

**PRAYER VIGIL FOR THE PEOPLE
OF MANOR MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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INTRODUCTION:

The Bible instructs us to be in prayer for the affairs of the nations in which we live.

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Paul instructed Timothy and us today, *“Therefore, I exhort first of all that supplications, prayer, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence”* 1 Timothy 2:1-2.

Peter instructs his readers, and us today, to *“submit to every human authority for the Lord’s sake, whether it be to the king, as supreme, or to governors, as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and to praise those who do right....Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king”* (1 Pet 2:13-14, 17).

In these verses we get a clear exhortation from the Apostle Paul that we should **pray** for all people. This includes those who govern the countries in which we live. When we look at politics and those in power and those striving for power it can seem like this is a futile task. We can almost ask ourselves, what help will it be to **pray** for perhaps godless and proud people who are certainly not willing to be led by God? How will prayer help this? What is it that we should actually pray for? Can God steer the government using such people? What is the actual intention of praying as this verse exhorts?

Paul, and many throughout the centuries, knew that God listens to and considers the prayers of God-fearing people. James writes about Elijah: *“The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.”* James 5:16-18.

God-fearing people are not meant to sit back and accept whatever may come. We ought to fight in prayer for our leaders and for our country! Regardless of what type of person the leader may be. We read in Proverbs 21:1: *“The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, like the rivers of water He turns it wherever He wishes.”* *God’s eyes roam the earth to find those who are loyal to Him and fully support them. (2 Chronicles 16:9)* James also states: *“Yet you do not have because you do not ask.”* James 4:2.

We know that God is omnipotent and can do whatever He pleases. But we can't be fatalistic because of that. There are examples in the Bible in which God changed His plans because of prayer. He had decided to destroy Israel after they sinned by making a golden calf, but then Moses pleaded: *“Lord, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians speak, and say, “He brought them out to harm them, to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth”? Turn from Your fierce wrath, and relent from this harm to Your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, “I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of--- I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.”” So, the Lord relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people.”* Exodus 32:11-14.

Therefore, it is good to take heed to what Paul and Peter have written and **pray** for our leaders and ask God to guide their ways **{ESPECIALLY DURING THIS COVID 19 PANDEMIC AND NATIONAL EMERGENCY, RECOVERY AND AFTERMATH DURING THE MONTHS TO COME}**. We can ask God to act and steer matters in order that we can live “a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.” For example, we can pray that no legislation would be passed or decisions made that would hinder our ability to have Christian gatherings or would tear down the moral integrity of the country. We can also ask God to protect the safety of our homeland especially for the sake of our families and other loved ones. We can be sure that God is following along with our prayers as He directs the affairs of the lands in which we live.

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SUGGESTED PRAYERS:

Firstly, we should **thank** God for the peace and security we do enjoy today, for the stability that we so often take for granted in the United States (US).

Secondly, we can **pray** for the authorities to execute justice well and for wisdom in this task. The state's duty is to honor and protect those living decently and productively and punishing those who do wrong (Rom. 13:3-4). **Pray** that they would govern with wisdom for the common good, or the "welfare of the city" (Jer 29:7), not for personal gain, or under the pressure of lobby groups, or for the advantage of a favored few. Their concern must be for the wellbeing of all. Political issues are not usually black and white, cut and dried. They often involve compromise between different interest groups. Even Christian politicians will often disagree on best policies. Politicians truly need wisdom. **Pray** that they would have the foresight to make wise decisions, taking into account future generations and not simply the favor of the electorate to get reelected.

Recognize that God can use crooked sticks to hit straight! (*That's why He can use you and me!*) He can accomplish His purposes through unbelieving politicians regardless of their willingness to be used by Him.

Thirdly, pray that God will give wisdom, guidance and direction to all leaders of our national, state, and local governments about how to solve the multi-faceted crises that our country is experiencing now during this Covid 19 Pandemic, in the following fields, ***including but not limited to: (PRAY ALSO ABOUT OTHER THINGS THE LORD MAY PLACE UPON YOUR HEART!)***

- A. **Medical Health** of our people in the United States, and particularly the critical need to stop the Covid 19 coronavirus; to develop vaccines against the coronavirus; to determine appropriate medical tests to enable people to return to their workplaces, the marketplace, and to safely reintegrate into society at large. **Pray** that God will give ideas, insights, wisdom, strength, and stamina to President Trump, Vice President Pence, all members of the Coronavirus Task Force, especially Dr. Deborah Berx and Dr. Anthony Fauci who are key advisors regarding all medical aspects of the situation, the military services leaders and heads of hospitals, and schools. **Pray** also the same requests from God on behalf of our Virginia Governor Northam, his advisors and all other Commonwealth of Virginia officials and local leaders.
- B. **Economic Health.** **Pray** that our U.S. economy will be rebuilt as quickly as possible as well as the financial well-being of all affected by the Pandemic. **Pray** that God will give solutions to the federal task force being created to determine best practices to use to reopen the U.S. economy safely and expeditiously as feasible. **Pray** for inspiration for job creation in places with low employment; for local governments to inspire community spirit (and for churches to play their role in this too).
- C. **Politics.** During this time of crises, the federal, state, and local governments all have important roles to play to solve problems together. But, in many instances, politics has become very divisive. **Pray** that U.S. political leaders at executive, legislative, and judicial levels, will work together for the good of the country and our people and not just their political parties. **Pray** that righteous and just decisions will be made.

- D. **Environmental.** **Pray** for our leaders in all of government in their role of stewardship to use and safeguard the resources in our country.
- E. **Religious.** Secularism has not fulfilled the spiritual needs of communities and many are looking for spiritual reality—but not necessarily in the church. Here we need clear thinking on the place of religious freedom and freedom of conscience, the foundational freedom for all other freedoms. Most importantly, we ought to always **pray** that God’s Kingdom would come, His will be done, on earth – in our towns, cities, neighborhoods, regions, and nations, - as it is in heaven. **Pray** that the Great Commission that our Lord Jesus gave His disciples; i.e., the Gospel, the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ, will be proclaimed, in all times and in all places, even now in this very bizarre, and even surreal time of the Covid 19 Pandemic.
- F. **Thanksgiving.** Give God many thanks that we have the privilege to speak with Him through the gift of prayer and that He hears our prayers and answers our prayers in His perfect ways and perfect timing. **Pray** and ask Him to help His people to trust Him in all things, ***even now***, and not to worry but cast our cares onto Him!

In Jesus’ Name we **pray!** AMEN.

Excerpted from: <https://www.ywam.org/about-us/praying-for-local-governments/>