“Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you, declares the LORD....”
Jeremiah 29:12-14a
“Prayer 2020” - What an exciting way to begin the new year and the new decade. Across this year we will have many opportunities for each of us to grow in our prayer life, and it all begins in January. We are focusing on prayer because we know that prayer is critical in the life a Christ follower.

If you want to be a disciple of Jesus – then you have to spend time with Jesus, and prayer allows that to happen. However, too many of us get too busy to pray, or we think we don’t know how to pray, or we worry that we have to use the “right” words. Praying isn’t that complicated. It is simply talking to God. John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Movement, once said, “Perhaps no sin of omission more frequently happens than the neglect of prayer.” We know we should pray – but we just neglect to pray. Now is the time to change that.

As I think about the opportunity of “Prayer 2020”, I am reminded of two additional quotes from John Wesley. Wesley said, “God’s command to ‘pray without ceasing’ is founded in the necessity we have of his grace to preserve the life of God in the soul, which can no more subsist one moment without it, than the body can without air.” My prayer is that each of us will grow to make prayer a deep and significant part of our lives – as critical to us as the air we breathe. Because I know that when we pray, when we spend time talking with God, the wind of the Holy Spirit can fill our lives.

The second quote is, “Give me one hundred people who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not if they are clergy or laity; such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the Kingdom of heaven on earth.” I believe that our church has a great opportunity to transform our lives, our families, our church, our community, and our world when we make prayer a part of our everyday lives. Because – when we pray – the eternal, all knowing, all powerful, majestic, holy, divine God of all that was, all that is, and all that will be – is listening. And, remember, with God nothing is impossible.

As I said, I am excited to begin the year praying with you, praying for you, and praying for our church. My prayer is that you will all join me on this great adventure.

In Christ,

Bill
January 1

“Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD all the earth! Sing to the LORD, bless his name; Tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples! For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised;” Psalm 96: 1-4a

Holy, holy, holy are you, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come. You are the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last. We praise you, our Lord and Savior. You are the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Father, we come before you on this first day of a new year and decade, knowing that you are making all things new. Draw us near to you, that you would be made known in this body of Christ and beyond for your glory and honor. We thank you for all you have already done in and through this church and ask that you direct us in this new year according to your will and purpose in every area so that you are honored and glorified in all of it! Amen

PRAYER FOCUS: Seeking God’s will and vision for VHUMC in 2020 and beyond

Notes:
January 2

“This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it” Psalm 118: 24

Dear precious Lord, Master, Creator and Friend, bless this day, this week, this new year. Teach me, Father, how to be a truly devoted, disciplined disciple. I want to know You better and follow You closer this year. Father God, You are awesome. I cannot conceive that You desire a relationship with me, yet I gratefully and humbly accept this Truth and am thankful! Lord, this day, as so many are awakening to a new year, I pray that Your Spirit (our helper beyond what we are aware we even need) will empower us to grow in ways beyond our imagination, but NOT beyond yours! Thanks for Your love and Your presence this day and all days in this year. Bless all that lies ahead! Amen!

PRAYER FOCUS: Our Pastors and their families

Notes:
God Almighty,
I praise You as King of kings, Creator of all, the One who saves me from sin and has redeemed me. You are the Alpha and Omega. Your love has no limit and Your mercy is everlasting. You are perfect and I am not. Forgive me for my sins. Wash me clean and my soul will be renewed. As I receive your forgiveness, protect me from the sin of not forgiving myself.

Thank You for the cleansing blood of Jesus that washes away my failures and sins. Thank You for the blessing of salvation that comes only through Him. You are the giver of every good and perfect gift and human words are inadequate to thoroughly thank You for your blessings, but help me to try.

God, I thank you for the gift of prayer and being able to lay at Your feet the people and concerns on my heart. I pray for my church and its leaders. Guide them as they lead us and protect them from pursuing anything that is not part of Your Will.

Protect my children and help them understand how much You love them. May they base their identity on the way You see them rather than on what they may see or hear in this world. Likewise, help me seek to please You in all that I do, measuring my actions, decisions and success only by the example of Christ. Lead me by Your Holy Spirit to follow Your Will. Help me to have a humble and thankful heart, praising You with all that I am. In Jesus’ powerful name, Amen

PRAYER FOCUS: VHUMC Staff (see vhumc.org/staff)
January 4

"Teach me to do your will, for you are my God! Let your good Spirit lead me on level ground! Psalm 143:10

Heavenly, Father, I come to you today praising you for your never-ending love and care for us, your children. For this earth and for the expanse of the universe which you have so wondrously created, I give you thanks. For your holiness and righteousness, which has been consistent throughout human history, I give you thanks. For your decrees, your laws, your ordinances, your precepts, all of which were given to direct our lives to be holy and righteous, I give you thanks. I pray that your Holy Spirit will guide me all the days of my life and that as long as I live I will never cease to praise you for your glorious grace. Lord, I know that I am a sinner, but I also know that I have been forgiven through faith in your Son, my Savior, Christ Jesus. I thank you for the incredible gift of salvation which you freely give to those who come by faith to believe that Christ Jesus died an atoning death on the cross for the sins of the world. Amen

PRAYER FOCUS: Music & Arts Ministries including all choirs (Chancel, Youth, Children’s), Bells, Orchestra, Jubilee and Celebration Singers, and musical productions

Notes:
January 5

"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen up on you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising." Isaiah 60:1-3

Gracious Father,
Thank you for sending the Light of the world, Your Son Jesus, into the earth at your perfect timing. In Him is life, and that life is the light of men. His Light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. You tell us that in believing we become sons and daughters of light. Help us to walk in the Light of Christ and to be a light in a dark world. Help us to go tell it on the mountains, that Jesus Christ is born. Lord, we pray for your Kingdom to come to every dark place, for You to be made known to the nations, all for Your glory and honor. Amen.

