



A Service of Lament For the Healing of Faith in God's Providence for the Anglican Diocese of the Great Lakes

There are five elements of biblical lament:

- 1. Invocation of God*
- 2. Complaint*
- 3. Petition*
- 4. Naming the Character of God*
- 5. Confidence/praise*

The lament form is adaptable. Different psalms of lament put different amounts of emphasis on each of these elements. Also, elements may be arranged in different orders.

In the same way this prayer service is adaptable. While it follows the five-element structure of biblical lament, prayer groups should feel free to skip over or condense elements, expand others, and/or rearrange them as needed.

For each section various readings are offered. For longer services, prayer groups could read multiple readings. For shorter services, these readings could be omitted.



1. Invocation of God

Leader: Merciful God, teach me to seek you, and as I seek you, show yourself to me; for I cannot seek you unless you show me how, and I will never find you unless you show yourself to me. Let me seek you by desiring you, and desire you by seeking you; let me find you by loving you and love you in finding you. Amen.

A period of silence may follow

The following psalm may be sung or spoken:

Psalm 13

How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
How long must I wrestle with my thoughts
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?
How long will my enemy triumph over me?

Look on me and answer, LORD my God.
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,
and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.

But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.
I will sing the LORD's praise,
for he has been good to me.

One of the following contemporary settings of Psalm 13 may be played:

- ❖ My Soul Among Lions: Psalm 13 <https://mysoulamonglions.bandcamp.com/track/how-long-o-lord-psalm-13>
- ❖ Brian Doerksen: Psalm 13 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uusiWwIo-C4>
- ❖ Alisa Turner: Psalm 13 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tK8dmqPpgfQ>
- ❖ Shane & Shane: Psalms 13 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UvPBFdZVasI>

2. Complaint to God

One or more of the following psalms of complaint may be spoken:

Psalm 22

- ¹ My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from saving me,
so far from my cries of anguish?
- ² My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer,
by night, but I find no rest
- ³ Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One;
you are the one Israel praises.
- ⁴ In you our ancestors put their trust;
they trusted and you delivered them.
- ⁵ To you they cried out and were saved;
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.
- ⁶ But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by everyone, despised by the people.
- ⁷ All who see me mock me;
they hurl insults, shaking their heads.
- ⁸ "He trusts in the LORD," they say,
"let the LORD rescue him.
Let him deliver him,
since he delights in him."

Psalm 44

- ¹ We have heard it with our ears, O God;
our ancestors have told us
what you did in their days,
in days long ago.
- ² With your hand you drove out the nations
and planted our ancestors;
you crushed the peoples
and made our ancestors flourish.
- ³ It was not by their sword that they won the land,
nor did their arm bring them victory;
it was your right hand, your arm,
and the light of your face, for you loved them.
- ⁹ But now you have rejected and humbled us;
you no longer go out with our armies.
- ¹⁰ You made us retreat before the enemy,
and our adversaries have plundered us.

¹¹ You gave us up to be devoured like sheep
and have scattered us among the nations.

¹² You sold your people for a pittance,
gaining nothing from their sale.

²³ Awake, Lord! Why do you sleep?
Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever.

²⁴ Why do you hide your face
and forget our misery and oppression?

Psalm 55

¹ Listen to my prayer, O God,
do not ignore my plea;

² hear me and answer me.

My thoughts trouble me and I am distraught

³ because of what my enemy is saying,
because of the threats of the wicked;
for they bring down suffering on me
and assail me in their anger.

⁴ My heart is in anguish within me;
the terrors of death have fallen on me.

⁵ Fear and trembling have beset me;
horror has overwhelmed me.

¹² If an enemy were insulting me,
I could endure it;
if a foe were rising against me,
I could hide.

¹³ But it is you, a man like myself,
my companion, my close friend,

¹⁴ with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship
at the house of God,
as we walked about
among the worshipers.

²⁰ My companion attacks his friends;
he violates his covenant.

²¹ His talk is smooth as butter,
yet war is in his heart;
his words are more soothing than oil,
yet they are drawn swords.

Psalm 80

¹ Hear us, Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock.

