



Church of the Brethren
Spring 2011 prayer calendar
Continuing the Work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together.

Week of April 3: In the Gospel of John Jesus heals a blind man by spreading mud on his eyes (John 9) and uses the event to reveal that he is "the light of the world." The image of light revealing everything should hit home to us all as we turn on the light switches in our houses. Try to walk through a room without turning on the lights. What does this tell you about looking to Jesus as the Light of the World? How might you pray for new light in your faith, new understanding of Christ's death and resurrection?

Week of April 10: As we journey through Lent and move closer to Easter the events in scripture get worse before they get better. The psalmist in Psalm 130 reveals this in the lectionary reading for this week: "Out of the depths have I called out to you, O Lord." What are the depths around you? What does it mean to you that Christ comes to the depths with you? How do you pray in the depths before the Resurrection?

Week of April 17 - Palm Sunday: The crowd we see welcoming Jesus as he enters Jerusalem is the same crowd which asks for his crucifixion. The statement of the gospel writers is striking - those who praise Jesus just as easily turn on the Christ. How do you or your congregation turn on Jesus? Pray both for forgiveness and the strength to follow Christ through death into Resurrection.

Week of April 24 - Easter: Christ is Risen, Christ is Risen indeed! The great mystery of Easter is that Christ rose in the body, offering us that same gift as the first fruits of the dead. How might you live the resurrection of the body around you today? Pray that opportunities may come which will make space for you reveal Easter to those around you.

Week of May 1 - National Youth Sunday: This Sunday congregations will worship through the inspired leadership of their young people. How might you make space for these youth to take part in the life of the congregation beyond this Sunday? What are your prayers for their life and faith? How might you take part in their lives, given your prayers? <http://www.brethren.org/youthministryresources>

Week of May 8 - Mother's Day: A mother is a special grace from God, from the ways she gives life to her guiding presence throughout our lives. Yet, a mother need not be biological. In our congregations the care, guidance and prayers of many women give life to the community in countless ways. What names do you lift in thanks to God, those of both biological and spiritual mothers?

Week of May 15: This week members of the Church of the Brethren Spiritual Directors Network will gather for their annual retreat. Pray for their ministries and the persons who receive the gift of spiritual direction from them. As you pray, consider those who have been formative companions on your own journey of faith. Give thanks for the gift of their questions and prayers.

Week of May 22: As young adults from across the denomination gather at Inspiration Hills in Northern Ohio pray for their travels and their time together. Ask that their conversations about ReThinking Church may revive and encourage our congregations. <http://www.brethren.org/YAC>

Week of May 29: This week on our journey through the life of Jesus in the days after Easter we recall Christ's ascension. In Luke we are told that after seeing Jesus ascend, "they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy," the same city in which Jesus was crucified and where they feared for their own lives (Luke 24:53). What does it look like to return to the world after a mountain top time of worship? What around your congregation do you fear? Pray that Christ might send you out, empowered by worship and filled with Joy?

Week of June 5: As the summer begins, take time to consider the many camps within the Church of the Brethren. Pray for the staff, volunteers and campers who will take time away in God's creation. May their time of worship, study, community building, and natural exploration form their lives of faith and encourage their growth in Christ.

Week of June 12 - Pentecost: On the day of Pentecost we remember the giving of the Holy Spirit to the Church. This week Junior High youth will gather in Elizabethtown, PA to be the Church. Pray that the spirit will move among them, through word, song, and games. Lift up the many speakers, advisors and planners that their faith and love might reveal the true Church to them.

Week of June 19 - Father's Day: Sociologists remind us that one of the major crises of our day is the waning role of the father. Yet, this week we will celebrate the many father figures in our communities. Pray that this recollection will encourage the men in our communities to take on mentoring roles, for both biological children and the young people of our congregations. Give thanks for the many men who have taken part in the formation of your community.

Week of June 26: Throughout the year we as the Church have been in deep conversations and discernment. Now, for the first time since Pittsburgh we gather to pray, worship and discern as one body, the body of Christ. Pray that our time in Grand Rapids will be renewing. Pray for our leaders that they might support the work of discernment with wisdom and compassion. And most of all, ask that we might renew our commitment to one another as sisters and brothers in Christ.