



**31 DAYS OF
PRAYER**

MARCH 2016

31 Days of Prayer

During the month of March, Brandywine Valley Baptist Church is encouraging everyone to participate in 31 days of prayer. This prayer guide has been created to guide us in how to pray for the church, its ministries and activities. Designed to glorify God and unify our congregation through daily prayer, this guide allows us to pray together as a church for topics that are relevant to our individual lives and our lives as a church body.

We encourage you to take time each day to read the day's scripture, reflection and prayer. Use the prayer as it is written or repeat it and add your petitions to it.

March 1, 2016

Prayer Introduction

By Kristi Pullig

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NIV)

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Reflection

Prayer. The Creator of the universe wants to communicate with us. The thought is overwhelming. Yet, God made it possible for us to converse with Him through Jesus Christ. Through prayer, we can encounter the living God. Prayer is an intentional act of turning our focus to God and away from ourselves. It is a time to magnify Him and seek His will. Praying continually is more of a privilege than a duty. It is being in an uninterrupted constant spirit of prayer. At times we also stop other activities to focus on talking and listening to God. Each day this month you are encouraged to use this guide for that purpose. You will be praying for specific circumstances. May the prayer time not only change the circumstances, but also allow it to change you as you encounter God through the amazing gift of prayer.

Prayer

Dear Lord, as I pray allow me to see You for who You really are. Reveal Yourself to me. I rejoice in the gift of salvation through the blood of Jesus. Remind me to continually be mindful of You so that I can be in a constant state of communion with You. Use my prayer time this month to help me seek Your will and know You in a deeper way. Amen.



March 2, 2016
Preaching and Teaching Ministry

By Nate Keeler

2 Timothy 4:2-5 (NASB)

Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Reflection

Paul's words to the young pastor, Timothy, are a powerfully sobering charge to all those who teach and preach the Word. Ministers of the Word should be like spiritual doctors who get to know their patients, make accurate diagnoses and seek to heal them with the powerful truth of God's Word. May we thank God for all those who teach and preach the Word throughout Brandywine Valley Baptist Church and pray for them regularly!

Prayer

Lord, our pastors and teachers in the pulpit and classrooms have a challenging and essential role at Brandywine Valley Baptist Church. I pray that they would be diligent in their preparation and careful in their teaching so that our church remains grounded on sound doctrine and growing in the Word. May the Holy Spirit use them as doctors to discern the spiritual needs of the congregation and accurately use the Word to bring healing. Amen.

March 3, 2016

Small Groups

By Karl Nockengost

Acts 2:42,46-48 (NIV)

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

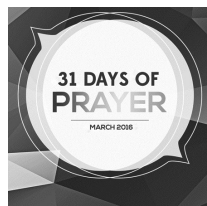
Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Reflection

Community is found in small groups, where people meet to pray, to study, to fellowship and to care for each other. Spiritual transformation is different apart from spiritual community. We are not independent souls, but dependent people who need Christ and each other to grow, change, mature and serve. Small groups is where this change takes place.

Prayer

Father, we pray that biblical community will grow through the growth of small groups. We pray that people's lives will be transformed by the community they experience in small groups. Amen.



March 4, 2016

Deacons

By Matthew McNutt

1 Peter 4:8-11 (NLT)

Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins. Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay. God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

Reflection

The office of deacon was created in the New Testament to take a leadership role in serving the church body, enabling the pastors to focus on prayer and teaching of the body. In many ways, the roles complement one another, working together in common vision and direction for the good of the church body. Our deacons are called to serve and help this church with all the strength and energy that God supplies, as this passage in 1 Peter describes.

Thomas Jefferson once wrote, "In matters of style, swim with the current; in matters of principle, stand like a rock." The challenges of leadership are great. Standing like a rock can come at great cost, often times without anyone knowing the depth of the challenges. That is why in 1 Timothy 2, the apostle Paul tells us to pray for our leaders.

Prayer

Lord, we lift up the twelve men that serve on our Board of Deacons. We ask that You would give them wisdom, direction, strength, clarity, joy in their service, and peace. Thank You for giving us leaders committed to our church and Your Kingdom. Amen.

