

Strategic Prayer and Fasting Week

January 12-18, 2017

Call to Faith Christian Fellowship
for season of focused prayer
for the advancement of the Kingdom of God
in Pen Lucy, Baltimore, and the world



“Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit,
says the LORD of hosts.”

- Zechariah 4:6

Faith Christian Fellowship

505 East 42nd St. Baltimore, Maryland 21218 - 410.323.0202 - fcchurch.org

Welcome to the most important ministry of FCF: Prayer

In recognition of our weakness and dependency on God for all things, the officers of FCF call all members, leaders, and interested participants to join us for a focused season of strategic prayer and fasting for the glory of God and His good pleasure for Pen Lucy, Baltimore, and the world. We encourage everyone not only to give focused prayer time during this week but also to pray with other believers as couples, in teams, in small groups, and finally concluding in a fellowship meal and meeting.

Annual Congregational meeting on Wednesday, January 18
Potluck Fellowship Meal @ 6pm---Congregational Meeting @ 7pm

We realize that for many of us, the idea of a focused season of prayer, or prayer and fasting, is a totally new idea and it may feel rather daunting. The spiritual disciplines of prayer and fasting are something that believers grow in. The purpose of this week's calling is not to produce feelings of guilt for those of us who feel weak in this area. The purpose is to encourage each of us to grow individually and corporately in prayer as a means of grace, to enjoy the opportunity to participate with the Holy Spirit in the work He is doing, and to watch God advance His Kingdom through our prayers.

We focus this prayer week around **Church Health**, our goal theme for the ministry year 2016/17. Each day will be focused on our related ministries and goals; our relationship with God in worship & prayer; our relationship in the Body of Christ in community and growing in the Word; and our outward service to the world in outreach, missions and community development.

Our hope is that you would experience the power and joy of God in amazing and fresh ways. The following material is intended to encourage you further in this movement of prayer. Thank you for participating in this Faith Advance.

Grace upon grace to you,



Pastor Craig Garriott



Pastor Stan Long

“The truth is that the church has always accomplished the most when she has deeply realized her own helplessness. Dependence upon God is our greatest need; it focuses our attention on what HE can do; and it makes His glory a supreme reason for all our concerns.” - Ian Murray

Weekly Prayer Schedule – Thursday January 12- Wednesday January 18, 2017

The daily focus for the Faith Advance Prayer and Fasting Focus Week is as follows:

Thursday January 12 – Praise & Thanksgiving to God for Answered Prayers

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Friday January 13 – Ministry Year Goal Focus: Church Health

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matt 28:18-20

Saturday January 14- Rejoicing- Worship

““And they sang a new song: "You are worthy ...because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased us for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.” Revelation 5:9
 Music Ministry - Worship Ministry- Hospitality Ministry- Ushers Ministry

Sunday January 15 - Reconciling- Unity

“His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility” Ephesians 2:15,16
 Unity Team; Community Groups; Intercessory Prayer

Monday January 16 – Renewing- Word

“We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.” Colossians 1:28
 Adult Christian Education- Children’s Ministry -Women’s Leadership Team

Tuesday January 17 – Reaching- Mission & Restoring - Justice

“Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible.” 1 Corinthians 9:19
 Connections Team - University Connections - Missions Committee Pen Lucy Team - Pen Lucy Action Network, (PLAN)
“And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8

Wednesday January 18 – Reproducing – Leaders

“You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.” 2 Timothy 2:1,2
 Women’s Leadership Team, Women Deacons, Elders, Deacons, Staff

Why are we having a focused season of prayer?

God has made it clear throughout biblical and church history that he uses and responds to special times of humble, corporate, Kingdom-focused prayer to accomplish His redeeming purposes.

Chronicles' Promise: God has declared that the chief problem of society and the city is not unbelievers living like unbelievers in their unbelief and idolatries. The chief problem is believers not trusting God or seeking God's Kingdom first. The healing of the land and the city begins with believers in humble prayer. Our recent and nationally divisive presidential election gives us a compelling call to humble prayer for our nation and our leaders.

