

PRAYER GUIDE EXPLORE



First Christian Church, May 20, 1979

I will give you every
place where you
set your feet, as I
promised Moses.
Joshua 1:3



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A letter from Pastor Kevin

We have been praying for you! It may go without saying, but it's still good to know that you are being lifted up in prayer. Spiritual movements that shape our lives, and the world around us, all have their foundation in prayer. God bends down to hear our prayers of hurt and hunger; He listens to our celebrations and struggles. He knows our needs before we ask and is faithful to meet us along the way.

I want to encourage you to make prayer a bigger part of your life. This guide will give you an opportunity to take spiritual steps. All you need to do is:

1. Carve out a specific time to settle your heart and mind to interact with God
2. Be intentional about eliminating distractions
3. Engage each day and take steps in light of what you are learning; don't give up if you miss a day, simply pick up where you left off and keep moving

Personally, I want to thank all of our EXPLORE team for their work on this generosity initiative – the kingdom is bigger and stronger because of faithful servants like them.

Blessings,
Kevin Brimmer
Lead Pastor

A letter from EXPLORE Prayer Directors

On behalf of the Prayer Team, our desire is that you as a family use this prayer guide as a daily devotional over the next 27 days. In doing so, may you explore ways that He directs you to help make this generosity initiative a journey that will transform us all into fully devoted followers of Christ.

Terry & Susy Dayvolt, Directors
Cleo & Carol Holder
Kent & Linda Vinson

INITIATIVE TEAM

EXPLORE TIMELINE

April/May	EXPLORE Series
April 24, 28	Town Hall Meetings
May 17-18	Prayer Vigil
May 19	Commitment Weekend
May 19	First Christian's 40th!

Campaign Director
Jim Schooler
Prayer Team Directors
Terry & Susy Dayvolt
Special Events Directors
Spencer & Jennifer Vinson
Town Hall Directors
Mike & June Watjen
Video Director
Guy Hall
Administrative Director
Nancy Hall
Communications Director
Julianne Brimmer

WEEK ONE THEME: REMEMBER

Day 1: Psalm 105:1-5

Give thanks to the Lord, call upon his name, make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always. Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced.

Pray: Reflect upon how God has blessed you, your family, First Christian Church, our community and nation. As you pray, give glory and praises to God for his abundant blessings. Thank Him for the Godly legacy of those who came before us, and as our church moves forward, pray that we would always be found seeking His face, His strength, grace and wisdom.

Day 2: Psalm 143:5-6

I remember the days of long ago; I meditate on all your works and consider what your hands have done. I spread out my hands to you; my soul thirsts for you like a parched land.

Pray: In this psalm, David cries out to the Lord for deliverance from his enemies. He fully knows of and acknowledges what mighty things God has done in the past (vs. 5). From this, he draws confidence that the Lord will also be with him as he faces his enemies. Today our "enemies" that overwhelm us and persecute our souls can be physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual; internal or external; seen or unseen. Pray earnestly for deliverance from your own personal enemies, remembering what a mighty, powerful God we serve. He is able!

Day 3: Isaiah 26:1-4

In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; God makes salvation its walls and ramparts. Open the gates that the righteous nation may enter, the nation that keeps faith. You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord is the Rock eternal.

Pray: Remember the good work God has done in you. His salvation makes us strong- capable of great things done in His name. Thank Him for his patient, steadfast love. Pray that we would put our complete trust in Him!

Day 4: Psalm 77:11-15,20

I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will meditate on all your works and consider all your mighty deeds. Your ways, oh God, are holy. What god is so great as our God? You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples. With your mighty arm you redeemed your people, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Pray: As we remember the powerful, mighty deeds of God as He led the

Israelites out of Egyptian bondage, let us also remember that the same God sits on the throne today. Pray that God would use us in mighty ways today to accomplish His perfect plan. Make us a willing vessel, Lord we pray.

Day 5: Proverbs 3:5-10

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil. This will bring health to you body and nourishment to your bones. Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with wine.

Pray: Our Heavenly Father and Creator loves us immeasurably! When we completely put our trust in Him, giving Him lordship over our lives, He is faithful to keep His promises: protection, health, wisdom, comfort, and immeasurable blessings! In return, we honor Him with the offering of our time, talents, offerings and tithes to His kingdom. Pray to increase your trust and reliance upon the Lord. Pray that God will reveal to you ways He can use you to further His kingdom.

Day 6: Acts 20:34-35

You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Pray: Jesus came to earth to not only be the once-and-for-all sacrifice for our sins, but also to teach and show us what Godly living looks like. In this passage, Paul reminds us to find/discover the joy of giving. Pray that God would help us to be cheerful givers of our time, talents, and money—to give joyfully without expecting something in return.

