

75 Day Reading Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Psalms</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Psalms</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Psalms</u>
Sept 12	1, 2	Oct 7	51, 52	Nov. 1	101, 102
13	3, 4	8	53, 54	2	103, 104
14	5, 6	9	55, 56	3	105, 106
15	7, 8	10	57, 58	4	107, 108
16	9, 10	11	59, 60	5	109, 110
17	11, 12	12	61, 62	6	111, 112
18	13, 14	13	63, 64	7	113, 114
19	15, 16	14	65, 66	8	115, 116
20	17, 18	15	67, 68	9	117, 118
21	19, 20	16	69, 70	10	119, 120
22	21, 22	17	71, 72	11	121, 122
23	23, 24	18	73, 74	12	123, 124
24	25, 26	19	75, 76	13	125, 126
25	27, 28	20	77, 78	14	127, 128
26	29, 30	21	79, 80	15	129, 130
27	31, 32	22	81, 82	16	131, 132
28	33, 34	23	83, 84	17	133, 134
29	35, 36	24	85, 86	18	135, 136
30	37, 38	25	87, 88	19	137, 138
Oct 1	39, 40	26	89, 90	20	139, 140
2	41, 42	27	91, 92	21	141, 142
3	43, 44	28	93, 94	22	143, 144
4	45, 46	29	95, 96	23	145, 146
5	47, 48	30	97, 98	24	147, 148
6	49, 50	31	99, 100	25	149, 150

The Psalms Challenge

A 75-day journey through the Psalms

September 12 – November 25, 2010

30 Day Reading Schedule *(from the Common Book of Prayer)*

Day	AM	PM	Day	AM	PM	Day	AM	PM	Day	AM	PM
1	1-5	6--8	8	38-40	41-43	15	75-77	78	22	107	108-109
2	9-11	12-13	9	44-46	47-49	16	79-81	82-85	23	110-113	114-115
3	14-17	18	10	50-52	53-55	17	86-88	89	24	116-118	119:1-32
4	19-21	22-23	11	56-58	59-61	18	90-92	93-94	25	119:33-72	119:73-104
5	24-26	27-29	12	62-64	65-67	19	95-97	98-101	26	119:105-144	119:145ff
6	30-31	32-34	13	68	69-70	20	102-103	104	27	120-125	126-131
7	35-36	37	14	71-72	73-74	21	105	106	28	132-135	136-138
									29	139-140	141-143
									30	144-146	147-150

***Pleasant Street Christian Reformed Church
Spiritual Formation Resources***

Why The Psalm Challenge?

First, **the Psalms teach us to pray through imitation and response.** Real prayer is always an answer to God's revelation. The Psalms are BOTH prayer and revelations about God—the perfect soil for learning prayer.

Secondly, **the Psalms take us deep into our own hearts – one thousand** times faster than we would ever go if left to ourselves. Religious people tend to want to deny the rawness and reality of their own feelings, especially the darkness of them. The secular world has almost made an idol of emotional self-expression. But the Psalmists neither 'stuff' their feelings nor 'ventilate' them. They pray them. They take them into the presence of God until they change or understand them.

Finally, and most importantly, **the Psalms force us to deal with God as He is, not as we wish he was.** "Left to ourselves, we will pray to some god who speaks what we like hearing, or to the part of God we manage to understand. But what is critical is that we speak to the God who speaks to us, and to everything He speaks to us...the Psalms train us in that conversation." (from Eugene Peterson's Answering God)

What will I find in the Psalms?

There are four basic types of psalms: **Wisdom Psalms** capture right living before God; **Royal Psalms** emphasize God as King; **Lament Psalms** are characterized by complaint or distress; **Hymns of Praise** express joy and delight in who God is and what He's done.

How can I pray the Psalms?

Try to understand a psalm before praying it. A commentary is particularly helpful to understand the context of the Psalm. What was the Psalmist going through when he wrote this particular Psalm? The Psalms also point to Christ. Where might this psalm fit into His life?

Linger over a Psalm. Is there a particular verse that is particularly relevant to your life right now? Chew on it. Read it aloud over and over, with a different emphasis on each word. Why is this word chosen or important here? What difference would this make in my life if I believed this with all my heart? If I applied this to my life? Pray for yourself and others from it.

Use the Psalms to praise God for different aspects of His character.

Use an order to guide you: *see the back page*

How can I involve my family?

Participate in the Psalm Challenge together by reading aloud at Breakfast and Dinner, or at bed time. Give each member of the family an opportunity to participate. Even children who can't read may still be able to join in a refrain (ie: "His love endures forever" – Psalm 136).

Talk about the Psalms using these questions:

- What do you think was happening in this person's life when they wrote this?
- Have you ever felt the same way? When?
- What does this Psalm say about who God is or what He's done? How can we worship God through this Psalm?
- When in Jesus' life might He have prayed these words? In what way does this Psalm point us to Him?

How can I connect with God on a deeper level through the Psalms?

Get alone. In our busy society and frenetic schedules, we often need to pursue silence and solitude. Turn off your cell phone. Unplug. Close the door. Feel free to read the Psalms and pray in any posture you choose: dancing, sitting, standing, kneeling, or lying face down on the floor. Oftentimes journaling can help focus one's thoughts and attention.

Don't read for information. The goal of the Psalms is not education, but formation; not knowledge, but intimacy with our creator. So give yourself permission to slow down and read the psalm (or a verse, or a word) over and over again. Meditate on the Word. Chew on it. Marinate in it. Allow it to spring board you into your own conversation with God—you're on Psalm!

Engage your senses and emotions. Put yourself in the Psalmist's shoes. Imagine the life situation that gave birth to the Psalm, or the gathering in which it was meant to be sung. What do you see, hear, touch, taste and smell? What emotions are present? Immerse yourself in the world of the Psalmist, and try to connect with God at an experiential level.

Invite Jesus in on the Conversation. True, the Psalms were written long before Christ was born. Still—they are *His Words*. How and when would He take a particular Psalm on his lips? In what way does this Psalm point to Jesus, or reveal our need for Him?

Read and Discuss the Psalms with others. *See the questions in the column to the left.*

Great Books on the Psalms

Many of these books are available at the Book Table in the Fellowship Hall!

Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayer
by Eugene Peterson

The Book of Psalms (the Message)
by Eugene Peterson

How to Read the Psalms
by Tremper Longman

Reflections on the Psalms
by C.S. Lewis

Praying the Psalms
by Thomas Merton

Praying the Psalms: Engaging Scripture & Life in the Spirit
by Walter Brueggemann

Praying through the Psalms
by Eugene Peterson

Psalms: The Prayer Book of the Bible
by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Where Your Treasure Is: Psalms that Summon You from Self to Community
by Eugene Peterson