

Prayers Offered  
in the  
**North Carolina  
House of  
Representatives**

2015 - 2016





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# 2015 Session ~ Prayers in the House Chamber

## *January 14, 2015 – September 30, 2015*

*January 14, 2015*

*The following prayer is offered by Representative John Torbett:*

Ladies and gentlemen, guests, Honorable Members, the year is 1774 and representatives from each of the thirteen states are meeting in Philadelphia to iron out political differences that threaten to destroy a new nation. The arguments intensified until one man stood and spoke these words. That man was Benjamin Franklin.

“I have lived, sir, a long time and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth—that God governs in the affairs of men. and if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?...I therefore beg leave to move that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven and its blessing on our deliberations be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business.”

The first prayer was offered on the morning of September 7<sup>th</sup>, 1774 at nine o'clock AM and delivered by the Reverend Jacob Duché, Rector of Christ Church of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He delivered the first prayer of the Continental Congress. This prayer I offer today. Will you join me?

“O Lord our Heavenly Father, High and Mighty King of kings, and Lord of lords, who dost from Thy throne behold all the dwellers on earth and reignest with power supreme and uncontrolled over all the Kingdoms, Empires and Governments; look down in mercy, we beseech Thee, on these our American States, who have fled to Thee from the rod of the oppressor and thrown themselves on Thy gracious protection, desiring to be henceforth dependent only on Thee. To Thee have they appealed for the righteousness of their cause; to Thee do they now look up for that countenance and support, which Thou alone canst give. Take them, therefore, Heavenly Father, under Thy nurturing care; give them wisdom in Council and valor in the field; defeat the malicious designs of our cruel adversaries; convince them of the unrighteousness of their Cause and if they persist in their sanguinary purposes, of own unerring justice, sounding in their hearts, constrain them to drop the weapons of war from their unnerved hands in the day of battle!

“Be Thou present, O God of wisdom, and direct the councils of this honorable assembly; enable them to settle things on the best and surest foundation. That the scene of blood may be speedily closed; that order, harmony and peace may be effectually restored, and truth and justice, religion and piety, prevail and flourish amongst the people. Preserve the health of their bodies and vigor of their minds; shower down on them and the millions they here represent, such temporal blessings as Thou seest expedient for them in this world and crown them with everlasting glory in the world to come. All this we ask in the Name and through the merits of Jesus Christ, Thy Son and our Savior. Amen.”

*First Prayer of the Continental Congress, 1774  
Reverend Jacob Duché*



**January 28, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Becky Carney:***

Let us pray.

O God, our Help from ages past, our Hope for years to come—help us on this opening day to remember that it is not about us, but it is about the people of this great state. With Your help from the past, with Your help from the future, we ask today that You help us to not fear. Help us to accept the fact that we will be busy, but not to fear, for we are Your servants. We are public servants, and we come to this Chamber today with our hearts open that the needs of the people of this state, and not the needs of ourselves, will be put in the forefront. We ask You today to guide us with Your strength, to guide us with Your Spirit, to guide us in that path that will indeed lift us up as servants for the people of this state.

I ask all these things in Your Name. Amen.



**January 29, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bob Steinburg:***

Good morning. Let us pray.

We pause to acknowledge Thee, our Father, before we undertake the important duties to be considered. Great responsibilities rest upon the Members of this body. We present no merit but plead the merits of Thy Son, our Redeemer, and ask for divine wisdom and guidance that all our tasks may begin, continue and end in Thee.

Safeguard the families of our Members while they are separated one from another. May any who are sick be restored to health, any who are bereaved be comforted and any who are exposed to temptation to do wrong be delivered from evil. We are thankful for friends who believe in us and trust us, and encircle in their protecting love. Help us ever to be worthy of trust and love. Give all the success we can bear and still be humble, unselfish and faithful. Spread the knowledge of Thy Word and make Thy Church the instrument of diffusing and upholding true religion until Thy Kingdom shall come and Thy will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, amen.



**February 2, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Marilyn Avila:***

Let us pray.

Our Gracious Heavenly Father, today we come before You in humility recognizing that all things come to us through Your mercy and grace, not by any of our own actions. We praise and thank You for guiding each of us to this place today. We ask for Your wisdom and understanding as we face important issues affecting the lives of North Carolinians. Grant us patience and love as we deal with each other and the differing ideas among us.

Watch over and protect our men and women in the armed forces as they defend our freedoms. Be with their families as they struggle with separations, anxieties and fears. Give them a peaceful mind and a restful heart as they sacrifice to protect our great country.

All this I pray in the Name of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.



**February 3, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Mark Brody:***

Gracious and Sovereign Lord, we pray as Your servants in this Legislature that You might keep us faithful to the solemn office to which You charged us. Strengthen and uphold us. Guide us and direct us to fulfill our purpose according to Your Word. Give us counsel and aid that we may preserve the integrity and honor of our state. Protect our nation...*(audio missing)*...neighbor's best interest, and uphold and preserve all life You have given us. Grant us firmness to maintain and promote law and justice, and determination to strive for the good of our state and the betterment of our citizens. Give us wisdom in the hour of decision that we may speak and decide on matters in a spirit of unity and the bond of peace. Give us serenity in the face of crisis. Guard and defend us that we may serve the security and wellbeing of the people You have given us to serve. Make us leaders of a people who would do Your righteous and holy will in our state and our nation.

We ask this in the Name of Your Holy Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.



**February 4, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Ken Waddell:***

Good evening. The prayer I offer tonight is from my pastor at Chadbourn Baptist Church, Dr. Danny Russell. Please pray with me, if you will.

“O God, we have gathered this evening with a lot of information before us, which will also increase in the upcoming weeks of session. We will receive this information through our committee meetings and conversations around the proposed bills before this governing body.

We have also gathered this evening with a lot of knowledge before us. We come before the people of North Carolina from a variety of backgrounds that influence how we view and understand the world in which we live. We pray that this information and knowledge will lead us to governing with true wisdom throughout this year’s session.

We ask for our thoughts and perspectives to reflect Your wisdom. We ask for the ability to reason in a way that affirms a common approach and value to life. We ask because some of us have faith, while some of us may not. We ask because some of us have religious convictions, while some of us may not. Despite these differences, may our common desire to care for and represent the people of North Carolina bring us to reason together and make wise decisions that reflect the power of grace and love to overcome the differences that can so easily separate us. May we discover the gift of love around us and become more loving. May we discover the gift of grace around us and become more gracious. May we also discover what it really means to partner together through love and grace for the sake of the men and women throughout the great State of North Carolina and beyond. Amen.”



**February 5, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Carl Ford:***

Let’s pray.

Father God, we thank You for this day. We thank You for this time together. We pray that You’ll guide and direct us as we make thoughts and decisions in this place. We pray that You’ll bless our families at home. Give us all safe traveling mercies today or tomorrow, and we pray that You’ll bless our staff. Thank You, Lord, for all that You’ve done for use. We pray that You’ll guide and direct everyone in Washington and help them to do the right thing. We pray, Father, for our troops protecting our freedoms around the world; please keep them safe, Lord. We thank You so much for all You do, for Your grace, mercy and love. In Jesus’ Name, amen.



**February 9, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bert Jones:***

Let us pray.

Our Father and our God, we come before Your throne of grace acknowledging that You are our Creator, the Giver and Sustainer of life—and that life being eternal. Help us this day and every day to live and act according to those truths.

We come before You today on behalf of ourselves and this legislative body as we also intercede for the people of North Carolina that we are privileged to represent. We pray that You would grant us wisdom and courage to faithfully stand for truth and for righteousness. We pray for our state and our nation, for all of our citizens and for each elected official that has been placed in authority. According to Your Word, we are ministers of God called upon to do an important work. We pray that we would be true to that high calling and that our actions and our methods would be glorifying to You.

Today we celebrate the anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America and the centennial year of its honors society, the Order of the Arrow. We thank You for the noble founding mission of these organizations and the many lives that have been positively impacted over the years by an organization whose oath begins: “On my honor, I will do my duty to God...” Our prayer would be that all of us—scouts, scouters and all citizens—would endeavor to do just that, and we would be mindful to give You all the honor and the glory.

With each here praying in their own way, I offer my prayer in the Name of Jesus Christ, Your Son and my Savior. Amen.



**February 10, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Larry Pittman:***

*(The audio begins in the middle of the prayer.)*

...Lord, may we always have their rights and their best interests at heart in all that we do. Give us strength this day, Lord. Give us wisdom and show us what You would have us to do for Your people, Your children. For we pray it in Jesus' Name. Amen.



**February 11, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Rick Glazier:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon and please join me in prayer.

We ask Your blessings, O God, upon those who have been elected to lead and serve our state. As we perform our duties, keep us ever mindful to the high purposes to which we are dedicated. Help us be faithful heirs to those who have preceded us and worthy predecessors to those who will follow. May our collective actions reflect wisdom and strength and bear testimony to the great heritage they represent. As the newly elected officers of this House strive to achieve their goals, may they help keep all of us faithful to our task.

Grant us all the strength when we are weary, hope when we are discouraged, patience and perseverance when we face obstacles. Give us health of body, vigor of mind and serenity of spirit. May our labors always reflect honor upon the House, the General Assembly and the people of North Carolina. And let us all say, amen.



**February 12, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Grier Martin:***

Members, in one week we will celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the American landings on the island of Iwo Jima. At the end of that five-week-long battle 6,000 American Marines and sailors lay dead and 19,000 wounded. At the dedication of the 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Division's Cemetery on Iwo Jima, Navy Chaplain Lt. Roland B. Gittelsohn delivered a sermon. I hope you'll permit me to quote one small portion from that sermon. Chaplain Gittelsohn said:

“We dedicate ourselves, first, to live together in peace the way they fought and are buried in this war. Here lie men who loved America because their ancestors generations ago helped in her founding, and other men who loved her with equal passion because they themselves or their own fathers escaped from oppression to her blessed shores. Here lie officers and privates, blacks and whites, rich and poor—together. Here are Protestants, Catholics and Jews—together. Here no man prefers another because of his faith or despises him because of his color. Here there are no quotas of how many from each group are admitted or allowed. Among these men there is no discrimination. No prejudice. No hatred. Theirs is the highest and purest democracy.”

Please join me in prayer.

Dear God, we are Your imperfect servants who have been entrusted by Your people to effect democracy here on earth. Lead us to serve others with humility, with love and with devotion. Free us from hate, from jealousy and from anger. Be with us and guide us as we

aspire to create as high and pure a democracy as we can in a violent and chaotic world. I offer this prayer myself in Jesus' Name in a great nation where Christian, Jew, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and all faiths worship freely. For this and our many freedoms I give thanks to You, God. Amen.



**February 16, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Gregg Sindors, Staff to Speaker Pro Tem Paul Stam:***

Please bow your head.

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank You for this day and the opportunity to serve. We ask that You be with each Member of this body and give them hearts of service and minds open to Your wisdom. Be with them in their roles as servant leaders. Remind us to act with civility towards each other, even when we may disagree. We ask that You be with each Member and keep them safe in their travels. We pray for their families. In Your Name we pray. Amen.



**February 18, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative William Brawley:***

This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Father, we are grateful for the sun which has warmed our path. We stand in awe of the winter storms that batter us. We thank those in public service who have worked so hard to protect us from the harm the winter storm has caused. As we who legislate continue our work, help us to remain humble and remember our powers are limited. Let us solve what we can and trust You to use other voices and other organizations to solve the problems beyond our charge. We each come to You in our own way. I come to You in the Name of Jesus. Amen.



**February 19, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Gale Adcock:***

Let us pray.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, send down upon those of us who hold office in this state the spirit of wisdom, charity and justice, that with steadfast purpose we may faithfully serve in our offices to promote the wellbeing of all people. To Your glory and in Your Name, I offer this prayer. Amen.



**February 23, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Yvonne Holley:***

Good morning. Before I get into the prayer, I would like to read a little daily meditation. It's called, "I Must Go Shopping." I think the women can relate to this one.

"I must go shopping. I'm completely out of generosity and want to get some. I also want to exchange the self-satisfaction that I picked up the other day for some real humility. They say it wears better. I want to look for tolerance, which is worn as a wrap this season. I saw some samples of kindness and I'm a little low on that right now; one can't get too much of it. I must try to match some patience; I saw it on a friend and it was so becoming. I must remember to get my sense of humor mended and keep my eyes open for some inexpensive goodness. Yes, I must go shopping today."

Let us pray.

Dear Lord, thank You for giving us another day. Please bless our families, friends, communities, state and country. We're here today as legislators with a purpose and a mission. Law-making is an awesome responsibility. We know You understand because You have given us the best laws to live by—they're called the Ten Commandments. Help us follow Your lead to fulfill this responsibility with integrity, character and unselfish love for the people we serve. Please be with each of us this session—by our sides, in our hearts and spirits—as we make, sometimes, very difficult decisions. Help us keep Your commandments and laws as an example of how and why we should do our jobs: with real humility, tolerance, kindness, patience and yes, some unexpected, inexpensive goodness. Thank You, Lord, for all You do. In Jesus' Name I pray. Amen.



**February 24, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Ken Goodman:***

Let us pray.

Dear Lord, we gather here today intent on doing good work. We seek to represent fairly and well those who have given us this task. May our efforts be blessed with insight guided by understanding and wisdom. We seek to serve with respect for all. May our personal faiths give us strength to act honestly and well in all matters before us. Lord, we also ask on this winter day that You keep those who must travel safe from the hazards created due to the snow and ice. Amen.



**February 27, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Warren Hawkins, Assistant House Sergeant at Arms:***

Let us pray.

Lord, once again we come to You how we know how, Lord, with bowed head and closed eyes, Lord, thanking You for this day, thanking You for Your mercy and Your grace that You have shown us all day. Now, Lord, we pray that everything done and said this session will be pleasing in Your sight. In Jesus' Name we pray, amen.



**March 2, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Carl Ford:***

Let's pray.

Father God, we thank You for this day, thank You for this time together. We thank You for safe travels You've given us the past couple of weeks. For us, the staff, everyone here, our families, we thank You for all You've done for us and all You're going to do. Pray that You'll guide and direct our thoughts and words today and this week. Thank You so much for Your grace, mercy and love. Bless the staff here today; I know that they've got a rough week ahead of them. And I pray that You'll bless our friends in the Press. Father, we thank You for all You do. In Jesus' Name, amen.



**March 3, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Mark Brody:***

Almighty God, Heavenly Father, You are our Fortress and our Strength. You have given us this good land for our heritage and have called us to serve the people of this great state. We humbly ask You to be our Guide during this legislative process. We thank You for this session and implore You that You would direct the discussions and decisions that lay before us. Help us to make decisions that abide by Your law, decisions that uphold the general welfare and peace for the people we serve. You are the Author and Sustainer of all life and we humbly implore You to make us a people who cherish all life in our midst. As You have spoken to us by Your Word, we beg You to guide our own lives, as well, so that we may be moved to live by the same laws we make, administer and judge for this state. Give wisdom to our leaders, guidance to the people who support our efforts, and a quiet heart and mind to hear Your words. We ask this in the precious Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.



**March 4, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Charles Jeter:***

Let us pray. Reading from the Holy Bible, Second Timothy, Chapter four, verses five through eight:

“But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid upon me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.”

Lord, this Scripture was read as part of my mother’s funeral service. I want to thank You for her seventy-three years with us. And today on what would have been her seventy-fourth birthday, my mother would have been quick to remind me and all of us that, as this scripture states, we work as evangelists in this building, that our actions matter and that one day we will have to answer for the decisions we make—to You, to the people of North Carolina, to our friends and family, and to ourselves. Lord, I pray that You’ll give us the wisdom and guidance to make sure the decisions we make will remain honorable and true at all times. In Your Name I pray, amen.



**March 5, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Brian Brown:***

Members, if we will bow our heads.

Heavenly Father, with issues facing this body that are historically significant, we pause to acknowledge You and to thank You. I ask for Your protection, Your divine wisdom and Your daily guidance upon each of these honorable men and women here in the North Carolina House of Representatives, along with their families. May Your plan become our purpose, may Your Book become our guide, and may Your presence be our ever-encouraging assurance. Bless the Members of this hallowed body with the knowledge that what binds us together is stronger than what may pull us apart, that serving You is best accomplished by serving others. In Jesus' Name, amen.



**March 9, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Larry Pittman:***

Let us pray.

Great are You, O God, beyond all our imagining. And we thank You, Lord, that You've not left us to the darkness of our misunderstanding and our lack of knowledge, but You've chosen to make Yourself known. How we rejoice, O God, in Your self-revelation. How we love the very thought of You—Your goodness, Your greatness, Your infinite majesty, glory and love. Father, fill us with that love, we pray. Help us, O God, to be aware wherever we are that You are present with us. Lord, cover us with Your grace, fill us with Your compassion. Lord, fill us with Your Spirit, that we might have understanding and wisdom. Show us, O God, in the midst of all the many different voices and many different directions that we sometimes feel pulled, to find the right way—the way that pleases You.

Tonight, O God, be with those who have special need of You. Lord, I don't know the details, but I heard of an Amtrak derailment today. Lord, I don't know who may be hurt, who may be dead, just what the situation is. Maybe some here know better than I do, but Lord, You know it all. And we just pray, O God, that You would be very real to those who are needing You from the incident today, and many other things all across the world. We may or may not be aware of them, but You know it all. And we just pray, O God, that those who are in need in any way will find You sufficient. God, grant us the assurance of Your presence, Your love and Your purpose for each and every one, for all are precious in Your sight. And we thank You for that. We thank You that You show us that in Your Son Jesus Christ, in whose Name we pray. Amen.



**March 10, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Harry Warren:***

Let's all bow our heads, please.

Heavenly Father, today we have come together once again to work on behalf of the people of this wonderful state that You have blessed so abundantly. You have entrusted us with the responsibility of caring for Your majestic mountains, fertile Piedmont and beautiful coast and waters that You have so generously provided.

Father, there are many among us here today that believe with our whole hearts that we are here by Your design, that You have called us to be here for Your purpose to do Your work. So Lord, on behalf of this body, I beseech You to open our hearts and minds to one another that we might work in harmony to address and resolve the issues before us in the manner most pleasing to You. Help us, Lord, to use the patience, understanding, tolerance, compassion and humility that You have given us. Strengthen us to suppress our vanity, our egos and our pride, that we may govern fairly, reasonably and honestly in the best interest of those whom we represent.