"If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land." -2 Chronicles 7:14

Nehemiah's City Renewal: The beginning of the urban renewal of Jerusalem after the exile began with the broken heart of Nehemiah that was manifested through prayer and fasting for the broken city.

"And they said to me (Nehemiah), 'The remnant there in the province who had survived the exile is in great trouble and shame. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire.' As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven." -Nehemiah 1:3, 4

Acts of the Apostles: The whole forward movement of the gospel of the Kingdom in the early church begins with and is ignited by the prayers of the disciples.

"All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers." -Acts 1:14

"And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness." - Acts 4:31

Spiritual Awakenings: God has responded to corporate prayer for the salvation of people by initiating movements of widespread acceptance of the gospel.

"There has never been a spiritual awakening in any country or locality that did not begin in united prayer." -Dr. A. T. Pierson

"Out of that second Great Awakening came the missionary movement, the abolition of slavery, popular education and so many social benefits, as well as evangelistic drive." -*The Role of Prayer in Spiritual Awakening*, Dr. J. Edwin Orr

What is the heart of God-honoring prayer?

“Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.” -*Westminster Confession of Faith Shorter Catechism Q # 98*

“The essence of Christian prayer is to seek God. Behind all true prayer lays the conversation which God initiates - Ps. 27:8 ‘You have said to me ‘Seek my face.’ My heart said to you, ‘Your Face Lord I will seek.’” -John Stott

Why do we pray?

“Believers do not pray with the view of informing God about things unknown to him, or of exciting him to do his duty, or of urging him as though he were reluctant. On the contrary, they pray in order that they may arouse themselves to seek him, that they may exercise their faith in meditating on his promises, that they may relieve themselves from their anxieties by pouring them into his bosom; in a word, that they may declare that from him alone they hope and expect, both for themselves and for others, all good things.” -John Calvin

“At the heart of Jesus’ mission to attack and destroy the forces of evil lies the sure knowledge of the Father as Abba – from the treasures of that relationship we have the power to face sin and evil.” -Joachim Jeremias

“God is attracted to weakness. He can’t resist those who humbly and honestly admit how desperately they need him. Our weakness, in fact, makes room for his power.” -Jim Cymbala

Why do we encourage fasting with prayer?

Jesus affirms the value and expectation of fasting for His disciples and provides guidance for the proper attitude. Jesus talks about “when” his disciples will fast, not “if.”

“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”
Matthew 6:16-18

The early church fasted to seek the face of God for the mission of the church.

“While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’” Acts 13:2

“I believe the power of fasting as it relates to prayer is the spiritual atomic bomb that our Lord has given us to destroy the strongholds of evil and usher in a great revival and spiritual harvest around the world.” -Bill Bright

***Please see the appendix for more specific guidelines regarding fasting**

Thursday, January 12, 2017
Praise & Thanksgiving to God for Answered Prayers

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Psalm 100 A psalm. For giving thanks.

“Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is He who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.”

Confession:

Almighty God, you are generous in abundance. You have given us gifts we do not deserve. You have called us from death to life, granted us forgiveness through your Son, given us the Holy Spirit, and made us your children. Yet we have failed to be thankful or rejoice in your goodness. Forgive us for our ingratitude. Give us eyes to see your hand at work in all areas of our life. Deepen our gratitude that we might serve you with undivided and joyful hearts. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Good and gracious God we give You thanks and praise for:

