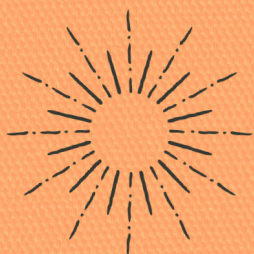


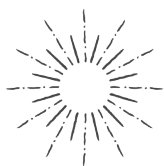
Liturgies for Wholeness



60 Prayers to Encounter the
Depth, Creativity, and Friendship
of God in Ordinary Moments

AUDREY ELLEDGE
AND ELIZABETH MOORE

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WATERBROOK

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Published in the United States by WaterBrook,
an imprint of Random House, a division of
Penguin Random House LLC.

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Hardback ISBN 978-0-593-44282-1

Ebook ISBN 978-0-593-44283-8

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper

waterbrookmultnomah.com

2 4 6 8 9 7 5 3 1

ScoutAutomatedPrintCode

First Edition

Book design by Elizabeth A. D. Eno

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For our mothers, who carry us in prayer

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A Note on Liturgy

Perhaps *liturgy* is a new word for you. Maybe you grew up in a tradition that practiced liturgy, but it feels irrelevant and outdated now. Or maybe liturgy, with its rootedness and sacraments, is something you have only recently longed for.

Historically, liturgical prayer refers to responsive, communal prayer that is usually repeated in a worship service to direct people toward God. By repeating words based on Scripture—which has been spoken by all sorts of people throughout history—liturgical prayer invites us into rich communion with both God and generations of worshippers who came before us. Liturgy reminds us that we are not alone—our stories are woven together with the stories of others who have repeated the same words and who have reached for God in their pain and joy.

Formation is at the heart of liturgy. Through liturgy, we learn the practices and rhythms of faith that shape our hearts, minds, desires, convictions, and whole selves. Liturgy forms us in the way

of Jesus, which is to say, it forms us into the people we are meant to be.

In this book, when we use the word *liturgy*, we are referring to an original, pre-written prayer based on the comfort, truth, and wonder found in Scripture. We believe our daily lives present us with an opportunity to participate in liturgy, so we put words to some common experiences—washing our face, grocery shopping, napping, dancing—all through which we can encounter the Divine. You'll also find prayers to guide you through life's highs and lows: falling in love, healing a broken heart, receiving a diagnosis, overthinking, forgiving.

If you're at a loss for words, need fresh inspiration, or just feel exhausted, we pray these liturgies provide a steady, comforting framework for your own prayers. We wrote these liturgies to give language to the wonder and wrestling in your mind, body, heart, and soul. And we hope these liturgies invite you into a community of people praying the same words, anchored in the knowledge that God sees us and calls us beloved.

How to Use This Book

We are all beginners when it comes to prayer.

If you've never prayed a day in your life, you are welcome here. If prayer is a part of your daily spiritual practice, you are welcome here. If you've picked up this book seeking nourishment through prayer—welcome. In these pages, you'll find liturgies to orient your entire being toward wholeness. By addressing topics that pertain to the mind, the senses, the body, the heart, and the soul, as well as our homes, communities, and world, these prayers aim to bring all the parts of ourselves to God.

This book will live best on your nightstand, in your backpack, or on the passenger seat of your car—available to be picked up as needed. While you could read this book cover to cover, we hope you frequently scan the table of contents and find language that speaks to what you, a friend, or a loved one is going through. Feel free to use these liturgies individually, in the quiet of your room or in the chaos of your life, as well as corporately, reciting them as a community with the intention of being collectively formed.

As you read one liturgy at a time, take a deep breath. Read each line slowly and thoughtfully. Allow every word to land softly on your heart. Speak them directly to God and resolve to be fully honest with Him. Hope more wildly than you've ever dared to before and listen quietly for the Father's encouraging response.

At the end of each liturgy, you'll find Scripture references that inspired these prayers. We encourage you to spend additional time with these verses on your own and ask what the Holy Spirit may be speaking to you through His Word. And as you engage in ongoing conversation with God, may your prayers transcend words, leading you into constant communion with your Maker and continual nearness to His presence.

Above all, as you read and pray, may God remind you that He is kind, gracious, beautiful, and good. May you sense, deep in your soul, that He longs to hear from you, no matter how fractured you may feel. If the pursuit of wholeness begins with brokenness, then may we come to the feet of Jesus together, free and open with our imperfections, examining what needs repair and looking beyond ourselves to the only One who can make us whole.