You who sit enthroned between the cherubim,
shine forth ² before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh.
Awaken your might;
come and save us.

³ Restore us, O God;
make your face shine on us,
that we may be saved.

⁴ How long, LORD God Almighty,
will your anger smolder
against the prayers of your people?

⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have made them drink tears by the bowlful.

⁶ You have made us an object of derision to our neighbors,
and our enemies mock us.

⁷ Restore us, God Almighty;
make your face shine on us,
that we may be saved.

The leader may ask the following questions each of which may be followed by a period of silence; the leader may also ask people to speak out answers to these questions:

Where in your life, our diocese, or in our world do you sense or feel the absence of God?

Where are there wounds that do not seem to heal?

In what ways have you lost hope in the goodness of God?

Where has the love of God seemed to fail you?

Personal prayers of lament may be offered to God

Leader: O God, almighty and merciful, you heal the broken-hearted, and turn the sadness of the sorrowful to joy. Let your fatherly goodness be upon all whom you have made. Remember in pity all those who are this day destitute, homeless, elderly, infirm, or forgotten. Bless the multitude of your poor. Lift up those who are cast down. Mightily befriend innocent sufferers and sanctify to them the endurance of their wrongs. Cheer with hope all who are discouraged and downcast, and by your heavenly grace preserve from falling those whose poverty tempts them to sin. Though they be troubled on every side, suffer them not to be distressed; though they are perplexed, save them from despair. Grant this, O Lord, for the love of him who for our sakes became poor, your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

3. Petition

One or more of the following Psalms may be spoken:

Psalm 44

²³ Awake, Lord! Why do you sleep?
Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever.

²⁴ Why do you hide your face
and forget our misery and oppression?

²⁵ We are brought down to the dust;
our bodies cling to the ground.

²⁶ Rise up and help us;
rescue us because of your unfailing love.

Psalm 74

¹⁸ Remember how the enemy has mocked you, LORD,
how foolish people have reviled your name.

¹⁹ Do not hand over the life of your dove to wild beasts;
do not forget the lives of your afflicted people forever.

²⁰ Have regard for your covenant,
because haunts of violence fill the dark places of the land.

²¹ Do not let the oppressed retreat in disgrace;
may the poor and needy praise your name.

²² Rise up, O God, and defend your cause;

Psalm 79

⁸ Do not hold against us the sins of past generations;
may your mercy come quickly to meet us,
for we are in desperate need.

⁹ Help us, God our Savior,
for the glory of your name;
deliver us and forgive our sins
for your name's sake.

¹⁰ Why should the nations say,
"Where is their God?"

Psalm 90

¹³ Relent, LORD! How long will it be?
Have compassion on your servants.

¹⁴ Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love,
that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.

¹⁵ Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us,

for as many years as we have seen trouble.
16 May your deeds be shown to your servants,
your splendor to their children.

17 May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us;
establish the work of our hands for us—
yes, establish the work of our hands.

Leader: 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
(*Philippians 4:6-7*)

Leader: I invite your petitions for yourself, our diocese, and the world silently or out loud

Petitions to may be offered

Leader: Most loving Father, you desire us to give thanks for all things, to dread nothing but the loss of you, and to cast all our care on the One who cares for us. Preserve us from faithless fears and worldly anxieties and grant that no clouds of this mortal life may hide from us the light of that love which is immortal, and which you have manifested unto us in your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

4. Naming the Character of God

The following hymn or another suitable song may be spoken or sung:

How Firm a Foundation

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word!
What more can He say than to you He hath said,
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

“Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I’ll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand.”

“When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;
For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.”

“When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply;

The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.”

“The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I’ll never, no, never, no, never forsake!”

One or more of the following psalms may be read:

Psalm 74

- ¹² But God is my King from long ago;
he brings salvation on the earth.
¹³ It was you who split open the sea by your power;
you broke the heads of the monster in the waters.
¹⁴ It was you who crushed the heads of Leviathan
and gave it as food to the creatures of the desert.
¹⁵ It was you who opened up springs and streams;
you dried up the ever-flowing rivers.
¹⁶ The day is yours, and yours also the night;
you established the sun and moon.
¹⁷ It was you who set all the boundaries of the earth;
you made both summer and winter.