WEEK TWO THEME: CONSECRATE

Day 7: Leviticus 20 7-8

Consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am the Lord your God. Keep my decrees and follow them, I am the Lord, who makes you holy.

Pray: All Christians must struggle with a dual nature- our born-in sinful nature, and the Holy Spirit living within us. While this struggle will not be completely resolved until we are in Heaven, Christians can surrender to and rely upon the great 'I am' to deliver us from the pitfalls of our sinful nature. Pray for this daily! Pray for awareness of all that would compete for the throne of God in your heart.

Day 8: Mark 10:43-45

Not so with you. Instead whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant. And whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Pray: Are you a disciple of Christ? The life of Christian discipleship is characterized by humble and loving service. Ask God to make you receptive to the urgings of the Holy Spirit. Ask for God to reveal to you ways that you can serve others joyfully and humbly, representing to them the love of Jesus Christ. Make us the hands and feet of Jesus, we pray.

Day 9: John 3:16

For God so loved the world that He gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him, shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Pray: God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. God loved us so much that He gave us what He knew we needed- a savior to redeem us from our sins so that we can spend eternity in the holy presence of God. Likewise, He calls us to have a great love for his people (everyone) and to give joyously and generously that all may know the great love of the Father. Pray for your family, neighbors, and our community. Pray for opportunities to give, to pour out God's love. Pray that many will come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

Day 10: Philippians 2:1-15

If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Pray: Have you ever been in need of encouragement? We could all answer yes. As Christians, we should have intense care for each other, offering encouragement, comfort, fellowship, tenderness and compassion. Pray today and often for the pastors and staff of First Christian Church. Pray also for the elders and deacons, small group leaders and Sunday school class leaders. Pray for encouragement of all FC members. Pray for other churches and Christians in our community.

Day 11: Matthew 5:6

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Pray: Righteousness is holy and upright living; in accordance with God's standard. We cannot become righteous (holy) through our own "goodness." We can only become righteous through identification by faith with His Son. Righteous living must be sought after daily- just as we eat and drink daily. Without food and drink, we would soon become very weak. Without daily communion with God, we soon become spiritually weak. Pray that you will develop a hunger and thirst for his Word. Pray for strengthening of your prayer habits and pray that you will be 'still' and 'hear' what God wants you to know.

Day 12: James 4:10; Matthew 23:12

Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will lift you up.

For whoever exalts himself will be humbled and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

Pray: There are many rooms (areas) of our spiritual hearts. You may feel like you have already surrendered all to the Lordship of Jesus. But prayerfully analyze whether or not you have given over ALL areas of your life to the Father. Is there an area of your life that you are still trying to manage on your own? Trust him in all things. Today, humbly bow at the feet of our loving God and Creator and surrender it all to Him, and He will bless you, lift you up, and exalt you.

Day 13: Ephesians 4:22-24

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Pray: The Bible scriptures this week focused on consecration- defined as the act of setting apart, of something or someone for God's use. In the Old Testament, temples, objects, and people were consecrated to God. In the New Testament, the supreme example of consecration is Christ himself. But believers are also consecrated by Christ and are urged to consecrate themselves as well. Reflect again on the scriptures of this week. Have you 100 percent dedicated your life (consecrated) to the Lordship of Jesus? Or are you reluctant to place both feet firmly in the kingdom of God? Do you try to hang on to remnants of your former self? This is, by the way, a daily process. Pray daily for God to help you deny deceitful desires (vs. 22) and saturate you in a new attitude (vs. 23). The result? We can become like God in righteousness and holiness (vs.24). What a loving, merciful, and mighty God we serve!

WEEK THREE THEME: STRENGTH & COURAGE

Day 14: Philippians 4:10-14,19-20

I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength. And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Pray: Contentment in all circumstances. Total reliance on the Father. Seems like a tall order in today's world, but oh, the peace when we do. "But you don't know what I'm going through" you might say. Well, Paul (the writer of

this scripture) had been jailed, beaten, robbed, lived through a shipwreck, gone hungry, and at times had barely enough clothes to keep him warm. Yet he still put his full trust and faith in Christ Jesus, ushering in contentment and empowerment to face any and all situations. Don't just pray for God to "fix it." Pray for contentment in all circumstances which will lead to peace and confidence in a future with God at the helm of the ship. Storms may come, but our God has "got this!" Let go and let God!