- An encouraging time of learning, fellowship and fun during the Leadership Retreat in October, 2016. We thank you for our growing leadership teams as they lead our ministries with heart and hands. Thank you for the largest group that has attended a retreat of this nature. Thank you for the provision of a campsite for the September, 2017 Leadership Retreat.
- The annual Advent Concert and Bazaar this past December. We continue to see your hand at work in mighty ways during the preparation, Concert/Bazaar and thereafter. We praise You for providing over \$3,000 for our Deacons’ fund to help those in need. Thank you for providing space for relationship and ministry to flourish. Thank you for the hearts that were touched deeply during the Concert. Thank you for so many talented musicians who give from their hearts for Your glory.
- The annual Christmas Basket distribution whereby 18 families were reached through the support of 12 Community Groups. Thank you that the families were from our church, neighborhood and beyond. May your Spirit continue to move in the lives of these families.
- The provision of our Youth Director, Rueben Amlalo with his wife Golda who has already had a significant impact in the lives of our youth, their families, our staff and the neighborhood in just 4 months.
- Your provision and mercy in making our budget and the generous giving of your people through finances.
- The faithful 6 years of leadership by Elder Jonathan Hansen as clerk of the Session and for Elder Steve Sharkey’s willingness to now serve as clerk.
- For the women’s ministries and the Soul Food classes whereby honest discussions were shared around Biblical passages. Thank you for the group that has formed to continue to find ways to promote the service and growth of women in the church.
- The many, many answered prayers through the Prayer Wrestlers, Prayer Intercessors, Community Groups and Staff prayer groups. We see your Faithfulness and goodness Heavenly Father.
- The new members, baptisms and new life as shared in our Faith Report.

Friday, January 13, 2017
Ministry Year Goal Focus: Church Health

“And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matt 28:17-20

We define **Church Health** as: the body of believers devoted to the great commission of Jesus that is driven by the worship of God, grounded in the Word of God, uniting the people of God to reach all the nations of the world by making disciples who make disciples through reproducing worshipping communities of faith.

Confession:

Lord, we have not longed for your coming and your kingdom as we ought. Instead, clinging to the things of this world and counting them dear, we have grown callous to needs of the poor and downtrodden, the lonely and the suffering. We have not cried out for justice as we should, nor have we cared about those who are without Christ and without hope in this world. We have been silent when we could have spoken and have lacked boldness in our witness. Lord, forgive us for our offenses. And grant that by the power of your Spirit we might live in light of your coming again. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

Prayers of Supplication:

Lord we pray that you would embolden us to be a healthier church who follows close after you that:

- we would live in the certainty of Your covenant promises given through Abraham, David, the prophets and apostles,
- we would live in the awesomeness of Your humility as you took on our human flesh to identify with us in our broken and sinful state,
- we would live in the center of Your mission in bringing Good News to all people, races, ethnicities, languages, tribes, and social networks

We pray Lord Jesus that we would be Your body devoted to Your great commission,

- that we would be driven and compelled by Your grace to worship God our Father and You God our Savior,
- that we would be grounded and anchored in the Word of God,
- that through Your Holy Spirit we would be the united people of God. May the world know that You came so that all nations and peoples would know the Good News
- and that You Lord would work through us to make disciples who make disciples through reproducing worshipping communities of faith, here is Pen Lucy, Baltimore and the world, for your glory forever.

Saturday January 14, 2017
Rejoicing- Worship

“And they sang a new song: “You are worthy ...because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased us for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.” Revelation 5:9

“everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.” Romans 1:4-7

Confession:

Almighty, merciful Father, you have loved us and made us your people in one family through your Son. Yet we have not loved one another as we ought. Selfish ambition has gripped us, and we have failed to look out for others’ interests above our own. Pride has gripped us, and we have failed to befriend and care for those different from ourselves. We have not treated one another as brothers and sisters in one family. Forgive us for our offenses. Subdue our sinful drives. By the power of your Spirit make us a community that shows forth your acceptance, love and peace. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Great and awesome God, we declare that as a reconciled community in Your Son Jesus Christ we work in our worship services to represent God’s Kingdom in our local context. Holy Spirit, give us grace, wisdom and strength to work to offer You Lord our most precious and valuable expressions of devotion from our varying cultures. Help us Lord to give you such worship you are worthy of that we would pursue excellence and give you our very best offerings of devotion, in playing and singing skillfully with the gifts you have given, to offer praise, prayers, testimonies, and the prayerful teaching of Your Word that we might glorify You in a Christ- centered, believer-edifying and seeker-welcoming service. (Prayer from FCF Unity Declaration – Worship)

