

## **Rotary Club of Knoxville Prayer Book**

In 2009, the RCK Board of Directors created an Inclusivity Committee to ensure that our Club respects and appreciates the diversity of its membership. The mission of the Committee is to increase cultural, racial, gender, sexual orientation, religious, and political awareness and sensitivity within our Club. As part of that mission, the Committee was asked to develop a standard set of prayers to be used for the weekly invocations. This Prayer Book was submitted to and approved by the Board of Directors in December 2009.

These prayers represent a number of the world's belief traditions, but the messages in the prayers are universal and are not limited to a specific religion. If known, the source of the prayer is provided. The origins of these prayers range from scripture, to folk traditions, to Rotarians from our Club and around the world. It's intended to be a living document, and will be updated periodically to include other prayers that meet the Board's approval.

If you've been asked to provide the weekly invocation, please select a prayer that appeals to you from this list and read it at the Club meeting. If it's listed, you may want to cite the origin of the prayer before you begin. Please refrain from modifying the prayer in any way to reflect your own religious beliefs



### **Ralph Caldwell's Rotary Prayer (1993)**

How blessed we are to be Rotarians  
committed to building goodwill, peace  
and better understanding in the world.

Make us humble.

Make us grateful.

Make us loving

and, make us full of thy grace.

Ralph C. Caldwell, RCK president 1960-61 and 60 year perfect attendance Rotarian



Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace;  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,  
grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood, as to understand;  
to be loved, as to love;  
for it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen.

st. francis of assisi - 13th century

Though commonly attributed to St. Francis, the original author appears to be unknown.



Let the rain come and wash away  
the ancient grudges, the bitter hatreds  
held and nurtured over generations.  
Let the rain wash away the memory  
of the hurt, the neglect.  
Then let the sun come out and  
fill the sky with rainbows.  
Let the warmth of the sun heal us  
wherever we are broken.  
Let it burn away the fog so that  
we can see each other clearly.  
So that we can see beyond labels,  
beyond accents, gender or skin color.  
Let the warmth and brightness  
of the sun melt our selfishness.  
So that we can share the joys and  
feel the sorrows of our neighbors.  
And let the light of the sun  
be so strong that we will see all  
people as our neighbors.  
Let the earth, nourished by rain,  
bring forth flowers  
to surround us with beauty.  
And let the mountains teach our hearts  
to reach upward to heaven.

Amen.

a prayer for the world - rabbi harold kushner - 2003



May all beings have happiness and the causes of happiness;  
May all be free from sorrow and the causes of sorrow;  
May all never be separated from the sacred happiness which is sorrowless;  
And may all live in equanimity, without too much attachment and too much aversion,  
And live believing in the equality of all that lives.

traditional buddhist prayer



May the road rise up to meet you.  
May the wind be always at your back.  
May the sun shine warm upon your face;  
the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again,  
may God hold you in the palm of His hand.

traditional gaelic blessing



May I become at all times, both now and forever  
A protector for those without protection  
A guide for those who have lost their way  
A ship for those with oceans to cross  
A bridge for those with rivers to cross  
A sanctuary for those in danger  
A lamp for those without light  
A place of refuge for those who lack shelter  
And a servant to all in need.

buddhist - prayer of peace



### MORNING PRAYER

O Infinite God, of life, goodness, and generous love, I dedicate my heart, my life, to you.  
Help me to cherish all human life,  
and do the good you want me to do.  
Make me a loving example of your generous love,  
and a blessing to everyone I see.  
May your goodness be fully in us, and in all that we think, and say and do.



### PRAYER FOR ANY TIME

O God, may I find and praise your goodness dwelling within every human being.  
May I be a living sign of your generous love, and help everyone to live more intimately with you.  
May we respect the evolving nature of all creation, and grow to our fullness of life with you.  
Guide our search into our entire human nature, and into all creation, to know what you want us to do.





### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, Who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be Thy Name;  
Thy Kingdom come.  
Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil.  
For Thy is the kingdom and the power and glory  
Amen



We give thanks for food and remember the hungry.  
We give thanks for health and remember the sick.  
We give thanks for friends and remember the friendless.  
We give thanks for freedom and remember the enslaved.  
May these remembrances stir us to service above self.  
Amen

Dear Abby Thanksgiving Prayer adapted by Charlie Harr



Grant us, Lord God, a vision of your world as your love would have it:

- A world where the weak are protected, and none go hungry or poor;
- A world where the riches of creation are shared, and everyone can enjoy them;
- A world where different races and cultures live in harmony and mutual respect;
- A world where peace is built with justice, and justice is guided by love.

Give us the inspiration and courage to build it, *Amen*.



O God,  
Open our eyes that we may see the needs of others;  
Open our ears that we may hear their cries;  
Open our hearts that we may feel their anguish and their joy.  
Let us not be afraid to defend the oppressed, the poor, the powerless, because of the anger  
of the anger and might of the powerful.  
Show us where love and hope and faith are needed, and use us to bring them to those  
places.  
Open our ears and eyes, our hearts and lives, that we may in these coming days be able to  
do some work of justice and peace for you.  
*Amen*



Eternal God, our Divine benefactor and guide in life, thank you for the opportunity and privilege afforded us to be Rotarians and dedicate our chosen way of life to “Service above Self.” Give thanks for those individuals who have had the vision and willingness to sacrifice time and talents that form this Rotary Club of Knoxville. And likewise give thanks to all those individuals throughout the world who have accepted the Rotary principle that “the one who profits most, serves the best.” For all this and more, we are thankful, even as we are for Thy presence and bountiful care, for it is in Thy Holy Name we pray. *Amen*



### **Service Above Self**

In a world where conflict often appears to be a way of life, we give thanks that, as Rotarians, we can reach across so many borders to offer comfort, counsel and service to those in need. As we lift our voices in prayer, we give thanks that we have the ability to offer our time, our talents and our fortunes to serve our neighboring men and women. Thus in one accord, we join in fellowship and ask that this food nourish us and help us better fulfill our commitment to “Service above Self”. Amen

*Bill Grossman, Rotary Club of Amherst East, NY*



*O God, or Heavenly Father  
May we intentionally place \*Service above Self\*, in all our daily pursuits.  
Help us to remember as we walk together in this club, that whatever we might say, only  
be the truth.  
Whatever steps we take together, let them build goodwill and better friendships among  
us.  
Whatever goals we strive to accomplish through this club, let them be beneficial to all  
concerned.  
And, help us never to lose sight of your many blessings, o God.  
For good food, fellowship, and the opportunity to serve others through Rotary.  
For all of this, and a few doses of good luck and grace, we give You our thanks. Amen*



#### **The Four way test Blessing**

Lord help us to remember as we walk along life's pathway that whatever we might say, let it be only the truth. Whatever steps we take in life, let them build good will and better friendships. Whatever goals we strive to accomplish, let them be beneficial to all concerned. We ask you to help us to never lose sight of our many blessings, including the food we partake of today. Amen

Sharon Pepper, Canandaigua Rotary Club



#### **God of Creation**

Blessed are you, Lord, God of Creation. You feed the whole world with your goodness, your grace, your kindness and your mercy. You nourish and sustain us and do good to all. Bless this food to our use and us to your Rotary service. Amen

Dr. William Dougherty, Rotary Club of Elmira Heights





### **God of the Universe**

Since we are not conscience enough to fathom your ebb and flow, help us then to bring our best efforts to what we can know.

To love our friends and family.

To treat our employees and follow workers fairly.

To seek justice.

To help those in need.