Prayer Focus: Thrive Student Ministries (6th -12th grades) including Sunday School, small groups, Prayer Breakfast, Appalachian Service Project, 6-7th Grade Serve weeks, Discovery, retreats, mission projects and Volunteers and Chaperones

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7
January 6

“I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exalt in my God, for he has clothed me with garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness.” Isaiah 61:10

Father Almighty,
You set the stars in place and call them by name. You know all and You see all. Nothing is hidden from You. Darkness is as light to You. You know when I lie down and when I get up. When a word is on my mouth, You know it completely. Where can I go from Your Spirit?

You breathe life into my dry bones. You revive my soul. Your Spirit sustains me. You are Manna for every day. You are Living Water pouring so much grace into me that my cup overflows.

I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Your love for me is so extravagant that You gave your one and only Son for me. You did not ask me to be righteous. You gave me Your Son’s righteousness as my own and You allow me to approach Your Throne Room, not fearfully, but boldly. Your grace truly is sufficient. In Christ, Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS: Elementary Ministries (1st-5th grades) including teachers and students in Sunday School and Bible Pathfinders

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Oh, Father, Yahweh. My redeemer, My Savior, Blessed be Thy name!!! Prince of Peace, Holy one, Deliverer, my Lord, my God, I come to your feet, again, blessed more than I deserve. And here you sit, arms wide open, inviting me into your loving embrace. Lord, I know I am human, and so very broken. My eyes cannot see clear to know all you need from me. I cannot see my sins, and I desire to be clean before I come to you. Lord, please reveal to me any sins I cannot see in myself. Show me how to glorify You in my path to repentance. In Jesus’ Name I ask this, and in Jesus’ Name I am here to serve you Lord. Amen

PRAYER FOCUS: All teachers, leaders, and participants of the Adult Sunday School classes and Adult Bible studies

Notes:
“Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!” Psalm 34:8

Heavenly Father,
May I learn to fast to gain control over my physical desires. I want to break the yoke of overindulgence and receive your healing for the apathy and guilt it causes. Lord, be with me through this fast. Thank you for centering my mind on you. With you all things are possible. In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS: Those who serve and those who are served through the Food Pantry Ministry, Backpack Buddies, and Meals on Wheels

Notes:
January 9

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.” Psalm 19: 14

Heavenly Father,
Thank you for walking beside me this day.
Lord, keep your arm around my shoulder and your hand over my mouth. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS: Those who lead and participate in the Boomer Ministries including Hilltoppers, Bible studies, work teams, mission projects, trips, and special events

Notes:
January 10

"Draw near to God and he will draw near to you..." James 4:8a

Precious Father,
My heart is overflowing with praise and thanksgiving for the endless blessings you have given me. I am standing before you a sinner in need of forgiveness and I ask you right now to forgive my great desire to control, to find a million excuses for not spending time with you and for choosing my wants over truly loving you. Please, Lord, strengthen me and give me the power to equal any task you lay before me. Work a miracle in me so that you can count on me to obey you and serve you. When I tell you I love you may my words not be shallow and self-serving but come from the depths of my heart! In the name of you sweet Father, your Son and your Holy Spirit, I pray. Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS: All teachers, children, and parents involved in the Pre-school Ministries including Sunday school, Little Lambs, Parents’ Night Out, nursery workers, and Easter Egg Hunt volunteers

Notes:
January 11

“How precious is your steadfast love, O God! The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings... For with you is the fountain of life; in your light do we see light.” Psalm 36: 7 & 9

Lord, we have long searched for the fountain of youth and spend so much money on looking youthful, which will fade... Yet You hold the key to the fountain of life—which is freely and lovingly given for every one of us, Your children—thank you! And You give us Your owner’s manual, Your map, Your guidebook, so we may find this fountain of life—thank you for your Word made flesh, and still living among us! Father, all that I am or ever hoped to be, I lay at your feet. My soul lovingly responds as did Isaiah, “Here am I, send me!” You are the potter, Lord, and I am the clay—mold me and make me into a vessel needed for such a time as this—thank you! Lead, guide, and direct my footsteps so every moment of every day I am truly a child after Your own Heart, not tossed to and fro by worldly pressures—thank you! Amen!

PRAYER FOCUS: Those who serve and are served at Piper Place and First Light

Notes:
January 12

“Be still and know that I am God,” Psalm 46:10a
(see all of Psalm 46)

Lord, I’m kind of a mess—No, I am a mess! Right now, I’m so filled with fear and dread. I’m not doing a good job of peace and harmony and keeping my soul! “Let not your heart be troubled”, “Peace I give to you, My peace I leave with you”, “Be anxious for nothing, but in all things by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, make your requests be known to God”, “Peace be still” and “even the wind and the waves obey His command”.

Oh, Lord, who with the sound of Your voice command the mighty wind and waves to settle down—rebuking and taming all that is raging all around, please send Your healing voice into my surroundings and into my heart to stop the swirling which seems to be growing faster and faster—Lord, send forth your peace, send Your Spirit to inhabit my will, my mind and my heart, so that my soul will magnify Your Name in the midst of the frenzy and fray---thank you!