And finally, Lord, we ask that You bless those men and women around the world who, at this very minute, are at the watch in battle away from family, friends and the comforts of home defending our very right to be here exercising the freedoms of self-government that they and so many before them have and are sacrificing for our posterity. Bless them and protect them and us. We pray in Christ's Holy Name, amen.



**March 11, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Ralph Johnson:***

"This is the day that the Lord has made; we must rejoice and be glad in it." Let us pray.

Father, we thank You for this day. It's a day that we are grateful to have, one that we have never seen before. We thank You for life, health and strength, for family and friends, the opportunity to serve and to do Your will as servants of Your people. We remain grateful to You and acknowledge that You have provided the opportunity to serve in leadership positions for all of us, not because of any good or gracious thing that we have done, but only because of Your goodness and mercy. We thank You for Your mercy. Lord, Your words are true and You credit righteousness to all those who trust in You. Guide us back to You when we fall down into disobedience and teach us how to examine our ways. You have said in Your words that obedience is better than sacrifice. Help us always to know the difference...Help us to always know the difference.

Lord, we are meeting today to conduct the business of Your people. Guide our hearts and our minds and our spirits of fairness, right thought and speech. Impart Your supreme wisdom upon our activities so our affairs may reach a successful conclusion. Help us to remember Galatians 6:10 which says as we have opportunity, we should do good to all

people—all people—especially to those who belong to the family of faith. Thank You for being our source of guidance today and in the days to come. We ask all these things in the precious Name of Your Son. Amen.



**March 12, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bob Steinburg:***

Good morning, Members of the House and guests. Let us pray.

Almighty God, Ruler of all nations who has cast our lot in this land of civil and religious liberty, give us, we pray Thee, a true sense of our privileges and responsibilities as a nation and a people. We thank Thee for the patriotic men and women of the past whose generous devotion to the common good has been the making of our state. Grant that our generation may build worthily on the foundations they have laid.

Bless the cause of sound learning everywhere. We thank Thee that the sum of human knowledge is being increased. We praise Thy Name for all that knowledge has done and is doing for the wellbeing of mankind and the spread of comfort among men, and the prevention and cure of disease, in the promotion of good feeling and social service and philanthropic efforts, in improved manners and in refined living. Send out Thy light and Thy truth that men may not be satisfied with either ignorant faith or an unbelieving knowledge.

May the work of the General Assembly and of all the institutions of our state that have for their object the safeguarding, enriching and enlarging the lives of the people hasten the coming of Thy Kingdom on earth. For Thy Name's sake we pray, amen.



**March 16, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative John Szoka:***

Today marks the 213<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the United States Military Academy at West Point. After the Revolutionary War, several soldiers and legislators, including Washington, Knox, Hamilton and John Adams, desiring to eliminate America's wartime reliance on foreign engineers and artilleryists, urged the creation of an institution devoted to the arts and sciences of warfare. President Thomas Jefferson signed legislation establishing the United States Military Academy in 1802 after ensuring that those attending the academy would be representative of a democratic society. The prayer I offer today is the West Point Prayer, as expressed by Dan Goyle. The Cadet Prayer's messages and petitions are profoundly universal. Moral behavior is the force that binds us together in our relationships, both personal and communal. And as we pray this prayer, please reflect on

its message and how we can endeavor to be humble servants and legislators. Please pray with me.

“O God, our Father, Thou Searcher of human hearts, help us to draw near to Thee in sincerity and truth. May our religion be filled with gladness and may our worship of Thee be natural.

“Strengthen and increase our admiration for honest dealing and clean thinking, and suffer not our hatred of hypocrisy and pretense ever to diminish. Encourage us in our endeavor to live above the common level of life. Make us to choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong, and never to be content with a half-truth when the whole can be won. Endow us with courage that is born of loyalty to all that is noble and worthy, that scorns to compromise with vice and injustice and knows no fear when truth and right are in jeopardy. Guard us against flippancy and irreverence in the sacred things of life. Grant us new ties of friendship and new opportunities of service. Kindle our hearts in fellowship with those of a cheerful countenance, and soften our hearts with sympathy for those who sorrow and suffer. Help us to maintain the honor of the Corps untarnished and unsullied and to show forth in our lives the ideals of West Point in doing our duty to Thee and to our country. All of which we ask in the Name of the Great Friend and Master of all. Amen.”



**March 17, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Tricia Cotham:***

Good afternoon. Happy Saint Patrick’s Day. I see a little bit of green on some of you. And after the prayer, for those of you who are not wearing green, go ahead and give them a pinch. I wanted to say an Irish blessing in honor of Saint Patrick’s Day. Will you pray with me?

“May the road rise to meet you.  
May the wind be always at your back.  
May the sun shine warm upon your face.  
May the rain fall soft upon your fields  
And until we meet again,  
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.”

Amen.



**March 18, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bert Jones:***

Let us pray.

Our Father, our Creator and our God, we humbly approach Your throne of grace on behalf of ourselves and the people of North Carolina that we represent. As we do so, we would be mindful to enter into Your gates with thanksgiving and into Your courts with praise.

Your Word says, "Blessed is the nation whose god is the Lord." From the beginning of our nation, You have indeed poured out blessings upon us by Your mercy and Your grace. But we confess that too often we have dishonored You and scorned Your Word. The nation desires Your blessing but often fails to acknowledge You as Lord and God. You are an always-faithful God who says, "If my people, who are called by my Name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and heal their land."

We pray for every Member of this body and for all the elected leaders of our state and nation. Help us to hate what is evil and love what is good. We acknowledge that all righteous wisdom and true authority comes from You. In the words of Your beloved Son, we pray for Thy will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Each one here offers their prayer in their own way—many, including myself, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.



**March 19, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Dennis Riddell:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to read a verse from the Old Testament, the Book of Micah, Chapter 6, verse 8: "He hath shown thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Will you join me in prayer?

Father, we thank You for this day and for the privilege to be in this body on this day. You have indeed shown us what You require of each of us. Help us to do justly, according to Your definition of justice. Help us to love mercy, according to Your perfect definition of mercy. And help us to remember that You alone are God, and we are Your servants sent here to do the people's business who have sent us, and to do what is right, and pure and acceptable in Thy sight. May all that we say and do in this day, Lord, be pleasing to Thee. We pray in Christ's Name, amen.



**March 23, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Michael Speciale:***

Please join me in prayer.

Almighty God, we stand before You humbled by Your creation. We thank You for all that You have blessed us with. We thank You for our families and for our friends and for our neighbors. We thank You for our health that we are able to be here today. We thank You for allowing us to be here today in our capacities as public servants.

While we serve the public, we pray that we will continue to serve You. We ask for Your guidance in all of the decisions that we make here today. We ask for Your strength that we may stand strong against the political winds. We ask for Your knowledge that we may recognize the truth. We ask for Your courage that we may fight the battles against those who would seek our country's ruin. And we ask for Your love, Your mercy and Your forgiveness through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



**March 24, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Susan Martin:***

Please join me in prayer.

Dear Lord, thank You for this day. We are grateful for the opportunity to come before You with thanksgiving for the many blessings You have given to each of us and poured out on our great state and nation. We are grateful also for the opportunity to bring our requests to You.

Thank You for the gift of Your Word which provides truth and wisdom to guide us. Isaiah 6:8 says, "Whom shall I send?" And the response, "Here I am, Lord; send me." Romans 13:1 states, "We submit to governing authorities because all authority comes from God." Esther 4:14 says of a person placed in a position of influence that "perhaps you are here for such a time as this."

Lord, each of us has accepted the call. You have placed us in our current positions of authority. Help us to recognize that we are here to serve Your purpose for Your people. As we face difficult situations, controversial decisions, divisive attacks, I pray that You would unite us through Your Spirit. Give us wisdom and discernment to take necessary actions in such a time as this. Help us to forgive as You have forgiven. Let Your Spirit so fill us that our thoughts and actions reflect evidence of the fruit of Your Spirit, according to Galatians 5:22, "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." Lord, help us to do all that You require of us according to Micah 6:8, "to do what's right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with Your God."

We lift up Bill Brawley's wife Smokey and her family and ask that You, the Great Physician, be with them at this time. We lift up our families who are sacrificing to allow us to serve, our military and their families, our government leaders at every level and all the

people involved in any way in the work we are trying to do here. Bless them and keep them safe.

Thank You for the privilege of praying in Jesus' Holy Name. Amen.



**March 25, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Roger Younts, staff for Representative Jason Saine:***

Let us pray.

Lord, as we recognize that You are sovereign over our country and state, I ask You to guide our lawmakers to the right path. We recognize those placed in positions of responsibility and authority need Your inspiration and guidance to deal with the issues and problems we face. As they debate the issues of today using their heads and hearts, help them to use their spirits to divine Your will for the State and its people. And let us recognize that, despite any political differences between us, we are all united through You. In Jesus' Name I pray, amen.



**March 26, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Rena Turner:***

Will you pray with me, please?

Our Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your presence in this Chamber. We remember those who have gone before us and lift up those that You have called to serve in this place today. We thank You for the rich heritage we have in North Carolina of our past and present leaders in our communities, our state and also in our country.

Remind us of Your will and Your way as we consider the laws we make for us, Your people of North Carolina. Lord, we look to You today for such a time as this when we need Your grace and Your mercy to guide us. Strengthen us in the way as we move ahead to accomplish the tasks that You've set before us. Help us always to trust You to lead us and that we might, in turn, follow You each moment. Mold us and make us into the servants You've called us to be, and forgive us when we fall short. Your way is perfect and You are worthy of our praise and honor.

These things we ask in our own way, and I ask them in the Name of my Savior Jesus. Amen.



**March 30, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Donny Lambeth:***

Please join with me in a moment of reflection and appreciation for the blessings that we all share.

Our most Kind and Gracious Heavenly Father, as we come together this evening to conduct the business of this great state, we pray that You guide our hearts and our minds in the spirit of fairness, in the knowledge of right from wrong, and with respect for one another that we may continue to improve the quality of life for all the persons whom we serve. Kindle within our hearts the true love of peace. Grant us in all decisions the grace to ask what would You have us to do, that the spirit of wisdom may save us from false choices and Your light will guide the way to justice and truth.

May we never take for granted the many blessings that are ours, and may we be ever mindful of those who are hurting or struggling. May we continue to focus on reducing poverty, reducing infant mortality, creating good jobs and protecting those most vulnerable while maintaining a fiscally responsible state. Father, train us to listen through Your prompting. Shield the men and women who place themselves in harm's way for our freedom and safety through their service in the military and as first responders.

Now, as we begin this evening's session, give us wisdom to make the best of each decision. Bless each Member in our service, and pour out special blessings on our families who extend their support in allowing us to serve. In Your Name we pray, amen.



**March 31, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Rick Glazier:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May we pray.

O Guardian of life and liberty, may our state and nation always merit Your protection. Teach us to give thanks for what we have by sharing it with those in need. Keep our eyes open to the wonders of creation and alert to the care of the earth. May we never be lazy in the work of peace, but may we also honor those who have died in the defense of our ideals. Grant our leaders wisdom and forbearance. May they govern with justice and compassion. Help us all to appreciate one another and respect the many ways we may serve You. May our homes be safe from affliction and strife, and our state and nation be sound in body and spirit always. Let us say, amen.



**April 1, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Lynn Taylor, Legislative Assistant for Representative William Brawley:***

“We’ve been a free people living under the law with faith in our Maker and in our future. I’ve said before that the most sublime picture in American history is of George Washington on his knees in the snow at Valley Forge. That image personifies a people who know that it’s not enough to depend on our own courage and goodness; we must also seek help from God, our Father and Preserver.”

Those remarks were made at a White House ceremony in observance of the National Day of Prayer by Ronald Wilson Reagan. Let us pray.

Our Heavenly Father, we come before You this beautiful spring day pausing in our busy schedules, bringing our cares, our fears, our praises and petitions before You, for You are good. Your loving-kindness is everlasting and Your faithfulness is to all generations. We acknowledge You are the Lord of all the earth, and we are Your people, the sheep of Your pasture.

We are mindful of the work before this Assembly and the great responsibility they willingly shoulder. May the women and men appointed for this time look for truth and enact righteous laws that we might live in the peace and harmony that result. We ask for Your guidance and Your wisdom to accomplish the tasks set before this body, and then the courage to stand steadfast in all Your ways that will make North Carolina a leader, strong and prosperous, a shining light of hope. We ask Your hand of blessing and Your protection, for unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it.

In the Name of Your Son, Jesus, we pray. Amen.



**April 2, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Becky Carney:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Members of the House. Today before we pray I would like to just say I, for one, am grateful for life. Today marks my six-year anniversary of an event that took my life here in this building. It’s something that I live with every day and I’m grateful, especially this time of year in a time of renewal, spring, resurrections, celebrations of life, and am grateful. But I want to share with you a prayer today that was offered on April the 2nd, 2009—the day of my event. It was the last prayer that I heard before my event happened. And these were given at that time by our House Chaplain, Reverend James Harry. So would you please join me in prayer.

“Sovereign Lord, You reign over the universe and all that is in it. We cannot help but marvel at the beauty of Your creation. Thank You for providing us with the abundance of nature’s offerings. Help us to be people who respect Your world and the gift that it is. Remind us that some of our natural resources are, indeed, finite, and that we need to be

good stewards of all that You have given us. As we return home this afternoon, grant us the grace of simplicity to admire the hue of the grass, the colors of the trees, the smell of the blossoms. Let our trip be one of thanksgiving and respect for Your gift of the earth and, ultimately, for Thee. Amen.”



**April 6, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Assistant Sergeant at Arms Bill Morris:***

I trust everyone had a wonderful Easter, and now I'd like to start by reading a passage from Isaiah, Chapter 40.

“Do you not know? Have you not heard? Yahweh is the Everlasting God, the Creator of the whole earth. He never grows faint or weary; there is no limit to His understanding. He gives strength to the weary and strengthens the powerless. Youths may faint and grow weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who trust in the Lord will renew their strength; they will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not faint.”

Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You so much for this wonderful day. Thank You for Your Son who You sacrificed for us, defeating sin and death once and for all so that we might have life.

Lord, now I pray for every Member of this Chamber. Lord, I pray that You'd continue to strengthen them and enlighten them with wisdom—Your wisdom, O Lord. Continue to guide them in Your ways. And Lord, I pray that You'd be with their families and be with those that are not here with us today, Lord. I pray that You'll continue to watch over them, keep Your loving arms around them and keep them safe. And Lord, I pray that, as this session continues throughout the year, Lord, that Your will will be done in all things.

I pray all these things in Jesus Christ's Name. Amen.



**April 9, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Assistant Sergeant at Arms Bill Morris:***

In the Bible God tells us to love him and to love others, and in Romans Paul tells us, “Therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing and perfect will of God.” Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, I just thank You so much for this wonderful day that You've given us. I thank You for this body that is willing to serve You and to serve this state and to serve others. And Lord, I pray that You will be with them. I pray that You will guide them and direct them in all that they do. I pray for their families, Lord, while they are here. Lord, I pray that You will be with them and supply their every need. And Lord, as many are traveling this week, Lord, I pray that You will be with them and keep them safe and bring them back here on Monday as the session reconvenes. And above all, Lord, I just pray that we will open our hearts and our minds to Your will. Lord, allow our hearts to be transformed by You so that we may know Your perfect will and we may serve this state as we should according to Your will. Lord, we pray all these things in Jesus Christ's Name. Amen.



**April 13, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Marvin Lucas:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My fellow legislators, certainly we are refreshed by the break and the beauty of spring. And may we reflect, as we get ready to pray, on the vast diversity that is represented in this Chamber. We have many religions and we have many segments of the same religion. And many of you may know that I like to reflect on literature, especially poetry, many times, and my mind wandered to one of my favorite American poets. And as a prelude to the prayer I'd like to give homage to one of my favorite poets, Emily Dickinson, who really espoused religion in a very unique way. For you see, she didn't go to church, but she was as religious as they come. Her poem was:

“Some keep the Sabbath going to church –  
I keep it, staying at Home –  
With a Bobolink for a Chorister –  
And an Orchard, for a Dome –

Some keep the Sabbath in Surplice –  
I, just wear my Wings –  
And instead of tolling the Bell, for Church,  
Our little Sexton – sings.

God preaches, a noted Clergyman –  
And the sermon is never long,  
So instead of getting to Heaven, at last –  
I'm going, all along.”

*(Some Keep the Sabbath Going to Church, by Emily Dickinson)*

In honor of poet Dickinson, and as we reflect on the diversity in this Chamber, let us bow as I recite the Serenity Prayer.

“God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time, accepting hardships as a 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. Amen.”

*(Adapted from The Serenity Prayer, by American theologian Reinhold Niebuhr)*



**April 14, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bert Jones:***

Let us pray.

Our Father and our God, our Help and Strength through ages past, and our ever-present Hope for all the years to come, in 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 20, Your Word says that You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand are power and might so that none is able to withstand You. Although rebellion is rampant and Your rule is not now acknowledged by all, the day will indeed come when it will. Meanwhile, as Psalm 2 reminds us, nations will conspire against You and people will plot in vain.

Father, I pray for strength and guidance for Your people and a peace that passes all understanding. May You grant to Your people the wisdom to know what is right and the courage to stand strong for it. We pray You would guard our hearts and minds from forces of evil and deception. Please help us so that our society would not descend to one where there is little recognition of God and everyone does what is right in their own eyes—for indeed, You are God, and not we ourselves.

We pray that the leaders and citizens of our state would remain true to the Preamble of our State Constitution that we would acknowledge our dependence on You for the continuance of the blessings that have protected and preserved this state and nation from our beginning. We pray that, not only our words, but our actions would indicate an understanding of how utterly dependent we are upon You. In the words of our sixteenth President, Abraham Lincoln, let us not be concerned whether God is on our side; but always let our greatest concern be to be on God's side—for You, God, are always right. May we ever be mindful of the consequences of our actions in Thy sight.

With each here praying in their own way, I offer my prayer in the Name of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.



**April 15, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Linda Johnson:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If you'll bow your head, please.

