

“These prayers all date from the time of the Reformation. With the exception of the last [which is the Deacons Prayer. TAD] which was added in the beginning of the 17th century, they were first published in the Netherlands in an edition of the Dutch Psalter by Petrus Dathenus in the year 1566. Some of these prayers seemed to have been composed by him, while others were taken in whole or in part from Calvin’s liturgy or other liturgies based on that of John Calvin. Although they gradually fell into disuse, they have to the present time always been printed in every edition of the Liturgy of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.

The collection now appears for the first time in our praise book. A committee was appointed by the synod of 1930 to translate these prayers into the English language. Their work was submitted to the synod of 1932, and with a few slight revisions adopted by the synod of 1934.” (pg. 74, Psalter Hymnal Centennial Edition, Doctrinal Standards and Liturgy of the Christian Reformed Church. Publication Committee of the Christian Reformed Church Inc. Grand Rapids, Michigan 1959)

Opening Prayer for the Meetings of the Deacons

"Merciful God and Father, Thou hast not only declared that we shall always have the poor with us, but hast also commanded us to succor them in their need. Thou hast ordained the service of the deacons for Thy Church, in order that its needy members may receive the aid they require. Since we whom Thou hast called to the deaconal office in this church are now met in Thy Name to discuss matters pertaining to our office, we humbly beseech Thee that Thou mayest, for the sake of Jesus Christ, dwell among us with the spirit of discrimination. May Thy Spirit help us to distinguish between those really poor and those who feign destitution, and to distribute the alms that have been collected as each one's need may render necessary, in the spirit of joy and fidelity. May we neither fail to comfort the needy members of Thy dear Son, nor dispense gifts to those who are not in want.

Kindle fervent love to the poor in men's hearts, in order that they may contribute generously of their temporal possessions over which Thou didst appoint them stewards, and we may have command of sufficient means to bring relief to those that are indigent, and may faithfully perform our task with true liberality of heart and without difficulty.

Bestow upon us also the grace we need, not only to relieve want by means of external gifts, but also to instill the comfort of Thy Holy Word in hearts afflicted with misery. Truly, man lives not by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of Thy mouth.

We pray, therefore, that Thou wilt bless our ministrations and wilt multiply the bread of the poor, to the end that both they and we may have reasons to praise and thank Thee; meanwhile awaiting the blessed appearance of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, who for our sakes became poor that He might enrich us with eternal treasures. Amen."