Lord we pray for:

- **Music & worship Ministry (Pastor Stan, Mark McMillen, Sarah Kennedy and the dozens of volunteers who make up the music/worship team)** We thank you, God that they have already met their ministry goal of the following: Start holding an annual music ministry kickoff day (Sept 2016) where we come together to worship together, encourage, communicate needs, expectations, discuss and pray for the year ahead. We pray for Becky McMillen as she is due to give birth to their 3rd child. May God provide for the role Mark serves while he takes time off to enjoy his new family. We pray for all the talented musicians who give so faithfully of their time, talent and treasures for God’s kingdom every week. We pray for their families as they sacrifice time to practice.

May you, Father God strengthen our Sunday worship services as we continue to recruit, train and support additional servants for all Sunday morning tasks. Pray for the preparation for Easter in 4 months.

- **Hospitality Ministry (Angela Onime and the team of 19 team members)** May God continue to expand the team to provide full coverage for hospitality every Sunday; that people might feel called to serve in this ministry; for better coordination of resources within the church.
- **Ushers Ministry:(David Pitts, with over 16 other team members)**
We thank you God for providing David Pitts to oversee this ministry. We pray for a smooth transition and that God will send the team 3 or 4 others who are needed for this ministry. God, may we be welcoming to all who come through our doors and seek to represent Jesus to them.

Sunday January 15 Reconciling- Unity

“His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.” Ephesians 2:15,16

“As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called— one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.”

Ephesians 4:1-6

Confession:

Holy Father, your Son became poor that we would become rich. He died that we might live, not for ourselves but for Him who loved us and gave Himself freely for us. Yet we confess, we think more about our thoughts than your truth. We are captivated more by our plans than by your Kingdom. Forgive us. Bind us together. Heal our confused minds with your Word, heal our divided wills with your Spirit, heal our anxious hearts with your love, that we might enjoy you and glorify you forever. Amen.

Holy God, we confess that You God our Father, in Your great love, have redeemed us by sending Your Only Son Jesus Christ and united us as people, by His blood, from diverse cultures into one family through Your Holy Spirit and have committed to us the message of reconciliation. We confess that great transgressions based on race, gender, class and faith have tragically marked our life together as a human family throughout the history of the world and this nation. Give us power and perseverance to join with those believers who confess that true reconciliation cannot be realized without a commitment to repentance, forgiveness and the pursuit of justice. **(Prayer from FCF Unity Declaration: Our Fundamental Identity)**

Lord we pray for:

- **Unity Team (Pastor Stan Long and team)** Greater unity of mind/vision/heart among the diverse team members. Praise for a good visit to another church to learn more and thank you for allowing us to meet this goal. May we spend more time in prayer, scripture and worship together. May the team finalize this year's Unity Month activities. Also we have several inactive members and would love to have several more members participate on the Unity Team.
- **Community Groups (Laura Baltatzis and team)** That the Lord would provide two more sets of facilitators to start two additional community groups and an additional two more people to join the Community Group Support Team.
- **Intercessory Prayer (Libet Garber and team)** That God would touch our prayer lives both corporate and individually so that we may grow in prayer and dependence on Him this year. We desire a Spirit filled prayer life for each member of the prayer team and our church. May the Lord raise prayer warriors this year and may we encourage one another in prayer.