PRAYER FOCUS: Those who serve and are served at Children’s Harbor and Family Promise

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“After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven… At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.” Revelation 4: 1-2

Enthroned living Lord…
Everything revolves around You. Everything. We worship you as:
  The Center-point of the Universe
  The Center-point of time and space,
  The Center-point of history,
  The Center-point of life, meaning and purpose today,
  The Center-point of all of our tomorrows,
  The Center-point of prayer.
You are the Center-point. Period.

Nothing else really matters except Your will and Your wants and Your way and Your Word. We choose now to make you the Center-point of our lives and of our prayers. We want what you want more than what we want. We come to You in the name of Jesus for the glory of your name. Amen.
(Cited from Anne Graham Lotz)

PRAYER FOCUS: Vacation Bible Camp, Summer Days Camps, Created for a Purpose

Notes:
January 14

“Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!” Psalm 51: 1-2

Lord, make me as holy as a pardoned sinner can be made.
(Author: Robert Murray M’Cheyne)

PRAYER FOCUS: Health, Wellness, Recreational Ministry; The Lighthouse volunteers and those who intersect our church through that facility; Blood Drive volunteers; Those who lead teams and activities and those who participate in Upward Sports

Notes:
"Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.’" John 6:35

Father God,
You are the bread of heaven and the living water. You are our daily bread. Thank you, Father, that you sustain us. You are the very breath that we breathe. Help us to abide in you this day for you are the vine and we are the branches and apart from you we can do nothing. All glory and honor and praise are yours now and forever. Amen

PRAYER FOCUS: Those who will lead and serve and those who will be fed by the ministry of Rise Against Hunger

Notes:
January 16

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9

Heavenly Father, you are perfect. You have separated yourself from all evil, untruth and darkness. I am not perfect. My sins separate me from you. Your Word says, “the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.” Through the death and resurrection of your Son, I know that sin no longer binds me, because I have accepted you as my Savior. The veil has been torn from top to bottom; therefore, I can humbly come before your throne and offer my confessions. For I know that when I confess my sins, you are faithful and just to forgive me for my sins and you cleanse me from all unrighteousness.

I am unworthy to be called your child, yet you love me anyway. I can offer you nothing that you need. I humbly ask for your forgiveness. Cleanse me. Restore me. Transform me. Abide in me. Mold me into your likeness. In humble confession, Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS: The Wellhouse; Church of the Reconciler; Oak Mountain Missions

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18
January 17

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8-9

Lord, Help us to believe you when our feelings contradict what your Word says; Help us to trust you when our instincts tell us our ways are better. And help us to obey You when our desires conflict with Yours.
(Cited from Martyn Lloyd-Jones)

PRAYER FOCUS: Car Ministry; Kairos Prison Ministry; Aid to Inmate Mothers

Notes:
Lord Jesus Christ,
We are so thankful that you have said, “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” We are thankful for the ease with which you walked upon the earth, the generosity and kindness you showed to people, the devotion with which you cared for those who were out of the way and in trouble, the extent to which you even loved your enemies and laid your life down for them. We are so thankful to believe that this is a life for us, a life without lack, a life of sufficiency. It is so clear in you, the sufficiency of your Father and the life poured through you, and we’re so thankful that you promise that same love, that same life, that same joy, that same power for us.

Lord, slip up on us today. Get past our defenses, our worries, our concerns. Gently open our souls and speak you Word into them. We believe you want to do it and we wait for you to do it now. In your name, Amen.
(Cited from Dallas Willard)

PRAYER FOCUS: Habitat for Humanity; Bridge Ministries; Disaster Relief

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January 19

“I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the LORD!’” Psalm 122:1

Father God,
Thank you for the opportunity to come into your house this day to worship you. Thank you for your presence. Thank you for your church and the gift of community. Thank you that we can come and praise you for who you are and to thank you for every good and perfect gift that you have given us. We lift up those who will lead in worship today—that your Spirit will be upon them. We lift those that will come to worship that you would be made known this day. Help us to be a welcoming community for guests or anyone else whom you will draw near today. Let us worship You in spirit and in truth (John 4:23). All glory and honor and power is Yours, Almighty God. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS: Welcoming Teams including Greeters, Golf-cart drivers, Bread Baking Team, First-time Visitors and Processors, New Member Team, Coffee Hospitality Team, Community Engagement Team

Notes:
January 20

“The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.” Lamentations 3: 22-23

Lord God,
Almighty and Everlasting Father. You have brought me in safety to this new day. Preserve me by your mighty power that I may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by adversity. And in all I do, direct me to the fulfilling of your purposes through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen. (Cited from The Book of Common Prayer)

PRAYER FOCUS: Sacred Connections Worship Team, Fidget Mat Ministry, all our homebound members

Notes:
January 21

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.” Ephesians 6:10-13

Thank you, Lord, for my salvation. I receive it in a new and fresh way today and claim your promise that nothing can separate me from Your love. Defend me from all attacks against my heart. I put on the belt of truth—help me to choose a lifestyle of honesty and integrity and teach me Your truth for You are the Way and the Truth and the Life. I put on the breastplate of righteousness—cover me with your holiness and purity. Fit me with shoes ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. Let me take up a strong shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. Lord, I know that no weapon formed against me shall prosper, for You are my God! Amen!

