

## 40 Days of Prayer- Sailboat Church- Joan S. Gray

### Guide to Forty Days of Prayer

If a church is to sail, there must be a critical mass of people who are willing to become sailors. Only God can make the changes in our life that will turn those of us who are by nature rowers into sailors. However, sailing begins with praying. Participating in interactive prayer puts us where the Holy Spirit can make us into sailors. This prayer guide is offered as a starting place for that process.

Begin each day's exercise by asking God to open your mind and heart to what God wants to do in you. Read the Scripture several times and think about what it says. Then read the section "Listening to God" and meditate on what God might be saying to you personally. Next, pray your response to God from your listening and meditation. Writing your prayer down will give you something to reflect on later. However you pray, make the prayer as honest and personal as you can. Trust God to meet you where you are and give you what you need.

Let these readings and reflections lead you into deeper intimacy with God. After you have gone through the forty days, gather a small group to go through it again together with you. This could be done in conjunction with reading and discussion one of the books in the "Readings for Further Exploration" section. If this seems to be bearing fruit, think about using the prayer guide in your church in classes, small groups, or a church-wide season of prayer.

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Day One

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 29: 1-14

**Focus Text:** “When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the LORD” (vv.13-14).

**Listening to God:** When was the last time you really searched for me? Your days are full of other things that compete for your time and attention, but I am the only one who loves you unconditionally and forever. I hold everything in my hands. So much of what you worry about I have already taken care of for you. It will work out. Today, set aside some time to let me bless you with a deeper sense of my presence.

**My Prayer:**

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Day Two

**Scripture:** Lamentation 3: 22-33

**Focus Text:** "It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD" (v. 26)

**Listening to God:** I am a God who loves to save. I like nothing more than bringing my Spirit and healing into your life. Please give me more room to operate! When you thrash around in complaint and impatience you block my blessings. Take a deep breath and give me time to complete the growth I am trying to bring about in your soul.

**My Prayer:**

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Day Three

**Scripture:** Psalm 42: 1-11

**Focus Text:** "As the deer longs for flowing streams, so mu soul longs for you, O God." (v. 1)

**Listening to God:** The desire you feel for me is put into your heart by the Holy Spirit. Rejoice in this desire! Hold onto it like a lifeline. Your yearning for me is a sign that my love has been poured into your heart by faith. Your thirst for me draws you closer and closer to me so that I can claim more and more of you. I am using your desire, as unfulfilled and frustrating as it may feel, to transform you into the person I want you to be.

**My Prayer:**

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Day Four

**Scripture:** Acts 17: 16-33

**Focus Text:** “Indeed he is not far from each one of us. For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’”  
(vv.27-28)

**Listening to God:** Know that right at this moment, I am very close to you. The air that you are breathing is a gift from me. The ability to turn a page or read a sentence comes to you right now from my loving hands. It grieves me when you act as though I am far away. You give me great joy when you recognize our intimacy and live like a son or daughter of God. I desire your good as a mother desires good for her infant. Trust me and don't be afraid!

**My Prayer:**

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Day Five

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:1-16

**Focus Text:** "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." ( v. 3)

**Listening to God:** I desire fellowship with you more than anything else in the universe. You often expect me to bless you most in your abundance. This is not the way I work. When I bless you in your abundance, you tend to forget me in fascination with my gifts. The gifts become an idol, and our relationship suffers. It is my way to bless you in your lack, failure, and emptiness. This way you don't forget me, and I can work my will through you in amazing ways. Look for my hand moving in your life when you are feeling lonely, incompetent, and out of control. Blessed are you when you don't run away from the means I use to draw you to me.

**My Prayer:**

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Day Six

**Scripture:** Psalm 34

**Focus Text:** "The LORD is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit." (v. 18)

**Listening to God:** It is sad that you often feel my presence least when you are in the most need. It should be just the opposite. Like any good parent, my love reaches its peak when my child needs help. I have everything you need and want to give it to you. Repent your lack of trust and come to me in prayer. I will bring good out of anything that is tormenting you.

**My Prayer:**

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Day Seven

**Scripture:** Mark 1: 14-20

**Focus Text:** "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." (v. 15)

**Listening to God:** I want to do something new in you and in your church. This new thing is a piece with what I have been doing with you, but it is also fresh and different. I want you to turn away from your contentment with the way things are and ask me what I want you to be doing. I want you to partner with me now, not next week, or next year. There are people all around you who need what only I can give. Let me use you to be good news to them.

**My Prayer:**