

LIVING IN FAITH

ANCIENT PRAYER PRACTICES



As our prayer life matures, the shape of our prayers and how they function may change. Like many things in life, even prayers can become rote and routine. Prayer, throughout a lifetime, often takes us down different pathways. It is important to keep our prayer life fresh and open to the movement of God. Our expectations of how God answers our prayers should also change and evolve. As our trust in God grows, we begin to understand that we should remain open to God's answers to our prayers based on what He knows we need rather than what we think we need. Having an open heart to God's responses will increase our trust and give us a greater sense of the love of God in our lives.

Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina means “divine reading” in Latin. It's a meditative way of reading the Bible in which we let go of our own agendas and open ourselves to what God is trying to say to us.

TO PREPARE

- Choose a text of the Scriptures that you wish to pray.
- Place yourself in a quiet environment. Calm your anxieties and thoughts, and acknowledge God's presence.
- Offer a prayer to the Holy Spirit for inspiration and guidance: Come, Holy Spirit, enlighten my heart and mind to listen to your Word.

LECTIO DIVINA

1. **Lectio:** Read the text slowly and prayerfully, constantly listening for the Word that God has prepared for you. You may want to read the scripture multiple times to help quiet yourself internally and focus on God's voice. Listen and receive the Word that God speaks to you.
2. **Meditatio:** When a word or phrase strikes you, stop and rest with it. Repeat the word or phrase to yourself. Allow it to speak to you in a personal way by pondering the word in your heart, reflecting on what it means to you. Memorize it and repeat it to yourself, allowing it to interact with your thoughts, hopes, memories, and desires.
3. **Oratio:** Prayer is your response to God's word. It begins your dialogue with God that comes from your heart. Formulate a prayer as a response to God. What do you want to say to the Lord in response to the Word spoken to you? Enter into this loving conversation with God.
4. **Contemplatio:** Rest in God's presence and receive His transforming embrace. Sit still with God, realizing that in this deep and profound relationship, words are not necessary. Be content and at peace with a wordless, quiet rest in God, which brings joy to the heart. Remember that contemplation is not your action or doing, instead it is allowing God to act in you.



EXPLORE. TRANSFORM. MATURE. IN YOUR FAITH AS YOU WALK WITH JESUS.

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

ST. ANDREW'S UMC | 3315 S. BRYAN RD., BRANDON, FL 33511 | 813.689.6849 | WWW.SAUMC.NET

DEC2025