Lord, we come to You today with humble hearts knowing we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. Sometimes, Lord, we're so busy doing our service for this day that we don't stop and breathe in Your blessings. We thank You for all our blessings, especially for the beauty of this season and the hope that it brings. We are so latent, sometimes we forget Your Scripture that tells us to trust in You, Lord, with all our heart, and lean not onto our own understanding, and always acknowledge You and You will direct our paths. Lord, we ask for Your direction this day. We ask for the wisdom of Solomon, the patience of Job, and the love and understanding of Your grace. I ask this prayer for blessing in the Name of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.



**April 16, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Jimmy Dixon:***

Our Kind Father in heaven, we pause for a moment before this session of the General Assembly and give Thee thanks, and to ask Thee, Heavenly Father, to please hear our prayer of thanksgiving for the magnificent blessings that we enjoy as citizens of this great state and as elected officials to serve the various districts from which we come; to accept our thanks, Father, for the wonderful folks who are here to assist us, for the Principal Clerk and her staff, for the staff that works on the bills and does so much work on so many occasions to assist us, for those who keep the building clean, for those who help the youth across our state come and enjoy an experience here. Please accept our thanks, Father, for the wonderful freedoms and liberties that we enjoy and hear our prayer to ask for Thy help to properly safeguard those freedoms and liberties and pass them to the next generation. We humbly pray in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.



**April 20, 2015**

***The audio begins in the middle of the prayer and the speaker is not identified.***

...and work together, Democrats and Republicans, to do the right thing for our constituents and pass good legislation for their benefit. Give us the patience and fortitude to withstand the pressure and demands of our job in Raleigh. But most of all, I pray that You will help us to lead our lives according to the teachings of Your Son, my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.



**April 21, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Jacqueline Schaffer:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members and visitors in the gallery, today I have the great honor of offering a prayer that was authored by my friend and pastor, Dr. John Munro, of Calvary Church in Charlotte. He and his wife Gudny are visiting with us today in the gallery. Will you pray with me?

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His Holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

“Eternal God and Heavenly Father, we thank You for the many blessings You graciously bestow on us as a nation, state, as families and as individuals. You have blessed us beyond measure. And so we ask that, as You have graciously blessed us, so we may be instruments of grace, justice and hope to others. Forgive us when we use our many blessings in a self-indulgent and self-centered way rather than in helping others and leading them in truth and righteousness. We pray for our beloved nation and ask that You will be a light to all of the nations and that we would be a light to all of the nations.

“We pray for the great State of North Carolina and for ourselves as leaders that we will not pursue our own agendas but lead in a way which glorifies You, the living God, and also blesses all the citizens of this state. In our weakness give us strength; in our inadequacies give us wisdom; in our struggles give us peace; in our pride give us humility, and in our fears give us courage. Protect our nation and our state. You are our Refuge and Strength, a very present Help in trouble. Help us to love and trust You with all our hearts.

And we make these requests in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.”



**April 22, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Sam Watford:***

Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for Jesus the Christ, in whom I find life and hope and in whose Name I offer up these words.

Thank You for allowing us to spend our brief time on the earth in this great country, and this beautiful state. And as we bow before You this afternoon, I ask for wisdom and guidance in these efforts of self-government. May our conduct toward one another always be as You have taught us through the Psalmist: “Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my Savior and my Redeemer.”

Amen.



**April 23, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bert Jones:***

Let us pray.

Our Father and our God, we thank You again today that we can come before Your throne of grace any time in any place. As we come with praise and thanksgiving, we acknowledge our utter dependence on You. We are weak, but You are all-powerful. We are limited, but You are everywhere present. We see things dimly as through a dark glass, but You are all-knowing of all things past, present and future. You have promised to grant much wisdom from above to Your people who will simply ask in earnest. Let us ask.

The challenges we face are great, but with God—and only with God—all things are possible. Many would chose rather to do what is right in their own eyes. Proverbs 14 reminds us there is a way that seems right to people, but its end is the way of death. Let us not be people who would deny God. For as Psalm 118 says, it is better to trust in the Lord than to put our confidence in man. May we put our trust in the Lord and strive to lead this state in a way that honors You first. As other ambitions would lead us astray, let us be reminded that no one can serve two masters.

Lord, we pray that You would heal and preserve our state and nation that we would bring honor and glory to You, our Creator and Sustainer of life. May our efforts be of eternal significance in the Kingdom of God.

As each here may be choosing to pray in their own way, I pray in the Name of Your Son and my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.



**April 27, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Rena Turner:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let us bow.

Our dear Heavenly Father, we seek Your guidance tonight. We thank You that You are with us, that You have made a way for us to commune with You and to communicate with You. And we thank You, Lord, that when we ask, You answer.

We pray tonight that the decisions that are before us, the controversial topics that come up, the times when we need Your grace, we pray that You would be with us in a special way, in a new and fresh way that we might be able to learn from You and follow You as You prepare the way before us.

Now we ask that You would be with each Member in this Chamber in a special way that we might be able to follow You and do Your will according to what we have learned from You. For it is in Jesus' Name we ask it. Amen.



**April 28, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Gale Adcock:***

*(The audio begins in the middle of the prayer.)*

...You have created us with opportunities to serve other people in their need, to share together in respect and affection, and to be faithful in the responsibilities that we've been given. In this moment of prayer, please grant the Members of this House the gifts of wisdom and discernment that in our words and actions we will do justice, love with mercy and walk humbly with You. May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory. Amen.



**April 29, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Rick Glazier:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Members. This prayer is in memory as a Holocaust prayer. It was written, although I've modified it slightly, by Alexander Kimel, a Holocaust survivor. Please pray with me.

"Almighty God, full of mercy, remember the generation of children that were reared for slaughter. Remember the multitudes of children who, in their short lives, never experienced joy, knowing only hunger and depravation and fear. Open our hearts to the plight of the deprived and hungry children of today. And by helping them we shall help keep the memory of the perished alive.

Almighty God, full of love, remember all the mothers that carried their babies to their execution, led their children to the gas chambers and witnessed their burning, poisoned them with cyanide or killed them with their own hands. Let their anguish and pain and torture never be forgotten. And in our memory, they will live forever.

Almighty God, full of compassion, remember the elders and the sages who, instead of teaching people how to live in peace, had to teach them how to die with dignity. Fill our hearts with compassion towards the elders and the sages, the infirm and the sick of today. And by helping them live in peace and die with dignity, we shall honor the memory of those who perished.

Almighty God, full of wisdom, remember all the forgotten and unrecognized heroes who knowingly and willingly sacrificed their lives for the sake of others. In our hearts they will live forever. Open our hearts to the plight of the displaced and discarded members of our world and society today—people who in silence bear the crushing burden, fear and despair of their collapsed world. And by helping them, we will honor the memory of the unknown heroes of the Holocaust.

Almighty God, remember the fighters of the ghettos, the partisans and the resistance. They fought without weapons and without ammunition and too often without hope, but their heroism paved the way for the rebirth of our people. Open the hearts of the religious fanatics who kill in our world today in Thy Name, and let them understand that there cannot be love of God without love of fellow man. Let them understand that religious dogma cannot override the basic commandment that thou shalt not kill.

And finally, Almighty God, remember the six million that were gassed and killed and drowned and burned, tortured and beaten for the sake of one man while the world at times looked on in silence in the early part. In our hearts, their sacred memory will last forever.

And finally, God of our Fathers, let the ashes of the children who were incinerated in Auschwitz, the rivers of the blood spilled at Babi Yar or at Majdanek, be a warning to mankind that hatred is destructive and violence is contagious. And let us instead fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah that they shall beat their swords into plowshares, nations shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. And let us all say, amen.”



**April 30, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Donny Lambeth:***

As we pause for a moment of thanks and praise, may we remember those in our nation and our world who are experiencing heartache, tragedy and devastation, whose world is literally crumbling around them. Let us pray.

Our most Kind and Gracious Heavenly Father, we join together this morning to give thanks for the bounty of blessings we share. We give thanks for life’s simple pleasures: the warmth of the sun, the gentle rain, our pets, time spent with friends. We offer gratitude for our comrades gathered here, our families who support our service, our staff who facilitate our duties. We give thanks for our state and national leaders, our military, our safety and emergency personnel, our teachers, medical personnel. It takes each of us in all walks of life working together for continual improvement and the common good joining together to make our nation and this state a place of continued opportunity.

Sometimes debate or voices of disagreement may suggest that we lack the spirit it takes to move us forward. We ask Your guidance in remembering why we are here: to work together, to debate when appropriate and to eventually reach consensus that makes us the better for it. May we never take for granted the basic principle on which our nation was founded, a principle so powerful that our forefathers had it etched on our buildings, inscribed on our currency, and that we have instilled in our hearts: In God We Trust. Trust we will as we move past this important day of crossover and into vigorous budget debates. Trust we will as we approach even more difficult decisions.

Now I close our moment of prayer with these few words: In God We Trust. Amen.



**May 4, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Mark Brody:***

Dear Lord and God, each week we are given the privilege of starting over fresh. This week is no exception. Not all of us are here now, so we first ask for safe passage for our colleagues. Bless our leaders and their staff who prepare for the week to come. You know there are so many working parts to the function of a state government that we need Your enlightenment and ask for Your guiding hand. The best government is one where we honor You first and acknowledge that Your will shall be done according to Your Word.

Dear Lord, You are our Refuge and our Strength, and nothing is done that You have not allowed. Be with us in the times of decision so that what we do will be pleasing to You. All glory be to God the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen.



**May 5, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Brian Turner:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Eight years ago today my wife and I welcomed our daughter Eleanor into this world, and so today I offer this prayer in humble thanks to His blessing. Let us pray.

Colossians 3:21 tells us, "Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart." Dear Lord, as we gather today in this Chamber, we do so by Your grace. Please grant us the clarity of Your vision and the strength of Your wisdom so that we may be true and faithful in our work. Grant us patience and understanding so that when our words are heard and our deeds are witnessed, our children and all of God's children will not lose heart, but rather find comfort that we work the furtherance of Your glory. In Your Name we humbly pray. Amen.



**May 6, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Harry Warren:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Please bow your heads and join with me.

Heavenly Father, we are gathered together before You with our heads bowed and our hearts open at this moment to ask of You guidance, wisdom, patience and tolerance as we prepare to do the work of the people. Lord, give each of us the strength of character to do the right thing, to step out of party or ideology, to look at each issue before us

pragmatically, objectively and to make decisions based solely on what is in the overall best interests of the people we represent. Remind us, Lord, that doing the right thing for the right reasons, no matter how difficult or challenging, is never the politically or morally wrong thing to do. Bless us accordingly, we pray, in Christ's Holy Name. Amen.



**May 7, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Susan Martin:***

Thank you. Today I'd like to share with you from a devotion book I picked up called, "Keep Calm and Trust God," and it's about pressure. It spoke to me and I think it will speak to you: "Lord, when we long for life without difficulties, remind us that oaks grow strong in contrary winds and diamonds are made under pressure," by Peter Marshall.

Join me in prayer.

Lord, please help us to stay calm and maintain our peace when faced with pressured situations. Help us not to feel forced into making rash or hasty decisions. Show us how not to give in to the pressure to act before we are confident what the correct course of action actually is. Help us not to let the pressure of the moment force us into making an ill-fated decision that we will regret. Give us wisdom and clarity of thought to properly discern the choices available to us. Let us not be agitated, disturbed or intimidated by the circumstances around us. Grant us Your peace so that we may maintain calmness in the midst of adversity. We ask You for Your guidance and direction concerning the choices before us. Lord, we trust You and will follow Your direction.

Thank You for our nation and our great state. We lift up all our leaders on this National Day of Prayer. We praise You for our many blessings and acknowledge our need for You. In Jesus' Name, amen.



**May 11, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Chris Malone:***

Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to lead you in prayer.

On this day that the Lord has made, let us be thankful for His many blessings bestowed and grace given. Let the hand of God guide those in this Chamber and all those who labor in government. Let His wisdom flow into us as we make decisions that we believe are in the best interest of the state we lead.

I close by offering scripture from Colossians 3, verses 15 through 17: "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be

thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom from psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." Amen.



**May 12, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Sam Watford:***

For your information, those that are Masons, we are a very structured organization from an earlier time period, and today I offer one of the opening prayers in the Masonic Lodge. Let us pray.

"Most Holy and Glorious Lord God, the great Architect of the universe, the Giver of all good gifts and graces: Thou hast promised that 'where two or three are gathered together in Thy Name, Thou will be in the midst of them, and bless them.' In Thy Name we assemble, most humbly beseeching Thee to bless us in all our undertakings, that we may know and serve Thee aright, and that all our actions may tend to Thy glory, and to our advancement in knowledge and virtue. And we beseech Thee, O Lord God, to bless our present assembling, and to illuminate our minds, that we may walk in the light of Thy countenance; and when the trials of our probationary state are over, be admitted into 'the temple,' not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Amen."



**May 13, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Mark Brody:***

In the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Lord spoke and said, "If you faithfully obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all His commandments, the Lord will set you high above the nations of the earth and all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you. Blessed shall we be in the city and blessed in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of our womb and the fruit of our ground and the fruit of our cattle and the increase of our herds and our flock. Blessed be our basket and our kneading bowl. The Lord will cause our enemies who rise against us to flee and the nations to fear us because the Lord is our Protector, and he will command blessings upon the land he has given us. The Lord will establish us as a people holy to himself if we keep His commandments and walk in His ways, and then the Lord will make us abound in prosperity. He will open His good treasury to give rain to our land in its season and bless the work of our hands. We shall lend to many nations, teach them the reasons for our prosperity, so that they may also join us, but caution, we shall not borrow. We will follow

His commands and walk in His ways, and he will lift us up among the nations and we will not stumble, we will not fear, and we will live quiet lives in the protection of our Lord.”

In this building of the people’s Legislature, I ask that these United States be blessed accordingly, and that North Carolina, being one among the many, will be pleasing in Your sight. I ask this in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.



**May 14, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Larry Pittman:***

Thank you. Let us pray.

Great God, our Father, we thank You for the beauty of this day and the great privilege that we have to serve You by serving the people of the great State of North Carolina here in this place.

Lord, we thank You for all the law enforcement officers who are here with us today, and we pray for Your special blessing on them as we mourn the loss of those who have died serving the public, seeking to uphold the law and protect our citizens. We ask, Lord, that You would keep them safe and guide and direct them in all that they do to serve our people.

Father, I thank You that, even though You knew before You created the universe that we as sinners would break Your heart and dishonor You, You still loved the very idea of having fellowship with us so much that You created us anyway. That’s part of how I know that the Gospel is true, Lord, because no human being would ever have imagined or made up a God of such great love. I pray, Lord, that there may not be one person here today who does not experience that love in their lives. I pray that You would help us, O God, to share that love with each other day by day. Help us out of that love that You share to do our very best here in this place to do what is right in Your sight and best for our people. For we pray it in Jesus’ Name, amen.



**May 18, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative John Ager:***

I just want to begin by thanking everyone for welcoming this Democrat into your body, for your friendship and your cordiality. Thank you very much. Let us pray.

We pause to lift our hearts to the One who created this infinite and fantastical universe in our small corner of life here on Planet Earth. Protect us from pride, as the power we have been given is rightfully Yours. Protect us from self-righteousness, for You despise those who refuse to recognize their own sickness of heart. Protect us from despair, for we know

that our web of laws is incapable of fully bridling the human heart. Protect us from greed as it lurks about seeking to devour those who are not vigilant. Protect us from harsh judgment because over and over again You have commanded us to love the less fortunate and even our enemies. Protect the communities of worship in our state such that rebellious hearts can be transformed by the seeds of Your divine love.

And during this week, we pray that we'd take the heavy responsibility of spending billions of dollars of revenue in ways that bring opportunity to our people. Finally, teach us anew how to love our neighbors, how to love You with all our heart and soul. We pray, hardly capable of naming Your Holy Name. Amen.



**May 19, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Tricia Cotham:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let us take a moment and pray.

Lord, it's a tense time at the Legislature with big decisions being made on how we budget for Your people. It's also an exciting day as we will soon celebrate the National Champions of college basketball. God, help us to remember that You are always on our team. You are our loyalist fan and our constant cheerleader. You want us to be victorious. Help us to remember that if we get sidelined, You are our best coach, and Your playbook is the one we should review. If we are thirsty, You will bring us water. If we are sore or tired, You will give us strength. And through it all—win, lose or draw—Your grace is enough. Lord, remind us that You want us to win at life. Even if we commit a foul, You will still love us. Let us not forget these words. And God, help us to have a time to take a timeout, and let us feel Your passion and confidence in us. For You, and on Your team, victory is always in sight. Amen.



**May 20, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Allen McNeill:***

Thank you. Before we pray, I would like to ask all Members to remember my father, whose name is also Allen McNeill. He had a heart catheterization yesterday. He's at home and he's doing fine. He's doing well today, but your thoughts and prayers for him would be appreciated. Let us pray.

Our most precious Heavenly Father, we thank and praise You today that You are mighty, a loving and a just God. Today I use passages from Your words to show that love and justice.

God says in His Word in John 3:16 that, "For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that whomsoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." And in Romans 3:23, God's Word says, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." And in Romans 6:23, God's Word says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." And in Romans 10:13, God's Word says, "For whomsoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved."

God's desire today is that all would have a personal relationship with him. That is my prayer also today. Guide us, Lord, in all that we say and do today that we might be an example for You and might give You the honor and glory in all things. In Jesus Christ's Name I pray. Amen.



**May 21, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Larry Pittman:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let us pray.

Great God, our Father, we thank You again for the privilege of being here, the privilege of living in the beauty of Your creation, and the privilege of representing the people of this state. Lord, if we really stop and think about it, the authority that has been placed upon us is even a little bit intimidating, a little bit scary. But Lord, we trust in You, and we pray that You will be with us to guide us and direct us.

Lord, today is going to be a hard, long day, as we consider the matter of the budget today. And Lord, there are a lot of strong feelings on all sides. But we pray that You will help us to conduct the coming debate with mutual love and respect, even where we disagree. Lord, we just pray that whatever each of us desires, what will prevail is what is best in Your sight.

Lord, we lift up those who are suffering in any way today and those who are seeking to help them. Father, we think of things like of the disasters in Nepal and other places, tornados and things that have happened in our own land, and the folks who are still trying to recover from those things and those who are helping them. We pray for strength and peace for them all.