March 5, 2016

brandywineKIDS Ministry

By Kristi Pullig

Jeremiah 17:8 (NIV)

They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.

Reflection

The goal of brandywineKIDS is the same as that of Brandywine Valley Baptist Church as a whole – to introduce people (kids) to Jesus Christ and to help them follow Him. Jeremiah 17:8 is the theme verse of this ministry. As a tree grows we know that roots must be established in order for the tree to stand firm. In the same way, we desire that the children of Brandywine Valley Baptist Church will be planted in Christ and will stand as the tree of righteousness. It is important that they learn to trust the Lord and allow Him to provide nourishment. We do not just want children to know about God. We want them to KNOW God. Pray that each child who comes to Brandywine Valley Baptist Church will make a personal decision to trust Christ for salvation and that they will be firmly rooted in the faith.

Prayer

Dear Lord, thank You for all of the children who are involved with the brandywineKIDS ministries. May each child experience Your love. Please open their hearts to the gospel. Allow kids here to know You, to grow in You, and to go into the world with You. Establish their roots in your Word and enable them to produce fruit. Help them to stand firm as they face challenges in life. Give them an eternal perspective and a heart for Your kingdom. Amen.



March 6, 2016
Hospitality Ministry

By Nate Keeler

Leviticus 19:34 (ESV)

You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.

Reflection

Throughout Scripture the people of God are called to the practical love of immigrants, strangers and sojourners. The New Testament term for this practical love is “hospitality” (Romans 12:13, Hebrews 13:2). A ministry like English as a Second Language (ESL) at Brandywine Valley Baptist Church is a great example of the demonstration of God’s love through the care and education of people from all across the globe. May we practice hospitality as Christians and may we be a demonstration of God’s love!

Prayer

Father, You call us to love immigrants, strangers and sojourners like family. Help me to open my heart and resources through the practice of hospitality. Thank You for the ESL ministry at Brandywine Valley Baptist Church. Bless them with more teachers who minister in your name, greater impact and opportunities to demonstrate and declare the love of Christ in the Gospel message. Amen.

March 7, 2016

Lay Ministers and Volunteers

By Karl Nockengost

Romans 16:3-4, 6, 10, 12 (NIV)

Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus. They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them.

Greet Mary, who worked very hard for you.

Greet Apelles, whose fidelity to Christ has stood the test.

Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord.

Reflection

These are but a few of the people Paul sends greetings to in Romans 16. All of these people were lay ministers or volunteers with Paul in his ministry. They were also close friends. Their work was crucial to the spreading of the Gospel.

Prayer

Father, we pray for and thank You for the people who help lead our ministries and who volunteer in valuable work at Brandywine Valley Baptist Church. We pray that You will bless their endeavors and bless their lives. Amen.



March 8, 2016
Worship and Music Ministry
By Nate Keeler

Psalm 150 (NLT)

Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heaven! Praise him for his mighty works; praise his unequalled greatness! Praise him with a blast of the ram's horn; praise him with the lyre and harp! Praise him with the tambourine and dancing; praise him with strings and flutes! Praise him with a clash of cymbals; praise him with loud clanging cymbals. Let everything that breathes sing praises to the Lord! Praise the Lord!

Reflection

The Psalmists of Israel were the worship and music directors of their day. They had the awesome privilege and great responsibility to lead the people of God in praise and worship for who He is and what He has done, as this Psalm demonstrates. Today, those who lead, write, sing, play, facilitate and amplify music of all styles have the same privilege and responsibility. God delights in us as we delight in Him through our praise and worship!

Prayer

We praise You Lord! You are worthy of all our worship for who You are and what You have done! Thank You for the gift of music that lifts our soul to worship, for providing skilled musicians to lead us and technicians to bring it all together with excellence and beauty. Protect, lead and keep them steadfast in their passion for You and ministry to Your church. Amen.

March 9, 2016
Brandywine Student Ministry
By Matthew McNutt

Matthew 17:24-27 (NLT)

On their arrival in Capernaum, the collectors of the Temple tax came to Peter and asked him, "Doesn't your teacher pay the Temple tax?" "Yes, he does," Peter replied. Then he went into the house. But before he had a chance to speak, Jesus asked him, "What do you think, Peter? Do kings tax their own people or the people they have conquered?" "They tax the people they have conquered," Peter replied. "Well, then," Jesus said, "the citizens are free! However, we don't want to offend them, so go down to the lake and throw in a line. Open the mouth of the first fish you catch, and you will find a large silver coin. Take it and pay the tax for both of us."