To be the best that we can be, and to live by the four way test:

Of all the things we think, say or do:

Is it the TRUTH? Is it FAIR to all concerned? Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS? Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned? Amen

*Rotarian Len Scheffler, Columbia-Northwest, Columbia, MO*



### **God of Creation**

Blessed are you, Lord, God of Creation. You feed the whole world with your goodness, your grace, your kindness and your mercy. You nourish and sustain us and do good to all. Bless this food to our use and us to your Rotary service. Amen

Dr. William Dougherty, Rotary Club of Elmira Heights



### **The Gift of Awareness**

Dear God, we ask for the gift awareness. Too often we miss the little things that make our lives so wonderful. Help us to see your hand in the gentle gifts we give and receive and enable us to live life every moment we are alive. Amen

*Bill Grossman, Rotary Club of Amherst East, NY*



### **The Long View**

O God, give us the long view of our work and world. Help us to see the tasks before us and to know that it is better to fail in a cause that will ultimately succeed than to succeed in a task that will ultimately fail. Direct our projects and our efforts to meet the needs of our community. And as we gather today, bless the food which we are about to enjoy that it may strengthen our bodies for the service you have placed before us. Amen  
Anonymous



### **Place of Peace**

O God, we pledge ourselves to work for peace. We gather in this peaceful place to share a peaceful meal with our friends and other Rotarians. Help us to build bridges of reconciliation to those who do not know peaceful times or peaceful meals. Amen  
*Bill Grossman, Rotary Club of Amherst East, NY*



### **Marvelous God**

God of majesty who creates an eye-catching sunset, who carves out a Grand Canyon, who stuns us with giant sequoia trees, we gather in awe, in wonder, in silent adoration, for you are great and marvelous. This day is filled with your wonder and your tender care. You set a table before us and invite us to be fed. You place us in a community that cares and shares of the wonderful bounty of life. Bless the food we eat and the food we share. Amen  
*Bill Grossman, Rotary Club of Amherst East, NY*



### **The Beginning**

From the beginning, there was beauty in the ordinary and splendor in the commonplace.  
O God, don't ever let us forget that we are part of the ordinary and the commonplace  
who have gathered in this group to do the extraordinary for the uncommon. Amen  
*Bill Grossman, Rotary Club of Amherst East, NY*



God, make us more conscious of Your gifts to us, and help us to see that no work truly prospers until it brings blessings to others. Teach us not to withhold from others a share in the bounty that is yours. Amen



God, give us the grace today to think not of what we can get, but of what we can give, that a new spirit may come into our work, with a new vision and purpose that You will delight to bless. Amen



As we greet this day, O God,  
compel us to be just and  
honest in our dealings. Let  
our motives be above  
suspicion. Let our word be  
our bond. Amen



Eternal Spirit, teach us better to know ourselves – that knowing our weaknesses, we may be on guard. Teach us better to understand other people, that we may view their shortcomings with charity, their virtues with appreciation, and their kindness to us with gratitude. Amen



God of Strength, give us courage to remain faithful to our convictions, and loyal in our moral commitments, binding our covenants with one another and with You.  
Amen



We gather in knowledge that without divine guidance we can do nothing but with you, O God, we can do all things. Let us not be frightened by the problems that confront us this day, but rather give thanks that You have matched us with this hour. May we resolve, God helping us, to be part of the answer, and not a part of the problem.  
Amen



Give us open minds, O God, minds ready to receive and to welcome the light of new knowledge. Give us the courage to change our minds when needed and to be tolerant of the thoughts of others, for we never know in what voice we hear the voice of God. Amen



God, we praise You for the creation of this world, for the wonder of all living things, for the order and harmony in which Your creation moves, for seedtime and harvest, summer and winter, day and night. We bless You for everything that supports our life and for Your providence, which maintains and preserves the world in order.  
Amen



God of this nation, we thank You for the heritage that has come down to us, bought by other toil and other tears than hours. For great character, that has been woven into the fabric of this nation, blessed by Your Name. Amen



God give us grace to triumph over the confusion of impulse.  
Grant us clearness of vision especially when good is  
intertwined with evil, and when duty conflicts with desire. Amen



