forces, but I remain persuaded that eventually such forces will give way to the purpose of divine love.

My Lord, your constant care in days past assures me that I can trust myself to your love in days yet to come. Your providence assures me that the blackest night may usher in the brightest morning.

I do not know what the future holds, but I believe that you will remain close to me as I face it. So, dear Lord, as a child trusts in a loving parent, I entrust myself to you this day and all my days.

Amen.

Undated
Jack Swafford

A Morning Resolve

I will try this day to live a simple, sincere and serene life, repelling promptly every thought of discontent, anxiety, discouragement, impurity, and self-seeking; cultivating cheerfulness, magnanimity, charity, and the habit of holy silence; exercising economy in expenditure, generosity in giving, carefulness in conversation, diligence in appointed service, fidelity to every trust, and a childlike faith in God.

In particular I will try to be faithful in those habits of prayer, work, study, physical exercise, eating, and sleep which I believe the Holy Spirit has shown me to be right.

And as I cannot in my own strength do this, nor even with a hope of success attempt it, I look to thee, O Lord God my Father, in Jesus my Savior, and ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Undated
Bob Wahlstedt

Heavenly Father, Help us remember that that the jerk who cut us off in traffic last night is a single mother who worked nine hours that day and is rushing home to cook dinner, help with homework, do the laundry and spend a few precious moments with her children.

Help us to remember that the pierced, tattooed, disinterested young man who can't make change correctly is a worried 19-year-old college student, balancing his apprehension over final exams with his fear of not getting his student loans for next semester.

Remind us, Lord, that the scary looking bum, begging for money in the same spot every day (who really ought to get a job!) is a slave to addictions that we can only imagine in our worst nightmares.

Help us to remember that the old couple walking annoyingly slow through the store aisles and blocking our shopping progress are savoring this moment, knowing that, based on the biopsy report she got back last week, this will be the last year that they go shopping together.

Heavenly Father, remind us each day that, of all the gifts you give us, the greatest gift is love. It is not enough to share that love with those we hold dear. Open our hearts not to just those who are close to us, but to all humanity. Let us be slow to judge and quick to forgive, show patience, empathy and love.

August 25, 2003
Norm Craig

Spirit of life, be present with us this hour. Join us today as we gather in a wider search for truth and purpose.

In this quest, may we greet one another with open hearts and minds; may we inspire each other to consider new questions and seek deeper meaning; and may we cultivate wisdom and compassion.

Let all who enter this sanctuary see a welcome face, hear a kind word, and find comfort in this community. And may all that is done and said here today be in service to love and justice.

1997 UUMA Worship Materials Collection

September 8, 2003
Frank Caro

Prayer for Peace on Earth

(Delivered in anticipation of the second anniversary of 9-11-01 and noting our feelings of honor, respect, pride, courage and sorrow from that day.)

Send Thy peace, O Lord, which is perfect and everlasting,
that our souls may radiate peace.

Send Thy peace, O Lord, that we may think,
act and speak harmoniously.

Send Thy peace, O Lord, that we may be contented and thankful
for Thy bountiful gifts.

Send Thy peace, O Lord, that amidst our worldly strife,
we may enjoy Thy bliss.

Send Thy peace, O Lord, that we may endure all, tolerate all,
in the thought of Thy grace and mercy.

Send Thy peace, O Lord, that our lives may become a Divine vision
and in Thy light, all darkness may vanish.

Send Thy peace, O Lord, our Father and Mother, that we Thy children on Earth
may all unite in one family.

Hazrat Inayat Khan
Sufi
SoultoSpirit.com

October 6, 2003
Robert Stephan

Dear God,

We ask that you remind us that your wisdom is the source of peace and tranquility. Endow in each of us the ability to transcend the tendency to think of self and to know that happiness and personal fulfillment comes when we use our time, talent and treasure to help others.

In this world filled with war and famine of body and spirit remind us that we must never cease to work to ease the suffering of others and to know that we really are the same creation in your eyes.

And as to Ben Craig, Chuck and Linda Carlsen, and Dick Bond, give us the strength to persevere when one of their names or pictures are not in the newspaper.

Amen

March 2003
Bart Cohen

As we begin this first full week of war with Iraq, confident of military victory but not as sure that we will prevail in the ongoing battles for the hearts and minds of the peoples throughout the world and especially those in the Middle East that will continue to exist following the completion of the military phase of this campaign, our thoughts and prayers are for the safety of our military personnel and the wisdom of their leaders especially, our President, the Commander in Chief. The issues encountered are extremely complex.