Reflection

It's incredible to think of all the disciples accomplished for God's Kingdom. A seemingly defeated group of poor fishermen, tax collectors and others of low reputation, they led the beginnings of a movement that has grown throughout the world for two thousand years! Perhaps this is an odd choice of scripture for student ministry. It's a passage that many scholars point to as the strongest hint we have about the age of the disciples; the temple tax was required of males over the age of twenty. Because the silver coin was only enough for Jesus and Peter, the theory is that the other eleven must have been under the age of 20 – I've heard some jokingly say that Jesus led the first youth group with his teenage disciples!

The Bible is full of stories of young people displaying incredible faith and accomplishing tremendous things for the Lord and His Kingdom. Some of the great heroes of the faith were adolescents! Too often in today's culture we are guilty of setting the bar too low, of not seeing the incredible potential for leadership and spiritual gifts that God has placed in all the members of His church, including the young people!

Prayer

Lord, we pray for the students in 6th-12th grade, that they would see Your calling in their lives, that they would develop a lifelong faith, and grow as servants and leaders in our church body today. Thank You for blessing our congregation with young voices committed to You! Amen.

March 10, 2016
Adult Christian Education

By Karl Nockengost

2 Peter 1:3, 5-11 (NIV)

His Divine Power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Reflection

God has given us everything we need to grow in godliness. Our job is to make every effort to keep growing. We grow in our knowledge, our self-control and finally our love. Brandywine Valley Baptist Church offers classes every week where people can increase in their knowledge of Jesus Christ and become more productive in their faith.

Prayer

Father, we pray that people at Brandywine Valley Baptist Church would seek to grow in You and grow deeper in their knowledge of You. We pray that more would come to classes to learn the Scriptures and build relationships that lead to spiritual growth. Amen.

March 11, 2016

Our Pastors and Staff (and Families)

By Kristi Pullig

Ephesians 4:1-3 (NIV)

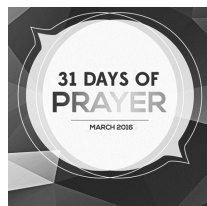
As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Reflection

The pastors and staff of Brandywine Valley Baptist Church are called, as all Christians are, to spread the gospel of Christ. However, they are not immune to the problems of the world. As with any church that is making disciples, Satan would love to get a foothold. This is all the more reason it is so important to cover the pastors and staff in prayer. Worthiness does not come from us. God makes us worthy through Christ. We must continually be reminded of that so that we can be humble, gentle, patient, and loving. Unity is not automatic, even if all are striving toward the same goal. Unity takes effort. We can only do it with God's help.

Prayer

Dear Lord, protect the pastors and staff of Brandywine Valley Baptist Church. Do not allow Satan to have a foothold as we seek to make disciples. Keep the staff humble and in right relationship with You. Protect their families as the staff serves You in a way that has unique challenges. Help them to be unified in purpose and in love. Keep their focus on You. Amen.



March 12, 2016
Connection Café
By Karl Nockengost

Romans 15:7 (NIV)

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

Reflection

We are called to accept one another out of the love of Christ and our love for Christ. He accepted us and died for us while we were yet sinners. Our love can be shown by how we treat people who are new to our church or are seeking Christ.

Prayer

Father, we lift up our Connection Café and the people involved. We pray that our love for visitors will grow through this endeavor, and that we would readily accept those people who come to our church seeking Jesus. Amen.

March 13, 2016

Brandywine Valley Christian Preschool & Kindergarten

By Nate Keeler

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (NIV)

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.

Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Reflection

This passage is known by the Jewish people as the great “Shema” (hear). The people of God were called to wholeheartedly love God and to prepare the next generation to do the same. Brandywine Valley Christian Preschool and Kindergarten is one key way that we live this out at Brandywine Valley Baptist Church. Our teachers and helpers provide much more than excellent education; they enrich the spiritual soil of children and families to know, grow and go in Christ. May we praise God for this ministry and pray for continued impact for Christ!