God of Truth, who alone can lead us into the truth that is  
freedom and joy, be our teacher as we seek to find the way  
of life in times that bewilder and challenge us. Amen



Almighty and Everlasting God,  
We thank you for this opportunity to gather together with likeminded friends,  
and for the ideals of Rotary which keep us in worldwide company.  
Let such precepts as truth and fairness and goodwill and mutual benefit  
permeate both this meeting and our everyday lives.  
By your grace, may we effectively model  
what it means not to be served but to serve.  
Indeed, Gracious God, we ask you to bless  
not only our time together  
but also any service we may render,  
so that all the world may benefit from the joy of Rotary.  
Surround us this day with your presence,  
strengthen us in our convictions, and embolden us in our actions,  
for you are the author and giver of life,  
both now and forevermore. Amen.

Holton Siegling, Knoxville Rotary Club, TN



## The Serenity Prayer

God grant me the serenity  
To accept the things I cannot change;  
Courage to change the things I can;  
And wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;  
Enjoying one moment at a time;  
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;  
Taking, as He did, this sinful world  
As it is, not as I would have it;  
Trusting that He will make all things right  
If I surrender to His Will;  
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life  
And supremely happy with Him  
Forever and ever in the next.

This prayer is most commonly attributed to the American theologian and writer Reinhold Neibuhr (1892-1971). The prayer appears in print form in 1950, although [Reinhold's wife recounts](#) that it may have been in existence as early as 1934.

# Disturb Us, Lord

Disturb us, Lord, when we are too well pleased with ourselves,  
When our dreams have come true  
Because we have dreamed too little,  
When we arrived safely  
Because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord, when  
With the abundance of things we possess  
We have lost our thirst  
For the waters of life;  
Having fallen in love with life,  
We have ceased to dream of eternity  
And in our efforts to build a new earth,  
We have allowed our vision  
Of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly,  
To venture on wider seas  
Where storms will show Your mastery;  
Where losing sight of land,  
We shall find the stars.  
We ask You to push back  
The horizons of our hopes;  
And to push into the future  
In strength, courage, hope, and love.

(attributed to Sir Francis Drake -1577)





## PRAYER FOR VETERANS

Dear Lord, We honor our veterans, worthy men and women who gave their best when they were called upon to serve and protect their country. We pray that you will bless them, Lord, for their unselfish service in the continual struggle to preserve our freedoms, our safety, and our country's heritage, for all of us. Bless them abundantly for the hardships they faced, for the sacrifices they made for their many different contributions to America's victories over tyranny and oppression. Amen.

Author Unknown



## FOR OUR NATION AND PEACE

God our Father, You guide everything in wisdom and love. Accept the prayers we offer for our nation. In your goodness, watch over those in authority so that people everywhere may enjoy freedom, security, and peace. We ask this in Your holy name. Amen.



## FOR OUR MILITARY AND PEACE

We pray that the Lord may preserve the members of our Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard from all harm; and that the families, relatives and friends of our military members may be strengthened in this time of concern and anxiety. We pray that you help families with men and women in the armed forces cope with daily challenges in the absence of their loved ones. Finally we ask that our homeland will be preserved from violence and terrorism, and that the nations of the world will seek to work together in harmony and peace. Amen.



PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Lord, we thank you for the goodness of our people and for the spirit of justice that fills this nation. We thank you for the beauty and fullness of the land and the challenge of the cities. We thank you for our work and our rest, for one another, and for our homes. Accept our thanksgiving for all our blessings on this day. Amen.



PRAYER FOR OUR LEADERS AND FOR PEACE

God our Father, we ask your blessing and guiding hand for the President and the members of Congress, that they may seek the way of peace, with wisdom and strength; and for the members of our armed services, that you will guard them, and return them safely to those who love them. Finally, we ask for an end to all war and violence, that your peace might prevail. In your name we pray. Amen.