

Alleluia!

I will thank you, YHWH, with all my heart in the meeting of the just and their assembly. Great are your works, to be pondered by all who love them. Majestic and glorious are your works, and your justice stands firm forever.

.....
Reverence for YHWH is the beginning of wisdom-and those who have it prove themselves wise. Your praise will last forever! -Psalm 111

Dear friends on the journey,

The psalmist speaks of "*reverence for YHWH is the beginning of wisdom.*" One of the ways reverence for God is revealed is in the first word of this psalmist, the Hebrew word, Hallelujah, spelled "Alleluia!", often translated into English as "Praise the Lord." Alleluia is what we will be shouting come Easter morning. So, I invite each of us, as we prepare for the season of Lent prior to Easter, to think about our preparations that include praising God, all along our journey, not just on Easter morning but in every moment and seasons of our lives. Let us remember at the beginning of our Lenten journey that we are already, people of the resurrection, Easter people all the time.

One of the ways the psalmist reveals reverence for God is through this psalm/prayer/praise/acrostic poem. The psalm, translated to English, is praising of God, from A-Z. In the original text in Hebrew, it would have been the 22 characters of the Hebrew alphabet. Each line, written from right to left, spells out a word, message, or the alphabet, all words praising God. Through each line, the psalmist poetically shares with us, the sense of awe for God's amazing deeds. In acknowledging the wonders of God, we can grow in wisdom, as we also come to realize both our place and our limitations before God and creation. In one of our recent midweek pause videos, Ms. Jen shared about this Psalm and invited us to write our acrostic praise of God as our prayer. Have you done it yet? Why or why not? Well, here is the perfect opportunity to begin our Lenten journey by responding to this invitation now, again and anew. If you feel nudged by the Spirit and would like to share your praise of God in whatever expression as a mid week video, please reach out to Ms. Jen.

May we begin this season of Lent with a heart to grow in wisdom. Let us wonder what it would look like to experience a renewed reverence for God? What if we respond to the call to participate intentionally for 40 Days of prayer using our Lenten book study, "May it be so", as a gift? What would happen along the way, and how would we be changed together as we create a community with renewed reverence for God? I also invite you to come and receive ashes online or at our drive thru on Ash Wednesday and wonder what it would look like to receive ashes with renewed reverence and praise for our Creator, who not only creates life but also is wise about the mystery of death? What if our mission outreach activities with various partnerships in our community through this pandemic is renewed as part of our reverent acts of praising God for all God has done, is doing, and will do? What if we trust that even in the midst of this pandemic, disappointments and betrayals, natural disasters, ill health and complications due to Covid, intolerances, oppressions, hate speech, discord, brokenness, abuse, loneliness, depression, insecurities, failures, lostness, grief, war, addictions, separations, fears, anxieties, hunger, poverty, imprisonment, all manners of sin and evil, and death itself, when we are unable to offer our praise/thanksgiving/reverence that the very presence of the Holy One of God, revealed on the cross will carry us through? Surely, the limitations of humanity remembered on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday, yet still in the reverent light of our ever present, risen Christ and Savior would bring about once again, a resounding joyful shout, Alleluia! We journey always as Easter people, and God continues to form us in the wisdom, righteousness and justice of God.

I also invite you to try a Lenten acrostic prayer/praise/poem of your own or together as small groups in our church and communities online. How about displaying it on our home office walls and online boards? What would happen when we actively share our praising of God, in and through and especially in this pandemic season of our journey? Lent is a season in which we are invited back to remember our baptisms and practice all the means of grace available to us that we may be renewed in discipleship. We are guided by Wisdom, and when we arrive at Easter this year, may we be blessed that in the end is the beginning. **Alleluia!** Praise be to God!

May the Holy Spirit/Wisdom, renew us, to see, hear, and take action during this Lenten journey. Let us call upon the name of our God, with reverence!

Pastor Wongee

Below is the beginning of my acrostic prayer with reverence. It includes praises of God in and through acknowledging with reverence both names of our members at AUMC, as well as lifting up our needs and includes names from our prayer lists. It is in the process of our praising that we experience Wisdom and her delight in us as well.

A-Alleluia, Adonai, Almighty, Architect, Awesome, Advocate, All Knowing, addressing racism as a health crisis, anti racist actions, assisted living facilities and caregivers, Anne J, Alex J, Allison R, Angela, Andrew, ACT, ACP, Aya S, Alice, Amy C, Alex C, Adam E, Allison G, Aidric G, Amy G, Angela K, Allison K, Andy L, Ames H, Andrew M, Ann N, Adrienne O, Alex R, Allison S, Adam S, Andrew T, Ann Y,

B-Behold God's grace in each person I meet during Lent, beautiful is God's work in our church, schools, families, and our world, Beloved, Bread for the journey, Black Lives Matter, Burma, Bishop Elaine S, Bob H, Brandon O, Ben K, Bud B, Barbara B, Brad B, Brody B, Brook B, Britain B, Brad F, Bill F, Betty F, Bruce F, Bob G, Betsy A, Bryce S, Bob O, Brian R, Beth S, Beth S, Ben S, Bryan T,

C-Compassionate One, Comforter, Creator, Confidence, Consuming Fire, Communities of Belonging, Charles, CAP, Caregivers, Cynthia, committees, classism, Congress for meaningful and compassionate decisions, climate change awareness and action, Caralynn H, Chucky H, Chuck H, Chris B, Crossroads, Congregation for the Homeless, Carol C, Charles J, Chris B, Colleen O, Camille B, Carolyn M, Cami F, Crissandra F, Clarine G, Charlie W, Claire I, Cynthia M, Caden M, Cindy S, Charlie S, Doug S,