PRAYER FOCUS: Hope Lodge, Christian’s Place Mission, Mae Mae’s Hugs

Notes:
“Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.’ But he answered him, ‘It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” Matthew 4: 1-4

Father God,
Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Prepare my ears to hear your voice as I study your Word. Open my heart and mind to the truths that are held within its pages. Help me to discover clarity of thinking, being and doing from your Word. In Jesus’ name, I pray. Amen

PRAYER FOCUS: Support Groups including NA, AA, OA, ALANON, ACOA, Grief Support and Cancer Support, Veterans & Armed Services Team

Notes:
January 23

“As we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith? Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.” 1 Thessalonians 3:10-13

(A prayer for a friend to come to Christ)

Father, I pray for “my friend” to know that night and day he is prayed for and loved. Supply him with whatever is lacking in his faith. Clear the way for him to encounter community, for Your love to increase and overflow in his life, and for You to strengthen his heart so that he will live in Your presence today. Thank you and Amen!

PRAYER FOCUS: Moms In Prayer, Children’s Prayer Partners, Grandmothers in Prayer, Hannah Prayer Team, Prayer Shawl ministry, and the creation and growth of more prayer teams

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“For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.” Romans 7:19

Gracious Father,
It seems like I keep asking for Your forgiveness for the same things over and over. Surely You must grow so weary of hearing the same things again and again. My flesh is strong, but You are stronger. You told Peter to not only forgive seven times, but seventy times seven, because Your mercies are new every morning. It is only through that assured forgiveness that I can be cleansed and strengthened to conquer my sins. So wash me clean again. Wrap me in Your robe of righteousness and release me from trying so hard and failing. Renew me in Your Spirit to overcome my sins.
In Christ’s name, Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS: International Mission Teams including Costa Rica (Feb 2020), Honduras (June 2020), and Tanzania (2021)

Notes:
“And my God will supply all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:19

Heavenly Father,
Just as the friends brought the paralyzed man to Jesus by cutting a hole in the roof, I have family and friends I long to bring to You. Please meet each need according to Your glorious riches.

So many are sick, Lord, and I lift them up to you now. Give them strength in their weakness and Your healing power. Give wisdom and skill to the doctors and nurses caring for them. But above all, give them Yourself. May they know You are with them.

Father, I lift the lonely and the rejected. You understand them, don’t You? You were rejected, mocked and left alone. Show us how to be Your hands and feet to reach out in love to all. You left the 99 to go find the one. Guide me to the one You want me to touch for You. Help me not make excuses about why I can’t. In Your mercy, guide me to just one person.

Four friends brought the paralyzed man. Show me others to help and support by Your power in Your name.
In Christ, Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS: Conservatory of the Arts, Vestavia Day School, Vestavia Dance, and Scouts

Notes:
Gracious Father,
You tell us to enter Your gates with thanksgiving and Your courts with praise. You are worthy of all our praise. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain. You are the Great I Am. You are the Word made flesh. You protect as the Good Shepherd, laying down Your life for Your sheep. You provide for our needs and are our manna from heaven for each day. You fill our thirsty souls as our Living Water. You breathe Life into us and mount us up on wings like eagles when we grow weary. You are the author and perfecter of our faith. You are our Redeemer.

You are so powerful that You spoke the world into existence, yet You are so tender and loving that You call me Your child. You adopted me into Your family. Thank you that we can worship Your name together today in this family of faith! Through Christ, Amen

PRAYER FOCUS: Orphan and Foster Care Ministry, Angel Trees, and Bunny Aid

Notes:
January 27

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.” 1 John 4:7

Come Holy Spirit, fill me anew with Your vision for this hurting world. Father, make me into a child after Your Heart. Grant me eyes that see as You see, in loving compassion; ears that hear as You hear, in loving support; a heart that sees and hears beyond what is seen and heard, straight to the hearts of those searching for You, for those who have lost faith and hope. Lord, this is Your desire for me and all of Your children: for us to take the reality of Your presence to a hurting world, to reflect the hope and peace available to those who seek and find You in and through all of life’s ups and downs.

You clearly say You’ll be with us (me) always and that You love me even when I fail or fall short – unfailing, undying love.

Make me an instrument of Your peace, Lord, and may all the glory and honor and praise go only to You. Thank You! Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS: Altar Flower team, Gardening Team and Lay Visitation team

Notes:
God.
Sometimes my heart is so heavy and the problems so dear and complicated that I know not what to pray. At times like these I thank you for the words of Romans 8: 26-27 that tell me “...the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to God’s will.” With the Holy Spirit helping me pray from my heart, I know I am not alone and I do not have to find the right words to come before God and God will do what is best. Thank you, God, for hearing my heart! Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS: Sunday worship services (8:30, 9:45, 11:00 Traditional and Contemporary), Vespers, Livestream, Ushers, Acolytes, Bible bearers, Communion Stewards, Pew Stewards, Sound and Video Teams

Notes:
You have called me to say no,
Not no to You or no to others,
But no to myself.
I must say no to selfish desires, wrong thoughts, and dangerous emotions.

I must say no to the world’s values, sin’s temptations, and my desire to control what only God can rule.
But left to myself, I have little desire or power to say no.
So you have given me exactly what I need.
It’s the only thing that will solve my problem.
You have given me your Spirit.

So, when necessary, I am able to say no.
(Cited from Paul David Tripp...New Morning Mercies)

PRAYER FOCUS: Women’s Ministry and UMW Circles

Notes:
January 30

“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

Lord, we give You thanks for all that You in Your mercy have given us to be and to do and to have. Deliver us, Lord, for all greed to be and to do and to have anything not in accord with Your holy purposes. Teach us to rest quietly in Your promise to supply, recognizing that if we don’t have it we don’t need it. Teach us to desire Your will—nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else. For Jesus’ sake, Amen.
(Cited from Elisabeth Elliott)

PRAYER FOCUS: All participants, teachers, and supporters of Unless U

Notes:
"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.” I Corinthians 6:19-20

I am no longer my own, but yours.
Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will;
Put me to doing, put me to suffering;
Let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,
Exalted for you, or brought low for you;
Let me be full, let me be empty,
Let me have all things, let me have nothing;
I freely and fully yield all things to your pleasure and disposal.

