

PRAYER PATTERNS

by David Young

Building upon your experience of prayer, may I share with you my pattern of prayer, which has continued for more than twenty-two years. This is when our family moved to Philadelphia to provide for the needs of our children. Since that time, there was no fulltime pastorate position in the Church of the Brethren. Additionally, I resided in the Drexel Hill Church.

My first book in Church Renewal has many stories of church and being spiritually renewed. This gave me a deep yearning for God unlike anything ever I experienced. In those days I rose each Saturday morning and went to Pendle Hill, a retreat and conference center administered by Quakers.

I settled into the quiet peace of their library which is open 24/7. There, I developed a unique prayer pattern. I first want to offer thanksgiving to God. Then my anxieties I lifted up to God. If you write a journal, you will be able to write these things that first day. I first turned to the Bible to read Scripture, once and then a second time. Slowly, I asked myself which words or themes had risen from the pages. In those days of my new prayer practice, I turned to the devotional classic by Thomas Kelly who talks about living in holy obedience.

Then I call home and feel that I am done for the day. Joan would put things off so long on my Saturday retreats. She replied that she has a husband on a peaceful basis. Now I have a daily pattern for prayer. For me it is important to do this prayer gift today.

My prayer time has become the experience that helps fulfill that deep yearning. I want to thank my wife who says to keep it in your daily pattern. I hear and sense this feeling of the Holy Spirit. If I look one way, I feel a deep rest and if I look another way, I sense a desperation about decisions of my life. These moments of good daily spiritual exercises are special. Finally, in this process I discover a period of divine peace.