Prayer

Father, thank You for our Brandywine Valley Christian Preschool and Kindergarten. May You bless the teachers, helpers and the families who are enrolled so that they will grow in the knowledge and love of Christ. Continue to bring us opportunities to share Christ with the families who enroll their children and to provide excellence in education. May the next generation be filled with those who wholeheartedly love You! Amen.



March 14, 2016
Outreach to Our Community
By Patty Harris

1 Thessalonians 1:6-8 (NIV)

You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it.

Reflection

How did one group of newly converted pagans in Thessalonica reach their city as well as regions beyond with the proclamation of the Gospel in such a short period of time? The answer is not complicated. They simply imitated what they saw Paul, Timothy and Silas do. So taking advantage of their own natural everyday opportunities, whether they were business encounters or social interactions, the Thessalonian believers went about relating to “everybody everywhere” the same heavenly message that had transformed their lives.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank You for giving us the example of the Thessalonian believers' spiritual stamina. We pray that You will build into us the same kind of sensitivity to Your Holy Spirit. Please equip us to take on more of what burdens Your heart and let us find joy in being living sacrifices for You. Chart our course this year for how we can successfully reach our community and world for Christ. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

March 15, 2016
S.A.L.T. (Support and Leadership Training) Ministry
By Karl Nockengost

2 Timothy 2:2 (NIV)

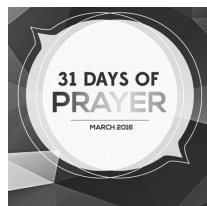
And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.

Reflection

Paul's charge to Timothy was to develop leaders to build God's church. This verse includes four spiritual generations: Paul, Timothy, reliable people and the ones they teach. We are always to be looking for future leaders to whom we can entrust the gospel.

Prayer

Father, we pray for the S.A.L.T. ministry. We pray for their spiritual impact among the pastors in South America and around the world. We pray that with their training, these pastors will equip their churches and spread God's word. Amen.



What if it's true?

Join us Easter Week
to discover the answer.

Holy Thursday/Tennebrae,
March 24, 7 p.m.

Easter Sunday, March 27
8 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.

Brandywine Valley Baptist Church
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Wilmington, DE 19803
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March 16, 2016
Love in Action
By Lanny Weaver

Matthew 25:34-40 (NLT)

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.' "Then the righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?' "And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!'"

Reflection

Jesus instructs the people listening to His words to care for those who are suffering because they lack the necessities of life, whether it is food, clothing, shelter or other requirements for daily living. Remember, as we give each month to our "Love in Action" fund, this is one way we can help the less fortunate in our congregation and community. Additionally, Jesus is challenging us to find other ways to serve those in need as we go about our daily lives in the church and the community surrounding us.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank You for our "Love in Action" program. This has given us an ongoing vehicle for serving people in our church and community. We pray today that we would better understand the role we can play in reaching out to other people in our church and community who need assistance. We further pray we would make those needs visible to other groups within and outside our church who might be able to offer a helping hand. Amen.



March 17, 2016
The City of Wilmington

By Kristi Pullig

Jeremiah 29:7 (NIV)

Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.

Reflection

No matter where we find ourselves living, we are always on mission for God. In Jeremiah, God instructs the people to pray for the city. Believers can intercede for those whom we encounter each day. The city of Wilmington has recently received some less-than-favorable nicknames due to the large number of shootings and murders. What would happen if the people of Wilmington's surrounding churches would pray diligently for the city? Imagine what God will do if we are a people on our knees.

Prayer

Dear Lord, we seek the peace and prosperity of Wilmington. You have brought us here for a reason. We pray for the people who live and work within the city. May those who are Your followers be a reflection of Your light. May those who are not following You know that You are the true source of peace and salvation. Turn their hearts toward You. Strengthen those who want to make a difference. Raise leaders who want to glorify You. Amen.

March 18, 2016

Ministry Partners

By David Cordrey

1 Timothy 6:18-19 (NIV)

Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

Reflection

In this passage, Paul instructs Timothy regarding helping those less fortunate. Being a Christian means to be Christ-like. We need to not only profess Christ with our words but to also profess Christ with our actions so that we may take hold of true life ... Life in Christ. There are many needs in our local community and opportunities to serve through local partners such as Sunday Breakfast Mission, Urban Promise, So-journers Place, and Friendship House.

