

HOW TO USE THE TREASURY OF DAILY PRAYER

The daily devotional resources in *Treasury of Daily Prayer* are organized around the Christian Church Year. You will want to determine what week it is in the Church Year by asking your pastor or consulting your congregation's worship folder.

You will find it helpful to use the ribbon marker that comes with the *Treasury* to mark the portions of the book that you will use on a daily basis. The following information will help you place the ribbon markers appropriately and inform you about how to use the *Treasury*. The ribbons are used in the order and for the purposes as indicated in the list that follows. If you use this order, you are less likely to tangle the ribbons as you use the *Treasury*.

Dark Green = marks the Church Year calendar section.

Gold = marks the current day in the Church Year.

Red = marks the order of prayer you are using (all orders are in the center of the book).

Purple = marks the additional prayers you may choose to use daily.

Light Green = marks your place in the Psalms.

Blue = marks "Prayers for the Baptized Life" or any place in the book of your choice.

With repeated use, you will discover that using the *Treasury* will become second-nature as you grow comfortable with its content and format. At that point, the *Treasury* will become for you a dear and faithful companion for your daily time of meditation on God's Word and conversation with your Lord.

The following offers a detailed, step-by-step guide to using the *Treasury* for the first time. While there are various options for your daily orders of prayer, we will assume, for this guide, that you are using Morning Prayer.

Step 1. Insert the tab of the ribbon bookmark in the spine of the book in the space between the pages and the cover. The dark green ribbon should be closest to the front cover and the blue ribbon closest to the back cover.

Step 2. Use the *dark green ribbon* to mark the section on the Church Year found on pages 2–13.

Step 3. Use the *gold ribbon* to mark the day of the Church Year.

Using the Church Year calendar marked by the dark green ribbon, or information available from your church, such as worship folders or a church calendar, determine what day of the Church Year it is.

IF THE DAY IS IN THE TIME OF EASTER, that is, a day from Ash Wednesday through Holy Trinity:

- locate the specific day, such as Monday—Lent 4, in the section Propers for Daily Prayer, pages 24–352;
- use the *gold ribbon* to mark the day.

IF THE DAY IS OUTSIDE THE TIME OF EASTER:

- locate the specific calendar date, such as 30 May or 4 December, in the section Propers for Daily Prayer, pages 353–1274;
- use the *gold ribbon* to mark the date.

Step 4. Use the *red ribbon* to mark Morning Prayer (which begins on O–24), or the order of prayer you wish to use. The Orders for Daily Prayer are found, numbered separately, in the center of the book and are distinguished by red-tipped pages.

Step 5. Use the *purple ribbon* to mark the additional prayers that may be used each day of the week. These Daily Prayers for the Christian begin on page 1306.

Step 6. Use the *light green ribbon* to mark the beginning of the Psalms on page 1323.

Step 7. Find a quiet place to pray.

Using the *red ribbon*, turn to page O–24 and pray Morning Prayer, singing or speaking the parts or praying it silently. Follow the rubrics (the directions in red), using the options for Common, Advent, or Lent according to the season of the Church Year.

Psalmody: The Antiphon and Venite (Psalm 95) are always prayed. You may use the *gold ribbon* to turn to the propers for the day or date of the Church Year. Pray the Psalmody included for the day or date.

If you would like to pray an additional Psalm, use the *light green ribbon* to locate the additional Psalm suggested in the propers for the day or date.

Using the *gold ribbon*, pray or sing the Hymnody for the day or date.

Using the *gold ribbon*, read the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Writing for the day or date.

Using the *red ribbon*, pray the Cantic.

Using the *gold ribbon*, pray the Prayer of the Day for the day or date.

Using the *purple ribbon*, pray the appropriate prayer for the time and day of the week.

Using the *red ribbon*, pray the Collect of Grace, the Lord's Prayer, and the final blessings of Morning Prayer.

It is recommended that you read the introduction to *Treasury of Daily Prayer* (pp. ix–xvi) to understand the rich resources that are included in this book.

INTRODUCTION



Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. *1 Thessalonians 5:16–18*

Pray without ceasing.

I struggle with this.

From childhood, I have heard pastors preach, and as a pastor I have myself preached, that the life of the Christian is a life of prayer. I have instructed adults and confirmands, written articles, and made speeches on the structure and practice of prayer. I have advocated for daily individual and family devotions. I am armed with good intentions and plenty of resources. However, I still struggle to maintain a regular and vital life of meditation on God's Word and prayer. Like my New Year's resolutions, or my intentions for a Lenten fast, my resolve to have a time of structured daily devotion soon dissolves. Numerous prayer books and devotions sit on my bookshelf as silent accusers, witness to my failure. And what is more, I know I am not alone, among either pastors or laity.