Monday January 16 **Renewing- Word**

"We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ." Colossians 1:28

*"But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."
2 Timothy 3:14-17*

Confession:

God of all grace, you call us to love you with all our heart, soul, mind, strength, and our neighbor as ourselves. Yet we are not sufficient for these things. We confess that our hearts continually turn away from you: from purity to lust, from freedom to slavery, from compassion to indifference. Have mercy on us. Order our lives by your Word. Make your commandments the joy of our hearts. Conform us to the image of your Son that we may shine before the world to your glory. Amen.

Lord God, Holy Father, You have not left us in our darkness but have shined Your Word into our world and into our hearts. Your Word Lord is sharper than any two edged sword and it exposes and cuts through all the destructive lies and deceptions that surround us, that abide in our

hearts. Help us Holy Spirit to abide in Your Word. Sanctify, purify us by your truth, Your word is truth. Help us to always be ready to give a reason for the hope we have. Help us to meditate and love and memorize your Word that we might not sin against You. Give us the power through the Word of Your grace to say no to temptation. Raise up among us Lord, teachers and preachers who rightly divide Your Word. And may we be such a church Lord that boldly proclaims You, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in You Lord Jesus Christ. Give us Lord the perseverance to labor and struggle with Your energy, which so powerfully is working in us.

In Your Spirit we pray Lord for:

- **Children’s Ministry (Cindy Newton, Wendy Pitts and team)** For the infants through 5th grade to continue to grow in God. That the surveys which were sent out to the 4th/5th graders and families would be returned and that a plan will be made with the results to serve this age group more effectively. We praise you God for the nursery team and their use of “The Toddler Bible” with the 3 year olds. We pray for the Summer@Faith program for the children of the church and community to continue this summer for God’s glory and praise Him for the inception this past summer in cooperation with PLAN. We pray for the introduction of toys and other items in the Friends of Jesus room during family events to be used and enjoyed.
- **Youth Ministry (Rueben Amlalo, Emily Sippel and team)** Pray that we are able to CREATE systems to measure spiritual growth among youth. Pray that we are able to CREATE systems that draw youth into the wider body of Christ so that they may serve. Pray that we are able to CREATE systems to pair individual youth, who are showing signs of spiritual growth, with more mature Christians who would make time for discipleship. Pray that the 2017 summer mission trip planning goes smoothly and that the trip is fruitful in building deeper spiritual maturity for our youth. Pray that leaders would emerge from our youth to disciple other youth.
- **Adult Christian Education (Phil Johnson, Ann Maouyo and team of 5)** Pray for the planning/execution of a Marriage Workshop weekend in March.
- **Biblical Counseling (Kim Sutter)** That God would enter into each encounter as Kim meets with those who are hurting. May the Spirit guide each who are seeking Him and encourage those who are lost without Him. For the upcoming Emotions Seminar to be helpful and fruitful for all who attend.

Tuesday January 17
Reaching- Mission & Restoring – Justice

“Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible.” 1Corinthian 9:19

“And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8

Confession:

Almighty and most merciful God, Your mercy is higher than the heavens, wider than our wanderings, deeper than all our sin. Forgive our frivolous attitude toward life, our callousness toward suffering, our envy of those who have more, our indifference to Your Kingdom, our neglect of your Word of truth. Help us to change our ways so that we may desire what is good, love what you love, and do what you command, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Loving Father, we commit ourselves to work together as a multicultural body to proclaim Good News that communicates Christ to people in their particular cultures with Biblical integrity through culturally sensitive means. Help us Lord to be faithful witnesses. Teach us how to share the good news of our faith. Give us boldness Holy Spirit.