Psalm 145

- ^{13b} The LORD is trustworthy in all he promises
and faithful in all he does.
¹⁴ The LORD upholds all who fall
and lifts up all who are bowed down.
¹⁵ The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food at the proper time.
¹⁶ You open your hand
and satisfy the desires of every living thing.
- ¹⁷ The LORD is righteous in all his ways
and faithful in all he does.
¹⁸ The LORD is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.
¹⁹ He fulfills the desires of those who fear him;
he hears their cry and saves them.
²⁰ The LORD watches over all who love him,
but all the wicked he will destroy.

Leader: Standing firm in our knowledge of God’s love and mercy, I invite you declare the character of God, repeating after each half verse the refrain “His love endures forever”:

Psalm 136

¹ Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good.

His love endures forever.

² Give thanks to the God of gods.

His love endures forever.

³ Give thanks to the Lord of lords:

His love endures forever.

⁴ to him who alone does great wonders,

His love endures forever.

⁵ who by his understanding made the heavens,

His love endures forever.

⁶ who spread out the earth upon the waters,

His love endures forever.

⁷ who made the great lights—

His love endures forever.

⁸ the sun to govern the day,

His love endures forever.

⁹ the moon and stars to govern the night;

His love endures forever.

¹⁰ to him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt

His love endures forever.

¹¹ and brought Israel out from among them

His love endures forever.

¹² with a mighty hand and outstretched arm;

His love endures forever.

¹³ to him who divided the Red Sea asunder

His love endures forever.

¹⁴ and brought Israel through the midst of it,

His love endures forever.

¹⁵ but swept Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea;

His love endures forever.

¹⁶ to him who led his people through the wilderness;

His love endures forever.

¹⁷ to him who struck down great kings,

His love endures forever.

¹⁸ and killed mighty kings—

His love endures forever.

¹⁹ Sihon king of the Amorites

His love endures forever.

²⁰ and Og king of Bashan—

His love endures forever.

²¹ and gave their land as an inheritance,

His love endures forever.

²² an inheritance to his servant Israel.

His love endures forever.

²³ He remembered us in our low estate

His love endures forever.

²⁴ and freed us from our enemies.

His love endures forever.

²⁵ He gives food to every creature.

His love endures forever.

²⁶ Give thanks to the God of heaven.

His love endures forever.

Personal prayers of confidence may be added.

5. Confidence/Praise

One or more of the following passages may be read:

Psalm 100

¹ Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.

² Worship the LORD with gladness;
come before him with joyful songs.

³ Know that the LORD is God.

It is he who made us, and we are his;
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

⁴ Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and praise his name.

⁵ For the LORD is good and his love endures forever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Psalm 146

¹ Praise the LORD. Praise the LORD, my soul.

² I will praise the LORD all my life;
I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.

³ Do not put your trust in princes,
in human beings, who cannot save.

⁴ When their spirit departs, they return to the ground;
on that very day their plans come to nothing.

⁵ Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the LORD their God.

⁶ He is the Maker of heaven and earth,
the sea, and everything in them—
he remains faithful forever.

⁷ He upholds the cause of the oppressed
and gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets prisoners free,

⁸ the LORD gives sight to the blind,
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down,
the LORD loves the righteous.

⁹ The LORD watches over the foreigner
and sustains the fatherless and the widow,
but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.

¹⁰ The LORD reigns forever,
your God, O Zion, for all generations.
Praise the LORD.

Romans 8: 18, 28-39

¹⁸ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. ³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 11:33-36

³³ Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable his judgments,

and his paths beyond tracing out!
³⁴ "Who has known the mind of the Lord?
Or who has been his counselor?"
³⁵ "Who has ever given to God,
that God should repay them?"
³⁶ For from him and through him and for him are all things.
To him be the glory forever! Amen.

The following hymn or another suitable song may be spoken or sung:

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee,
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,
who wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee,
though the sinful human eye thy glory may not see,
only thou art holy; there is none beside thee
perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Together:

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come, life everlasting. Amen

Leader: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!