**Prelude to Prayer**

Sometimes, it seems as if we are sitting in the darkness for a long time, and then someone replaces the burned-out lightbulb with a new one, the wood pile is replenished, the sun comes out. While the light seems to be diminished, the light can easily be accessed again if we choose to accept it. Light gives us life. Christ’s light is like that. Christ teaches us in scripture that faith keeps the darkness at bay. Rachel Schwab/The Sentinel

**Matthew 5:14-16**

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand and it gives light to everyone in the house.  In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven**.**

* Thank you, Lord, for the imagery of light and darkness in Your word. This is so basic that we all can understand exactly what you mean. Especially as we head in the winter season with it’s cold and darkness, we have a fundamental need of Your light and the warmth that it produces. Not just physical warmth, but also Your spiritual warmth. The feeling deep in our souls of having that connection to You.
* I recently heard that the opposite of darkness is not light, but love. I believe it is both, in the person of Jesus Christ. Please help us shine that light-love to those around us that are dealing with darkness in their lives. Whether is it sickness, pain, money worries or just a feeling of loneliness. Right now, I am especially thinking of… Help me give them light and love in their time of need.
* Lord, be with Wayne and Ester as they are dealing with Covid. Please heal them and keep those around them healthy as they help them get better. So many in our community are dealing with this right now, so I pray for Your intervention. Help us all do what we need to do to stay healthy.
* Father, too many people are angry in our world. They are angry, bitter and lashing out at each other because they are afraid. Please help them. Put those in their lives that can show a way out of that spiral for them through You. Give them a hope and glimpse of true change that can only come from You.
* Sometimes I am scared that You will ask me to do and be one of those called to step into that role. Give me the courage and boldness to do as You ask. Help me hand over the reigns to You and let You speak through me.
* Be with us all as we go out into our week of daily cares and struggles. Remind us (me) to stay in You and Your word when I forget, so that answers come readily when needed. Let me shine Your light and be that beacon on the hill for all to see. It is in Jesus’ name I pray.

Amen.