(Prayer from Unity Declaration: Evangelism)

We pray Lord for:

- **Connections Ministry (Laura Scott, Jim Hicks and team)** Gather together 2/3x per year to build a greater sense of being a team and working together.
- **University Connections: (Titus Jones)** Integrate more with the Connections Team to make sure students feel welcomed and connected the first time they walk through the door, beginning September, 2016.
- **Pen Lucy Team (Laura Clark – interim leader, Paulette Sullivan, Shellery Washington, Andy Devos, Sarah Kennedy, Pastor Craig Garriott, Emily Sippel (on sabbatical))** wisdom and guidance as we cast a vision for our next steps in engaging the congregation in the principles and practice of Christian Community Development in Pen Lucy. We thank God for the leadership Emily Sippel has had with this group and pray that God strengthens her during her time away from this ministry and focus on other ministries.
- **Missions Committee: (Ananda Kumar, Rachel Hicks and team)** To strengthen the support and prayer for our missionaries by encouraging ownership and participation of our members and community groups. That God would give each of us hearts for His world and wisdom as we seek to minister to different cultures and customs among us and beyond our boundaries.
- **PLAN: (Jeff Beans, Erin Kauffman and team)** that we might pursue stronger relationships with the parents of students that participate in our programming, by providing relevant support through new strategies, events and educational resources. For the 2016-2017 school years, implement two parent feedback nights and one resource night for 7th grade students and parents, focusing on the Baltimore city high school application process.

Holy God, Lord Jesus, we declare that we, your church are called to be Your redemptive presence in the world, by proclaiming Good News, which is demonstrated through concrete deeds of mercy and justice. We affirm that this Good News affirms people's dignity, cultivates environments of hope, and restores people to You, God our Father through You Christ our Savior and to service in Your kingdom. Help us Lord be faithful to this call. (Prayer from Unity Declaration: Justice and Community Development)

Wednesday, January 18, 2017
Reproducing – Leaders

“You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.” 2 Timothy 2:1,2

Confession:

O my Savior, help me. I am slow to learn, prone to forget, and weak to climb; I am in the foothills when I should be on the heights; I am pained by my graceless heart, my prayer less days, my poverty of love, my wasted hours, my unspent opportunities. I am blind while the light shines around me: take the scales from my eyes, grind to dust my heart of unbelief. Make it my highest joy to study you, meditate on you, gaze on you, Help us to change our way of life so that we may desire what is good, love what you love, and do what you command, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God our King, You have made us your chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people who belong to you that we might declare your praises out of our darkness into Your wonderful light. Lord we commit ourselves to seeking Your Kingdom first as we seek to prepare ourselves and others to fulfill our callings to serve and lead. Lord Jesus, as You spent the night praying for those who would become your disciples, give us wisdom and hearts to pray for workers for your harvest field. Lord, we know you chose a culturally, socially, politically diverse group of disciples to reach all the nations of the world. Lord help us to encourage such a blended Body of leaders in our midst as we seek to affirm and by your direction, ordain those elders you are calling to shepherd your flock and those deacons you are calling to oversee our mercy and justice ministries. Lord raise up among us those leading women full of the Spirit, who are gifted and called to serve in vital partnership with our elders and deacons that we might contend as one person for the gospel. Help us Holy Spirit to promote reconciled teams of leaders who understand and are committed to the authority of Your Word, who value the bonds of Christian community as members of Your Body, who exhibit godly character, devotion to prayer and who are disciple makers who make disciples. Lord help me, help us to be faithful to your calling of servant leadership in our midst. (Prayer from Unity Declaration: Leadership)

For tonight's **"A Taste of Faith" Potluck (6pm) & Congregational meeting (7pm)**, may God provide good fellowship, communication and quality time together.

