

**An outline of the course “Why Pray?”  
at Christ Church, Accokeek  
September 15-November 10, 2017**

**Aims / Objectives / Goals of the Course:**

- To help people grow in their prayer life by inspiring them and by giving them tools.
- To help Christ Church discern its prayer vocation.

**Things to keep in mind as you consider attending:**

- You may not be able to come to every session, but please come to the ones you can!
- Please pray for the course, its speakers and all attendees.

**Schedule for Each Night:**

We will meet Friday nights from 6 pm to 8 pm from September 15 until November 10 (skipping October 6). The format and time frame will follow what is often used for the Alpha Course.

- 6:00pm – Dinner
- 6:30pm – Song; Kids dismissed (12 year olds and under)
- 6:35pm – Father Brian gives announcements / takes care of housekeeping
- 6:40pm – Speaker begins the teaching
- 7:10pm – Speaker concludes teaching
- 7:15pm – Attendees break into small groups
- 8:00pm – Groups finish their discussion and prayer time

**The Schedule of Speakers and Topics:**

**Week 1 (September 15)**

- Topic:* Prayer: Just do it.  
*Speaker:* The Rev. Father Brian Vander Wel, Rector of Christ Church  
*Summary:* The course begins with an introduction to what prayer is with some suggestions for how to maintain or begin a regular life of prayer. We will discuss the basis of prayer and give an introduction to the prayer offices.

**Week 2 (September 22)**

- Topic:* Three-fold prayer  
*Speaker:* The. Right Rev. Bruce MacPherson,  
Supplemental Overseeing Bishop of Christ Church

*Summary:* Using Jesus' high priestly prayer found in John 17, we will look at the setting that is before us today as we share in Jesus' prayer for perfect obedience as we seek to win the world to God.

### **Week 3 (September 29)**

*Topic:* Psalms: the Heartbeat of Prayer

*Speaker:* Father Brian

*Summary:* This class will discuss how to pray with the Psalms focusing on what might be gleaned from them as we pray them.

### **Week 4 (October 13)**

*Topic:* An Introduction to Spiritual Direction

*Speaker:* Ann Bodling, trained spiritual director and member of Christ Church

*Summary:* Ann will talk about what spiritual direction is and focus on the role that prayer plays within it.

### **Week 5 (October 20)**

*Topic:* Praying for Healing

*Speaker:* The Rev. Kathleen Christopher, the Falls Church, Anglican

*Summary:* Kathleen and her team will describe what a healing prayer ministry is, give Scriptural basis for it and speak of their experiences in it. They will also give participants an opportunity to experience the power of healing prayer and inner healing prayer that night. (There may or may not be time for small group discussion.)

### **Week 6 (October 27)**

*Topic:* The Questions we ask God

*Speaker:* Father Brian

*Summary:* Using the questions that the Psalmists ask God as a starting point, this class will focus on our need to address God with our deepest concerns as well as and the permission and form the Psalms give us in asking.

### **Week 7 (November 3)**

*Topic:* The Roots of the Prayer Offices

*Speaker:* The Rev. Dr. Steven Peay,  
former Dean and President of Nashotah House seminary  
(He succeeded Bishop Salmon in this post.)

*Summary:* Father Peay will discuss how Anglicanism, in its Prayer Book tradition, draws from Benedictine monastic communities. He will talk about how parishes can learn to seek to live this tradition in their corporate prayer life.

### **Week 8 (November 10)**

*Topic:* Prayer in the Silence and a wrap up of the course

*Speakers:* Beth Bogard Vander Wel & Father Brian

*Summary:* Beth will discuss her experiences in and understanding of her silent prayer time as well as her attendance at “Holy Hour,” an hour of adoration at a local church. Father Brian will also lead a discussion on the question: Where do we go from here?

**In addition to the Friday night prayer classes, we also offer two Quiet Day retreats:**

- **Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>** Bishop MacPherson will lead a Quiet Day from 9:30 am to noon providing three meditations on Matthew 6:25-34 and Jesus’ word: “Therefore, I tell you, do not worry.”
- **Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup>**. The Rev. Dr. Steven Peay will lead a Quiet Day from 9:30 am to noon on the ancient art of “Lectio Divina” or “Divine Reading.” It is a practice which teaches people how to pray the Scriptures. That Saturday will also include opportunity to participate in Morning prayer, Eucharist, Noonday prayer and Evensong Prayer.
- Lunch will be provided at the conclusion of both Quiet Days.