Day 15: James 1:2-6

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of our faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish this work so that you may mature and complete, not lacking in anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

Pray: As Christians we should be striving for wisdom and spiritual maturity. Trials produce spiritual maturity. But how do we become equipped to face the trials? Answer- God's wisdom. It is available to us, but we must ask for it. The humble asking brings us into a relationship with Him. The wisdom we receive is not information imparted, but character learned. We learn of God's character and how to behave like Him. This trains and equips us, in advance, for trials we face. Pray (ask) for God's wisdom daily!

Day 16: 1 Chronicles 29:11-13

Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power, and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In our hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. Now, our God, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name.

Pray: Think about it. The same God who created the heavens and earth also breathed the breath of life into me, and knows me so intimately that He knows the number of hairs on my head. We are all dearly loved princes and princesses (children) of the King of Kings! Whom should we fear knowing this? I can face my trials and have peace knowing that my God is on the throne today and always. I also acknowledge everything I have is a blessing from Him. Thank and praise God today for his power and majesty, for His love and grace to his children, for richly blessing us, and for the promise of an eternity with Him!

Day 17: 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong. Do everything in love.

Pray: Listen to this interpretation of these verses from The Message Bible: "Keep your eyes open, hold tight to your convictions, give it all you've got, be resolute, and love without stopping."

Sounds similar to a coach's pep talk before the big game. Paul was trying to instill confidence in the Corinthian church. They too were facing many trials. But by holding steadfastly to the truths of the Christian faith, he told them they could be strong to endure. And very importantly, he said to do everything in love. Why? Because God is love. Jesus said they will know we are Christians by our love. Pray today for God, the author and perfecter of our faith, to embolden you; to help you be courageous and strong in taking the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world.

Day 18: Malachi 3:10-12

Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse that there may be food in my house. "Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the Lord Almighty.

Pray: This is the only way in which God tells us it is permissible to test Him. If everything already belongs to God, why does He need offerings from us? Because He wants us to show thankfulness and obedience- with a grateful heart, give back to the One who immeasurably gives. Our offerings can be our time, using our talents for His glory, and/or monetary tithes and offerings. Then God will bless us for our willingness to trust Him in this. Ask God to show you how to trust Him more, and to step out on faith. Thank Him for the many resources and talents he has blessed you with. Pray that God would reveal to you how to use your time and talents for his glory and kingdom.

Day 19: Isaiah 41:9-10

I took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners I called you. I said, 'You are my servant;' I have chosen you and have not rejected you. So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous hand.

Pray: Are you beginning to see it, to believe it, to feel strengthened, courageous and empowered? God tells us again and again in His holy Word that He will always be there for us. He will always "have your back." He will never leave us no matter how many times we stumble. All He asks is for us to TRUST Him. Believe it down to your bones that wherever you go, God goes before you and with you working on your behalf. Today let God know how much you love Him. Ask Him to help you trust in Him more and strengthen your walk with Him. Thank Him for His love and protection of us.

Day 20: Jeremiah 32:26-27; Matthew 17:20

Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?

...I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.

Pray: God. The great I Am. We cannot possibly wrap our minds around his "bigness" and power. Yet he longs for a relationship with his children and to be fully trusted by them (faith). So why are we hesitant? Why do we wait? Could it be our faith needs a boost? Ponder this: God's power, plus my complete faith, would equal an unstoppable team! We know God is ready. Now we need to be ready. Pray for an increase of faith. Pray that God would help you learn to trust him more- in all things. And pray that you soon will have the confidence to trust and believe that nothing is impossible with God!

WEEK FOUR THEME: FUTURE

Day 21: Isaiah 65:17-18

Behold I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy.

Pray: These verses are the prophesy of the end times. From the beginning of time God has had a plan- a perfect plan, because He is perfect. At the appointed time, which only God knows, Jesus will come again to gather his faithful followers unto the new Jerusalem. What a glorious day that will be! He has made a way for us who have accepted Him as Lord to spend eternity with Him. But this day will not be a great day for all. Those who do not know Jesus as their Savior will meet a much different eternity, a fiery Hell. If we love others as Jesus taught us to, we do not want this fate to come upon anyone! We want what God wants- that all would come to accept and know Him and join Him in eternity. Pray that God would increase your heart for the lost of the world. Pray that he would bring people to cross your path that you can have influence upon. Pray that all who attend the worship services at FC would come to accept Jesus as their Savior.