And now, glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
You are mine and I am yours. So be it.
And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it be confirmed in heaven.
Amen.

Wesley Covenant Prayer
Wesley credited Richard Alleine as author
Used in Methodist covenant services since 1755

PRAYER FOCUS: The city of Vestavia Hills and its leaders, our schools, our state and nation and all leaders

Notes:
Prayer Models
The Lord’s Prayer

This prayer may be the most recited prayer ever, but we likely miss the beauty and power of it in our familiarity with it.

Jesus’s disciples knew how to pray. They grew up being taught the Jewish practices, but they saw that Jesus did something different. They saw how important prayer was to him and asked to be taught how to pray like that.

“Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray’…” Luke 11:1

Pray then like this:

"Our Father in heaven

Hallowed be your name.

Your Kingdom come,

Your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,

And forgive us our debts,

As we also forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from evil.” (Matthew 6: 9-13)

The prayer Jesus taught his disciples gives us proper order and posture for our relationship and conversation with God. Be encouraged not just to recite it, but to carefully dwell on each phrase as you speak it to God.

Our Father

This speaks to our relationship with God as our perfect Father, our Abba (Aramaic for “daddy” or “papa”). Begin by addressing God as Father and thanking Him for calling you his son or daughter, for adopting you into his family, and for making you an heir to His righteousness and to eternal life.

In Heaven

Picture your Father on a throne in heaven. Read Isaiah 6, Ezekiel 1, Revelation 4 for a very consistent picture of what this looks like. Your Father is also the King and is on a throne, surrounded by saints and angels who never stop praising Him.

Hallowed be your name (Holy is Your name)

Praise God using all the ways He is named. (See last pages of this guide for a list). Call him King of kings, Lord of Lords, God Almighty, Creator, Redeemer, etc…
**Your Kingdom come**
Recognizing God as your King means you are saying you want Him to be ruler of all...your heart, your home, your family; then outside your bubble to your church, community, workplace, city, state, nation, world. Jesus said “the kingdom of heaven is near (at hand)” when He was walking the earth. And the Kingdom of heaven has been invading the earth ever since the Resurrection. One day God’s Kingdom will come completely (Revelation 11:15).

**Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven**
Submitting to God’s will in all that you do or ask of Him; also recognizes that God’s will happens in heaven and you are calling for it to happen right here, too.

**Give us the day our daily bread**
Asking God to provide your needs, both physical and spiritual. Jesus is the bread of life (see John 6). So this is also asking for more Jesus. The Hebrew people were given daily bread, manna, as they wandered 40 years on the way to the Promised Land. They were given the exact right amount for that day. This part of the prayer speaks to that. Jesus provides for your needs today and doesn’t want us looking ahead to future needs or troubles. (see Matthew 6:25-34)

**And forgive us our debts (trespasses) as we forgive our debtors (those who trespass against us)**
A condition of being forgiven is to forgive those who have wronged you. Jesus explains this right after giving the prayer model above, probably because He knew that would be the first point needing clarification. (See Matthew 6: 14-15, Luke 6:37 and Colossians 3:13)

**And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil (or “the evil one”)**
Recognizing that our battle is not against man but against the spiritual forces of the enemy, and we must call on the God of Angel Armies to protect us. (Ephesians 6: 10-18 and 2 Corinthians 10:3-4)

The closing phrase that we say, “For thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever, Amen,” is not found in the earliest manuscripts of the New Testament but is an appropriate ending declaring truths found elsewhere. (See the words of David’s last prayer as king of Israel in 1 Chronicles 29: 10-12)
Using the A.C.T.S. model

**Adore God for who He is**
- The Lord lives! Blessed be my Rock! And may the God of my salvation be exalted! (Psalm 18:46)

Praise is not for God as much as it is for us. It puts God in His rightful place. It takes our eyes off the situation and puts it on God and His abilities, not ours. (see last pages for names and attributes of God to proclaim)

**Confess your sins**
- If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

Even if you can’t think of a sin, you can ask God to reveal your sins to you. He will tenderly show you where you need to make changes. We have all fallen short of His righteousness.

**Thank God for what He has done**
- Give thanks to the Lord, call on His name; make known what He has done. (1 Chronicles 16:8)

Thanking God for things He has done, strengthens our faith as we recall all He has done and it honors God. When Jesus healed the 10 lepers only 1 returned to thank Him. (Luke 17:11-19) It is an act of our will to choose to thank Him. When we do, He builds in us a heart of gratitude.