Lord, we lift up Representative Hager and his father as Hager's father has had some difficulties this week with his health. We just pray, God, that You would touch and heal him, as only You can do. And Lord, for Representative Arp's mother-in-law; Lord we pray for You to help her. And those are just a couple that I know about, Lord, but there are many others who are on our hearts and minds today. And we know that You are the great Healer and we pray that You'd be with them and bless them.

Now Lord, lead, guide and direct us. Help us to put Your will ahead of all else. Through Christ our Lord, amen.



**May 22, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Assistant Sergeant at Arms Bill Morris:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to begin by reading a passage out of 1st Timothy, Chapter 2.

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayer, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, I just thank You so much for this time that You've given us here together in Your Name. Lord, I lift up all these Members that You have put in authority over this great state. And Lord, I pray right now, Lord, that You'll give them peace at heart. Lord, I pray that You will give wisdom of mind. And Lord, I pray, even though it is a late hour, Lord, I pray that You will give us strength to endure to the end tonight. And Lord, I pray that You will be in the midst of all of us. And Lord, we give thanks to who You are. We give thanks to all these people here. And Lord, I just want to just add that I would just lift up the families of each and every Member here tonight who is also making a dear sacrifice for this state. Lord, we love You and we praise You. And it's in Jesus Christ's Name we all pray. Amen.



**May 26, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Seth Morris, Legislative Assistant to Representative Gale Adcock:***

Let us pray.

Lord, make us instruments of Your peace. Where there is hatred, let us so love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is discord, union. Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. Where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we 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.



**May 27, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Ken Waddell:***

Good afternoon. The prayer that I offer today is from my pastor, the Reverend Danny Russell, in Chadbourn, North Carolina–Chadbourn Baptist Church. If you would, pray with me.

“O God, we have already been through a full morning and now begin a full afternoon. We have been busy working at the start of the day and several House Standing Committees have also met earlier this morning. Now we gather this afternoon to share ideas and make decisions on behalf of the people of North Carolina.

“Before we begin, we admit our shortcomings. At times we may feel that we have a memory problem, such as not remembering the names of new people we meet. Even though we meet a lot of new people, we can admit that we do not have a memory problem as much as a listening problem. When meeting new people or talking to acquaintances and friends, there are times that we are thinking about what we want to say instead of listening to what someone else is saying. We confess this applies to other areas of life as we struggle to listen to others before making judgments about what we think they are saying.

“We ask for Your help to give us patience and listening ears. We have a lot of decisions to make, and we need to listen to those around us to be thoroughly informed in making those decisions. It is easy for us to only listen to those who agree with us. We ask for the confidence and wisdom to listen to those who think differently to help us make the best decisions for North Carolina. We come from a variety of backgrounds and convictions about what is important and how to address what is important. May we remember the grace that we have received and be empowered to share that grace during this session and in the days to come. Amen.”



**May 28, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bob Steinburg:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. This morning, as opposed to opening with an official prayer, I’ve taken the liberty to share with you the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, and I hope that any of you who know it by heart or would like to turn in your prayer books to page 471, we can certainly say that in unison. So we will be doing Psalm 23 this morning.

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”



***June 1, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative John Faircloth:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If you so desire, please bow your heads and pray with me.

Almighty God, Creator and Protector of all, we're gathered here to do the business of this governmental House of the people of our great state. It is appropriate that we collectively offer prayer for the Members and staff of this House, for the people of our beloved Old North State, and for the many other government leaders throughout our towns, cities and counties who have been chosen to serve their respective jurisdictions.

Lord, we are indeed Your own, destined to so be. Give us wisdom in every decision and help us think clearly. Grant us discernment and commonsense so as to be strong and effective servants of those who sent us here. As we strive to develop appropriate and beneficial policy, help us to do so with integrity, and assure that honest and rational thought keeps us on track and our state moving forward. Be merciful and keep us Spirit-filled and motivated by Your principles. Direct our steps according to Your Word, for our actions greatly impact the lives and the loved ones of our citizens back home.

Be our Defender and Protector. Keep us always on guard. Help all governmental leaders to be strong and courageous, standing firm in their faith and influencing others for an orderly and prosperous society we desire here on earth and Your Kingdom that is to come. Encourage and strengthen all those who serve in our armed forces and public safety agencies protecting our state and our nation, this wonderful land we call America.

For the opportunity You have given us to join together in service in this place we are eternally grateful. For the responsibility You have placed on us by virtue of the votes of our constituents, may we serve always in their best interest. Should we ever stray from that path, we expect and pray that You will call us to task and show us the true way of public service to the standard You expect.

We pray each in his and her own way, and for this humble servant, in the Name of the Christ Jesus. Amen.



***June 2, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Rena Turner:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let's pray.

Our dear Heavenly Father, we thank You for being in our midst today and for being with us every minute as we move through our time on earth. We thank You for making a way for us to come to You with our deepest needs and decisions, and even those less troubling. We

thank You that You care about us, that You want to commune with us because we are Your children.

As we represent our districts in this body, guide us in the way that best serves others. Forgive us when we seek our own way for our own betterment, for You have called us for such a time as this to stand in the gap for those we represent. You've called us to serve with our gifts and abilities that You have given us to look out for the interests of others. Lord, help us to use these gifts and abilities in the way that You direct us. We thank You for Your blessings on us. Though the path leads us into controversy at times, help us not to think You have abandoned us, but let us know that those are the times You will encourage us to move forward in Your Name. Increase our faith and grow us into the people You've called us to be that we might be a witness to others for the lives we lead.

These things I ask in the Name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.



***June 3, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Phil Shepard:***

Let us pray.

Our Gracious Heavenly Father, we come to You today. We want to praise You and thank You, Lord, for the opportunity to serve You in this great state. We thank You for the gifts and abilities that You've given us. We pray today that You will be with many of those that today are suffering from one sickness or another. We pray for our military that are in harm's way throughout this world and we pray that You will be with them and, Lord, put a hedge of protection around them. We pray that You'll give us wisdom and guidance in all that we say and do in this Chamber. May we be respectful of one another, and may all that we say and do bring honor and glory to You. In Christ's Name we pray. Amen.



***June 4, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Gale Adcock:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let us pray.

O God, from whom all power comes, by whose divine will all must abide: we thank You for our civil liberties and freedom, for our opportunities and our privileges. We beg of You to bless, assist and enlighten us and all who are elected to represent the citizens of our great state. May we prove worthy of the confidence placed in us. May we be just and upright in our thinking, honest in all our actions, and guided by a true conscience in the

legislation we propose and vote upon. Forgive us all our mistakes and selfish tendencies, and help us to prepare for an eternal union with You. In Your Name we pray. Amen.



***June 8, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Harry Warren:***

Thank you. If you will all bow your heads with me, please.

Heavenly Father, we come before You now in a moment of reverence routinely set aside before each of our work sessions. It is only fitting, right and logical that we turn to You for the mercy of Your guidance as we prepare to undertake the task before us.

Father, so often we come to You and we ask that You guide us and direct us, but we neglect to ask You to bless us with the greatest of our needs. So Gracious Heavenly Father, we come to You today and ask, not only for Your guidance, but also, Lord, that You fill us with the courage to follow it, to think for ourselves and to act independently on behalf of the souls we represent. Help us to listen with open hearts and open minds to others and consider them different opinions, not opposing views. Give us the courage, Lord, to carefully consider all views objectively when making our determinations and boldness to let our actions truly reflect our conscience as You so direct us.

We pray, many of us, in Christ's Holy Name. Amen.



***June 9, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Rick Glazier:***

This is a prayer for our country adapted from a prayer written by Louis Ginsberg.

"Our God and God of our ancestors, we ask Your blessings upon our country and state, and upon the leaders of our nation and communities. Inspire all of us who lead and serve to conduct our affairs honorably. May peace and security, happiness and prosperity, right and freedom abide among us. Unite the inhabitants of our state and nation of all backgrounds and creeds, so that we may banish hatred and bigotry, safeguard our noblest ideals, and preserve those institutions that nurture liberty and justice for all. May this land be an influence for good throughout the world, helping to secure to all, at home and abroad, peace and freedom, and thereby bring us closer to fulfillment of the visions of Your prophets: Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. For the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness calm, compassion and confidence forever. And let us say, amen.



**June 10, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Jean Farmer-Butterfield:***

Please join me in prayer.

Father God, the Giver of every good and perfect gift: first and foremost, we thank You for the many gifts of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness that we dare not take for granted. Eternal God who holds every government and nation and state in Your hands, we ask Your reverent presence upon our proceedings today. Guide us by Your Spirit in the ways of justice and compassion. Remind us that life is a gift, that leadership is a privilege, and service to others is a calling. Put before us, by Your Spirit, Your divine mandates: “When I was hungry, did you feed me? When I was sick, did you visit me? When I was thirsty, did you give me something to drink?” Stir up in us that what we do unto the least of these is a true measure of a good life and evidence of our love for Thee. Convict us when we stray from Your way and strengthen us when we seek to do Your will. As we move through the session today, let the words of our mouths and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in Thy sight, for Thou art our Strength and Redeemer. Amen.



**June 11, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Mark Brody:***

Gracious and Sovereign Lord, as Your servants and servants of the people who have sent us here, we humbly ask You to keep us faithful to the solemn office with which You have charged us. We are a diverse people—not only of race, creed and national origin, but also of political thought. Give us counsel and aid as we do our work that we may continue to preserve the integrity and honor of our state, protect our neighbors’ best interest and uphold the sanctity of life that You have given us. Grant us firmness to maintain and promote law and justice, and determination to strive for the betterment of our citizens. Give us wisdom in the hours of decision that we may speak and decide matters in the spirit of unity and bond of peace.

Lord God, our great nation is faced with political and social unrest. Our enemies are getting bolder and approaching our gates, and we are faced with domestic issues that will sometimes require unpopular decisions. Instill in our hearts and minds Your words: “If you faithfully obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all His commandments and walk in His ways, the Lord will set you high above the nations of the earth. He will make us abound in prosperity and bless the work of our hands.” Give wisdom to our leaders, guidance to the people who support our efforts, and a quiet heart and mind to hear Your words. In this building of the people’s legislature, I ask that these United States be

blessed according to their faithfulness and that North Carolina, being one among many, be pleasing in Your sight. In Jesus' Name, amen.



***June 15, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Gale Adcock:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let us pray.

O God, You made us in Your own image. Look with compassion on the whole human family. Take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts. Break down the walls that separate us. Unite us in bonds of love, and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish Your purposes on earth, that in Your good time, all nations and all people may serve You in harmony around Your heavenly throne. In Your Name we pray. Amen.



***June 16, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Chris Whitmire:***

Well, folks, before I lead us in a prayer, I'd like to share a couple of verses that all of us should keep in mind as we do our business.

For expertise, Proverbs 2:6 tells us "the Lord gives us wisdom; from His mouth comes knowledge and understanding." For steadfastness, 2 Samuel 10:12 tells us to be strong, to let us show ourselves courageous for the sake of our people and the cities of our God. Micah 6:8 reminds us how to temper our actions by telling us, "O man, what is good and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, please forgive us of our sins. Thank You for our many blessings You have given us. Lord, I ask You to grant each of us the wisdom, courage and humility as we seek to serve the people of our state and our nation. Please grant us patience and insight as we work for the betterment of our people. May we demonstrate our love for You in how we conduct ourselves with respect and appreciation with each other. Dear Lord, please lead, guide and direct us as we endeavor to make our world a better place. In Christ's Name I pray. Amen.



**June 17, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Larry Pittman:***

*(The audio begins in the middle of the prayer.)*

...seeking to reconcile us to Yourself, and we thank You for such patience. And Lord, we pray You'd help us also to love and be patient with one another. And Father, as we consider matters of importance to Your children in this state, Lord, we pray You would help us to remember that sometimes we may champion a cause that is not pleasing to You; and if it prevails, we have failed. Sometimes we champion a cause that is what You want us to do, and it fails; and we just have more work to do. Lord, we just pray that You would give us the stamina, give us the courage, and give us the determination, if what we're doing is right in Your sight, to press on, to continue the struggle. But Lord, if we're doing wrong, we pray that You would help us to see it and turn from it. For we know, Lord, that in the final analysis, it is not we who are important, but Your glory and Your will. So help us to live for that and to work for that, to seek after a knowledge and an understanding of Your purpose and Your glory that may drive us forward to do the very best of which You make us capable. For we pray it in Jesus' Name. Amen.



**June 18, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bert Jones:***

Would you please join me in prayer?

Our Father and our God, we come once again before Your throne of grace, thankful indeed that Your mercies are new every morning. We pray today that You would search our hearts today and see if there be any wicked way in us, and lead us according to Your righteousness. You are a great and good God from whom all blessings flow. We acknowledge and thank You for the bountiful blessings You have bestowed upon us whom You have created and sustained. As You have first loved us, help us to love You by loving that which is good and by obeying Your Word. Help us to understand when we miss the mark, that we would repent and turn towards You.

We pray for our state and our nation that we would love You and desire Your ways, as we also acknowledge our total dependence upon You. Help us to love one another and treat others as we would want to be treated. Help us to seek forgiveness and to forgive one another when we fall short, following the example of Your Son in whom we find forgiveness. We pray for all our leaders, including everyone in this General Assembly that our greatest desire would be to honor and glorify You in all that we do. Grant us wisdom; grant us courage that we would be true to our high calling in this place of authority where You have put us. May we give You all the glory for that which is good.

And Father, today we would offer a special prayer for the families of the victims of the tragedy in Charleston. Father, we pray that You would wrap Your loving arms around them and help them to deal with this situation. Father, we repent of the evil that we see and the

violence of the hearts of men in this nation. Father, again, we would just pray Your greatest blessings, Your grace and mercy upon the families of those victims.

As each here prays in their own way, I pray in the Name of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.



***June 22, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Yvonne Holley:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let us pray.

Dear Father, thank You for allowing all of us to be here today—to get up this morning and to be healthy and feel good enough to get up and come in. It’s been a bad week for many of us. Last week many people on this floor—I think everybody on this floor—debated an issue that is so controversial and difficult and was a difficult decision for us to make. Yet hours later, crying and misery came upon this country. Please forgive those that have hatred, bigotry and pain in their hearts. I know, Lord, that You were in that room in that church. I know that You were in there with that hatred and pain and that misery. But I also know that You swooped Your loved ones up the moment that You could and enveloped them with Your love. Now You have given their families a grace. From the moment that I saw on TV where the families forgave him, I have begun to cry. I’ve cried for this country, I’ve cried for these people and I’ve cried for their families.

We are all chosen people who are here today elected by our constituents, given a job, and part of our job is to protect. Well, last week we didn’t protect like we should. So I beg upon You, Lord, to be with us as we continue to make these difficult decisions. Help us not use divisive rhetoric and hard feelings, but to open our hearts and minds. Help our country heal these wounds that are so on the edge of our tongue.

I know this may not be the prayer for the General Assembly tonight, but it is my prayer. And in Jesus’ Name I give it to You. Thank You.



***June 23, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Rena Turner:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would you pray with me, please?

Father, today I pray for our General Assembly and other government and community leaders throughout our towns, cities, states and nation. Give us wisdom in every decision to help us to think clearly. Grant us discernment and common sense so we’ll be strong and effective leaders. Help us lead and govern with integrity, and may our integrity guide us

and keep us on track. Direct our steps according to Your Word, for our decisions have a great impact on many lives. Be our Defender and Protector, and help us always be on guard. Help us to be strong and courageous, standing firm in our faith and influencing others for Your Kingdom. Encourage and strengthen us, giving us the wisdom we need. Help us to have courage and faith in You no matter what we are facing day to day. We give You this day and thank You for Your gifts. May we bring glory and honor to You, for I ask this in the Name of my Savior—in Jesus' Name. Amen.



***June 24, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Ken Waddell:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Please pray with me. This prayer was offered by a pastor of Whiteville Assembly of God. The pastor was Tim Rausch.

“Most Gracious Heavenly Father, we humbly come to You today as we open this session of the General Assembly. First we say thank You for giving us this day, for this is the day the Lord has made. Every day is a gift from above and an opportunity to use it for Your glory. We thank You for all Your blessings on our country and upon the great State of North Carolina. We thank You for our families and those who depend upon us each day. Now we ask You to grant wisdom to all the Representatives here to accomplish the task that is set before us. As You gave Solomon wisdom to govern wisely, so give us that same wisdom. Let every decision we make in this place be a godly decision and in the best interests of the people we serve. We ask You to lead and guide us in all we say and all we do today and may it bring glory and honor to You. We ask these in Your precious Name. Amen.”



***June 25, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Donny Lambeth:***

If you would, join me in celebrating our many blessings of this day.

Our most Kind and Gracious Heavenly Father, as we enter the eve of celebrating our nation's independence, we are reminded of the struggles our country has endured: the battles fought, the lives lost and the victorious wins. We are also mindful of the courage and sacrifice of those who continue to protect and defend us, both at home and abroad. And we are saddened at the realization that many of these same struggles exist today. We offer thanks for the blessings of family, friends and colleagues, for our health and for the beauty of this earth. We pray for those who are facing illness, unemployment, uncertainty and

tragedy. We pray for those who lost loved ones in their homes recently during storms and we ask for a special blessing on them as they begin to restore their lives.

We ask for Your continued guidance as we go about the business of this great state. May we remain focused on the essential elements that provide a better quality of life for our citizens: for their health and their safety, the education of our youth, the conservation of our resources and a fiscally sound economy, and in virtually all situations the important things in life. Help us to be better people. In Your Name we pray. Amen.



***June 29, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bob Steinburg:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ladies and gentlemen, Members of the House: as we pray, let us first thank God for the power of His love which continually surrounds us wherever we are.

God our Father, Lord of heaven and earth, who made the world and everything in it, we give You thanks for the wonderful gift of life and all the pleasures that it brings us. We praise You for the joys of creation, so evident in our summer days. We acknowledge that we are the children of Your family. And so we offer our grateful thanks for all the love which You bestow upon us, for good health and daily food, for the shelter and care of our homes, for the love of family and friends which surround us. We rejoice in the knowledge that Jesus is alive and lives in each one of us. May we show our allegiance, our commitment and our love to him—and in doing so, receive His Spirit in our lives. We pray that Spirit will work through us, helping us all to know You, to love You and to do Your will. We thank You for the power of Your love, which manifests itself in so many ways. And I ask this prayer in the Name of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.



