

PASTORAL PRAYER

12-3-61

God, we marvel that we call call  
Thee "Father." It is not within our  
understanding why the Maker of all  
things and of all ideas, anywhere and  
everywhere, cares for us. Further,  
that You should give us so much  
freedom of choice and will, even to  
choosing of evil thinking and acting,  
is difficult to fathom. We can but  
be astonished at the greatness of  
Thy Being and of Thy loving mercy.

We admit that we are not worthy  
of Thy attention. In our more  
sane moments we are ashamed of and  
sorry for our wrongful acts and atti-  
tudes. We are grateful for Thy  
repeated assurances through Jesus  
Christ of forgiveness to all who  
really regret their errors. ~~we~~

We thank Thee for the season of  
the year, now beginning, in which  
we celebrate the birth of Christ.  
In this Advent season, we find in  
the giving and receiving within our  
families reunions, in singing the  
beautiful carols, and in many other

ways a very great deal for which to thank Thee. Help us to be alert to the true Christmas message about the entrance of Thy Son into human life. Accept our greatest thanks for Jesus, the greatest of all gifts.

Guide us that we may keep the true spirit of Christmas, and not put an over-emphasis on gifts or other material things. Use us to bring the message and love of Christ to needy peoples, through community efforts, through support of our church's missionary programs, through personal efforts in many ways. In this season of preparation for a great holiday we would prepare in ways pleasing to Thee.

Be our guide in the rest of this service, and forever.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.