Oh, how different are my days when I begin with reading Scripture, meditating upon it, singing a hymn, and praying. Yet I let Satan nudge me away from my intentions. Like you, I know and appreciate the value that a regular time of devotion can bring to my life as a Christian. A spiritual discipline would be of benefit for both my faith and my life. Daily prayer should be central to what I do as a Christian. Yet I let the world encroach through the pressures of schedules and perceived priorities to rob me of this sacred time. Yes, most of us have a sense that our prayer life is not what it ought to be.

Take comfort in knowing that we have an Advocate who sits at the right hand of the Father and speaks on our behalf (1 John 2:1–3). Be assured that even when you and I neglect our prayers, the Holy Spirit Himself helps us in our weakness and intercedes with groans that even our words cannot express (Romans 8:26).

Treasury of Daily Prayer is designed to meet the needs of the Christian who wishes to follow a disciplined order of daily prayer centered in the Scriptures. It employs the rich resources of liturgy, hymnody, prayer, and writings from the Church Fathers and the Confessions. And it is designed so this period of devotion can be part of any schedule. *Treasury of Daily Prayer*, as much as possible, unites the resources for daily devotion together in one single place. While pastors and laypeople have numerous prayer books from which to choose, these resources often scatter the items for each day's devotion throughout the book or the book does not contain all that is needed for daily devotion, thus requiring the use of additional books.

It is with great eagerness that I have approached compiling and editing *Treasury of Daily Prayer* with the desire to make the practice of ordered daily devotions easier. This *Treasury* has been planned around the “daily exercise of reading and doing God’s Word” (Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord II 16). The Daily Lectionary, developed for *Lutheran Service Book* by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Commission on Worship, organizes and informs the selections made for each day’s devotion. Based upon this schedule, the full text of the appointed Scripture readings, along with the text of a Psalmody, hymnody, prayer, and writings, are printed in one place for each day of the year. Truly, all that is needed for a daily devotion is contained within the covers of this book.

WHAT’S IN *TREASURY OF DAILY PRAYER*?

Treasury of Daily Prayer is designed to be an all-in-one resource for daily devotions for individuals, families, and small groups. It features the Daily Lectionary developed for *Lutheran Service Book*. While the Daily Lectionary is sensitive to the seasons and rhythms of the Church Year, there has been no attempt to combine it with any of the various lectionaries (the appointed readings and propers for the Sundays and the feasts of Christ) for the Divine Service. Each arrangement of Scripture readings has its own particular character, pattern, and integrity. The Daily Lectionary, used in this book, becomes a true benefit in that *Treasury of Daily Prayer* can be used by any Christian.

The Daily Lectionary

One of the most distinctive—and beneficial—characteristics of the Daily Lectionary is the way in which the days of the year are arranged for ease of use: first, according to the Church’s Time of Easter, followed by readings arranged by the civil calendar date for the remainder of the yearly cycle. This makes it easy to know (and find) exactly where you should be on any given day of the year.

Treasury of Daily Prayer begins with Ash Wednesday in preparation for Holy Week and Easter. This choice of starting point reflects the origins of the Church Year, which began and developed around the Time of Easter (the weeks before and after the annual celebration of Christ’s Passion and resurrection). The days following Ash Wednesday are noted in relation to the Sundays in Lent and the Sundays of Easter, through the Feast of Pentecost and concluding with Holy Trinity. Most Christians are aware of and familiar enough with Ash Wednesday, the weeks of Lent, Palm Sunday and Holy Week, the Sundays of Easter, and the feasts of the Ascension, Pentecost, and Holy Trinity in order to find their way around this section of the *Treasury* without difficulty.

The rest of the *Treasury* is arranged according to the civil calendar and the dates that we all use to order and schedule our lives in this world. The Daily Lectionary begins this portion of the calendar with the earliest date that may follow the Feast of the Holy Trinity—that is, May 18, in those years when Easter occurs at its earliest possible time. The days progress consecutively through the months of the civil calendar (June, July, August, and so on through

February) to the latest possible date that may precede Ash Wednesday—that is, March 9, in those years when Easter occurs at its latest possible time. In this way, you only need to find a particular civil calendar date in the *Treasury* to find the appropriate readings.