Lord, we pray for our leaders:

- **Women Deacons/Mercy Ministries (Sharla Chinniah (chair), Nicole DeVos, Rachel Hicks, Betsy Dagold, Eleanor Daughtery)** For discernment and direction as we debrief both the Advent Bazaar and the Food Baskets and the future for the baskets.
- **Women's Leadership Team: (Martha MacIver and team)** pray that we would develop, disciple and integrate 4 more leaders to work within the ministries to the women by then end of the 2017 season.
- **Pray for our Leaders who are serving as current officers as well as those who are officers of the church. Pray for the reelection of officers. For the following male leaders, *denotes current officers and **denotes eligible for reelection**
- **Teaching Elders:** Craig Garriott*, Stan Long*, Karl Dortzbach, Beau Miller
- **Ruling Elders:** Steve Sharkey* (Clerk), Jonathan Hansen*, Jeff Beans**, Michael Rading**, Bill Bolling, Ananda Kumar, Don Rittler, Djik Maouyo**, Bruce Gustafsen
- **Deacons:** Sam Culli* (chair), Sandy Clark, Carneal Means, Weldon Newton, Gerry Sutter, John Decker, Dan Ellis, Jerry Lang, Calvin Landis
- **Staff members:** Pastor Craig Garriott, Pastor Stan Long, Don Rittler, Rueben Amlalo, Emily Sippel, Adrienne O'Connor, Cindy Newton, Robin & Kevin Carter, Jim Whiting, Keith Moore, Mark McMillen, Sarah Kennedy, Kim Sutter, Carneal Means (Rental Properties)

Prayer Reflections

"The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying. He fears nothing from the prayerless study, prayerless work, prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray."
Samuel Chadwick

"God likes to see His people shut up to this, that there is no hope but in prayer. Herein lies the Church's power against the world."
Andrew Bonar

"Why is it so important that you are with God and God alone on the mountain top? It's important because it's the place in which you can listen to the voice of the One who calls you the beloved. To pray is to listen to the One who calls you "my beloved daughter," "my beloved son," "my beloved child." To pray is to let that voice speak to the center of your being, to your guts, and let that voice resound in your whole being."
Henri Nouwen

"O Christ, our only Savior, so live within us that we may go from here with the light of hope in

our eyes, and the fire of inspiration on our lips, your Word on our tongues, and your love in our hearts. Amen.”

Prayers for the City of God, G. C. Binyon

“Prayer does not fit us for the greater work, prayer *is* the greater work.”

Oswald Chambers

“Pray, and let God worry.”

Martin Luther

Appendix:

What are some guidelines for fasting?

The following is a brief condensation of *Seven Steps to Successful Fasting & Prayer* by Dr. Bill Bright. The full version can be found at <http://www.billbright.com/7steps/>

STEP 1: Set Your Objective

Why are you fasting? Is it for spiritual renewal, for guidance, for healing, for the resolution of problems, for special grace to handle a difficult situation? Ask the Holy Spirit to clarify His leading and objectives for your prayer fast. This will enable you to pray more specifically and strategically. Through fasting and prayer we humble ourselves before God so the Holy Spirit will stir our souls, awaken our churches, and heal our land according to 2 Chronicles 7:14. Make this a priority in your fasting.

STEP 2: Make Your Commitment

Pray about the kind of fast you should undertake. Before you fast, decide the following:

- How long you will fast - one meal, one day, several days? (Beginners should start slowly, building up to longer fasts.)
- What type of fast does God want you to undertake? (Fasting options may include drinking water only, drinking water and juices, fasting only one meal each day, or even fasting something else you're dependent on besides meals)
- What physical or social activities you will restrict to accommodate your fast
- How much time each day you will devote to prayer and God's Word?

Making these commitments ahead of time will help you sustain your fast when physical temptations and life's pressures tempt you to abandon it.

STEP 3: Prepare Yourself Spiritually

The very foundation of fasting and prayer is repentance. Unconfessed sin will hinder your prayers. Here are several things you can do to prepare your heart:

- Ask God to help you come to terms with unconfessed, unaddressed sin.
- Confess every sin that the Holy Spirit calls to your remembrance and accept God's forgiveness (1 John 1:9).

