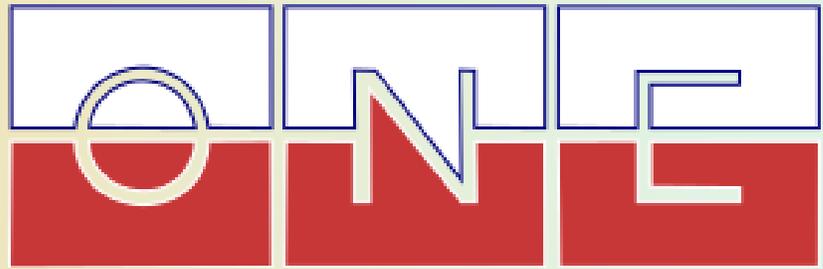


INSIDE:

+ Prayers for Ellis
County



A Publication of the Ellis County Ministerial Alliance

May 2023

National Day of Prayer May 4, 2023, 12-1pm

Let's come together as a nation to pray for our nation



**At VFW Building
2106 Vine St, Hays**



Ellis County Ministerial Alliance

ONE is the official publication of the Ellis County Ministerial Alliance (ECMA) which guides its mission, content, and theme. The ECMA encourage submissions from ECMA congregations. Photographs, stories, testimonies, and other submissions should be directed toward your church leaders or sent via email to

one@ourecma.com.

The ECMA ONE Advisory Board will choose appropriate and timely submissions for publication. The columns in ONE represent the views of the author.

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Editor's Note:

Ellis County will be observing the National Day of Prayer from noon to 1 p.m. Thursday, May 4, at the VFW in Hays. We asked our writers this month to compose a prayer to God that specifically addresses issues in Ellis County.

A Lament to God from Ellis County, Kansas

Written by:

Rev. Christine Wagner

Woe to us, residents of
Ellis County, Kansas,
where children go
unhoused and hungry,
where young people grow
numb with distractions
and despair,
where old women and
men cry out from lonely
rooms,
and no one responds.

Woe to us, we "good
people"
who pass suffering ones
on the street and look
away,
who wag our tongues

about "those people" and
"did you know" and "have
you heard."

Woe to us, the
comfortable,
who measure success by
how effectively our dollars
insulate us and our
children from the lives of
others.

Woe to us, the "holy ones"
who hide in gated
churches singing glad
hymns of praise

as the world around us
sinks into violence, lies
and loneliness.

Woe to us, Christians,
whose love toward one
another has grown cold,

who latch upon reasons to
judge and reject our
sisters and brothers

rather than listen to and
love them, as Jesus did,
forgiving one another 70 x
7 times.

Woe to us, we who in our
blind arrogance

refuse to hear the truth
that others speak

that holds a mirror to our
nakedness and shame.

Forgive us, gracious God,
for hanging onto the
trappings of faith

and forgetting to follow
Jesus' self-emptying way.

A Lament to God from Ellis County, Kansas (Continued)

Forgive us for denying the ways in which our endless consumption

disrupts and demolishes the land and lives of others

who now wander the globe seeking shelter and safety.

Forgive us our pointing fingers. Silence our lying tongues.

Guide us to repentance, most merciful God. Restore our souls.

Change us from the inside out by your astonishing grace.

In tears and lamentation we come to you; our heads are bowed.

Only in you, Christ Jesus, in your humility and by your Spirit, might we yet become the

beloved community

for whom you lived and died

and rise again, and again, and again.

Amen.



Rev. Christine Wagner is the Transitional Minister at First Presbyterian Church of Hays where she first

became a member more than 33 years ago.

'Lord, We Pray for All Those Who Suffer Quietly'

***Written by:
Brandon Nimz***

Lord, we pray for those of us who are quietly suffering, away from the eyes of others. We pray for those dealing with loneliness, depression, loss, and other forms of hopelessness. We pray with the many struggling with addictions that are controlling their lives and pulling them away from true life in you. This includes addictions to any idol—not just drugs, but work, wealth, and the worries and cares of this

world.

We also pray for the many who are uncertain about where they will spend the night. This is for both those who do not have any place to stay and for those who could lose their current shelter at a moment's notice. Within this, we also pray for the different endeavors by believers in the community to look at providing shelter and for looking at re-establishing routes to get those at risk to shelters outside of Hays.

Beyond this, we pray for believers who are undergoing big life changes as they seek to serve you. For those who have lost income, or whose health is failing, or who are dealing with other tough conditions, but who, nonetheless, endure and serve you and your Kingdom—thank you.

Help all of us overcome the obstacles in our lives and surrender our lives and direction to you and what you have for us. Help all of us to be

'Lord, We Pray for All Those Who Suffer Quietly' (Continued)

sensitive to the voice of your Holy Spirit and to listen sincerely and intently. Help us also to have the courage to follow through when we hear from you.

In these times in which the world and the enemy repeatedly highlight separating into tribes and loving friends, but hating enemies, please help us to remember to follow you and to love our enemies.

Help us to even further realize that all of us are created in your image, all of us are forgiven by your sacrifice, and all of us are one "we." Help us pray for one another, care for one another, and sincerely look after one another.

In those pursuits, help us seek peace—not by making everyone believe the same as we do, but rather by us loving everyone—those who believe the same and those who believe differently. Help us further to have the courage to follow your words and to ask how far we can go to live out the way of life you highlight in the Sermon on the Mount. May we walk more and more on the narrow road and encourage others to do the same.