***June 30, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative John Bradford:***

Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, staff and guests, will you please bow your heads with me?

Let us pray silently together, each one of us, according to our individual beliefs. Let us offer thanks for our health, food and blessings, for one another. Let us be a source of hope for all those in need and contentment for those who are lonely. Let us remember our family and friends that have joined their Savior and we shall someday see again. Let us feel the love and warmth we still hold in our hearts for our family pets that have passed, yet eagerly

await our company. Let us give gratitude for the opportunity to serve the good people in our districts back home and in all of North Carolina. Let the feelings of love, kindness and a well-directed, yet gentle, spirit always be reflected in our actions. In Your Name we pray. Amen.



**July 1, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Rick Glazier:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This prayer is adapted from “A Vision for our Future,” by Israel Friedlander. Let us pray.

We envision a nation great in numbers, great in strength, enjoying life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—true life, not mere breathing space; full liberty, not mere elbowroom; real happiness, not mere survival—all actively contributing to the enrichment of society, sharing and increasing in spirituality, enlarging our joys, diminishing our sorrows, deeply rooted in the soil of our ancestors, understanding our past, creating our future. True to our best traditions and faithful to our common values, one in sentiment with Americans everywhere, with straight backs and raised heads, with generous hearts and creative minds, with no conviction crippled and no emotion stifled, not yielding like wax to every impress from the outside, but yet blending the best we each possess with the best we encounter. Together united, adding a new note of richness to the American life, riding a new current into the stream of civilization, distinct and distinguished, caring and compassionate, trusted for our loyalty and respected abroad for our integrity. Esteemed for our best principles and valued for our greatest aspirations. A nation such as the prophet foresaw, “And all who will see us will point to them and say, ‘A nation and people blessed by the Lord.’” And let us say, amen.



**July 2, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Megan Klutz, Legislative Assistant to Representative Chris Whitmire:***

As we approach the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday, it is vital to remember what this day truly represents. As the American Revolution was fought in the midst of the Great Awakenings, it is important to note that many colonists sought America as a place to worship Almighty God in accordance to their own dictates. Alexis de Tocqueville said, “In American, religion is the road to knowledge and the observance of the divine laws leads man to civil freedom.” Galatians 5:1 tells us, “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.” Let us pray.

Gracious Heavenly Father, thank You for the many blessings You have bestowed on us. And I pray that, as a nation, we continue to seek Your favor. Grant our leaders and those here today the courage, strength and wisdom needed to fulfill Your wishes. In Your Son Jesus' Name I pray. Amen.



**July 13, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Assistant Sergeant at Arms Bill Morris:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In just a few moments we're going to face this flag and we're going to pledge our allegiance to this flag--this grand old flag--but we're also going to do one other thing. We are going to state that we put our trust in God to make this a great country. And if you listen to the news right now, especially over the last several weeks and months, it seems that there are a lot of things that want to divide this country, but I think God has a different plan. So right now I'd like to read a passage to you from the Book of Ephesians, and these are God's words through the Apostle Paul:

"As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it."

And now, as we pray, I want to use Paul's words to the Church in Ephesus. Let us pray.

"For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom this whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."



**July 14, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Mark Brody:***

Gracious and Sovereign Lord, we pray, as Your servants in this Legislature, that You might keep us faithful to the solemn office with which we have been charged. Guide and direct us to fulfill Your purposes according to Your Word. Give us counsel and aid that we may preserve the integrity and honor of our state, protect our neighbors' best interest and uphold and preserve all life You have given us. Lord, watch over and cover this great state with Your blessing and protection. Grant us an exceeding portion of Your wisdom when needed, a clear mind for discernment, a boldness to do what is right in Your eyes and the passion to strive to meet the needs of our citizens within the limits and constraints You have placed before us. Grant us firmness to maintain and promote law and justice and make us leaders of a people who would do Your righteous and holy will in our state and our nation. We ask this in the Name of Your Son Jesus. Amen.



**July 15, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Sam Watford:***

James 1:19 and 20: "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." Let us pray.

Heavenly Father and Creator of all, we humbly bow before You this afternoon realizing that the true humility required to worship You is in direct conflict and almost impossible with the pride of this position that we are so honored to hold. Sometimes this pride makes it difficult for us to acknowledge our own flaws, shortcomings and weaknesses in our interaction with one another. Thank You so much that we can rejoice in the mercy of forgiveness, hope, joy and light available to us through the Name in which I offer these words—Jesus the Christ. Amen.



**July 16, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Anne Murtha, Legislative Assistant to Representative Paul Stam:***

Peace be with you. My prayer is in honor and tribute to all mothers, and especially to my mother who would have celebrated her eighty-second birthday today. Charlotte Greiner Murtha embodied faith, determination and love. She lived her faith in God and etched that faith and love upon her children's and students' hearts. With four children under ten years old and many naysayers, she went back to college to become a teacher, graduating Magna

Cum Laude. My mother remembered and celebrated the people in her life in unique, fun ways. After battling and beating colon cancer in her forties, she succumbed to the intense radiation and chemotherapy as she battled lung cancer weeks before her sixty-fourth birthday. Happy Birthday, Mom. Please bow your heads as we pray.

Father in heaven, we thank You for this day and for all mothers who dedicate their lives to their families. Uplift them with Your love. Guide and strengthen them to fulfill Your will. Bless them with Your peace that passes all understanding. Keep them and their loved ones in Your care until we meet again. In Christ's Name we pray. Amen.



**July 20, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Carl Ford:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Father God, we thank You for this day, this time together tonight. We pray that You will guide and direct our thoughts, words and deeds. We thank You so much for the rain You've sent our way, and we pray that You'll send more. Much of our state is in drought, and we pray for that moisture from the sky that You send, Lord. We thank You so much for what You do—Your grace, mercy and love. Pray that You will help us here tonight, Father. In Jesus' Name, amen.



**July 21, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Neva Helms, Legislative Assistant and Daughter of Representative Mark Brody:***

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we pray for those who serve in the Legislature that You would keep them faithful to the office and duties You have charged them with. Grant them the firmness to do what is right in Your eyes, regardless of the obstacles placed in front of them. Encourage them to stand firm when confronted with the enemies of Your Word, and arm them with humility, the banner of truth and the time to be still and listen for the words of God. Give them counsel that they may preserve the integrity and honor of our state, protect the best interests of our citizens, and protect and cherish all life You have given us.

We lift up Your Name above all names and give You all glory, honor and praise, knowing You are the Author and Designer of this world and government and the glorious plan unfolding before us. Bless these United States, bless the great State of North Carolina, and bless those who have been entrusted with the responsibility to make the laws of this land.

In the Name of Jesus, amen.



**July 22, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Chris Malone:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am honored to have this opportunity to give prayer today. Our time here in this General Assembly is valuable to the citizens of the great State of North Carolina. May we use that time wisely and focus our energies in the areas that we can actually make a difference. May we approach this day and every day with an open heart and with open minds and be led by the higher ideals. May our pursuits be noble and just. I offer this prayer written by a Jennifer Pettiford.

“Heavenly Father, You are a mighty and holy God. We rejoice at the victories You bring. You are holy and righteous and You withhold no good thing to those who walk rightly. Thank You for Your mercy and forgiveness. May Your sons and daughters be faithful to show forgiveness as You have shown us. We will repent of our sins with a pure heart of contrition, Father. We desire to have both zeal and knowledge and not be hasty and miss the way. Father, You state wealth brings many friends, but a poor man’s friend deserts him. Your sons and daughters will seek out godly friends and relationships.

“Father, we thank You for Your unfailing love that endures all things. Thank You for Your mercy. May we display an attitude of gratitude for all that You do. Protect us, Father, in all that we do as we glorify You. In Jesus’ Name we pray. Amen.”



**July 23, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Gale Adcock:***

Let us pray.

Dear Lord, help us with our decision-making today with Your almighty love and purity, grant us the clarity of Your vision. May we be humbled by Your everlasting grace. Give us the strength of Your guidance, and may Your eternal love guide and protect us. Amen.



**July 27, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Rena Turner:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May we bow our heads, please?

Father God, we come to You with grateful hearts recognizing You as our Lord and King, our Provider and our Friend. We thank You for all Your blessings upon us, both small and large. Forgive us today for our transgressions that separate us from You. We ask that You remove them as far as the east is from the west. As we go forward with the business of this Chamber, we ask that You would bless us with wisdom, with focus and attention to detail, that we might make decisions based on truth and upon Your direction. Now Lord, we ask that You would continue to bless us and use us and keep us, for it is Your glory we desire to achieve. It's in Jesus Name we ask. Amen.



**July 28, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Mark Brody:***

Sovereign and most High Lord, as Your servants and servants of the people who have sent us here, we humbly ask You to keep us faithful to the solemn oath and office that You have charged us with. We lift Your Name above all names. We give You all glory and humbly invite You to stand next to all of us as we do the work set before us. Give us counsel and aid that we may continue to preserve the integrity and honor of our state, protect our neighbors' best interest and uphold the sanctity of all life You have allowed to happen. Grant us firmness to maintain and promote law and justice, and determination to strive for the betterment of our citizens. Give us wisdom in the hours of decision, that we may speak and decide matters in the spirit of unity and bond of peace.

Lord God, our great nation is once again faced with political strife. Our enemies are now inside our borders and we are facing domestic issues that will require sometimes unpopular decisions. Instill in our hearts and minds Your Words: "If you faithfully obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all His commandments and walk in His ways, the Lord will set you high above the nations of the earth. He will make your enemies flee, take away all fear and bless the works of your hands." As You have spoken to us by Your Word, we beg You to guide our own lives so that we may be moved to live by the same laws we make, administer and judge for this state.

Lastly, Lord, give wisdom to our leaders, guidance to the people who support our efforts and a quiet heart and mind to hear Your voice. I ask that You have mercy on these United States and that North Carolina remain always pleasing in Your sight. In the Name of Jesus, amen.



**July 29, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Larry Pittman:***

Good morning and may God's blessings be upon each and every one. Let us pray.

Great God our Father, we are astounded at Your greatness and Your glory. We look all around us, Father, and see the beauty of Your creation, and we just thank You that You made us in Your image that we might have the capacity to enjoy the wonders that You have made. And Lord, we thank You that You help us to be able to see just the evidence of Your handiwork in everything all around us—things great and mighty, things small and intricate. Lord, there are creatures on this earth so small we can't even see them and we are just amazed at just the wonder of all that You are able to do. Lord, we thank You for these great blessings. We thank You also, Lord, for small things, little things that give our lives pleasure and meaning which You made with that enjoyment in mind. Lord, You have in every way provided that life could flourish and be good on this planet.

We know, Lord, that sometimes we human beings mess up a lot of that, and we pray for Your forgiveness. Lord, whether it be in personal relations and family and among friends—whatever it is—sometimes we say and do and even think things that displease You, and we need Your forgiveness. But we thank You, Father, that we have the assurance that forgiveness is in Your heart, for You sent Your Son to display it without doubt. Lord, we see Your Son upon the cross and we know You love us. And so Lord, we pray that You'd help us to respond to that love. Help us in turn to love You, Lord, to desire more than anything else to please You and glorify You in all that we do and say.

There are many voices that cry out to us in many ways for many things, some of those things opposed to one another and it gets very confusing around here sometimes. We pray, Lord, in the midst of it all, that You'd help each and every one of us to hear Your still, small voice and obey. In Jesus' Name, amen.



**July 30, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Michael Speciale:***

Please pray with me.

Almighty God, we thank You this day for all that You have blessed us with. We pray that You'll guide us through today's proceedings, that You'll give us the knowledge to deliberate effectively, the temperament to debate professionally and the intelligence to make the proper determinations in all the decisions we're responsible for making on behalf of the people of North Carolina. We pray for Your love, Your mercy, Your forgiveness and Your guidance in the Name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.



**August 3, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bert Jones:***

Will you pray with me, please?

Our Father and our God, we are thankful that we can come together once again to do the people's business for the State of North Carolina. Father, we recognize that You have put us in such a position of authority. Father, we pray that we would never abuse that. Father, we recognize that the Word of God says that we are ministers of God called upon to do Your work. And so, Father, we pray that we would take that seriously. We pray that You would give us guidance and help. Father, we pray that all that we would do would be pleasing in Your sight. We ask for Your help and we offer our prayers in the Name of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.



**August 4, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Rick Glazier:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and let us pray.

"We cannot only pray to You, God, to end war, for we know that You have made the world in such a way that we must find the path to peace within ourselves and with our neighbors.

"We cannot only pray to You, O God, to end starvation, for You have already given us the resources with which to feed the entire world if we would only use them wisely.

"We cannot only pray to You, O God, to root out our prejudice, for You have already given us eyes with which to see the good in everyone if we would only use them rightly.

"We cannot only pray to You, O God, to end despair, for You have already given us the power to clear away poverty and to give hope if we would only use our power justly.

"We cannot only pray to You, O God, to end disease for You have given us great minds with which to search out cures and healings if we would only use them constructively.

"Therefore we pray to You today instead, O God, for strength and determination and will power to do instead of only to speak, to become instead of only merely to wish, for Your sake and for others speedily and soon, that our state, our nation and world may be safe, and that all of our lives may be blessed.

"May the words that we pray and the deeds that we do be acceptable before You, O Lord. Amen."

*(Adaption of "Prayer Alone is Not Enough," by Rabbi Jack Reimer)*



**August 5, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Susan Martin:***

Thank you. Members, I've selected another prayer from this book I keep at my desk, if you ever want to borrow it: Keep Calm and Trust God. It spoke to me and I think will speak to many of you where we are at this time. The title is, "Frustration."

"Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters, you must all be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to get angry," from James 1:19. "Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary," Galatians 6:9.

"Lord, help us not to let frustration produce stress and anxiety in our lives. Let us be patient with ourselves and with others. When life is hectic and demanding, show us how to not let frustration rob our peace and steal our joy. Lord, help each of us to maintain a peaceful spirit and a good attitude, even though the circumstances around us are not ideal. When faced with challenges and obstacles in our lives, help us face them with a resolute determination. Empower us to press on with confidence knowing You have promised to give us strength to overcome any situation. When things don't go as expected, let us remain calm, trusting You and not giving in to frustration. Grant us clarity of thought, mental focus and comprehension. Give us wisdom and guidance on how to navigate through the storms of life and arrive at a place of complete victory. We will not be unsettled, distraught or frustrated. Instead, Your peace will rule in our lives. Thank You for this day. In Jesus' Name, amen."



**August 6, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Rena Turner:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let's pray together.

Father, I'm praying for our General Assembly and other government and community leaders throughout our towns, cities, states and nation. Give us wisdom in every decision and help us to think clearly. Grant us discernment and commonsense so we'll be strong and effective leaders. Help us to lead and govern with integrity, and may our integrity guide us and keep us on track. Direct our steps according to Your Word, for our decisions have great impact on many lives. Be our Defender and Protector and keep us always on guard. Help us to be strong and courageous, standing firm in our faith and influencing others for Your Kingdom. Encourage and strengthen us, giving us the wisdom we need. Help us to have courage and faith in You no matter what we're facing today. We give You this day and thank You for Your gifts. May we bring glory and honor to You. Amen.



**August 10, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Harry Warren:***

Thank you, Mr. Chair. If you'll join me in prayer.

Heavenly Father, Creator of all things, seen and unseen, known and unknown: we come together this day, asking Your guidance as we address the issues before us. Father, help us to refrain from politicizing in partisan fashion the discussions we are about to have. Inspire us to redirect all errant discussions and our final decisions to the ultimate true agenda—Your agenda—to benefit all the people of North Carolina, those present and those to come. Finally, Father, burden each and every one of us with a reminder of the idealistic reasons many of us originally sought this responsibility and hold us true to those values today and every day that we assemble to work on the issues before us.

We ask this prayer, many of us, in the Name of Jesus Christ, Your Holy Son. Amen.



**August 11, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Donny Lambeth:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let us rejoice in this day that the Lord has given—the gentle rain, anxiety of another session, but the beauty of the future that awaits us. Let us pray.

God of grace, God of glory, on Your people pour Thy power. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage for the facing of this hour. We have tremendous responsibility before us, and we ask for Your guidance in the decisions we make. We pray for healthy debate and favorable resolve. We acknowledge that all good things come from Thee, and we offer thanksgiving for our many blessings: family, friends and our colleagues. May we be good stewards of Your gifts.

We pray for healing of those facing illness, those who grieve and those experiencing tragedy in whatever form. We ask Your protection on those serving in our military who are placed in harm's way. We acknowledge that freedom does not come without a price. May their families know and feel Your watchful presence.

Now as we again gather to carry out the business of this great state, give us grace to understand and eagerness to serve and the power to accomplish. In Your Name we pray, amen.



**August 12, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bob Steinburg:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let us pray.

External God, our Father, we are here before You, each of us separately and all of us together because we are Your children. It is too good to be true that You are saying unto us now, "Come unto me, all ye that travail, and I will refresh you." Dear God, I pray we turn away from human reasoning, longing and fears, and ask You to show us the way and lead us to the fullness of Your good.

Dear God, I ask for Your help today. I believe that You will help us. I pray for us to be guided and directed by You and to know exactly what to do. In this moment in time in prayer, I ask for Your direction. When You speak, I pray we will listen to the still, small voice and experience an inner-knowing of what we are to do. I pray we actively listen for Your guidance and agree to follow where You direct.

I have faith that answers are being revealed. I place my trust in You and feel the security of being divinely guided. Thank You, God, for going before us and showing us the way to make the crooked places straight and orderly. And it is in Jesus Christ's Name that I pray. Amen.



**August 13, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Augie Jurgensen, Intern for Representative Daughtry and Representative Szoka:***

Father, in Jesus' Name, I thank You for every individual under the sound of my voice that we are made in Your image, Father. I thank You that Your grace and Your mercy is new every day. I thank You for Your unconditional love that nothing can separate us from the love that You have for us. I thank You that You are sovereign and reign on a throne, that without You, Father, we are nothing but with You all things are possible.

I pray that You would align our hearts to do Your will, Father, because not our will be done but Yours. I pray that we would consult You before every decision, just like the Founding Fathers of this country did. You are amazing, God. You are the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the One who was, who is and who is to come. I pray this in the mighty Name of Jesus. Amen.