- Seek forgiveness from all whom you have offended, and forgive all who have hurt you (Mark 11:25; Luke 11:4; 17:3, 4).
- Make restitution as the Holy Spirit leads you.
- Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit according to His *command* in Ephesians 5:18 and His *promise* in 1 John 5:14, 15.
- Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Master; flee temptation, resist the devil (Romans 12:1, 2).
- Meditate on the attributes of God, His love, sovereignty, power, wisdom, faithfulness, grace, compassion, and others (Psalm 48:9,10; 103:1-8. 11-13).
- Begin your time of fasting and prayer with an expectant heart (Hebrews 11:6).
- Do not underestimate spiritual opposition. Satan sometimes intensifies the natural battle between body and spirit (Galatians 5:16, 17).

STEP 4: Prepare Yourself Physically

Fasting requires reasonable precautions, such as:

- Consulting your physician first, especially if you take prescription medication or have a chronic ailment. Some people should never fast without professional supervision. Physical preparation makes the drastic change in your eating routine a little easier so that you can turn your full attention to the Lord in prayer.
- Not rushing into your fast.
- Preparing your body by eat smaller meals before your fast begins and avoiding high-fat and sugary foods. Eating raw fruit and vegetables for two days before starting a fast.

STEP 5: Begin Your Fast

As you seek the Lord through your fast, here are some helpful suggestions to consider:

- Avoid drugs, even natural herbal drugs and homeopathic remedies. Medication should be withdrawn only with your physician's supervision.
- Limit your activity.
- Exercise only moderately. Walk one to three miles each day if convenient and comfortable.
- Rest as much as your schedule will permit.
- Prepare yourself for temporary mental discomforts, such as impatience, crankiness, & anxiety.
- Expect some physical discomforts, especially on the second day. You may have fleeting hunger pains, dizziness, or the "blahs." Withdrawal from caffeine and sugar may cause headaches. Physical annoyances may also include weakness, tiredness, or sleeplessness.

Tips on Juice Fasting

- Drinking fruit juice will decrease your hunger pains and give you some natural sugar energy. The taste and lift will motivate and strengthen you to continue.
- The best juices are made from fresh watermelon, lemons, grapes, apples, cabbage, beets, carrots, celery, or leafy green vegetables. In cold weather, you may enjoy a warm vegetable broth.

- Acidic juices (orange and tomato) should be mixed with water for your stomach's sake.
- Avoid caffeinated drinks.
- Avoid chewing gum or mints, even if your breath is bad. They stimulate digestive action in your stomach.

STEP 5: End Your Fast Gradually

When the designated time for fasting is finished, how you break your fast is very important for your physical and spiritual well-being.

- Begin eating gradually. Do not eat solid foods immediately after your fast. Suddenly reintroducing solid food to your stomach and digestive tract can have negative, even dangerous, consequences. Try several smaller meals or snacks each day. If you end your fast gradually, the beneficial physical and spiritual effects will result in continued good health.
- Put Yourself on a Schedule. For maximum spiritual benefit, set aside ample time to be alone with the Lord. Listen for His leading. The more time you spend with Him, the more meaningful your fast will be.

STEP 6: Expect Results

If you sincerely humble yourself before the Lord, repent, pray, and seek God's face; if you consistently meditate on His Word, you will experience a heightened awareness of His presence (John 14:21). The Lord will give you fresh, new spiritual insights. Your confidence and faith in God will be strengthened. You will feel mentally, spiritually, and physically refreshed. You will see answers to your prayers.

A single fast, however, is not a spiritual cure-all. Just as we need fresh infillings of the Holy Spirit daily, we also need new times of fasting before God. A 24-hour fast each week has been greatly rewarding to many Christians. It takes time to build your spiritual fasting muscles. If you fail to make it through your first fast, do not be discouraged. You may have tried to fast too long the first time out, or you may need to strengthen your understanding and resolve. As soon as possible, undertake another fast until you do succeed. God will honor you for your faithfulness.

“Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?”-Isaiah 58:6

“And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.” - Acts 4:31

“Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.” -John 16:24

Amen and Amen.

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