Prayer

Father, you call us to do good deeds for others and to share generously. We praise You for the ministries such as Urban Promise and others like them that help meet the needs of those in our community. Please bless them and help me to make time to plug-in and serve. Amen.



March 19, 2016

Hurting Marriages and Families

By Matthew McNutt

Hebrews 10:23-25 (NLT)

Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

Reflection

Author and speaker Stephen Covey once said, "I am convinced that if we as a society work diligently in every other area of life and neglect the family, it would be analogous to straightening deck chairs on the Titanic."

If we as a church work diligently in so many areas of faith, but ignore the realities of living in a broken and fallen world, and the stresses which that puts on marriages and families, we would be missing the heart of God's vision for the church. We are one body, united together; when one suffers, we should all feel that pain. I love the challenge by the author of Hebrew's to motivate one another to acts of love and good works, to encourage one another!

We need to be the type of church that is honest with one another, speaking to the challenges we have each had, so that those presently suffering feel safe in reaching out for help instead of pressure to hide and project an illusion of harmony. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we cannot turn a blind eye, but need to reach out in loving concern when God shows us cracks in each other's facades.

Prayer

Lord, we lift up the marriages in our church, that these couples would grow in strength and love. We pray for those who are struggling that they would have the courage to reach out for help. God, help us be the type of church body that cultivates an environment that fosters honesty and being real. Amen.

March 20, 2016

Those Who Suffer

By Nate Keeler

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (NIV)

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

Reflection

One of the results of the fall of man in rebellion is the introduction of suffering of all kinds (Genesis 3). Things are not the way they were intended to be. Physical, emotional, relational, spiritual and financial suffering are part of life, after the fall. However, the good news is we have a God who comforts us in the moment of suffering, and He also comforts us with the hope of eternal relief from suffering, in His presence. How? Because Jesus suffered so that we won't have to in eternity! In addition, He provides us with the opportunity to comfort one another with the same comfort we have received. He is a good, good Father.

Prayer

Father, there are many who are suffering in our church family from disease, affliction and trial of all kinds. While it can be overwhelming and discouraging, I praise You that You are the great comforter, great physician and our only hope for eternal relief through Christ. I pray that You would heal and comfort those who suffer. Use our church family and me as a source of Your comfort in times of affliction. Amen.



March 21, 2016

Financial Guidance for Those Out of Work or Laid Off

By Matthew McNutt

Matthew 6:25-27, 31-33 (NLT)

“That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn’t life more than food, and your body more than clothing? Look at the birds. They don’t plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren’t you far more valuable to him than they are? Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

“So don’t worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’ These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

Reflection

Some passages are harder to live out than others. It is easy to say not to worry when surrounded by security, but seasons of difficulty can test the limits of our faith and our patience. The stress from uncertain financial and career status can spill over into family life, relationships with friends, even our health. Often times we like to refer to Job, a righteous man according to God. We hold him up as a silent example of long-suffering; but when we actually read through his prayers to God, it’s shocking how blunt, how real, how deep his hurt and anger were – and yet he was a righteous man! Somehow he was able to be incredibly honest about his suffering without sinning.

This passage in the Gospel of Matthew records the words of Jesus as an encouragement to us. Our big picture can be different from God’s big picture, and Jesus gently reminds us that as much as we may worry or fear, God will take care of our needs. The challenge is in how we navigate those times of uncertainty.

Prayer

Lord, we ask for patience, endurance and peace for those impacted by layoffs and financial struggles. We pray for our church, that we will be an encouragement, blessing, and resource to those in need in our region. We ask that You would use us for Your glory. Amen.

March 22, 2016
For Our Country
By Karl Nockengost

1 Peter 2:13-14, 16 (NIV)

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and commend those who do right.

Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God.

Reflection

Scripture calls for us to obey our authorities and yet live as free people. As free people, we have the responsibility to support our government as long as it obeys Scripture.

