



WE ARE
THE CHURCH

ST. LUCAS UCC

*Transforming lives
as the hands and feet of Christ*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

SEPTEMBER 29-30

“Saying our Prayers”

By Rev. Keith Herron

What Is This?

This brief guide is intended for use individually, or in small groups. It's your chance to dive deeper into the issues raised in the weekend sermon and to connect a Biblical story with your daily life.

Revisit the Text

James 5:13-20; <https://bit.ly/2y5A4u3>

Big Ideas Raised

- We pray in every worship service, three times a weekend, and what we're doing is as ancient as the first-century church who faithfully gathered together on the seventh day. So, what about this prayer business? I think it would be fair to say we are acting out a grand experiment, a laboratory, of prayer. We center our thoughts on how our needs are met by God's listening ear and on occasion we sense a hint of God's abiding presence. We are gathering at the place where our lips are drawn near to God's ear. I call it an “experiment in prayer” because it's something we do in hopes of connecting with God.
- What happens when we pray? The answer to this question is a delicate one in coming to terms with prayers that seemingly go unanswered. Ultimately, we must confess that we stand at the edge of the vast sea of great mystery. What does it mean to intercede on behalf of those who are sick, asking God to heal them, and answer our prayers?
- The insight about intercessory prayer is that we human beings have a pool of spiritual energy, just as real as our physical, intellectual, emotional and economic strength. In effect we have the power that comes in the form of courage and hope and endurance. Could it be that our prayers are forms of a redistribution of wealth of spiritual energy? Those who have the spiritual resources in abundance are called upon to offer some of what they have in reserve for those who are lacking in resources of their own. Look upon it, if you will, as a transfusion of spiritual energy much like that the gift of life that comes from the donation of blood, or even stronger, the gift of living organs for those who would suffer or perish without.

Questions Meant to Dig Deeper

- All of us have had prayers answered in some way and other prayers that were not answered. How are we to think about the promises we assume describe the power of prayer when prayer is such a mystery?
- What happens in us or through us when we pray?
- Prayer is not magic. It is not a tool we use to get God to act on our behalf. Can one find other possibilities for prayer to have meaning?

Revisit the Sermon

For a recording or a manuscript of this weekend's sermon, please visit: <https://www.stlucasucc.org/sermons-resources>