Lord, thank you again for your providence, for light amidst darkness and hope in the most unlikely of places. Help us slow down our busy lives and take time to watch, to

listen, and to hear. Help us to also spend time with you and to simply be. May we take the time to let you refresh us and to help us walk with you. May we also seek out opportunities to refresh others and encourage them as you constantly encourage all of us.

Thank you again for your loving nature, for having created us in the first place, and for saving us to walk in true life yet again. Thank you dearly, Lord. Amen.



Brandon Nimz is the President of Unite Ministry in Hays.

'Lord, Teach Us to be One'

Written by:
Rev. Josh Gelatt

Father,

One of the most remarkable sections in the Gospel is found in a prayer given by Jesus in

John 17. It is an amazing moment in John's Gospel, as it provides a rare, intimate moment between you and your Son. In that passage we see our Savior pour His heart out to you in prayer. Surprisingly,

Jesus spends most of the prayer talking about His disciples. He prays for our protection (17:11-12), even in the midst of a world full of venom and hate (17:14). He prays that we would experience His

'Lord, Teach Us to be One'

joy and celebration (17:13). He also prays that we would be sanctified—an important word meaning that we would grow to become more like you day by day (17:19).

In that magnificent prayer, Jesus also prays that we would be one (17:21-23). Father, I confess this is often difficult. The shrill of division grabs our attention. Hate is an elixir we find intoxicating and difficult to resist. Instead of trusting in you for our protection, we villainize those we deem our enemies. Although you have invited us into your joy, we too often embrace bitterness.

Many of those who founded this country had a different vision. They spoke of America as something that would be a "city on a hill." Taken from Matthew 5:14, these

early Americans used that phrase as they envisioned a new kind of nation on the shores of this discovered land. Though done with tragic imperfection, they nevertheless wanted this nation to be founded on principles that honored you and respected one another.

They dreamed of a country where people would be drawn to your powerful light. One of America's past presidents said it well. Ronald Reagan dreamed of America becoming a "proud city built on rocks stronger than oceans, wind-swept, God-blessed, and teeming with people of all kinds living in harmony and peace."

Father, protect our community. Draw us together. Remind us that peace with one another is something Jesus desires.

Stir us to become a community that respects and cherishes one another. Above all, give the Christians in Ellis County a desire to live in harmony with one another and the world around us. Jesus prayed that we would be as one "so that the world may believe that you sent me" (John 17:21). In other words, it is only through peace, kindness, and love that we can effectively represent you. Hate and anger turn people away from your truth, but love draws them to you.

Father, teach us to love. Teach us to share your joy with each other. Teach us to be one.

Amen.



*Rev. Josh Gelatt
is the Lead
Pastor at North
Oak Community
Church in Hays.*

"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened." —Luke 11:9-10

Prayer Itself Is a Gift from God

Written by:

Cheryl Glassman

Prayer--what a wonderful gift! Prayers and spending personal time with God are learned by most people when they are young children. I remember when my younger brother was learning to pray. My mother would help him fold his hands, and she asked him to join in closing his eyes, and they would pray. My sister and I would join them.

I also remember teaching my son to pray. He has always had something to say about things, and often his expressions have stuck in my memory. His comment about prayer was, "This is easy!" In the Catholic Church we ask Mary and the saints to pray with us and for us. One of the lines in the Catholic prayer the Hail Mary is, "Pray for us sinners, now

and at the hour of our death."

Praying may seem easy, but for some people praying is not part of their lives. They might have turned away from God, or they do not believe in God. I will never condemn or think badly of those who feel this way, but I personally cannot remember a time when I concluded a prayer that my heart wasn't lifted or my situation seemed a little better.

I believe as a Christian, I have been given the gift of prayer, but it is also my responsibility to pray.

My prayer today is this:

Heavenly Father, our earthly existence can be challenging, and the world is overwhelmed with so many problems. Yet we know you will never turn your back on us or leave us. Send your protection and love to

those most vulnerable, especially our elderly, our poor, our children, and our families.

We face violence and sadness in our country daily. Lift our hearts and fill our minds and spirits with your strength and peace. Help us to know your presence within one another, and give us the opportunity to step away from the darkness into your wondrous light. May we always remember that Jesus, your resurrected son, believes in us and gave His life for us, and He walks with us every step of the journey.

May our community be a place of refuge and welcome to all. May her churches and businesses open their doors to bring joy and care. May we always be thankful for the opportunity to worship freely, and may we remember to

Prayer Itself Is a Gift from God (Continued)

acknowledge businesses who help us provide for our needs.

We also pray for those who, day after day, work in jobs and positions that require physical strength, patience, long hours, and time away from loved ones. May each of us realize the importance of every person, from the

youngest to the oldest, and seek to be kind, compassionate, and caring.

May the moments in life that bring us stress be offered to you, that you might help us, as it says in Psalm 46, "Be still and know that I am God." Father, you love us all. Care for this wonderful

community of families and help us to seek your kingdom, not only for ourselves but for one another.

Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.



Cheryl Glassman is the Director of Music at St. Nicholas of Myra Catholic Church in Hays.

***“Prayer is trading
our worries for His wisdom,
our pain for His peace,
our confusion for His confidence.”***

—Jennifer Hand