**August 17, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Augie Jurgensen, Intern for Representative Daughtry and Representative Szoka:***

Father, in Jesus' Name, I thank You, for this is the day that the Lord has made, I shall rejoice in it. Father, as the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for You. Help us to seek Your face always, to gaze upon Your beauty and glory. I thank You that Your love endures forever, that You are love and Your thoughts towards us are more than the grains of sand on earth. Pour out Your love onto us and fill us with Your Holy Spirit. Stir in our hearts to seek You, and make us aware that You are for us and not against us. Wash us in the precious blood of Jesus. Wash us from all of our sins and reconcile us back into Your open arms. In Jesus' Name I pray.



**August 18, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Mark Brody:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is from the prayer of George Washington.

“O Eternal and Everlasting God, we present ourselves this afternoon before Your divine majesty asking You to accept our humble and hearty thanks that it has pleased Your great goodness to keep and preserve us from all the dangers we are subject to and refreshing and comforting our bodies to perform the duties of this day.

“Direct our thoughts, words and work. Wash away our sins in the blood of the Lamb and purge our hearts by the Holy Spirit from the curse of our natural corruption that we may, with more freedom of mind and liberty, that we'll serve You, the Everlasting God, in righteousness and holiness in this day. Teach us how to live in Your fear, labor in Your service, and ever to run in the ways of Your commandments. Make us always watchful over our hearts, that neither the terrors of conscience, the lowliness of holy duties, the love of sin nor an unwillingness to depart from this life may cast us into eternal slumber, but daily frame us more and more into Your likeness of Your Son, Jesus Christ, that living in Your fear and dying in Your favor we may, in Your appointed time, attain the resurrection of the just into eternal life.

“Bless family, friends, kindred and nation. Unite us all in praising and glorifying You in all our works begun, continued and ended when we shall come to make our last account before You, blessed Savior. In the Name of Jesus, amen.”



**August 19, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Gale Adcock:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let us pray.

Be present, O Lord, to our prayers that in all the successive changes of time we may ever be strengthened by Your unchangeableness. Dispel for us this hour the multiple distractions of the world that we may be able, with quiet minds, to receive the promptings of Your still, small voice. Grant us the peace of knowing Your everlasting love and grace.

Today, O Lord, we pray especially for our nation's soldiers. Grant that they may be brave in battle, high-hearted in hardship, dauntless in defeat and gentle in victory. Be with all those who have trained themselves in times of peace to serve our country in the day of war. Give them endurance and self-control, skill and courage in the duty before them.

We pray all this in Your Holy Name. Amen.



**August 20, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Graig Meyer:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a prayer authored by the Reverend Sheila Sholes-Ross.

“O God, our Help in ages past, we recognize that You alone are our hope for the years to come. We invoke Your guidance with our task to offer mercy and fairness towards all humanity, as You will offer mercy to us as North Carolina's leaders and servants. Help us to remember the poor in spirit and those who mourn without a voice to speak. Engage us to remember that we, as leaders, are the voices for a changing world.

O God, You are unchanging, yet You have been the God of our ancestors, their Help in ages past. You alone are the same God who will direct, guide and lead us. Help us to remember the tasks at hand for our changing world. Teach us to set aside differences, challenge us to be more merciful, engage us to remember the real needs of a changing world as You have always done and provided for through Your earthly servants. O God, continue to display upon us mercy as we show mercy towards others, lest we forget the real task at hand. God, our tasks as servant leaders are daunting at times, but as we invoke Your guidance to uphold justice and equality, we believe You shall be here with us because You are the God of justice. Help us to remember the tasks at hand for our changing world.

O God, our Help in ages past, You are our hope for years to come. You are our shelter from the stormy, and You will be our eternal home. As we—Your leaders—remember the tasks at hand for a changing world, it is in Your Name we offer this prayer to You, the only Holy One, the only Wise One, our Redeemer and our God of justice for humanity. Amen.”



**August 24, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Assistant Sergeant at Arms Mark Cone:***

Heavenly Father, thank You for this beautiful, albeit rainy, Monday afternoon that You have given us to start the work week with. Thank You for the opportunity that we have to gather here in these Chambers both as Members and staff to serve the people of this great state. Heavenly Father, we know that there are less days ahead in this long session than there are behind, but we also know that the most difficult of the decisions to be made still lay in the days to come. I pray that You will bless the men and women of this great House that they will be able to face the hard decisions and address them based on the principles that best reflect those who have entrusted those decisions to them, knowing full well that the final decision may not always be the most popular one.

Heavenly Father, I also pray that You bless the millions of young minds that are entering our state's learning institutions at all levels to begin a new year of learning today. Bless them with the ability to focus and not be distracted by the world around them, but instead to find a desire for learning and knowledge and the desire to succeed. I pray that You will guide those entrusted in molding these young minds into the leaders of tomorrow that will one day fill the seats in this great Chamber. And bless them with the ability to sure up the weight of history that begins in their very classrooms and lecture halls.

Heavenly Father, be with us as we return to our homes and temporary residences this evening that we will travel there in safety and return tomorrow ready for the work week ahead. I ask that You bless the great State of North Carolina and all those who dwell within her boundaries with prosperity and happiness and do so in the Name of Your Holy Son, even Jesus Christ. Amen.



**August 25, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Yvonne Holley:***

Let us pray.

Gracious Father, Lord of all, thank You for allowing us again to be here for another day and to do Your will. Make sure that when we are doing our budget, transpiring and working behind the scenes, that first we do no harm for the citizens of the State of North Carolina. Guide us in the direction You want us to go with all the people of North Carolina in mind. Continue to be here for us and keep Your watch over us, our health and our families that we may continue to do Your work. In Jesus' Name I pray. Amen.



**August 26, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Megan Klutz, Legislative Assistant to Representative Chris Whitmire:***

*(The audio begins in the middle of the prayer.)*

...“If my people, who are called by my Name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” (2 Chronicles 7:14)

Jeremiah 17:7 tells us, “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him.”

Let us pray.

Gracious Heavenly Father, humble our hearts so that we may hear Your commands, and grant the leaders here today endurance and encouragement as they seek to vote on legislation. Provide the clarity and courage necessary to carry out Your wishes. In Your Son Jesus’ Name I pray. Amen.



**August 27, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Chris Whitmire:***

Thank you, Members of the House. Thank you for all in the gallery. From Psalm 55:22 before I pray, “Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; He will never let the righteous fall.” May we pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, Lord—please forgive us of our sins. Lord, we thank You for the many blessings that You’ve given us and, Lord, we thank You for the privilege of being an American. Lord, today and for the weeks to follow, we ask that You lead, guide and direct us as we finish our state’s business, get a budget and do the final items that we need in session over the next few weeks. Please give us the wisdom and the courage to do the right things for the right reasons, and to do it in such a way that we would set the example that we hope our children would follow. In Jesus’ Name I pray. Amen.



**August 31, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Craig Horn:***

Let us pray.

O God, as yet another legislative week begins, we ask for Your guidance and support. As many of our citizens still face lingering economic and personal difficulty, grant us the wisdom to make the prudent and pragmatic decisions necessary to build and sustain a better, more secure future. Guide and protect our men and women who work in the service of our country, our state and our community. Amen.



**September 1, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Carla Cunningham:***

Thank you. Let us pray.

Gracious God, in the business of my day I sometimes forget to stop and to thank You for the many blessings You have bestowed upon me. My blessings are many and my heart is filled with gratefulness for the gift of life. Thank You for Your traveling mercies that have brought me to my destination safely. Thank You for my family I left at home in Your keeping, also for their patience. Also, Lord, I want to thank You for my extended family that greets me here in this place, the staff and Members of the North Carolina General Assembly that serve here with dignity and respect day after day.

I thank You for the opportunity to serve for these crucial leadership moments because the hard things are the ones worth doing and because genuine achievement involves taking risks, making mistakes and never giving up. Things that are challenging or difficult when my heart is stretched, still I rejoice knowing You are as near to me as my next breath. In the midst of turbulence I am growing and learning. In the silence of my soul I thank You most of all for Your unconditional and eternal love. Amen.



**September 2, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative John Bradford:***

Mr. Speaker and Members, I offer this prayer on behalf of my Legislative Assistant, Anita Spence, who actually wrote this. Please bow your heads.

“Father, in Your Name we give thanks for the United States and its government. We bring before You the men and women who represent the State of North Carolina in the

General Assembly and ask You to bless their decisions. Thank You for the opportunity to serve You as we lead our great state. Your Word declares that ‘blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,’ Psalm 33:12. We desire Your blessing and wisdom in the decisions we make. Proverbs 21:1 says, ‘The king’s heart is like a stream of water directed by the LORD; He guides it wherever He pleases.’ Today, we seek Your will as a legislative body. Thank You for Your protection over us and those we serve. Father, in Your Name we pray. Amen.”



***September 3, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Dean Arp:***

If you will, join me in prayer.

Dear Heavenly Father, we pause this morning in the stillness and quiet of our brief time where we reflect on You as Creator and Lord of all that we see. We pray for our President and those who are in Congress because You’ve told us to, Father. And we lift them up to You that they are guided by Your hand through mercy and love.

Lord, I also pray for us as we undertake the business—and while there’s no business today in the Chamber, many things are going on and many people are working. I pray that You would make us fruitful and humble and yielded to who You are so that we may live peaceable and quite lives in reverence.

Lord God, there are many people who are struggling, both our colleagues and friends, and we lift them up to You that You meet them in their time of need. And many of our fellow citizens across this state, we pray that You would meet their needs. And bring us together in a unity and love in the great blessing of this United States that You’ve given us, that we hold in seriousness the blessings of liberty and truth, and that we guide our affairs in mercy and love. In Jesus’ Name I pray. Amen.



***September 7, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Assistant Sergeant at Arms Bill Morris:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, I just thank You so much for this wonderful day. I thank You for this opportunity that we have to come to You and just talk. Lord, it is Labor Day weekend, Lord, and I just ask that You protect the citizens of this state and this country as people are traveling. Bring them home safely. Lord, I pray for the Members of this Assembly. Lord, I pray that You be with their families as they are here the next several weeks finishing up their work. And Lord, I just pray that You reestablish Your firm foundation in this country by Your truths. Lord, I pray all these things in Jesus Christ’s Name. Amen.



**September 8, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Pat Hurley:***

Thank you. Let us pray.

Heavenly Father: Thank You so much for the opportunity to serve the citizens of North Carolina. You have said in Your Word that we need to be strong and courageous because You will never leave us or forsake us. The Psalms say You are our Refuge and Strength. Help us to be mindful of this as we serve our constituents to the best of our ability with Your help.

I only ask that You give each of us a desire to be united in our negotiations for a balanced budget. You know the needs of the people of North Carolina. Please give our leaders who are seeking solutions and making final decisions on the budget Your wisdom and guidance for a budget that meets the needs of our state.

Please protect those who serve in the military and in law enforcement. Please be with leadership at home and abroad. May Your will be done in all circumstances. As we continue to serve the people of North Carolina, please help us to show Your love through us by our words and deeds. In Jesus' precious Name I pray. Amen.



**September 9, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Assistant Sergeant at Arms Bill Morris:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the budget process continues in this great Assembly, I'd like to share with you some words from the Apostle Paul to the Church in Corinth and to us today.

"And now I will show you the most excellent way. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."

Further on he says, "Now these things remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, again we just thank You so much for this wonderful day and this time You've given us together in Your Name. Lord, again, as this budget process continues here in this great Assembly, Lord, I pray that the gifts that You have given each and every one of these men and women here today, Lord, I just pray that You will bind them together in love. Let them use those talents that You have so graciously given. And Lord, after all is said and done, may You receive all the glory and the honor. And it's in Christ's Name I pray. Amen.



**September 10, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Assistant Sergeant at Arms Bill Morris:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning I would like to read to you Psalm 67, a Song of Praise.

“May God be gracious to us and bless us and make His face shine upon us—that Your ways may be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations. May the peoples praise You, O God; may all the peoples praise You. May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for You rule the peoples justly and guide the nations of the earth. May the peoples praise You, O God; may all the peoples praise You. Then the land will yield its harvest and God our God will bless us. God will bless us and all the ends of the earth will fear Him.”

Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, I thank You so much for this wonderful day. And Lord, I just ask that You give us all a moment to pause during these budget committees to just think about who You are and look out a window and look at Your creation and just stand in awe of who You are before we continue our business. So Lord, we do praise You and we give You all the honor and the glory. For it's in Jesus Christ's Name we pray. Amen.



**September 14, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Assistant Sergeant at Arms Bill Morris:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to share with you some of Paul's words to the Church at Colossae talking about the church members having a new life—a new life in Christ. And having that new life, he says:

“As God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourself with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave

you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. As members of the one body, you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, I thank You so much for this wonderful day and I thank You for this great Assembly here. Lord, I pray that You will give us all patience, kindness, gentleness, all these things, Lord, that You call us to have being in You. Lord, as we finish up this budget process, Lord, I just pray that You will just make a wonderful statement through Yourself through all these Members. And Lord, I pray that You will guide and direct all their actions and their words. I pray all these things in Jesus Christ’s Name. Amen.



**September 15, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Dean Arp:***

If you would, join with me in prayer.

Our Heavenly Father, we pause a moment to acknowledge our presence before You. Lord God, there is nothing that we can do that You do not already know. We cannot flee from Your presence, for You have created the entire world and us in it.

Lord, we humble ourselves before You and acknowledge our sin. I have sinned before You; we have sinned as a nation. Lord God, reveal to us where we can serve You, for we cannot do so unless we see ourselves rightly before You. Only then will we acknowledge the wisdom that comes from You. And we thank You for Your forgiveness. As we plead our case that we may serve You, may You grant to us wisdom and guidance, humility. Lord, I love my fellow colleagues; Lord, I know You love them. Bind us together in a unity for the good of the people of this state that You love so that we may serve You and love them in humility and kindness. For it is in Your Son’s Name I pray. Amen.



**September 16, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bobbie Richardson:***

Thank you. Psalm 51:10 says, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” Pray with me this afternoon.

O Lord, my God, how great is Your Holy Name. Father, I come before You today praying that the words that I say here will honor You and that I am a living witness to Your commandments. O God, I thank You for Your wonderful grace and mercy that You show me and my fellow Members every day of our lives. Heavenly Father, I thank You for the opportunity to serve with the Members of this great Chamber, and for the people of the great State of North Carolina. Dear God, I ask that You keep me humble and give me a discerning spirit so that my words and my actions will be pleasing to You, O God. Father, I ask all this in the matchless Name of Your Son and our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.



**September 17, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Nelson Dollar:***

Mr. Speaker and Members of the House, this prayer was first offered on April 6<sup>th</sup> of 2011. And at the very end there will be a call and I hope you will feel led to respond. Let us pray.

Lord, our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer: we thank You for Your grace. We ask for Your blessing on this great House. While our words may clash and the debate may swing to and fro, Lord, You know our hearts. We are all here under Your divine authority, united in our desire to faithfully serve Your people. Give us strength tonight and faith in Your providence for tomorrow. Lord, as the sweetener hides in the tea, so let us hide in Thee.

And all God's people said: Amen.



**September 18, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Assistant Sergeant at Arms Bill Morris:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, I thank You so much for these men and women that have sacrificed so much for the people of this great State of North Carolina. Now I'd just ask that we all pray as Jesus taught His disciples to pray: "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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."



**September 21, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Assistant Sergeant at Arms Bill Morris:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me begin by reading Psalm 131.

“My heart is not proud, O LORD, my eyes are not haughty; I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me. But I have stilled and quieted my soul like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child my soul within me. O Israel, put Your hope in the LORD both now and forevermore.”

Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, I just pray right now for each and every one of us that You'd renew our hearts and our minds with a childlike spirit so that we may draw close to You, so that You might therefore guide us and direct us in all Your ways. I pray all these things in Jesus Christ's Name. Amen.



**September 22, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Sharon Sullivan, Legislative Assistant to Representative Jacqueline Schaffer:***

Good morning. Would you please pray with me?

Heavenly Father, in Daniel Chapter 2 Your Word tells us that You change times and seasons, You depose kings and raise up others, You give wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. I thank You, Lord, for each Member that You have raised up as a Representative this term, and I thank You for their willingness to serve and to give so much of their personal time to our great state. I ask, Lord, for You to give the Members and their staff the strength and endurance to complete the work that remains to be finished. Help them, Father, to seek Your will in the coming days and the courage to act upon it. I pray for there to be a sense of unity in the House and that the work of the people would be completed quickly and without obstruction. I also ask for safety and good health to be upon the Members, their families and their staff. I thank You, Father, for the many blessings that You have bestowed on us individually and as a nation. May we never forget that You are the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. In Jesus' precious Name I pray. Amen.



**September 23, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Mark Brody:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Gracious and Sovereign Lord, we pray as Your servants in this Legislature that You keep us faithful to the solemn office for which we have been charged. Guide and direct us to fulfill Your purposes according to Your Word. Give us counsel and aid that we may preserve the integrity and honor of our state, protect our neighbors' best interests, and uphold and preserve all life You have given us. Lord, watch over and cover this great state with Your blessing and protection. Grant us an exceeding portion of Your wisdom when needed, a clear mind for discernment, a boldness to do what is right in Your eyes, and a passion to strive to meet the needs of our citizens within the limits and constraints You have placed before us. Grant us firmness to maintain and promote law and justice, and make us leaders of a people who would do Your righteous will in our state and nation. We ask this in the Name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.



**September 24, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Gale Adcock:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all within me bless His Holy Name." Let us pray.

Dear Lord, I pray that Your Holy and Life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear and hatred cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



**September 28, 2015**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Graig Meyer:***

Friends, this is a prayer written by my friend, Granvel Johnson. Let us pray.

"Eternal and Loving Creator, as we come together on this auspicious day to convene the North Carolina House of Representatives, remind us continually that in Your Kingdom, those who are the greatest are indeed the servants of all.

"Lord, as we prepare to do this great work, teach us how to build bridges across lines of difference. Unify us so that, as one governing body, we will walk together on common

ground for the good of all people. Flood our hearts with Your peace so that the ideological storms we will face are no match for the persistent waves of patience, good will and compassion which are rooted in Your presence with us. Give us the wisdom required to allocate resources to create public policy which helps build communities that are characterized by hope, peace and prosperity for all people.