**Supplication: ask God to supply your needs**
- Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. (Matthew 7:7-8)

Ask for other’s needs as well as your own. Believe God’s promises in His Word. He may answer “Yes”, but He may say “No” for your best, or He may say “Wait” to work out the best answer. Be willing to yield the answer to Him as you pray. “Thy will be done.”
Using the P.R.A.Y. Model
A similar model to ACTS

**Praise**
Begin with praising God for who He is and thanking Him for what He has done.
• “Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise.” Psalm 100:4

**Repent**
Spend time confessing your sins, repenting and seeking forgiveness.
• “Repent, then, and turn to God, that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.” Acts 3: 19-20a (NIV)

**Ask**
After praising, thanking and confessing, bring your needs to God, your great provider.
• “…how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” (Luke 11: 13b)

**Yield**
Spend time in quiet and active listening for God to speak, nudge and lead you, submitting to God’s purpose for you.
• “…yet not my will, but yours be done.” Luke 22:42b
Praying the Psalms for Someone

- **Psalm 1** Enable his delight to be in Your law, and let (NAME) meditate on it day and night. Make (NAME) like a tree firmly planted by streams of Living Water.
- **Psalm 2** May (NAME) worship You with reverence, and rejoice in You with trembling. Let (NAME) take refuge in You.
- **Psalm 3** Remind (NAME) that You are a shield about him, the One who lifts his head, and the one who sustains him.
- **Psalm 4** Guard (NAME) from loving what is worthless and aiming at deception.
- **Psalm 5** Make Your way straight before (NAME).
- **Psalm 6** Thank You for hearing his voice when (NAME) is weeping.
- **Psalm 7** Let (NAME) take refuge in You knowing You are his shield. Give (NAME) a repentant heart.
- **Psalm 8** When (NAME) sees Your creation, remind him to praise Your name as majestic in all the earth.
- **Psalm 9** Thank You that You are (NAME’s) stronghold in times of trouble.
- **Psalm 10** Guard (NAME) against pride, greed and haughtiness. Do not let (NAME) even attempt to reject You.
- **Psalm 11** Let (NAME) behold Your face.
- **Psalm 12** Prevent (NAME) from having a double heart.
- **Psalm 13** Have (NAME) trust in Your loving kindness and rejoice in his salvation.
- **Psalm 14** Convict (NAME) that we all have turned aside from You, and he does no good absent You.
- **Psalm 15** Enable (NAME) to walk with integrity, work righteousness, and speak truth in his heart.
- **Psalm 16** Make known to (NAME) the path of life and that in Your presence is fullness of joy.
- **Psalm 17** Keep (NAME) as the apple of Your eye, and hide him in the shadow of Your wings.
- **Psalm 18** Have (NAME) call upon You so he will be saved from his enemies. Illumine his darkness and be his rock.
- **Psalm 19** Let the words of his mouth and the mediation of his heart be acceptable in Your sight.
- **Psalm 20** Don’t let (NAME) boast in the things of this world but let him boast in You.
- **Psalm 21** May (NAME) sing and praise Your power.
- **Psalm 22** Enable (NAME) to commit himself to You. Rescue him.
- **Psalm 23** Thank You that You are his shepherd.
- **Psalm 24** Thank You that You are mighty in battle for (NAME).
- **Psalm 25** Make (NAME) know Your ways and teach him Your paths. Lead (NAME)
in Your truth. Pardon his iniquity for it is great. Give (NAME) the desire and capability to wait on You.

- **Psalm 26** Make his foot stand on a level place.
- **Psalm 27** Give (NAME) strength and courage.
- **Psalm 28** Carry (NAME) forever.
- **Psalm 29** Bless (NAME) with peace.
- **Psalm 30** Please hear (NAME), Lord, be gracious to (NAME), and be his helper.
- **Psalm 31** Thank You for paying his ransom. Let (NAME) remember that his times are in Your hand.
- **Psalm 32** Make (NAME) glad in You so that he would shout for joy.
- **Psalm 33** Have his heart rejoice in You because (NAME) trusts in Your holy name.
- **Psalm 34** Keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking lies. Let (NAME) depart from evil, do good, and seek and pursue peace.
- **Psalm 35** Lord, do not keep silent, do not be far from (NAME).
- **Psalm 36** Do not let the foot of pride come upon (NAME), and do not let the hand of the wicked drive (NAME) away.
- **Psalm 37** Keep (NAME) from fretting. Thank You that when (NAME) falls You are there to hold his hand.
- **Psalm 38** Convict (NAME) that his iniquities weigh too much for him to try carry by himself.
- **Psalm 39** Let (NAME) know how transient he is and that man, at his best, is a mere breath.
- **Psalm 40** Set (NAME’S) feet on the rock and make his footsteps firm. Put a new song in his mouth, a song of praise to You.
- **Psalm 41** Make (NAME) consider and be compassionate to the helpless.
- **Psalm 42** Make his soul thirst for You.
- **Psalm 43** Send out Your light and Your truth to lead (NAME).
- **Psalm 44** Thank You that You know the secrets of (NAME’S) heart.
- **Psalm 45** Make his heart overflow with a good theme.
- **Psalm 46** Thank You that You are his refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Have (NAME) cease striving and know that You are God.
- **Psalm 47** Let (NAME) shout to You with a voice of joy.
- **Psalm 48** Guide (NAME).
- **Psalm 49** Guard (NAME) from pomp and pride.
- **Psalm 50** Have (NAME) call upon You in the day of trouble and please rescue (NAME).
- **Psalm 51** Wash (NAME) thoroughly from his iniquity and cleanse (NAME) from his sin. Create in (NAME) a clean heart, and renew a steadfast spirit within him.
- **Psalm 52** Let (NAME) trust in Your loving kindness.
- **Psalm 53** Do not let (NAME) be a fool.
- **Psalm 54** Thank You that You are the sustainer of (NAME’S) soul.
- **Psalm 55** Have (NAME) cast his burden on You and sustain him.
- **Psalm 56** Give (NAME) unshakeable confidence in the fact that You are for him.
• **Psalm 57** Give (NAME) a steadfast heart.

• **Psalm 58** Guard (NAME) against lies.

• **Psalm 59** Thank You that in Your loving kindness You will meet (NAME).

• **Psalm 60** Restore (NAME) when he has been broken.