Orders for Daily Prayer

In the physical center of *Treasury of Daily Prayer* you will find the orders for Daily Prayer. These are easily recognized by the color-tipped pages. These orders are taken from *Lutheran Service Book* and represent the rich tradition of daily prayer in the Christian community. Some users of this *Treasury* will be blessed by association with a congregation that prays daily the office of Matins or Vespers, or both. The majority of users will be using this book in small groups, in families, or individually. While some certainly will enjoy using orders such as Matins and Vespers in these smaller settings, or even individually, for others it may not be comfortable or practical. Therefore we have also included the briefer devotions of Daily Prayer for Individuals and Families (beginning on p. O-42). Whichever order you may choose, it is our prayer that you will consider a commitment to use one or more of these orders each day as you pray.

Seasonal Invitations, Antiphons, and Responsories (beginning on p. O-61) for use with Matins and Vespers provide you with texts to celebrate and commemorate the feasts and seasons of the Church Year. Many of these texts were developed specifically for *Treasury of Daily Prayer*. While this seasonal material is presented with Matins and Vespers in mind, several of the texts, such as the seasonal antiphons, can be used in other settings of daily prayer and devotion.

Propers for Daily Prayer

Propers are those texts within an order of worship or service that change with the seasons and days of the Church Year. In the *Treasury*, the propers for each day are noted and arranged according to the Daily Lectionary and are all included in one place. In most instances the texts chosen for the propers support one of the readings from Scripture. The propers for each day are:

1. Psalmody

The Psalter, the hymnbook of Scripture, is featured in two ways in *Treasury of Daily Prayer*. First, a Psalmody has been appointed for each day. The selected verses from a psalm that form the Psalmody set the tone and serve as an introduction for the readings that follow. A selection of antiphons (beginning on p. O-61) are offered and can be used with the Psalmody to add a seasonal interpretation.

Traditionally, the Gloria Patri has been used as the closing for the recitation and praying of the psalms to give a Christian focus to these ancient hymns. It has become a familiar pattern in the way a Christian prays the psalms. In an effort to conserve space, we consciously chose not to reprint the Gloria Patri as part of the Psalmody. However, the Gloria Patri does conclude each of the psalms in the Psalter section of the *Treasury*.

Second, for those who wish to use more of the Psalter as part of their daily devotion, or for those who may use the *Treasury* for more than one office during the day, additional psalms are suggested. No attempt has been made, either in the Psalmody or the suggested additional psalms, to present all the verses of the Psalter or even to represent a selection of verses from all 150 psalms. Instead, the seasons and the readings have been used to select psalms.

2. Old Testament and New Testament Readings

The daily reading of the Word of God is the core content of *Treasury of Daily Prayer*. The actual text of two readings, one from the Old Testament and another from the New Testament, uses the text of the English Standard Version. The schedule for the Scripture readings follows the Daily Lectionary found in *Lutheran Service Book* and does not repeat the Sunday lessons or Gospel, nor do the readings in the *Treasury* repeat themselves during the course of the year.

The selections from Holy Scripture from one day to the next follow a semi-continuous course through entire books of the Bible. This is consistent with the ancient Christian precedent and practice of *lectio continua* (“continuous reading”). This approach allows Scripture to interpret itself in its own literary context. Thereby it also informs and shapes Christian prayer and devotion over the course of time. The semicontinuous reading of Holy Scripture does not mean that one must begin with Genesis and read straight through the Old Testament in order, nor with the Gospel of Matthew and read straight through the New Testament, though Christians in the history of the Church have done precisely that. The semicontinuous reading pattern developed by the Daily Lectionary assigns the various books of the Bible according to the liturgical seasons of the Church Year. By way of example, the prophet Isaiah and his many prophecies of the coming Christ is read during the Season of Advent, while the Acts of the Apostles is read during the post-Pentecost Time of the Church. Thus the readings relate to the Church Year in a broad, general fashion, not in the more focused and specific way that one expects for the lessons and Holy Gospel appointed for particular Sundays and festivals of the Church Year.

Together, the two daily Scripture readings include approximately forty verses—an amount that should prove manageable and encouraging rather than burdensome and disheartening. Depending on circumstance and personal preference, you might read both readings during a single devotion time each day. In this way, you would read almost the entire New Testament and roughly one third of the Old Testament over the course of the year. You could choose to read the Old Testament in the morning and the New Testament in the evening. Or you could choose to use only the Old Testament readings for one year, then in the next year read the New Testament selections.

