



Westside Baptist Church

FORWARD



40 DAYS OF PRAYER





FOR 50 YEARS, the people of Westside Baptist Church have sought to bring the hope of Christ to all people. Beginning with a vision to reach the people in West Gainesville, the mission of this church body has been an unwavering commitment of faith to spread the gospel to the uttermost ends of the earth. Throughout our history, the people of Westside have faithfully stepped into the ministry of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, by giving our lives, our service, and our resources, and as a result God has blessed His people.

As we praise the Lord for His faithfulness across these 50 years, may we collectively pause for the next 40 days and ask how we may continue to bless Him. “50 Forward” is a time to reflect on our journey, praise His provision, and prepare for a renewed vision for our future. Join our church family as we engage in individual and corporate prayer for the strength of our church, our willingness to serve, and our faithfulness to give. During the next 3 years, as we press into our next half century as a church family, our prayer is that the Lord will provide \$2,500,000 to ease our indebtedness, increase our emergency and contingency fund, provide for needed capital improvements and allow us to begin to plan for the next phase of our development, additional preschool and children’s space.

Use this prayer guide fervently. The daily entries will prompt you to ask the Lord’s direction and provision for the fields of ministry in which our church is actively engaged. With your commitment and focused prayer, “50 Forward” will free us to attain our shared vision and ministry goals. Our strength comes from the Lord and His faithfulness and from the faithful stewardship and generosity of His people.

PURSUE. GROW. CONNECT.



DECEMBER 16 - CONTRIBUTED BY: JUSTIN CHADES (MINISTRY ASSISTANT)

SCRIPTURE: 1 KINGS 19:7-8

"And the angel of the LORD came to Elijah a second time and touched him and said, "Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you." And he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God."

QUESTION: How do you respond when you're confronted with the sheer reality of your weaknesses?

APPLICATION: Picture this for a moment: you're Elijah. You just defeated the prophets of the false god, Baal, in a stunning display of God's power (1 Kings 18). You saw fire come down from heaven, and you feel as though there's absolutely nothing in this world that can stop you. And then, seemingly out of nowhere, everything changes. Now, you feel as though there's absolutely nothing in this world that can help you.

Most (if not all) of us know what it's like to be in Elijah's situation. The glorious victory of 1 Kings 18 type experiences seemingly always leads us into the pain and trials of 1 Kings 19-type experiences. God, in his infinite wisdom and love toward us, chooses not to keep us from these difficult trials that expose our weakness and leave us vulnerable. Why would this be? So that in times of weakness, God can come to you and say, "Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you." And He'll feed you with the food that sustains and enables you to grow and flourish through the pain. Don't allow pride to rob you of the blessing of weakness. In the Gospels, Jesus never performed a miracle in the life of someone of great strength. He gave sight to the blind, cured the sick, and healed the lame. Your greatest weakness is God's greatest opportunity to display His glory in and through you. "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses so that Christ's power may rest on me" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

PRAYER: Father, thank you for loving me enough to show me that I need you. When life is filled with victories, you are the source of every good and perfect thing. When life is filled with pain, you are still God and you are still faithful. Though circumstances may change, you stay the same. I ask that you would give me the eyes to see my weakness as an opportunity for your



strength to take hold. Help me to walk in the strength of the food that only you can provide.

DECEMBER 17 - CONTRIBUTED BY: SHERYL BENNETT (DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MINISTRIES)

SCRIPTURE: COLOSSIANS 4:2

"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."

QUESTION: How do I speak with grace and truth, even with those whom I do not agree?

APPLICATION: God deserves the glory of all people. Pray for the evangelists, pray for yourselves to be proactive and a light for the Gospel. Pray for wisdom and discernment with gratitude.

