



## Being the Church

This Spring our members chose the mission statement: **Loving God and All People**. This Fall and into next year St. Mark Prayer team is calling our congregation to embrace our first vision statement to **pray**. Through the gift of prayer, God has given His people (us) the ability to shape the very future of the nation. As Christians, we have direct access to the Supreme Judge of the Universe. After acknowledging our corporate sins of abortion, sexual immorality, pride, worldliness, envy, apathy, and general unfaithfulness to His calling, we must pray that the Holy Spirit will work in the hearts of the lost and for their eyes to be opened to see the glory of God, His blessings, and a strong desire to know Him more.

The need for repentance, corporately and individually, to return to the God of the Bible is urgent. Our country and our leaders need our prayers - and Scripture instructs us to pray for them. (1 Timothy 2:1) and Psalm 72<sup>3</sup>

Why now? This September the "Illinois Family Institute (IFI)<sup>1</sup> is encouraging all Christians and all Illinois Churches to join together throughout the state to humbly seek God in prayer, beseeching His forgiveness for our national (and state) sins and ask for His for

- healing our nation,
- a revival of faith near and far,
- restoration of historic authentic Christian churches.

If there was ever a time that our nation needed the prayers of St. Mark Church it is today.

While the initial call from the IFI is for 40 days before the election starting September 25 or 26, we at St. Mark Church are encourage continuing prayers for the above which will reach even beyond 2025. We are also continuing in prayer for God's continual protection and flourishing of Israel.

## What You Can Do:

- Pray! Starting on September 25<sup>th</sup> and for 40 days thereafter, urge your Bible Study or any other church group to pray for these weighty matters during prayer time. Hold regular family prayer meetings. Let you kids know how important this 40-day period is. Gather a friend and spend time praying about the state of our culture.
- Watch “A Global Day of Prayer for America”  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lx44b\\_LfVwQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lx44b_LfVwQ)
- Go to St. Mark Church Prayer Guides <https://smlc.info/prayer-guides/>

**Prayer does not fit us for the greater work; prayer is the greater work.**

~Oswald Chambers

Here are four vitally important issues that we all should include in our prayers, especially during the next two months:

### **The Sanctity of Human Life**

Abortion “rights” activists are diligently and persistently seeking to challenge pro-life laws in [ten states](#) this year by placing the outright legalization of abortion on the ballot. We know that big abortion’s tactics will be dishonest and misleading. First, we must pray for God’s forgiveness for decades of innocent bloodshed in our land. Secondly, we must pray that lies and deception be exposed and thirdly that voters be convicted of the truth that every human life is “fearfully and wonderfully created” from the moment of conception by Almighty God.

Please pray:

- That our nation would finally repent of the evil of abortion.
- That the sanctity of human life would prevail in all of these locations and that every deceptive message of the pro-abortion forces would be exposed and confused in its delivery.
- That Christians would become educated and vote to uphold the right to life at every opportunity.

## Transgender Confusion

The transgender agenda is fierce and aggressive, and its messages lurk everywhere seeking to entice children into life-long decisions that lead to pain, regret and suicide. What is being taught to our children is a lifetime of horrific consequences which stem from denying the reality of God's creation of male and female.

Please pray:

- That citizens would speak out against and reject the radical transgender agenda taking over the public square.
- That the truth about the devastating lifelong effects of so-called gender "transition" on children would be revealed and that the very real harm and anguish caused would be acknowledged and understood – including the stories of those who have "de-transitioned."
- That parents would become aware and fight back against the immoral sexual content schools are teaching impressionable students.

## Parental Rights

In recent years, parents have become more aware of how bureaucrats at various levels of government are pushing harmful agendas on their children. Whether it is transgender indoctrination, critical race theory, "comprehensive" sex education, which includes the normalization of homosexuality and pornographic reading

materials, parents must be aware and vigilant when it comes to not only schools and libraries, but also doctors' offices, social media and the pop culture, among many others who actively seek to push sinful worldviews on unsuspecting and naive children.

Please pray:

- That parents/grandparents and church leaders will rescue impressionable young children from government schools and prioritize the discipleship of these children in the Christian faith.
- That our children/grandchildren would be better equipped to discern the truth when confronted with harmful, dishonest agendas and then respectfully be allowed to address those agendas with truth.
- Local governing bodies and lawmakers at all levels of government would recognize parental rights and enact provisions to reaffirm the rights of parents in the upbringing of children.

## Elections

After years of radicalism being imposed on citizens, whether it be the taxpayer funding of abortion, attempts to erode religious freedom or the proliferation of transgender mandates throughout the entire federal government, this election has the chance to determine whether or not these dangerous abuses of power will be allowed to continue.

Please pray:

- That Christians dedicate their lives to serving God and serving one another, praying fervently for our elected officials regardless of their party affiliation or religious ideologies.
- That any and all attempts at voter fraud will be exposed.
- That Christians here in Illinois, and throughout the nation, will engage in the election process, and will vote biblically. That God-fearing, Bible-believing candidates be elected to the U.S. Congress and the Illinois General Assembly.
- That outside forces and the media will not succeed in influencing the outcome of this election with deceptive narratives.

<sup>1</sup>The Illinois Family Institute (IFI) is an independent 501c(3) non-profit ministry dedicated to upholding and re-affirming marriage, family, life and liberty in Illinois. Since 1992, IFI has worked to advance public policy initiatives consistent with Judeo-Christian teachings and traditions, educating citizens so that they can better influence their local communities and the state. IFI does not participate in, or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. (See IFI's [Political Campaign Policy](#).)