For the Mind



COME, LET US BEGIN with the mind, stubborn yet elastic, forceful yet so easily led. As we listen for the quiet voice of truth, let us emerge from the hollow of our inflated egos and linger in the light. Though we may need to unlearn to understand, we take heart, for curiosity is a wonderful place to begin. Let us come to our questions with courage, for they are the seedbed of renewal. Let us explore the vast unknown of our minds together, for though we are often lost, we are not alone. May our imaginations stretch beyond themselves, for the Spirit awaits at the edge of the world's wisdom. May our thoughts fly upward until they are weightless with clarity and far from the Liar's reach. May we resist deceit and ponder goodness until our bodies and souls follow suit, until our homes and neighborhoods and world are restored. May we give and receive grace in generous doses, for the journey to wholeness will take time and creativity and a multitude of mistakes, but the work will surely be completed. We are led by a faithful Guide.

A Liturgy for Those Who Think They Are Always Right

Here I am, Lord,
Your strong-willed child,
Your passionate apprentice,
ready and willing to ride into battle
with my armor on and my shield up.

This boldness of heart is a gift—
worthy of gratitude and cultivation.
Yet an urgency for accuracy
and a devotion to discovering the right way
have taught me to rely on my mind,
overvaluing the power of knowledge
and undervaluing the power of listening,
defending not only what is good,
but also myself and my heart,
which is far more tender than I realize.

And so, wise and gentle Teacher,
relieve me of my armor—
these tools of self-protection—
and help me be a humble student,
that I may comprehend what is beyond my understanding.

I cannot change my nature,
but I can wrestle it closer to You.
Bend me
like malleable clay,
like heated metal,
to be more like You.

You, who possess the strength of kings.
You, who restrain this power for good.
You, who discern when to hold fast and when to relent.

Here is my heart, Lord—
fierce yet soft—
may it be trained and restrained
by the counsel of Your Spirit.
Show me the shape my strength should take,
and place Your hands over mine
as we form, together, a heart that imitates Yours.

Open my eyes to all I do not know.
Open my mind to the wonder of learning.
Open my mouth so that I may speak with measured
wisdom.

For every thought, I need You.

LITURGIES FOR WHOLENESS

For every decision, I need You.

For every impulse, I need You.

My ability to be right is not what pleases You,
nor what secures my respect from others.

Rather my ability to trust You,
to listen to You,
to walk in step with Your Spirit—
this is what anchors my thoughts.

Amen.

Psalm 16 • Matthew 11:29 • John 5:19–22 • 2 Corinthians 10:3–5, 17–18 • Ephesians 4:29 • Philippians 2:1–11 • James 3:13–17

A Liturgy for Those Who Think They Are Always Wrong

Oh Lord, my insufficiencies roar loudly in my ear,
and the threatening voice of fear silences me.

With the weight of self-doubt dragging behind me,
I come to You.

With the belief that others will always know better
than me,
I come to You.

With eyes that regard myself as small and limited,
I come to You.

Belittled by grand arguments, I ask,
Do you see me?

Ashamed of my wrong answers, I wonder,

LITURGIES FOR WHOLENESS

*Do you see me?*³

Afraid of what I do not know, I whisper,

*Do you see me?*³

With a disproportionate amount of distrust
in my own understanding,

I have claimed ignorance as an identity,
constantly assuming incorrectness

rather than honoring the cognitive abilities You have
given me.

But You have destined me for more than second-guessing.

Thank you, Lord, that You do not condemn me,
that my fear and timidity are not hidden from You.

Thank you, Lord, that You move toward me with
compassion,

though I feel I have done nothing of significance for You.

I lay before You now the imperfect and lovely gift of
my mind,

this profound miracle of thinking,
this image-bearing ability to reason.

Let me love You, oh Lord my God,
by believing in the potential You have created.

Let me love You by learning,
by speaking what is on my mind,
by trusting in Your wisdom,

which is accessible to all who ask.

Oh Lord, it is true:

without the clarifying light of Your Spirit,
my mind is prone to darkness,
seeing dimly the truth You have established.
But You have tucked the mystery of wisdom
into the body and blood of Christ.