Many of the portions of Scripture that have not been included in the Daily Lectionary are noted in the *Treasury* as suggested additional readings at appropriate points throughout the year.

3. Writing

An excerpt from the writings of a Church Father has been chosen for each day in *Treasury of Daily Prayer*. The writing can serve as a third reading or as a part of your meditation in your daily devotion. Normally the selected writing reflects or coincides in some way with (a) the daily Scripture readings, (b) the festival or commemoration assigned to that day, or (c) the feast or season of the Church Year.

The contributors and editors of the writings have, as much as possible, let the Fathers speak in their own voice, while at the same time employing modern English usage. Notable as exceptions are those Church Fathers who wrote in English—here we have made less of an attempt to update the writing. It should be noted that the translations are not critical works, but devotional works. Should one want to become a student and delve more deeply into the writings of a particular Father, more complete source information can be found in the Acknowledgments (beginning on p. 1,471).

It is also appropriate to acknowledge the bias of the editors in the selection of the writings. A little more than half of the selected writings have been drawn from the Lutheran Confessions and the work of Martin Luther. Also of note is the inclusion of nineteenth-century writers, primarily Lutherans. There are certainly prayer books from other faith traditions; the breviaries of the Roman Catholic and Anglican traditions are most notable. While *Treasury of Daily Prayer* presents clearly the Word of God in all its parts, and is thus valuable and useful to all Christians, the editors of the *Treasury* have firmly in mind the confession and tradition of the churches of the Augsburg Confession, that is, the Lutheran Church. It should also be noted that there has been great selectivity in choosing what writings to feature from the Church Fathers. While great and faithful statements have come from many pens, some of these same writers have recorded works that are misguided, less than scriptural, and sometimes wrong. We have not made judgments of a writer's orthodoxy a prerequisite for including his work among the writings. Nor have we knowingly included writings that do not square with Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. In this way, prominent Fathers in the faith from all eras of the Christian Church are represented in this section.

4. Hymnody

For each day of the year, *Treasury* includes the text of one or more hymn stanzas. While attention was given to the appointed Scripture readings, the liturgical and sanctoral calendars were also given consideration as hymn texts were chosen. The hymn stanzas can be prayed, recited, or sung as they are presented, but they certainly invite the possibility of using the hymnal and singing the hymn (in whole or in part) in the course of daily prayer and devotion.

5. Prayer of the Day

The Prayer of the Day is often a familiar text drawn from the collects of the Divine Service. In much the same way as the Psalmody sets the tone for the day, the Prayer of the Day collects the thoughts and themes in the texts selected for each day, especially the New Testament reading. Several new prayers have been written for inclusion in the *Treasury*, many for use on the days appointed to commemorate the biblical and churchly leaders with whom God has blessed His people.

6. Biography of the Saint, Festival, or Season

On the days when a commemoration or feast day is noted, *Treasury of Daily Prayer* provides a brief biographical description of the saint or event being remembered on that day. Approximately 120 commemorations are featured in the expanded sanctoral calendar in *Lutheran Service Book*. These offer opportunity to remember the faithful departed from the Old Testament, the New Testament, the early and medieval eras of the Church, the Reformation period, and the Lutheran Church through the nineteenth century. Precedents for the names and dates of these commemorations include Anglican, Eastern Orthodox, and Roman Catholic sources, but also most prominently the precedents of our own Lutheran Church.

7. Book of Concord

Together with the reading of Scripture, the reading of the Confessions forms the backbone of any endeavor to study God's Word and doctrine. Following Lutheran precedent, *Treasury of Daily Prayer* offers a schedule for reading through the Book of Concord during the course of a year. The entirety of the Confessions has been distributed over the days appointed in the Daily Lectionary and provides a semicontinuous reading pattern. No particular edition of the Book of Concord has been specified for these daily readings.

8. Lenten Catechesis

During the six weeks of Lent, the *Treasury* offers the texts of the six chief parts from Luther's Small Catechism, along with further teaching from the Confessions for study and meditation.

Catechesis, or instruction in the faith according to the catechism, has long been associated with Lent. In the Early Church, instruction in the faith during Lent led to Baptism and incorporation into the Church at the vigil on Easter Eve. From the time of the Reformation, specific times of the year were designated for public teaching and preaching on the chief articles of faith. (See Ember Days, p. 21.) Preaching on the chief parts of the catechism as part of the prayer offices during Lent has a tradition among Lutherans.