• **Psalm 61** Lead (NAME) to the rock that is higher than he is. Let (NAME) dwell in Your tent forever, and take refuge in the shelter of Your wings.

• **Psalm 62** Enable (NAME) to trust in You at all times. Prevent (NAME) from setting his heart on earthly riches.

• **Psalm 63** At night, when (NAME) is in his bed, call him to remember and meditate on You.

• **Psalm 64** Make (NAME’S) heart upright.

• **Psalm 65** Remind (NAME) that Your stream is full of water.

• **Psalm 66** Do not allow his feet to slip. Let (NAME) tell of what You have done for his soul.

• **Psalm 67** Be gracious to (NAME) and bless him, and cause Your face to shine upon him.

• **Psalm 68** Thank You for making a home for (NAME) when he is lonely.

• **Psalm 69** Save (NAME) when the waters threaten, there is no foothold and he sinks in deep mire.

• **Psalm 70** Thank You that You are his help and deliverer.

• **Psalm 71** Do not let (NAME) be ashamed of You. Rescue (NAME) from the evils of this world. Do not be far from (NAME). Let (NAME) praise You more and more.

• **Psalm 72** Thank You that You have and will work wonders in (NAME’S) life.

• **Psalm 73** Take hold of his right hand, guide (NAME) by Your counsel and afterward receive him to Your glory.

• **Psalm 74** Thank You that You are his king.

• **Psalm 75** Give (NAME) a thankful heart.

• **Psalm 76** Enable (NAME) to fulfill his vows to You.

• **Psalm 77** Let (NAME) remember and meditate on Your grace.

• **Psalm 78** Enable (NAME) to put his confidence in You, and don’t let (NAME) forget Your works.

• **Psalm 79** Let Your compassion come quickly to meet (NAME).

• **Psalm 80** Do not let (NAME) turn back from You.

• **Psalm 81** Prevent (NAME) from worshiping idols.

• **Psalm 82** Deliver (NAME) from enemies and wickedness.

• **Psalm 83** Let (NAME) hear Your voice and see Your hand at work.

• **Psalm 84** Remind (NAME) that You are a sun and shield, and that You give grace and glory.

• **Psalm 85** Thank You for forgiving (NAME) and covering his sin.

• **Psalm 86** Teach (NAME) Your way so that he walks in truth.

• **Psalm 87** Be the foundation of his joy.

• **Psalm 88** May (NAME) cry out to You for help.

• **Psalm 89** Let (NAME) sing of Your love and faithfulness.
• Psalm 90 Teach (NAME) to number his days and present to You a heart of wisdom.
• Psalm 91 Thank You that You are with (NAME) in trouble and will rescue him.
• Psalm 92 Let (NAME) declare Your love in the morning and Your faithfulness at night.
• Psalm 93 Thank You that You reign over (NAME’S) life.
• Psalm 94 Be his stronghold, rock and refuge.
• Psalm 95 Let (NAME) worship and bow down, kneeling before You. Guard (NAME) from a hard heart.
• Psalm 96 Have (NAME) proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.
• Psalm 97 Make (NAME) hate evil.
• Psalm 98 Remind (NAME) of the wonderful things You have done.
• Psalm 99 Cause (NAME) to tremble before You.
• Psalm 100 Enable (NAME) to serve You with gladness, sing to You in joy, and enter Your gates with thanksgiving. Remind (NAME) that he is not a self-made man but made by You.
• Psalm 101 Make (NAME) give heed to the blameless way and to walk with integrity. Prevent (NAME) from setting worthless things before his eyes.
• Psalm 102 Thank You for setting (NAME) free from being doomed to death.
• Psalm 103 May (NAME) bless You with all that he is. Do not let (NAME) forget Your benefits.
• Psalm 104 Let his thoughts and meditations be pleasing to You, and let (NAME) be glad in You.
• Psalm 105 Let (NAME) seek You and Your strength.
• Psalm 106 Thank You for making (NAME) an object of Your compassion.
• Psalm 107 Prevent (NAME) from rebelling against You and Your words.
• Psalm 108 Give (NAME) help against his adversary.
• Psalm 109 Let (NAME) be abundantly thankful to You and praise You in the midst of many.
• Psalm 110 Thank You that You are at his right hand.
• Psalm 111 Remind (NAME) that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.
• Psalm 112 Make (NAME) generous.
• Psalm 113 May (NAME) praise You as a servant of Yours.
• Psalm 114 Thank You for the miraculous power demonstrated in (NAME’S) life through his salvation.
• Psalm 115 Not to him, O Lord, but to You may (NAME) give glory.
• Psalm 116 Please let (NAME) call upon You as long as he lives.
• Psalm 117 Thank You that Your love has been so great towards (NAME).
• Psalm 118 Do not let (NAME) fear man because You are for him. Let (NAME) remember that it is better to take refuge in You than to trust in man. Let (NAME) rejoice in each day because it has been made by You.
• Psalm 119 Do not let (NAME) wander from Your commandments. Enable (NAME) to treasure Your word in his heart. Open his eyes so that he will see You but turn
his eyes from vain things. Teach (NAME) good discernment and knowledge. Let 
(NAME) rely on Your word as a lamp to his feet and a light to his path. Convict 
(NAME) of his sin. Give (NAME) understanding according to Your word.