“Eternal and Loving Creator, we are grateful for Your guiding presence as we tackle the difficult challenges ahead and embrace the wonderful opportunities that You have entrusted to our leadership and care. Lead us as we prepare to serve Your people in this, the great State of North Carolina. Amen.”



***September 29, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Megan Kluttz, Legislative Assistant to Representative Chris Whitmire:***

Let us pray.

Gracious Heavenly Father, thank You for the many gifts and opportunities You have blessed us with. Be with our leaders as they finalize legislation, and help them to love and honor You as they conduct business today. For it is written in 1 John 2:17 that the world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever. In Your Son Jesus' Name I pray. Amen.



***September 30, 2015***

***The following prayer is offered by Assistant Sergeant at Arms Bill Morris:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, I thank You so much for this new day that You have given us together in Your Name. Lord, I thank You for each and every one of the Members here and the sacrifices that they have made and continue to make for this great state. Lord, I pray that You will continue to give us strength tonight as we finish the work of this Assembly. And Lord, I pray that You will guide and direct all that is said and done here tonight. And Lord, I pray that Your will be done here on earth as it is in heaven.

I pray all these things in Jesus Christ's Name. Amen.



## **2016 Session ~ Prayers in the House Chamber** ***February 18, 2016 – July 1, 2016***

***February 18, 2016***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Phil Shepard:***

Good morning. Let us pray.

Our Gracious Heavenly Father, Lord, we just thank You for the blessings that You've bestowed upon each and every one of us today, the opportunity to come here and to serve our state, our communities and the people of this state. We pray, Lord, for Your wisdom and Your guidance in all that is said and done today. We also pray, Lord, that You'll be with us in our decisions, that everything that is said and done would bring honor and glory to You. In Christ's Name we pray, amen.



***February 19, 2016***

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Marilyn Avila:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let us pray.

Our Gracious God and Creator, we come before You today with praise for who You are to us: the Giver of life, both earthly and eternal. We come before You today with thanksgiving for all that You give to us: love unconditional and mercy unmerited. We come before You today with ill feelings in our hearts and sharp words on our tongues towards each other. We come before You today praying for Your forgiveness.

Cleanse our hearts. Fill them with the love and compassion that Christ showed to all men. Fill our mouths with words of reconciliation that will empower us to do good for the people of North Carolina.

We come before You today praying for protection and strength for our soldiers as they defend our freedoms. We pray, too, for their families as they face the anxiety of separation and the fear of danger for their loved ones. Grant them peace and comfort daily.

I pray this in the Name of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior. Amen.



**March 23, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bert Jones:***

Let us pray.

Our Father and our God, we come today before Your throne of grace acknowledging that You are, indeed, our God, our Heavenly Father, our Creator and our Sustainer. As our Creator, You have given our lives meaning and purpose. Grant us the wisdom to recognize Your authority in our lives; for according to Your Word, the foolish person will say in his heart that there is no God. Your Word also reminds us that, as government officials, we are to act as ministers of God. Help us to do so as lovers of righteousness and agents of truth. Grant us the courage to speak the truth and the compassion to do so in love.

Father, since we last met, our colleague Representative Ralph Johnson, and our former recent colleague, Senator Earline Parmon, have both passed into eternity. We commend their souls to You, and we pray for peace and comfort for their loved ones. Our Father, we also remember those victims of the recent violence in Brussels. And Father, we lift up their families and their loved ones, as well. May we all be reminded that this earthly life is extremely brief in the light of eternity, and may we live our lives with eternity's values in view.

As each one prays in their own way, I offer my prayer in the Name of the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.



**April 25, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bert Jones:***

Let us pray.

Our Father and our God, this is a day that You have made and we will rejoice and be glad in it. Father, we have so much for which to be thankful. Indeed, You have greatly blessed our state and our nation in so many ways. Your Word reminds us that blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.

We pray for the citizens of our state, and we know that many of them are also praying for us. As we open this year's session in the legislature, we pray that You would grant us the wisdom to know and the commitment to do what is right in Your sight. There will often be disagreements due to the nature of what we do. Help us to conduct ourselves with dignity and grace, to speak truth in love, to debate policy rather than attack people, and to forgive one another when we offend. I pray that we will always strive first to honor You, Lord, in all that we do. As each one prays in their own way, I offer my prayer in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.



**April 26, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Mark Brody:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Sovereign and most High Lord, as Your servants and servants of the people who have sent us here, we humbly ask You to keep us faithful to the solemn office and responsibilities with which You have charged us. We lift Your Name above all names. We give You all glory and invite You to stand beside all of us as we do the work set before us. Lord, this day, give us all we need to accomplish Your will and Your commands. We ask this in the Name of Jesus. Amen.



**April 27, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Kyle Hall:***

Let us pray.

Father, You have blessed us in so many ways. You've given us a beautiful state, from our majestic mountains to our thriving cities to our tranquil beaches. You've given us the government of the people, by the people and for the people so that we can carry out Your work. As elected leaders of our great state, we know that not every decision we make will be popular, but we pray, God, that You will guide us. Grant us the strength of Sampson, the wisdom of Solomon and the love of Jesus Christ as we lead this great state. It's in Your Son's Holy Name I pray. Amen.



**April 28, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Ken Waddell:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Please pray with me.

O God,

We begin this session by giving thanks. We are thankful for the beautiful day before us and the coming rain that will nourish our land and soil. We are thankful for this work to serve the people of North Carolina and thankful for our families and friends who support us in this work.

And we pray for Your guidance. We come to You from different backgrounds and understandings of who You are. Some of us have a deep faith and some of us have no faith

at all. Still we take this time to pause and reflect on what unifies us instead of what divides us. We care for the people of North Carolina and seek what is best for them.

We know the power of love that can transform people and ask for Your love to be expressed through us. We know the power of respect and ask for the ability to listen and hear from different points of view. We know the power of grace and ask that we are able to offer grace and receive grace during the times we make mistakes and are not kind.

We pray for the work we have before us and that the conversations we have together will better inform us to the decisions we will make. We pray for the people of North Carolina and the different hardships we are all going through. We pray for the many communities throughout this state as they reach out and support each other in life's difficulties.

May we discover what it really means to partner together through love and grace for the sake of men and women throughout the great State of North Carolina and beyond. Amen.



**May 2, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Ken Goodman:***

May we pray.

Dear Wise and Loving Father, we thank You for Your many and abundant blessings. I pray that You will give each of us wisdom to govern amid conflicting interests and issues of our times, a sense of the true needs of our people, confidence in what is good and fitting, and the ability to work together in harmony, even when there is honest disagreement. I pray for each person to have personal peace in their lives and joy in their tasks. Amen.



**May 3, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bert Jones:***

Let us pray.

Our Heavenly Father, once again we have the blessed privilege to come before Your throne of grace. We praise Your Holy Name and come with thanksgiving and reverence. As Your Word says, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge and the beginning of wisdom. Lord Father, we ask for a special measure of wisdom throughout this body as we would collectively carry the mantle of leadership in our state. You have promised to grant wisdom from above to Your people who will ask in earnest. Let us ask, for the wisdom from above is pure, sincere, and full of mercy and good fruit.

We pray that You would heal and preserve our state and nation such that we would bring honor and glory to You. The challenges we face are great, but with God, and only with God, all things are possible. May our efforts be faithful according to Your Word, and ultimately of eternal worth in the Kingdom of God. We lift up every soul within the sound of our voice and beyond, knowing that You are always there to meet their greatest need.

As others may choose to pray in their own way, I pray in the matchless Name of Christ my Savior. Amen.



**May 4, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Gale Adcock:***

Thank you, Speaker. Let us pray.

Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day. Lead us in Your ways that our state may be guided along the roads of peace, justice and goodwill. Grant strength and wisdom to our Speaker, to the Members of this House and to the Senate, to our Governor and his Cabinet and to our Judiciary. May our combined efforts benefit our state and its people. Bless mothers across our state and nation who we will celebrate in a special way this Sunday. May all that is done within this House be for Your honor and glory. Amen.



**May 5, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Harry Warren:***

Before I begin I'd just like to say that when I volunteered to do the prayer...I wonder if anybody else thinks it's coincidental they assigned me Cinco de Mayo. (*laughter*) Today is also Holocaust Remembrance Day. I want to mention that in my prayer, but I want to ask us all to keep those who have lost their lives during the worst event in our history—the history of our existence—to keep those folks in mind. Please bow your head and pray with me.

Our Father who watches and rules from heaven, it seems arrogant of us that at random times we stop in our activities to call upon You to address our needs as if You are only available to be at our beck and call. We ask You to bless our food, get us that promotion, help our team win or give us the right six numbers for the lottery. Rather than recognizing that having food to eat, a job to earn a living, a team to cheer for and sufficient means to survive are wonderful blessings in themselves, we unabashedly ask for more. You have blessed us and we implore You to bless the blessing. Still others turn to You with earnest hearts and tear-filled eyes pleading for relief from persecution, for a miracle of healing for

themselves or a loved one, for food to eat, clothes to wear, for the gunfire to stop and their children to be safe—sincere petitions offered in desperation and hope.

Today we pause to remember a moment in time when millions of such voices were silenced—systematically and methodically silenced forever in the most horrendous act of inhumanity in the history of mankind. We have proven throughout our very existence our ability for creating marvelous lasting beauty in music, sculpture, art and architecture. We have impressed ourselves with our achievements in science and medicine, and we have also consistently demonstrated our capacity for unimaginable acts of cruelty and depravation of morality. We cannot deny that we are conflicted creatures. We thank You, Almighty Lord, for Your patience, Your tolerance, and Your forgiveness.

Now, Lord, as we prepare to work together on behalf of those we represent, enlighten us, encourage us and enable us to use the talents that You've already blessed us with to collaborate for the betterment of our charges to glorify You. I and many among us ask this prayer in the Name of our Lord and our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.



**May 9, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Mark Cone, Assistant Sergeant at Arms:***

Our Father in heaven, as we come before You today on this beautiful Monday You've given us to start the week with, we are thankful for the recent rains and now for the prevailing sunshine and for the opportunity to have honored mothers everywhere this past weekend. As we start our week, Father, please guide the Members and staff of this great Chamber that the decisions made will always be in the interest of the greater good for all North Carolinians. I pray that You will be with each of us throughout the week, both here and in our homes, and do so in the Holy Name of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.



**May 10, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Brian Turner:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let us pray.

Dear Lord, thank You for this day. Please guide our minds and our hearts as we work in Your service and in the service of the people of North Carolina. As it says in Romans 12:16, "Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion." Please, Lord, provide us with humility and courage to do what is right. Thank You again, Lord, for what You do. And it's in Your Holy Name we pray. Amen.



**May 11, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Jimmy Dixon:***

Our Kind Father in heaven, we pause for a moment to give Thee thanks for the magnificent blessings that we enjoy in this life with the freedom and liberty that we enjoy in America. Bless our efforts in the General Assembly to do our part to preserve that freedom and liberty for future generations. We pray for this in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.



**May 12, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Debra Conrad:***

Please join me in a prayer from the National Federation of Republican Women's Prayer Book.

"Heavenly Father, as we begin this session, we bring Your presence with us. We speak Your peace, Your grace, Your mercy and Your perfect order. We acknowledge Your power over all that will be spoken, thought, decided and done at this Assembly. Lord, we thank You for the gifts You have blessed us with. We commit to using them responsibly to Your honor.

Give us a fresh supply of strength to do our tasks for the people of this great state. Anoint our ideas, projects and energy so that even our smallest accomplishments may bring You glory. Lord, when we are confused, guide us; when we are tired, infuse us with the light of the Holy Spirit. May our gathering today bring faith, joy and a smile to all we come in contact with.

All in Your Name and for Your glory, amen."



**May 16, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Larry Pittman:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let us pray.

Blessed be the Name of the Lord from this time forth and forever more. The Name of the Lord is to be praised, and we thank You, O God, for Your great love for us. We thank You, O God, that even though You knew how we would fail You and how we would sin, yet You loved the very idea of us enough that You made us anyway. And Father, we thank You for that great love. We rejoice in You. We thank You for the beauty of this day and for the beauty of this creation that You have made, and for the ability that You give us to

appreciate and enjoy it. And we thank You, O God, for Your offer to us of Your own fellowship.

Father, we pray for all who work here in this place. We pray, O God, that You would help them with whatever difficulties they may be facing. With the challenges, O God, that are in front of us, we pray that You would help us to draw on You for strength, wisdom and guidance. We pray, O God, for the health of all here and ask that You would bless each one. Some of us have been through some difficult health issues in recent days, and we just pray that You would continue to heal those who have had these issues, such as Representative Carney and others, Lord. We pray that You'd give us strength.

Be with those who are on their way here today, have not yet arrived. Father, give them safe journey. And Lord, just guide and direct us. We're getting into crunch time on the budget and a lot of other things waiting to be done. We just pray, Father, that You would guide us through it all. And in the end, O Father, as in all things, we ask not our will but Yours be done.

Through Christ our Lord, amen.



**May 17, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Gregory Murphy:***

Let us pray.

Gracious and Merciful Father, we give You thanks for yet another day. You have bestowed upon us a world of wonder, of beauty and of grace. You granted us each a moral conscience and a questioning and inquisitive mind. Please help us to use those gifts to seek You and Your guidance for all our lives and for the lives of those we represent.

So many in our world struggle for the basic necessities of water, food and shelter. We are blessed that You have granted those to so many, yet we ask that You would help us to provide for those who do not.

As we gather here in this Chamber we are reminded that we are here to serve as servant leaders. Jesus defines servant leadership in Matthew's Gospel. He said, "Whoever wants to become great among you must be first your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve."

We are called here to be humble, to seek a better life for those we represent and to protect all life. We ask that You continue to inspire us to overcome differences in opinion, and that You seek to help us to propose just and moral laws that benefit all of Your creation.

Please remind us to think, not only for today, but for those who would follow us five years, ten years, one hundred years from now. Help us to be mindful that the decisions we make here in this Chamber have consequences for those we know, but also the millions we do not know and the millions that will follow us.

Glorious God, You have shown us the great example of what "Love of Fatherhood" means. Please help our state and our nation to restore the critical necessity of "father" in

our children's homes. Our state and our nation now suffer the tragedy and indignity of so many of our youth growing up without a father's influence in their lives.

As I end, Father, we ask You most of all for peace: peace in our hearts, peace in our minds and peace in our souls.

In God's glorious Name we say, Amen.



**May 18, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Dean Arp:***

I'd like to offer this prayer on behalf of the students of the North Carolina Coalition of Home Educators. A couple students wrote this. If you will, pray with me.

"Dear Heavenly Father, we thank You for this great state and the privilege to serve its citizens. In this chaotic and lost world, we thank You for Your design and the order that government brings. We pray that as we work out the issues at hand that we'll bring You honor and glory. In the current turmoil in our state and our nation, we pray that Your will prevail.

"We pray for the future of our state and that You will raise up young men and women in these days ahead that will bring You glory and continue the banner of this state that You have blessed us with. As we go forward today, help us to make the decisions that please and glorify Your Name. We pray for safety and wisdom as You help us to be warriors for You.

"We pray all this in Your Son's Precious and Holy Name. Amen."



**May 19, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Rena Turner:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pray with me, please.

Our dear Heavenly Father, we come to You today with grateful hearts, hearts of praise for You for Your faithfulness and steadfastness of Your love that You have for us. We welcome Your presence here in this Chamber and thank You for it. We ask for Your guidance and wisdom as we participate in the governing of our state.

We thank You, Lord, for Your plan of salvation to bring Your children to You. We ask that this relationship with You brings us to make good decisions in our roles as legislators for such a time as this, as You remind us in the Book of Esther.

Lord, we look to You for strength and determination, the kind You gave Joshua in perilous times. We ask that You prepare the path before us and bring us closer to You as we

travel through our time on earth. Be the light that guides us through the darkness. Keep us focused on You as the swirl of distractions try to gain our attention. Forgive us when we fail to recognize Your direction. Help us to be alert to Your prodding as we move forward in Your Name. Help us to bring honor to You in our interaction with others, our debate on difficult topics and our normal discourse of business.

Now go with us. Keep us safe in Your care. Lead, guide and direct our paths. For it is in Jesus' Name I pray. Amen.



**May 23, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Michael Speciale:***

Almighty God, we thank You for this day, this day that You have made. We thank You for each other, for our friends, our families and our acquaintances. We thank You for the blessing of living in this land of freedom, and we pray that You'll guide us in the preservation of liberty. We thank You for the opportunity that we have to serve our fellow citizens and that You will never let us forget that it is an honor to represent them. We thank You for all that You have blessed us with, for we know that all that we are blessed with comes from You.

We pray that You will guide us through the days of this session, that You will guide us to do what is right. We pray that You strengthen us against those who would weaken us, that You would give us the knowledge to contemplate all sides of the issues that come before us, and that You will guide us to make the right decisions on behalf of those who sent us here. We pray that You would give us the courage to stand tall and to defend those ideas which have made this country great, and to be a bulwark against those ideas which would cause us to fall. We pray that You will guide our temperament with one another, that You will fill us with patience, courtesy, respect and consideration for one another.

And we pray these things in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.



**May 24, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Russell Miles, Staff in the Legislative Library:***

Let us pray.

Father, first of all, thank You for allowing us to be a part of this glorious day that You have made. You, God, are such a great and wonderful Father. Now Father, I ask Your grace, mercy and blessings upon every Member of this Chamber. God, strengthen each Member by Your power and might in Jesus' Name. Father, You selected each Member for this appointed time in history to lead and guide this great State of North Carolina. Keep them safe and

protect their family members back at home. Father, they can surely do all things through Christ who strengthens them. Father, let Your divine and perfect will be done today. In Jesus' Name we pray, amen.



**May 25, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Sam Watford:***

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, thank You for the health and wellbeing necessary to be here today representing the citizens of this most excellent state. This upcoming Memorial Day weekend should serve as a reminder to us of the sacrifices made by some when others have turned away from You. We are a people divided. Help us to focus our eyes and our hearts on You and follow Your guidance. Please don't give up on us. Heal our nation, O Lord. These words I offer in the only way I know how—in the Name of Jesus. Amen.