Additional Resources for Daily Prayer and Devotion

The Psalter

Treasury of Daily Prayer includes all 150 psalms beginning on page 1,323. The psalms are pointed so they may be chanted, and a brief introduction to the section offers directions and the chant tones that can be used. When the *Treasury* is being used by two or more in a small-group setting, the Psalm may be recited or sung responsively.

The *Treasury* offers two schedules for including the entire Psalter as a regular part of daily prayer. For those who desire to read the Psalter over a thirty-day period, a schedule begins on page 1,436. Following the tradition set by the *Standard Book of Common Prayer*, the psalms have been divided into sixty nearly equal parts and distributed over morning and evening devotions. If you continue this practice of reading through all 150 psalms on a monthly basis, you will become as familiar with the Psalms as you are with favorite or frequently sung hymns. In February, you can read extra psalms on the last day or two of the month to complete the Psalter. In months with thirty-one days, favorite psalms can be repeated, or you might choose to use a biblical or liturgical canticle (beginning on p. 1,424), before beginning the cycle again on the first day of the next month. A second schedule on pages 1,438–39 assists those who want to sing all 150 psalms over a two-week period during the Divine Office.

Luther's Small Catechism

Luther and the churches of the Augsburg Confession have long stressed the importance of knowledge and understanding of the chief articles of Christian faith. Luther writes in the Short Preface to the Large Catechism: “[This catechism] teaches what every Christian must know. So a person who does not know this catechism could not be counted as a Christian or be admitted to any Sacrament, just as a mechanic who does not understand the rules and customs of his trade is expelled and considered incapable.” In the prefaces of both his Large and Small Catechism, Dr. Luther again emphasizes the importance of the daily study of the catechism. Toward this end, the *Treasury* includes Luther's Small Catechism (beginning on p. 1,446).

Prayers

It is not the intention of this *Treasury* to offer prayers for all types of private circumstances and needs. Most Christians likely already have one or more favorite sources that are used for this purpose. Nor would we wish, by a plethora of prayers for every possible circumstance, to suggest that *ex corde*, or “from the heart,” prayers are unnecessary or discouraged in personal devotions. Yet to achieve the goal of providing an all-in-one resource for daily devotions, and to set a model for personal prayer, several prayers are offered here. The section Daily Prayer for Christians (beginning on p. 1,306) provides morning and evening prayers for each day of the week that encourage prayer not only for ourselves but also for the Church and for all those in need of our prayers. Prayers for the Baptismal Life

(beginning on p. 1,312) encourage us to live out our Baptism in a right relationship with God and toward others. The Litany (pp. 1,310–11) is a majestic and ancient prayer of the Church. It has formed and informed the prayers of Christians for centuries.

Preparation for . . .

Christians live their lives from Sunday to Sunday. In the Divine Service, you hear God speak, announcing again His judgment against sin and proclaiming the propitiation made for sin and judgment in the person and work of Jesus Christ. In the assembly of Christ's Church, you hear the announcement that you have forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation in Jesus Christ, and that reality is manifested not only in your ear but in your mouth as you receive His true body and blood in the bread and wine of the Sacrament of the Altar. Strengthened in faith and prepared by means of God's holy gifts, we leave the Divine Service to live out our daily lives, our vocations, in relationship to God and to our neighbor. Our daily prayer, our daily devotions, are filled with the echo of what we received in the Divine Service.

Our daily prayer prepares us for the coming Sunday when we will again be in the presence of God in the Divine Service. In this way we live out our lives between Sundays, thirsting and hungering after our Lord's righteousness (Matthew 5:6). Two sections are included in *Treasury of Daily Prayer* to assist us in this preparation. Preparation for Confession and Absolution (beginning on p. 1,458) is designed to help Christians examine themselves in light of God's Word, especially the Ten Commandments, and to hear His absolution, the announcement of forgiveness. This section will serve the Christian well whether that confession is made individually or corporately. Preparation for the Sacrament of the Altar (pp. 1,465–70) puts before us not only the magnitude of our sin but also the overwhelming magnitude of God's grace delivered to us in the life, death, and resurrection of God's Son, Jesus. This section helps believers prepare to receive the Sacrament worthily, that is, in repentant joy and faith.



It is my prayer, and the prayer of everyone who has worked on *Treasury of Daily Prayer*, that this book will be a blessing to you: that it will enliven your prayer life, that it will be true assistance in the daily exercise of reading and doing God's Word, and that by it your faith will be strengthened.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. *Colossians 3:16–17*

Scot A. Kinnaman

General Editor

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