

Preparing the Soil

For week beginning on December 4

Being in relationship with God is more than just a once-a-week event. Just like any relationship, regular communication is needed. I challenge you to create a daily routine to prepare your hearts for God's word. This is something that can be done in less than 20 minutes per day. It just requires a time and place of quiet (before the day begins or after the day has ended or even on the train coming home from work).

Instructions: - Monday through Saturday follow each step. Don't forget that the Bible is not a newspaper – it is God's word. Reading the same psalm for six days gives God a chance to speak to you with the same words but in six different days (and, potentially, six different circumstances).

I. Invocation (Pray this each day):

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

II. Psalm 126 (Read this each day):

III. Daily Scripture Readings

Monday	Isaiah 61:1-4
Tuesday	Isaiah 61:8-11
Wednesday	1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
Thursday	John 1:1-9
Friday	John 1:19-28
Saturday	Luke 1:46b-55

IV. Prayers

Monday	For those in need of healing from <i>Yellow Pages</i>
Tuesday	For those serving in military and vets
Wednesday	For our shut-ins and caregivers and families in grief
Thursday	For our leaders in government and church
Friday	For family members and neighbors
Saturday	For yourself

V. Reflection Silent and/or written

VI: Hymn: *Christ, Be Our Light* ELW #715 (Sing each day): (For music, type "Christ, Be Our Light" in your search engine.) One example is: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5g0c4YeABTs>

1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness. Longing for truth, we turn to You. Make us Your own, Your holy people. Light for the world to see.

Refrain: Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in Your church gathered today.

2. Longing for peace, our world is troubled. Longing for hope, many despair. Your word alone has pow'r to save us. Make us your living voice. **Refrain**

3. Longing for food, many are hungry
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us Your bread, broken for others
Shared until all are fed. **Refrain**

4. Longing for shelter, many are homeless
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us Your building, sheltering others
Walls made of living stone. **Refrain**

5. Many the gift, many the people
Many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another
Making Your kingdom come. **Refrain**

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VII: Benediction (Spoken each day):

The Lord bless you and keep you: the Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you: the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. Amen.

The general idea and often the words of the benediction are taken from: *A Guide to Prayer* by Rueben Job and Norman Shawchuck, (The Upper Room: Nashville, 1983).