Prayer

Father, we pray for our country's unity. We pray that You will sovereignly work in the lives of our leaders to help them make wise decisions in governing us. We pray for the Supreme Court, our President, and the Congress as they consider candidates for the current vacancy. Amen.



March 23, 2016
Church Finances
By Matthew McNutt

2 Corinthians 9:6-7 (NLT)

Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.

Reflection

Years ago I attended a rally where evangelist Luis Palau, the Billy Graham of our time, was speaking. When it came time for the offering, he asked everyone to stand, reach forward, take the wallet from the back pocket of the person in front of them, "and give like you have always dreamed of giving!" I loved it!

And isn't that something we long for? To be able to worship God with our giving without distraction? Without worry? To be generous with what He has given us for His Kingdom? God calls us to give, not because of church heating bills or curriculum needs, but as a way of demonstrating love to Him. When we sacrifice, it reflects a heart of worship. Our joy in giving is seen through a church that is able to meet the needs of our region, to live out the calling God has given each of us as a body both locally and globally.

Prayer

Lord, we pray for the finances of our church. We ask that You would continue to provide the resources needed to fund the ministries to which You have called us. Help us to honor our commitments, continue to grow in our impact, and most importantly, give glory to You with cheerful hearts as we give. Amen.

March 24, 2016
For Revival
By Kristi Pullig

Psalm 80:18-19 (NIV)

Then we will not turn away from you; revive us, and we will call on your name. Restore us, Lord God Almighty; make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

Reflection

God gives us life. He saves us from our sinful state. He also continually restores us as we seek forgiveness for sins. The meaning of “to revive” is to bring to life again or to renew. As we confess our sins and seek God’s will, He restores us and brings us to life. The work He is doing in our life is continual. Each day we must rely on Him for everything. He is always making us new.

Prayer

Dear Lord, revive us! Reveal any ongoing sin in our life that is keeping us from being obedient to you. Turn us toward our proper place, which is fully restored to you. I pray for a revival of hearts at Brandywine Valley Baptist Church. Revive us. Restore us. Fill us. Fan into flame the gifts that You have given each of us. Amen.



March 25, 2016

Unity

By Matthew McNutt

Philippians 1:27 (NLT)

Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ. Then, whether I come and see you again or only hear about you, I will know that you are standing together with one spirit and one purpose, fighting together for the faith, which is the Good News.

Reflection

It's amazing when you stop to think about it. The Christian believers in Philippi were experiencing persecution and suffering in a way that we will most likely never fully understand. And yet, over and over throughout his letter to them, Paul drives home the importance of unity. It's almost as if he is saying, yes, the suffering, the death, the torture – that's all hard, but the real challenge is putting aside our personal desires and being united!

The easy way out when we disagree, when we are uncomfortable, when we do not get what we want, is to leave. To find a church or other Christians who do line up with us ... until they don't. But on those incredible occasions where a body of believers can truly stand together with one spirit and purpose, it is a thing of beauty! Mother Teresa once said, "I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things." God has placed us together for a reason. Our unique gifting and collection of passions combined together in the unity He intends can accomplish great things.

Prayer

Lord, we ask for unity. We ask for the wisdom and ability to put aside differences and focus on the calling You have given us as a church. Amen.

March 26, 2016

Missionaries Stateside

By Craig Montgomery

John 20:20-21 (NIV)

After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you."

Reflection

Christ, risen from the dead and reuniting with His disciples, shows them the abuse His body has taken so that they may know it is Him and have faith to move forward. More than that, He is exhorting them that they are now to take a key role in sharing the gospel with the world. He is not just inviting them to be a part of this endeavor, He is commissioning them to be His hands and feet. In a very real sense God is placing responsibility on them, and now us, to share His good news with our Judea, and Samaria, and the ends of the world.

Prayer

Father, we ask for the courage and humility that comes only from Your Holy Spirit to help us share Your gospel with everyone we meet. We also thank You for those that work each day as missionaries here in our country and locally in our region, that You would further their impact for You. We thank You for the missional opportunities we have here at our church and ask that they be used to further Your kingdom. Amen.