**If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous, so that He will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

~1 John 1:9~

<sup>2</sup> Suggestions for seeking God's ear. Focus not on our own selfish desires, but God's will be done. Our goal is to honor and glorify God in all that we do, and especially our humble prayers for culture. Pray fervently every day for our nation and for all of our political leaders (including judges) through November 5<sup>th</sup>. Fast at least one day a week (length based on your health limits and doctor's guidance). Pray with others - family and friends.

- ♣ Acknowledge our national sins of abortion, sexual immorality, addictions, idol worship, apathy, etc.
- ♣ Pray for God's forgiveness and mercy.
- ♣ Pray for a spirit of repentance to sweep our state and nation.
- ♣ Pray that God and the Word would once again be revered in our culture.
- ♣ Pray that the Gospel would be boldly preached and exalted throughout the nation.

- ♣ Pray that we (as a culture) would better understand biblical justice and righteousness.
- ♣ Pray that God would expose public corruption and root it out.
- ♣ Pray that Christians would act on biblical convictions with grace, truth, love and wisdom no matter the cost. ♣ Pray for a softening of hearts, especially on the issue of abortion.
- ♣ Pray that our cultural attitude toward children would reflect God’s love, joy and commitment to these small images of the Almighty.
- ♣ Pray that the hearts of fathers be turned back toward their children.
- ♣ Pray that parents/grandparents would intentionally teach their children from God’s Word.
- ♣ Pray that Christians of every age would “seek God continually” and develop a biblical worldview on the issues of the day.
- ♣ Pray that the next generation would embrace God- ordained marriage and the idea of a committed life-long union.
- ♣ Pray that Christians would be intentional in blessing, honoring and caring for the elder members of our families, churches and communities.
- ♣ Pray for the preservation of religious liberty.
- ♣ Pray that our witness for Christ in the public square would be untarnished.

Psalm 72 can serve as a model prayer for Christians to use in praying for their civil authorities (1 Tim. 2:1).

## Psalm 72

*A psalm of Solomon.*

- <sup>1</sup> Give your love of justice to the king, O God,  
and righteousness to the king’s son.
- <sup>2</sup> Help him judge your people in the right way;  
let the poor always be treated fairly.
- <sup>3</sup> May the mountains yield prosperity for all,  
and may the hills be fruitful.
- <sup>4</sup> Help him to defend the poor,  
to rescue the children of the needy,  
and to crush their oppressors.
- <sup>5</sup> May they fear you<sup>[a]</sup> as long as the sun shines,  
as long as the moon remains in the sky.  
Yes, forever!
- <sup>6</sup> May the king’s rule be refreshing like spring rain on freshly cut grass,  
like the showers that water the earth.
- <sup>7</sup> May all the godly flourish during his reign.  
May there be abundant prosperity until the moon is no more.
- <sup>8</sup> May he reign from sea to sea,  
and from the Euphrates River<sup>[b]</sup> to the ends of the earth.

<sup>9</sup> Desert nomads will bow before him;  
his enemies will fall before him in the dust.

<sup>10</sup> The western kings of Tarshish and other distant lands  
will bring him tribute.  
The eastern kings of Sheba and Seba  
will bring him gifts.

<sup>11</sup> All kings will bow before him,  
and all nations will serve him.

<sup>12</sup> He will rescue the poor when they cry to him;  
he will help the oppressed, who have no one to defend them.

<sup>13</sup> He feels pity for the weak and the needy,  
and he will rescue them.

<sup>14</sup> He will redeem them from oppression and violence,  
for their lives are precious to him.

<sup>15</sup> Long live the king!  
May the gold of Sheba be given to him.  
May the people always pray for him  
and bless him all day long.

<sup>16</sup> May there be abundant grain throughout the land,  
flourishing even on the hilltops.  
May the fruit trees flourish like the trees of Lebanon,  
and may the people thrive like grass in a field.

<sup>17</sup> May the king's name endure forever;  
may it continue as long as the sun shines.  
May all nations be blessed through him  
and bring him praise.

<sup>18</sup> Praise the LORD God, the God of Israel,  
who alone does such wonderful things.

<sup>19</sup> Praise his glorious name forever!  
Let the whole earth be filled with his glory.  
Amen and amen!

<sup>20</sup> (This ends the prayers of David son of Jesse.)

Footnotes

- a. 72:5 Greek version reads *May they endure*.
- b. 72:8 Hebrew *the river*.

Below, outline this psalm as you might teach it to a group in order to encourage them to pray for a civil government. (To check your answer - see back page)

## Outline of Psalm 72 written by David, possibly for Salomon

- |                                      |                                    |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| I. Pray for the leaders              | IV. Defend against                 |
| A. Justice from a righteous heart    | A. Violence                        |
| B. Judge the poor with justice       | B. Oppression                      |
| II. Defend the cause of the poor     | V. Be healthy                      |
| A. Deliver the children of the needy | VI. The King Be blessed            |
| B. Protect the abused                | A. The land and people too         |
| III. May his enemies fear Him        | VII. The King praise and Bless God |
| A. May peace rule the land           | A. Forever and forever,            |
| B. May he defend the weak            | B. Amen and Amen                   |

Finally we make a decision **STAND, PRAY AND VOTE. WHY?**