Day 22: Matthew 25:14-30

Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time, the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.' His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' The man with the two talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.' His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share

your master's happiness!' Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.' His master replied, 'You wicked lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned, I would have received it back with interest. Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Pray: We were created by God in His image. God has given all of us talents which He desires us to use for his Kingdom. However, they don't come completely developed. We must cultivate them as we mature in faith. They must be used and exercised and practiced. Then, because we have been faithful with a few, God will multiply them. Again, trust God in this. Pray for discernment of your talents, and for God's leading in how to use them for his glory. Remember, though, that this parable also contains a warning: God holds us responsible for our life and talents and what we do with them. Pray that on the day of your last breath, as you stand before our great God, you will hear Him say "well done, good and faithful servant."

Day 23: Proverbs 16:3

Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.

Pray: To commit to the Lord doesn't mean we come up with our own plans and then ask God to bless them. It means that if we have made the commitment to honor God with our lives, then He will insure success. How does God define success? It is godly character and the riches of an eternal home in Heaven. A successful life for the Father may involve sacrifice, hardship or even persecution. But never doubt that God will bless you immeasurably for your obedience! Pray that God would help you discern His perfect will for your life. Pray that you would be attentive to the urgings of the Holy Spirit. Thank Him for His abundant, unfailing love for us.

Day 24: Matthew 6:19-21,24

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where our treasure is, there your heart will be also. No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You can not serve both God and Money.

Pray: Verse 21 sums it up: Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. If we are truly disciples of Jesus, then He is the beautiful, invaluable,

precious treasure of our heart. Our thoughts circle around Him. So do our actions and energies. We want to honor Him by giving Him first place in our hearts. This doesn't mean we must live a life of poverty to follow Christ. But we should be cautious to be good stewards with the money he has blessed us with. These verses warn us of how easily money can become our master. Pray that God would be honored in your monetary decisions. Pray for a humble attitude acknowledging that God is our loving provider. Thank Him for His bounty in our lives.

Day 25: 1 Peter 1:3-9

Praise be to the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade- kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith- of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire- may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Pray: Compared to the timeless, never-ending eternity of Heaven, our time here on earth is like a quickly vanishing vapor. Peter reminds us that 'for a little while' difficult times may come our way. In these times through prayer, we need to 'lean in' to our faith in Jesus, our living hope- which will comfort, uphold and sustain us. But also know that our salvation is secure and locked in, not because we are able to hold on to Jesus, but because Jesus holds on to us. It is His strength and power, combined with our faith that will see us through trials. Praise and thank God for his grace and salvation in your life. Thank Him for his promised faithfulness. Thank Him for our eternal home in Heaven that awaits us. Pray for those you know who are currently enduring trials.

Day 26: Ephesians 3:20-21

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Pray: Unfathomable power. Unfathomable love. God is able and ready to show his mighty works. But we must have a deep, written-on-your-heart faith that trusts and believes in his power. The God of the mighty works recorded throughout the bible, is the same God of today. The bible also records that God works through his faithful people to accomplish great things. Is your heart/faith in the right place for God to use you? Try to imagine what our church could do in our community if we all had this faith. Pray big prayers! Pray expectantly! Pray that God would use you to accomplish mighty deeds!

Pray that God's transforming love would flow out from us into our community like the waves flow to the shores. 'To him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine.....' Let's try to imagine it!

Day 27: Leviticus 26:3-13

If you follow my decrees and are careful to obey my commands, I will send you rain in its season, and the ground will yield its crops and the trees of the field their fruit. Your threshing will continue until grape harvest and the grape harvest will continue until planting, and you will eat all the food you want and live in safety in the land. I will grant peace in the land, and you will lie down, and no one will make you afraid. I will remove savage beasts from the land, and the sword will not pass through your country. You will pursue your enemies, and they will fall by the sword before you. Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall by the sword before you. I will look with favor and make you fruitful and increase your numbers and I will keep my covenant with you. You will be eating last years harvest when you will have to move it out to make room for the new. I will put my dwelling place among you, and will not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt so that you would no longer be slaves to the Egyptians; I broke the bars of your yoke and enabled you to walk with heads held high.

Pray: God does not break covenants or promises. If He says it, it will happen. But notice the first word of this text is IF. IF you follow my decrees and commands. This requires obedience – it's a heart issue. God has promised to richly bless us and provide for our needs and protection. Never underestimate or forget how much you are loved by our Father. He delights in "doting" on his children. All he asks is for us to return his love and to trust him. He knows what is best for us. Pray your faith walk with God would be elevated to a richer, deeper level through trusting Him more. All throughout this month of study, we have been reminded of God's power, strength, love and compassion. He can and will do great things for you, our church, our community, and yes, the world! But God desires and needs his faithful followers to accomplish His perfect plans in His perfect timing. We need to be those willing, faithful disciples....ready to go to work for Him and His glory. May our prayer always be, till our final breath, "Here I am Lord. Use me." To God be the glory for ever and ever! Amen.