**May 27, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Mark Cone, Assistant Sergeant at Arms:***

Heavenly Father, we come before You today at the start of our annual Memorial Day weekend with grateful hearts—grateful for those who have, since the beginning, heard our nation's call and paid the price so that we can enjoy many liberties that we have today. We thank You for sending such men and women to walk among us, to watch over us and to protect us, and to make the ultimate sacrifice according to Your will. I pray that their families know that their sacrifice was not in vain and wasn't taken lightly by those of us for whom it was made. I pray that You will bless them with the peace and knowledge that they now muster with the armies and navies of heavenly hosts in Your presence.

Heavenly Father, we ask that You watch over us as we celebrate their memory this weekend. Keep us from harm and see us each one safely back here next week to work for the people of North Carolina. These things I pray humbly in the Name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.



**May 30, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Blair Borsuk, Intern for Speaker Tim Moore:***

Thanks. If y'all will bow your heads.

God of power and might, wisdom and justice, through Your authority is rightly administered, laws are enacted and judgment is decreed. Assist with Your Spirit of counsel in the fortitude of the Representatives of this House and all government leaders of North Carolina and these United States. May they always seek the righteous, justice and mercy of Your ways. Grant that they may be enabled by Your powerful protection to lead our state with honesty and integrity. Keep in mercy the men and women who have died for freedom and bring them safely into Your Kingdom of justice and peace. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



**May 31, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Susan Martin:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday we commemorated Memorial Day, a day to honor all armed services personnel who lost their lives serving our nation. Consider these comments capturing the spirit of Memorial Day that were shared in 1863 at the dedication of a new national cemetery in Gettysburg.

“The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did. It is for us the living to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us -- that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave their last full measure of devotion -- that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain -- that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom -- and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

That was Abraham Lincoln. Please join me in prayer.

Dear Lord, thank You for blessing our great nation and state. We praise You for soldiers with a fighting spirit, for a proud, courageous people with the core values upheld by the armed services of the United States of America, for people with honor, courage, commitment, integrity, service, loyalty, duty, respect and excellence. As we honor our fallen patriots and the ideas and values those soldiers stood for and died defending, we ask Your blessing on their families and friends, including those they served with. We ask Your blessing on our active duty and retired military.

The New Testament says, “There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” Lord, we thank You for those who have gone before us and made that ultimate sacrifice

for our freedom worth continuing to fight for. Help us to never forget. Give us strength, courage and wisdom to perform the work we are called to on behalf of Your great people.

God, bless America, we ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.



**June 1, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Donny Lambeth:***

As we open today's session, I encourage you to reflect on your many blessings while keeping in mind those less fortunate. Let us pray.

Our most Gracious and Loving Heavenly Father, we join in prayer today to give praise and thanks for the many shared blessings of life. We rejoice in another glorious day that You have given to us. May we use it to the betterment of the citizens whom we serve.

As we reflect on this moment, we ask for Your wisdom and guidance. We ask for courage that we may be faithful. We ask for patience that we may be fair. We ask for strong minds and bodies that we may complete the tasks before us. We ask for forgiveness when we have wandered.

Gracious God, we pray for those seeking Your guidance in their life's work as they provide for their families and contribute to the betterment of their communities.

We pray for the men and women serving in our military, as well as their families. Keep ever before us the knowledge that our freedom does not come without sacrifice, and make us grateful. We pray a special blessing for our other safety personnel who daily protect us and keep us from harm's way. Thank You for their families who support and encourage them in their service.

Open our minds and hearts to Your understanding, Lord, and grant us wisdom in the decisions we make. We offer this prayer in Your Name. Amen.



**June 2, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Susan Fisher:***

Good morning. An essay by Clarissa Pinkola Estés was forwarded to me recently. She is an American poet, a post-trauma specialist, and author of "Women Who Run with the Wolves." The essay spoke to me, so I decided to fashion a prayer from some of the messages she was urging in her essay. This is for Sophie and Sadie.

The Lord be with you. And also with you. Let us pray.

Eternal God, Ruler of the universe, we find ourselves in a time of bewilderment over the current state of affairs in our world. We witness daily incomprehensible acts against

children, elders, everyday people, the poor, the unguarded, the helpless. Today I ask You to help us not to spend our spirits bemoaning these difficult times, but to give us hope and a willingness to engage one another in constructive dialogue and action.

Keep us from dwelling too much on what is outside our reach or what cannot be. Remind us that we are needed for these times. Assist us in meeting resistance by revealing to us those who will love us and guide us so that we will know when they appear.

We are united in our belief in a power greater than ourselves, and we know that we are not put here to fix everything all at once. Give us the grace to concentrate on mending the part of the world that is within our reach so that by an accumulation of acts of kindness, we tip the scales toward enduring good.

Help us, God, to remember why we are here, whom we serve and who brought us to this place in this time. Amen.



**June 6, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Larry Pittman:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Please pray with me.

Great God, our Father, we thank You for another beautiful day in the State of North Carolina which we love so dearly. Now some people might think that You didn't have anything to do with that, but I know better and I think most people here do, because You are the source of goodness and beauty and truth. You're the very definition of those words. And so anything good and beautiful and true comes from You and we rejoice in it.

We thank You, Father, that we have the opportunity once again to come and consider matters of importance to Your children in the State of North Carolina, and we ask, Lord, that You would give us wisdom. Guide us to say and to be and to do what is right in Your sight.

Lord, a lot of families in North Carolina have soldiers in the National Guard who are out west in California for a month of training, and we're deeply concerned, Lord, for their safety. We pray that You would bless them in their endeavors and bring them safely home to their families.

Now be with us through the rest of this evening, Lord, and in every moment may Your Spirit be in our lives to do what is right through us that may be pleasing to You and give glory to Your Name. For we pray in Jesus' Name, amen.



**June 7, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Rey Cooke, Assistant Sergeant at Arms:***

Will you pray with me, please?

Heavenly Father, we do bow before You and acknowledge that You are God and we are not. You are the Giver of every good and perfect gift, and we thank You, Lord. We thank You for the Word that we stand upon. We thank You for how it encourages us, refines us, disciplines us and teaches us, Lord, that You did not leave us here without any guidance. You left us with the unshakeable rock upon which we stand.

And Father, as we gather in this room today, I pray that You would be amongst us and that You would lead and guide in our decisions, and that we may acknowledge that it is a privilege to be here. Thank You for this opportunity. And we ask these things in Jesus' Name. Amen.



**June 8, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Dean Arp:***

Thank you. If you would like to, join with me in prayer.

Our Heavenly Father, I come before You today praising You for the many blessings of life and liberty You have bestowed upon us, and that we live in a state and nation that is free. You, God, are sovereign over our lives and know our hearts and our struggles. You know that we're all broken and sinners, but it is in You that we find abundant and new life. I thank You, God, for bringing us together to glorify Your Name in all that we do. We make sacrifices every day, but You are the One who made the ultimate sacrifice, and we thank You for that.

The Psalmist tells us that You hear our voices; we lay our requests before You and wait patiently. You are not a god who delights in wickedness. Evil cannot dwell with You. The boastful cannot stand in Your presence. You hate all evildoers. You destroy those who tell lies. The Lord abhors a man of bloodshed and treachery. Therefore, let us be pure in our actions, far from any evil intent, honest in our dealings with others and with You, and let us be righteous—for all who take refuge in You rejoice. Spread Your protection over them so that those who love Your Name may exalt in You, for You bless the righteous. O Lord, You cover them with favor as a shield.

Your Son did not come to serve, but to serve and give his life a ransom for many. We thank You for the chance that we have to serve others because You first served us. Today, Lord, I come to You asking for wisdom and guidance in our decisions, and that we make decisions that bring You honor and glory. Equip us with humility. Help us to love and serve the people of North Carolina because You love them. It is in Your will that we'll prevail and You are sovereign above all. I love You and I praise You, and it's in Your Holy Name I pray. Amen.



**June 9, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Rena Turner:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would you bow with me, please?

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Your Name in all the earth. We praise Your Name and thank You for this beautiful day and Your presence among us. We thank You for Your faithfulness and ask that You increase our faithfulness to You, to our families, to others in our communities, our state and in our world.

Lord, You have called us to be Your hands and feet in this world. Help us as we minister to Your children by using the gifts and talents You've given us. As You have given us each special gifts, we return them to You multiplied by serving others.

We thank You for Your presence with those who have lost loved ones or who deal with the trials of sickness with loved ones. We ask Your blessings of peace and comfort on those in difficult circumstances.

We ask Your forgiveness when we've done things that separate us from You, or if we have not taken opportunities You've given us to share Your love with others. Restore us to a right relationship with You.

Now, Lord, we ask that You pour Your wisdom on us as we make decisions that affect our communities, our state and our world. You see the whole picture and we only see dimly. Fill us with Your Spirit that we may discern Your will in each step we take. Guide and direct us in the path You would have us to go, and keep us safe as we take on this day. Help us to bring You glory.

Others pray in their own way, but I ask these things in the Name of Jesus, my Savior. Amen.



**June 13, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Gregory Murphy:***

Let us pray.

Gracious and Merciful Father, we give You thanks for yet another day. You have bestowed upon us a world of wonder, of beauty and of grace. You granted us each a moral conscience and a questioning and inquisitive mind. Please help us to use those gifts to seek You and Your guidance for our lives and for the lives of those we represent.

As we gather here in this Chamber, we are reminded that we are here to serve others as servant leaders. Jesus defines servant leadership in Matthew's Gospel. He said, "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, just as the Son of Man did not

come to be served, but to serve.” We are called here to be humble, to seek a better life for those we represent and to protect all life.

Father, we pray especially for the victims of hatred in Orlando, for their families and their loved ones. No words do justice to console those who have experienced this total and abject evil in our world. Yes indeed, there is evil in our world. Help us with a strong mind to discern it, a courageous heart to confront it and a persevering soul to defeat it. Help us to stand ready, as You told us in Matthew’s Gospel that we do not know the hour or the day. Yet also help us to overcome and not be blinded by this evil and hatred. Help us, Father, to seek peace and commonality with all our brethren and heal the divides that separate us. Our life here on earth is one given by You. Guide us to make us worthy of this most special gift.

In God’s glorious Name we say, amen.



**June 14, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Carl Ford:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let’s pray.

Father, we thank You for this day and we thank You for this time together. We pray that You’ll guide and direct our thoughts here today as we vote and represent our people at home, Father. We pray that You’ll bless us on this special day. It’s Flag Day, and we thank You for our flag and what it means and the freedoms it stands for. We don’t take them lightly. We thank You that this is also the anniversary of the day that we added “In God We Trust” to our pledge, and we pray that we will be a people that trust in You and we will follow You in this great state and this great nation. Father, thank You for Your grace, mercy and love. And we ask You these things in Jesus’ Name. Amen.



**June 15, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bert Jones:***

This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Let us pray.

Our Father and our God, as we live our lives today and every day, may it be to Your honor and glory. We pray for our state and our nation that we would be true to our national motto of “In God We Trust.” You have so richly blessed us and extended to us Your mercies in abundance, and Your mercies continue to be new every morning.

We lift up our troops around the world, and we pray for Your protection. We pray for our enemies, as well as our friends, that all may come to know You—for You alone can

satisfy and have the answer to our every need. We lift up those in authority, including this legislative body, and pray for godly wisdom. Help us to be mindful that our time on this earth is very short in light of eternity. Let us put our faith in You, our Creator, Redeemer, Lord and Friend. May Your Holy Name be lifted high so that You will be glorified.

As others may be praying in their own way, I offer my prayer in Christ's Name. Amen.



**June 16, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Susan Fisher:***

Let us pray.

Holy Presence, whose Spirit moves quietly but surely in the sound and fury of the world and in our lives, as concerned and caring people we need release from growing dissatisfactions, fretful preoccupations, nagging prejudices and the arrogance of being right. Release us from the disguises and lies in which we hide ourselves from our responsibility for our neighbors, our city, our state and our world. Release us from being possessed by riches we do not need and which keep us from seeing where our true treasure lies—for we do truly care about our neighbors and all the things that would make it better and easier for us to live together.

We do care for the least of these, the hungry and the terrorized and the sick and the exploited. We do care about peace and yearn for it, inside and out, and are weary of being afraid for ourselves and our children. And we care passionately for this fragile blue planet, this home, this Mother Earth, and all her offspring and creatures who share this life with us. Free us. Give us power and grace to work while it is still day. Amen.



**June 20, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Dennis Riddell:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to read from II Chronicles 1:10, 11 and 12.

“Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people, for who can rule this great people of Yours?’ God said to Solomon, ‘Because you had this in mind and did not ask for riches, wealth or honor, or for the life of those who despise you, nor have you even asked for long life for yourself, but you have asked for wisdom and knowledge that you may rule my people over whom I have made you king, therefore wisdom and knowledge have been granted to you. And I will give you riches and wealth and honor, such as none of the kings who were before you has possessed nor those who will come after you.’”

Let us pray.

Lord, I pray that You would give us wisdom and knowledge for today, and wisdom and knowledge for every tomorrow that comes to us from Your loving hand as we do the great business here in the North Carolina General Assembly. In Jesus' Name I pray. Amen.



**June 21, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Jean Farmer-Butterfield:***

Please let us bow our heads in prayer.

Father of time and eternity, help us look to the past with gratitude and to the future with hope. Bless each individual under the sound of my voice, and their families. Grant them peace, love, happiness and prosperity. Teach us to use our freedom to help to preserve and to strengthen freedom for all. Provide this body, as leaders of North Carolina, with wisdom, clear minds and insight. Open our ears so that we may know Your voice and be leaders by Your will to carry out service on behalf of the people of North Carolina. Father, we ask that You guide us with consensus, civility and progress, always mindful of the influence and impact of our work and the force that it has on the lives of all people of this great state. Amen.



**June 22, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Chris Whitmire:***

Thank you. As you find your seats, before I pray I want to share two verses. From Isaiah 66:2, it says: "This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word." And from I Peter 5:5: "All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'" May we pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for our many blessings and please forgive us of our sins. As we proceed down the homestretch of this 2016 short session, we ask that You help us to be humble and caring in our decision-making so that when we make the decisions that dictate the outcome of immense amounts of money and very important policy decisions, we do it receptive of Your guidance and in Your will so that we ultimately do what's best for our districts, our state and our nation. In Christ's Name I pray. Amen.



**June 23, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bob Steinburg:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Dear Heavenly Father, You remind us to not look forward to what may happen tomorrow. You, the Everlasting Father who cares for us today, will take care of us tomorrow and every day. Either You will shield us from suffering or You will give us the unfailing strength to bear it.

Be at peace, then. We must put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations and say continually, "The Lord is my Strength and my Shield. My heart has trusted in him and I am helped. You are not only with me, but in me, and I with You."

Heavenly Father, we call upon You to give us the strength to bear out our heavy burdens until we can again feel the warmth and love of Your divine compassion. Be mindful of us and have mercy on us while we struggle to comprehend life's hardships. Keep us ever in Your watch till we can walk again with light hearts and renewed spirits.

And I offer this prayer in the Name of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.



**June 27, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Mark Brody:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Gracious and Sovereign Lord, we lift Your Name above all names and recognize You as the Creator of all things. We pray for our servants in this Legislature of the State of North Carolina that You might keep us faithful to the solemn office for which You have charged us. Strengthen and uphold us. Guide and direct us to fulfill Your purposes according to Your Word. Give us counsel and aid that we may preserve the integrity and honor of our estate, protect our neighbors' best interests, and uphold and preserve all life You have given us. Grant us firmness to maintain and promote law and justice, and the determination to strive for the good of our state and the betterment of its citizens, remembering that we must also live under the same laws we write and enforce.

Give us wisdom in the hours of decision, and may we speak and decide matters in the spirit of unity and the bond of peace. When we face the challenge of defending Your Word and the direction Your Word takes us, give us the strength and serenity needed to meet that challenge. Guard and defend us that we may serve the security and wellbeing of the people You have given us to serve. Protect us from those who choose to do us harm. Make us leaders of a people who will do Your righteous and holy will in our state and nation.

In the Name of Your most Holy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, bless these United States and the great State of North Carolina. Amen.



**June 28, 2016**

*Session audio begins after the prayer.*



**June 29, 2016**

*Session audio begins after the prayer.*



**June 30, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Kyle Hall:***

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let us pray.

Father, You have blessed us in countless ways. As a state, You have blessed us with majestic mountains, thriving cities and tranquil beaches; a state with innovative and creative people and businesses; a state that stands out among the other forty-nine. As a nation, You have blessed us with a government of the people, by the people and for the people, and brave men and women who are willing to sacrifice everything they have to preserve our freedom. Personally, You have given us our families, our friends, our loved ones, and an extreme opportunity to serve this great state that we all love.

Father, as we begin to close this short session and return home, we need You. We know not every decision we make in this body is popular. But I pray that You remind us that You sent us here to lead and not to be loved and adored. I pray, Father, that You will guide us through these last days here in our state's capitol. Grant us the strength of Sampson, the wisdom of Solomon and the love of Jesus Christ. In Your Son's Holy Name I pray. Amen.



**July 1, 2016**

***The following prayer is offered by Representative Bert Jones:***

Let us pray.

Our Father and our God, it is a privilege that we can come before the throne of grace today and every day. And Father, today we lift up our state and our citizens, our nation and our world. Father, we lift up this institution and each Member and each family represented here. And we recognize that today may be the last day of this session—hopefully so—perhaps

tomorrow. But as we wind down, Father, we just pray that even now as we are tired, as we have worked hard, we pray that You would give us proper wisdom and discernment with the business before us, Father, that we would do our best, that You would grant us wisdom from above.

Father, we do pray that You would keep every Member safe as people will be traveling home and other places. We just lift up each and every one.

Father, as we come together, help remind us of what a privilege it is to serve and to be a part of this institution. Father, we make mistakes and we confess those before You. We pray that when we offend one another that we would be mindful to seek forgiveness, and that when we are offended that we would be quick to forgive. Father, we pray that You would make us quick to hear, quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger as James tells us in Your Word.

So Father, again, as we complete the business of this day and the business of this session, we just pray that You will guide us, that You will direct us, that You will give us that wisdom and discernment that can only come from You. For it's in Christ's Name we pray, amen.



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