D-Delightful, Defender, Dwelling Place, Debra Circle, discipleship, disaster relief, DS Derek Nakano, Don A, Dave C, Dick A, Don A, Dorothy B, Dillion B, Dave C, Diane C, David D, Dawn G, David J, Dylan J, Darrell L, Dave M, David P, Doris P, Dave S, Dave S, Dan W, Dwain Z, Daniel O

E-Elohim, Easter Sunrise, Eternal, Encourager, Everlasting, Eathel A, ecumenical partners, Elizabeth K, equity, Emily B, Erin and baby Eddie, essential workers, Eathel A, Erin B, Emily B, Elyse B, Emily C, Ellen E, Erin F, Edd G, Evan I, Eric L, Erin M, Emily O, Ethan S, Eli S,

F-Faithful, Fortress, Forgiving, Father, from fear to hope during economic uncertainties, Ferrel F, Fallon F, front line workers, Fishes and Loaves, Flo M,

G-Gracious, Gardener, Glory, Great Reward, gifts and graces, Gwen B, Gerry C, Gayle K, Gary S, Geri M, Garnet O, Grant R, Gretchen S

H-Hears, Hope, Helper, Hiding Place, Hallelujah, Helen, Holy Spirit, Hannah, heterosexism, Hope Link, health care professionals, Hope B, Heather B, Harry B, Heather E, Hugh I, Heidi J, Hailey S, Howard B, Hal P, Harrison P,

I-Intercessor, Immanuel, immigrants, interfaith partners, immunization, Ispa D,

J-Jehovah, Justice, Judge, Joshua, Jin, Jaewon, Jean H, Jeff W, Jo W, Jessica, John S, Jen H, Jill S, Jay F, Jo F, Jacob F, Josh F, Jacob H, Justin H, Joanne S, Jacob K, Jason K, Jeff K, John M, James M, Jason M, Jim M, Jeff N, Jim P, Jacqueline R, Jean R, Jim R, Jean R, Jason T, Jack T, Jennifer T, Jon T, Jo W, Janice Z

K-Kathy M, Kristie M, Kyle B, Kim B, Kelly C, Karen F, Kelly W, Kaye W, Kate I, Kenny J, Kevin T, Kyle T, Kayla J, Kathy T, Katrina M, Kayla M, Katie O, Kathy O, Kevin S, Kristin T, Kathy T, Karen Y, Kacey M,

L-Love, Light, Luminous Darkness, Lenten 40 days of prayer, leadership in our nation/internationally, local businesses impacted by the pandemic, Linda D, Lea F, Lay Leader Joe Lee, Livonia Lowe (Admin. Council Chair), LGBTQ+, Liz A, Lynda D, Lorene E, Lea F, Lew G, Lois I, Lily L, Londa N, Liana B, Laureen T, Lydia T,

M-Merciful, Maker, Mother, Mighty Rock, Majestic Glory, "May it be so" book study group, Mike, Mary B, Marta B, Mackenzie C, Mabel F, McKenna G, Maggie W, Max W, Michelle J, Molly K, Marilyn K, Madeline L, Melinda L, Mike L, Monica L, Mark O, Melissa P, Mitra E, Marietta R, Michael S, Mead T, Mickie T,

N-newest confirmands and families, nursing homes and essential workers, Neverlyn L, Norma B, Nick S, Nicolai S, Nelly S,

O-Omnipresent, oralism, Norma L, Olivia L, Nancy P, Obert R,

P-Provider, Powerful, Present, Potter, prayer chain, peace with justice, PNW conference, Pam J, Patty F, Polly W, Pam J, Pam B, Peter C, Pam D, Patrick E, Patty F, Parker S, Peter N,

Q-Questioning

R-Refuge, Rock of our salvation, Revelation, Righteousness, Redeemer, racism, returning citizens, Renton UMC, Ruth (Patty's Mom), Ruth C, Roger I, Rob A, Ryan B, Randy B, Rick C, Robin P, Rich D, Richard G, Reed I, Rick W, Renee K, Richard L, Rachel L, Rory L, Ruth M, Ryan M, Rachel M, Roya P, Robin R, Ruth R, Rachel S, Richard Y,

S-Sees, Shalom, Sanctifier, Sovereign, Shepherd, Shield, Sanctuary, Shelter, Sustainer, Spring, Song, Samantha K, Sam J, Sunday schools and teachers, small groups, sexism, school administrators, St Peter's UMC, Sanctuary of Women small group, Sophia Way, Sharon H, Sue A, Sue B, Steve B, Sheila C, Sue C, Sara F, Sam F, Sofie F, Sam F, Sarah F, Sandy W, Shirley L, Sarah H, Sabrina M, Simon B, Steve R, Susie S, Susan S,

T-Truth, trustees, teachers, Tommey J, Tom B, Tom B, Terri C, Toni H, Tom D, Ted S, Ted Y,

U-U.S.A., unity with the understanding that it is not the absence of conflict, UMW, UMC

V-Valentine's Day college care cookie packages, visioning, victims of weather related disasters/suicide/domestic violence/covid/mental health crisis, vaccine, video team, Vision House, Vanessa B, Vince F, Vander L,

W-Wisdom, worship com, Wongee J, Wakia B, Wendi B, Wilma T,

X- Χριστός (Christos), xenophobia no more

Y-YHWH, youth group, you are not alone, Young J,

Z- ZOOM gatherings, zero sum game resistors,