- **Psalm 120** Deliver (NAME) from lying lips and a deceitful tongue.
- **Psalm 121** Be his keeper and protect (NAME) from all evil, guarding him in his 
going out and coming in.
- **Psalm 122** Make (NAME) glad about and eager to worship You.
- **Psalm 123** Let (NAME’S) eyes look to and be fixed on You.
- **Psalm 124** Thank You for being on (NAME’S) side.
- **Psalm 125** Give (NAME) an upright heart.
- **Psalm 126** Remind (NAME) of the great things You have done for him.
- **Psalm 127** Please build his house because he labors in vain if (NAME) tries to 
build it.
- **Psalm 128** Enable (NAME) to walk in Your ways.
- **Psalm 129** Do not let his enemies (Satan, the world, his own flesh) prevail 
against (NAME).
- **Psalm 130** Let (NAME) cry to You in prayer.
- **Psalm 131** Compose and quiet (NAME’S) soul.
- **Psalm 132** Thank You for dwelling with, clothing and feeding (NAME).
- **Psalm 133** Let (NAME) look for unity with his brothers.
- **Psalm 134** Let (NAME) be Your servant.
- **Psalm 135** Guard (NAME) from idols.
- **Psalm 136** Let (NAME) give thanks to the Lord and always remember that God’s 
love endures forever.
- **Psalm 137** May (NAME) never forget you Lord in times of trouble.
- **Psalm 138** Please accomplish Your work in and through (NAME).
- **Psalm 139** Search (NAME) Lord and know his heart. Try (NAME) and know his 
anxious thoughts. See if there is any hurtful way in him, and lead (NAME) in Your 
everlasting way.
- **Psalm 140** Keep (NAME) from the hands of the wicked.
- **Psalm 141** Set a guard over (NAME’S) mouth, and keep watch over the door of his 
lips. Do not incline his heart to any evil thing or to practice deeds of wickedness. 
Do not let (NAME) eat of the delicacies of unrighteousness.
- **Psalm 142** Surround (NAME) with redemptive friends.
- **Psalm 143** Teach (NAME) to do Your will.
- **Psalm 144** Let (NAME) be as a mature plant.
- **Psalm 145** Let (NAME) call on You and please be near him.
- **Psalm 146** Open his eyes and guard (NAME) from spiritual blindness.
- **Psalm 147** Thank You for healing him when he is brokenhearted.
- **Psalm 148** Let (NAME) marvel at Your creation and glorify You.
- **Psalm 149** Thank You for beautifying (NAME) with salvation.
- **Psalm 150** May (NAME) praise You.
Praising God for Who He is

- The Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last (Revelation 1:11)
- Father, Son and Holy Ghost
- Holy, holy, holy (Revelation 4:8)
- Lord God Almighty
- Maker of heaven and of earth, the Creator of all things great and small (Isaiah 40:28)
- Worthy of our praise, Shelah
- The way, the truth and the life (John 14:6)
- The giver of every good and perfect gift (James 1:17)
- Faithful to His promises (Hebrews 10:23)
- The vine, we are the branches (John 15:5)
- Our strength and our refuge, a very present help in time of need (Psalm 46:1)
- The Potter, we are the clay (Isaiah 64:8)
- Love: patient, kind, not envious nor boastful, not proud nor rude, not self-seeking nor easily angered, does not keep a record of wrongs, does not delight in evil, but rejoices in the Truth, always protects, always hopes, always trusts, always perseveres, NEVER FAILS (I Corinth 13)
- Our Good Shepherd, our companion and protector who leaves the flock to rescue even one of His precious sheep who goes astray (John 10:11, 10:14) (Matthew 18:10-14)
- Omniscient, all knowing
- Omnipotent, all powerful
- Omnipresent, ever present in all places, past and future
- Our Master
- Our Savior
- Messiah
- The Great I AM (Exodus 3:14) (John 8:58)
- Eternal
- Righteous
- Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6)
- The One and Only
- Sovereign, in control of all
- Yahweh, too sacred to be pronounced out loud
- El Shaddai, all sufficient (Genesis 35:11)
- Elohim, Creator, worthy to be praised
- Adonai, my Master
- Jehovah Jireh, God who sees, God who provides
- Jehovah Shammah, God who is present and who comforts
- Immanuel, God who dwells among us (Matthew 1:22-23)
• Jehovah Shalom, my peace
• The Great Physician
• The author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2)
• Great. He is mighty. He is awesome!! (Deuteronomy 10:17)
• The God of gods, the Lord of lords and the King of kings
• long-suffering, not willing that any should perish (II Peter 3:9)
• The sun and the shield, gives grace and glory... withholding nothing from those who walk uprightly with Him (Psalm 84:11)
• Abba, daddy (Romans 8:15)
• Worthy is the Lamb (Revelation 5:12)
• His grace is sufficient (II Corinth 12:9)
• His yoke is easy and His burden is light (Matthew 11:28)
• He encamps all around those who fear Him and delivers them (Psalm 34:7)
• Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world (I John 4:4)
• His ways are higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:9)
• He has inscribed us on the palms of His Hands (Isaiah 49:15)
• He will never, no not ever, leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5)
• Those who wait on the Lord will renew their strength, they will mount of with wings like eagles, they will run and not be weary, they will walk and not faint (Isaiah 40:31)
• In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and Word was God (John 1:1)
• His Word is TRUTH (John 17:17) and is inspired by the Holy Spirit (II Timothy 3:16)
• Thy Word is living and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword (Hebrews 4:12)
• A lamp unto my feet, a l light unto my path (Psalm 119:105)
• Grass will wither, flowers will fade away, but Thy Word will endure forever (Isaiah 40:8)
• If He is for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31)
• He came that we might have life and have life more abundantly (John 10:10)
• “For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” John 3: 16
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