March 27, 2016
Missionaries Global
By Matthew McNutt

1 Thessalonians 3:6-10 (NLT)

But now Timothy has just returned, bringing us good news about your faith and love. He reports that you always remember our visit with joy and that you want to see us as much as we want to see you. So we have been greatly encouraged in the midst of our troubles and suffering, dear brothers and sisters, because you have remained strong in your faith. It gives us new life to know that you are standing firm in the Lord. How we thank God for you! Because of you we have great joy as we enter God's presence. Night and day we pray earnestly for you, asking God to let us see you again to fill the gaps in your faith.

Reflection

Paul the Apostle is one of the church's greatest missionaries. He knew the scriptures, had a confidence in his calling, and saw tremendous results wherever he went. And yet he had troubles, he had suffering. He was blessed to receive these messages of support and love from the churches.

During my family's time in South America we loved our calling, but there were times when it was difficult being so far from home. We missed family, friends, and a culture that we understood and could navigate with confidence. One of my favorite memories from those years was the day I discovered our mailbox crammed with letters all addressed to me! My youth group back home in the States had showered me with notes of encouragement, tangible reminders of their prayers and thoughts of me even from so far away. In the words of Paul, it gave me new life and encouragement!

Some are called to serve abroad, others are called to serve in the local church, but we are deeply connected and part of our calling here at home is to be both strong in our faith, and to encourage our brothers and sisters called to serve far from home.

Prayer

Lord, we pray for our missionaries serving throughout the world, that they would be encouraged, that they would have new life, and that they would know and feel our support and earnest prayers for them. Please give them the strength and wisdom to continue serving You in this way. Amen.

March 28, 2016

Seekers to Find Jesus

By Kristi Pullig

Deuteronomy 4:29 (NIV)

But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Reflection

Those who seek God will find Him. Those who do not know Jesus may know that something is missing, but may not even know what it is that they are missing. Pray that those who do not have a saving knowledge of Christ will be open to knowing Him. As believers, we can pray for opportunities to share the gospel with those who are seeking. We can pray for those who have not yet put their faith in Christ.

Prayer

Dear Lord, open the hearts of those who need You. Thank You that You offer salvation freely. Turn those who are looking for fullness and fulfillment in things of the world. Open their eyes to the brokenness of a sinful life and to the redemption that comes through Jesus. Amen.



March 29, 2016
Growing Believers to be Equipped

By Karl Nockengost

Ephesians 4:11-13 (NIV)

It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of God.

Reflection

God calls pastors and teachers to equip His people for works of service. The reason: to build up the body. This is to go on until the unity of faith is reached and we become mature.

Prayer

Father, we pray for believers to join small groups and classes where they can grow in You and be equipped for service. We pray that You will raise up equipped believers throughout our church who will be prepared to serve You. Amen.

March 30, 2016

New Believers to Grow

By Kristi Pullig

Ephesians 3:16-19 (NIV)

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his spirit in your inner being so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Reflection

For those who have trusted in Christ for salvation, a relationship with God has begun. The new believer is firmly planted in Christ's love. This is the foundation. Following that, the relationship must grow. Paul frequently uses the term "fullness" to express God's divine presence. Nothing can fill us as God does. Pray that new believers will allow God to fill them completely by walking, communing, and residing with Him.

Prayer

Dear Lord, thank You for those new believers who are connected to Brandywine Valley Baptist Church. As they learn more about You and Your love, fill them and allow them to grow. We pray that they would abide in You as You produce fruit in their lives. Provide other disciples around them who will support and hold them accountable as they grow in their faith. Amen.



March 31, 2016
Boldness and Opportunities to Share Christ
By Nate Keeler

Ephesians 6:18-20 (NIV)

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Reflection

The Apostle Paul was regularly asking the church to pray for him and one another, that God would give boldness, clarity and opportunity to share the gospel. Sharing our faith can be intimidating. We need a "platoon" around us to encourage us to share our faith and pray for boldness, clarity, and opportunities. While I do not understand how it happens, the bottom line is that when we pray these kinds of prayers—God moves!

Prayer

Lord, I am Your ambassador (2 Corinthians 5:20) but I often feel intimidated to share my faith. May You surround me with a prayer platoon. Give me the power, love and self-discipline of the Spirit (2 Timothy 1:7) to demonstrate and declare the gospel to those You put in my life. Provide for me clarity in speech and opportunities as Your ambassador. Amen.



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