May I not deny the potency of this mind You have
 given me
but with it seek out the hidden wonders of Your world.

May I not boast in my ignorance,
nor in my intelligence,
but in Your life and resurrection,
Your love and grace,
Your mercy and kindness.

Amen.

Psalms 103:13 • Proverbs 3:5–6 • Matthew 22:37 • 1 Corinthians 1:18–31; 2:6–16 • 2
Timothy 1:7 • James 1:5

A Liturgy for Cultivating Imagination

Oh God of artistry and ingenuity,
inspiration and invention,
creation and enterprise.

Yours is the Great Imagination—
forming entire worlds and galaxies
out of the overflow of Your creativity.
You make the clouds Your chariot.
You ride on the wings of the wind.
You formed the Leviathan to play in the sea.
You even created us, our earth, and the infinity that
surrounds us.

You have instilled imagination deeply within us,
designing us to create with our minds and our spirits.
We are imprinted with this aspect of Your image
and desire to be good stewards of such a marvelous gift.

Through imagination,
may we better comprehend
this world that You have made.
May we perceive beauty beyond reason
and explore the eternity you have set in our hearts.
May we be astonished
with hope for the future of the world,
until our idols appear as small and powerless as they
really are.

Enrich our intelligence for the renewal of the earth
and send forth Your Spirit into our minds,
for without Your breath—the source of true life—
we can produce only lifeless things.

Let us not depend on conventional or cultural wisdom,
but as we listen for the stirring of Your voice,
may Your holy imagination enlighten our thoughts.

As we wait for You, oh Creative One,
fuel us with divine inspiration.
May stunning canvases be painted.
May transcendent symphonies be scored.
May tales that are written for children bring grown men
to their knees.

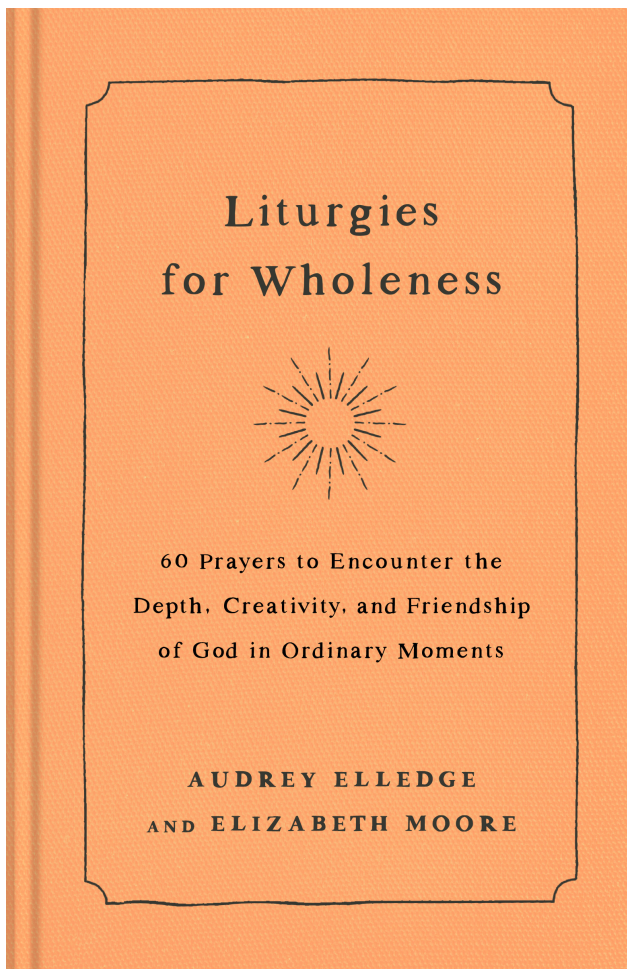
Receive our ideas and our crafts,
our sculptures and our songs,
as offerings of praise,
as sweet-smelling incense—
filling Your throne room

LITURGIES FOR WHOLENESS

with the aroma of unhindered inspiration.

Amen.

Genesis 1:1; 1:27, 31 • Psalm 27:4; 104; 135:13–18 • Proverbs 3:19 • Ecclesiastes 3:11–13 • Isaiah 40:26; 65:17–18 • John 14:16–17, 25–26; 15:4 • Ephesians 5:1



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