It is hard to comprehend the motivation of people intent upon evil-doing, causing widespread repression of human rights, discounting the sanctity of life and willing to utilize both weapons of mass destruction and suicide bombings to further their distorted view of those issues. Remembering the admonition of a great statesman of the past and repeated frequently thereafter, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing," our nation, in its service to humanity and to serve the cause of liberty and democracy, has undertaken a momentous campaign using force, the only method that evildoers ultimately respect, to directly confront those evildoers.

Values are important. Terrorism, treachery and tyranny cannot be the equivalent of liberty, freedom and human dignity. In our daily lives we have the opportunity and responsibility to do good, to be of service to mankind. We have the freedom and the right to apply the meaningful values of Rotary. We, as Rotarians, gather together each week to rededicate ourselves to the objectives of Rotary, encouraging and fostering the ideals of service as the basis of worthy enterprise to assist us in accomplishing the goals we strive to achieve.

So let us as Rotarians resolve to apply high ethical standards in business and profession, to recognize the dignity of each individual in his or her occupation as an opportunity to serve society; to use the ideal of service in our personal, business and community life; and to advance international understanding, good will and peace through the world fellowship of men and women united in the ideal of service through Rotary International.

May 17, 2004
Melynn Sight

With the horrendous acts that have happened around the world in the past week, today would be a good day to pray for justice, objectivity, understanding, due diligence, for knowing there is not one RIGHT answer to any problem, let alone the biggest problems of human behavior.

So today we pray for hope.

"This is how hope works: it looks for the good in people and situations, rather than finding the worst; it discovers what can be done instead of throwing up its hands at what can't; it considers problems large and small, as opportunities to move forward when it would be easier to take a different way out; it makes us human, helping us find the best in ourselves for those around us and the situations we face. "

- Kevin Eikenberry

Undated
Greg Musil

Paul Harvey Writes:

>

> We tried so hard to make things better for our kids that we made them worse. For my grandchildren, I'd like better.

> I'd really like for them to know about hand me down clothes and homemade ice cream and leftover meat loaf sandwiches. I really would.

> I hope you learn humility by being humiliated, and that you learn honesty by being cheated.

> I hope you learn to make your own bed and mow the lawn and wash the car.

> And I really hope nobody gives you a brand new car when you are sixteen.

> It will be good if at least one time you can see puppies born and your old dog put to sleep.

> I hope you get a black eye fighting for something you believe in.

> I hope you have to share a bedroom with your younger brother/sister. And it's all right if you have to draw a line down the middle of the room, but when he wants to crawl under the covers with you because he's scared, I hope you let him.

> When you want to see a movie and your little brother/sister wants to tag along, I hope you'll let him/her.

> I hope you have to walk uphill to school with your friends and that you live in a town where you can do it safely.

> On rainy days when you have to catch a ride, I hope you don't ask your driver to drop you two blocks away so you won't be seen riding with someone as uncool as your Mom.

> If you want a slingshot, I hope your Dad teaches you how to make one instead of buying one.

> I hope you learn to dig in the dirt and read books.

> When you learn to use computers, I hope you also learn to add and subtract in your head.

> I hope you get teased by your friends when you have your first crush on a boy\girl, and when you talk back to your mother that you learn what ivory soap tastes like.

- > May you skin your knee climbing a mountain, burn your hand on a stove and stick your tongue on a frozen flagpole.
- > I don't care if you try a beer once, but I hope you don't like it. And if a friend offers you dope or a joint, I hope you realize he is not your friend.
- > I sure hope you make time to sit on a porch with your Grandma/Grandpa and go fishing with your Uncle.
- > May you feel sorrow at a funeral and joy during the holidays.
- > I hope your mother punishes you when you throw a baseball through your neighbor's window and that she hugs you and kisses you at Hannukah/Christmas time when you give her a plaster mold of your hand.
- > These things I wish for you - tough times and disappointment, hard work and happiness. To me, it's the only way to appreciate life.
- > Written with a pen. Sealed with a kiss. I'm here for you. And if I die before you do, I'll go to heaven and wait for you.

Undated
Greg Musil

I wish you enough sun to keep your attitude bright.
I wish you enough rain to appreciate the sun more.
I wish you enough happiness to keep your spirit alive.
I wish you enough pain so that the smallest joys in life appear much bigger.
I wish you enough gain to satisfy your wanting.
I wish you enough loss to appreciate all that you possess.
I wish you enough “Hello’s” to get you through the final “Good-bye.”

Internet e-mail inspiration.