PRAYER: Lord I thank you that you are an all-powerful, righteous, good God. That you hold all things in your hand. Lord help me to reflect your love in the world, protect me from those who would distract me from your purposes. Help me to have conversations with people that help them see you and your love. May I have the words and courage to speak in the hard conversations and may my attitude be one of appreciation for all you have done. Lord please protect those in the world who are proclaiming your Gospel now, may you open doors and may you give them strength and courage to proclaim your name. It is in the name of Jesus I pray. Amen

DECEMBER 18 - CONTRIBUTED BY: KIM DIEHL (MUSIC MINISTRY)

SCRIPTURE: 1 SAMUEL 12:24

"But be sure to fear the Lord and serve Him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you."



QUESTION: How do you serve the Lord faithfully? If you are not involved in ministry, consider steps you can take to begin getting involved.

APPLICATION: Not just because of what He's done for me, but just because of who He is causes me to be in awe of Him because only He is worthy. Therefore, any outpouring from my life is a result of who He is in me. God is good. He is faithful.

PRAYER: Thank You, Lord, for knowing me and still loving me. I am in awe of your moment-to-moment presence in my life and am assured by Your many promises that you are faithful and will never leave me or forget me.

DECEMBER 19 - CONTRIBUTED BY: CHRIS WEEKS FAMILY

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 15:20-24

"So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.' And they began to celebrate."

QUESTION: Is this the kind of love we show for the lost in our community?

APPLICATION: Our actions will promote the love of our Father in our communities. Do we love those that do not fit our mold? We travel across the world to minister to individuals with very little clothing, marked up with tribal markings, worshipers of pagan idols, and we love on them and share the Gospel. Unconditional love must be shown for all sinners that need to come home. The next 50 years of ministry at Westside must be marked with a love that prompts us to run to the lost and embrace them with an unconditional love.

PRAYER: Father, help us to love like you love. I pray we would be filled with genuine compassion for the lost in our city as well as around the globe.



DECEMBER 20 - CONTRIBUTED BY: KATHY MARTINEZ

SCRIPTURE: PROVERBS 3:5-6

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."

QUESTION: What will Westside and our families put our trust in for the next 50 years?

APPLICATION: The heart of our church body must not forget our first love. Our heart needs to drive us to an acknowledgement of our need for God's leadership. If we trust in God we will have eternal significance, but if we trust in what is temporal we will not be a light to those without Christ.

PRAYER: Lord God, help us to not lean on our own understanding, but to trust in you and you alone. Guide us as we seek your direction for our next 50 years as a church family. May our hearts return to our first love and may we always find our significance in you and in nothing of this world.

DECEMBER 21 - CONTRIBUTED BY: KRISTI PARK

SCRIPTURE: PSALM 18:2

"The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold."

QUESTION: What is Westside Baptist Church looking toward as our foundation?

APPLICATION: The Lord must be our strength. The storms will come, but if Christ is our fortress then our church and families will not be moved. Our church must not just acknowledge this truth, but put our full trust in the fact that He is our protector, strength and salvation. No matter what comes in the next 50 years, if this is true our church will stand.

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, I pray that you would be our foundation through all the storms of life. Help us to find our strength in you.



DECEMBER 22 - CONTRIBUTED BY: KELLY CHRISTIE FAMILY

SCRIPTURE: ISAIAH 40:31

"Yet those who wait for the LORD will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary."

QUESTION: Are we waiting upon the Lord's plan for our children and the future of our church?

APPLICATION: Missions has always been a huge part of Westside and the impact continues to grow in my own families' life and in the lives of others. Many churches and movements are decreasing their missions efforts, but our future must be faithful to the call to go. The impact of missions will prayerfully change the futures of our children with a passion to go. Our strength and endurance as a church will be impacted by our faithfulness in fulfilling the great commission.

PRAYER: Lord, please help us to never lose our love for the lost and our heart to reach around the world to those in need of a Savior. We do grow weary and tired, but we stand on the truth that you will renew our strength. We love you Lord, and desire our lives to count for you.

DECEMBER 23 - CONTRIBUTED BY: BEVERLY CRUISE

SCRIPTURE: 1 THESSALONIANS 5: 23-24

May God himself, the God who makes everything holy and whole, make you holy and whole, put you together spirit, soul and body and keep you fit for the coming of our Master, Jesus Christ. The One who called you is completely dependable. If He said it, He'll do it! (The Message translation)

QUESTION: Keeping fit for the coming of our Master, Jesus Christ: What does that look like?

APPLICATION: We can't be fit without the presence of the One who set us apart. We are called by God to be set apart; give our spirit, soul and body to God. Surrender to His authority daily. Deny self and be transformed by the Word of God. Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. The best is yet to come!

PRAYER: Father, we bow down our whole spirit, soul and body to Your authority. We thank



you that you are faithful. You called us and we depend on you. You are with us always. You are invited to take control; we choose this day to serve you. Use us O Lord to Your Glory. Help us to trust in You at all times. Remind us to pour out our hearts to You, for You, God are our Refuge, Hope and Victory. Hasten the Day of Your return. In the precious name of Jesus our Savior, Amen.

CHRISTMAS EVE - CONTRIBUTED BY : PASTOR PHIL YOUNG

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 1:23

"Behold, The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him "Immanuel" which means "God with us".

QUESTION: God chooses to display His glory by beginning the Christmas story with the miracle of the virgin birth. Like many other things God chooses to do, this was scientifically impossible. Embracing the 'fact' that God chose to do the impossible through the virgin birth of Jesus requires 'faith.' Do we have the faith to believe that God will do the impossible in our own lives?

APPLICATION: Jesus was, in fact, God with us. He became a man so that he could become the sinless sacrifice for our sin. Our judge pronounced us guilty of sin, sentenced us to death as a penalty for our sin, then took off his kingly crown and his judge's robe and accepted our death sentence on the cross for us. God chose to start redemption's story by doing the impossible. By doing the impossible, he made possible salvation for us all.

PRAYER: Lord, as we prepare to celebrate Christmas, let us stop and ponder the miracle of the virgin birth, the miracle of God with us, the miracle of a holy God loving us enough to die in our place. Let us not get lost in presents and food and fun tonight and tomorrow and forget to thank you for the most awesome gift of your son. We love you, Lord. In Jesus name, Amen

CHRISTMAS DAY ~ DECEMBER 25TH CONTRIBUTED BY : PASTOR PHIL YOUNG

SCRIPTURE: ISAIAH 9:6

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting



Father, The Prince of Peace.” Luke 2:11 “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.”

QUESTION: Today is Christmas Day, a day where millions of people around the world acknowledge Jesus’ birth, but do most acknowledge Him as “Savior?” The “Christ?” The “Lord?” Do they see Him, Jesus, the babe of Bethlehem, as the Mighty God, the Eternal Heavenly Father himself?

APPLICATION: Today is Christmas Day. For those of us who truly realize exactly who this Jesus is, the one who saves, the one who calms the storm, heals the sick and raises the dead with one spoken word, should not our celebration today with family go far beyond our focus on giving and receiving gifts with one another? Should we not take time to be truly thankful in an act of family worship, for who Jesus is and what he has done for us? Should we not ask how we can better “reveal” him to the lost and dying around us like never before?

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, thank you for the precious gift of your son that we may know forgiveness and enjoy an intimate love relationship with you. We ask that you be honored by our heart of giving today, and as each of us also receive, let us be reminded of your grace so beautifully demonstrated to us that first Christmas. Show us Lord how to reveal you to those around us this coming year. Let our love for you result in transformation of those around us. We love you. We commit this day and every day to you. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

DECEMBER 26 - CONTRIBUTED BY: DONNA BRIDWELL

SCRIPTURE: 2 CHRONICLES 7:2-4

When all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord on the temple, they bowed their faces to the ground on the pavement, and worshiped and praised the Lord, saying: “For He is good, For His mercy endures forever.”

QUESTION: How often do you praise the Lord throughout your day? Do you think about Him during your work day or just on a Sunday or Wednesday evening?

APPLICATION: As children of God we are encouraged to spend time with God; Bible reading,



prayer, worship attendance and small group bible study are the tools used to help us to grow closer to our Savior. Another thing we can do to grow closer to the Lord is to praise Him and think about Him as we go through our work day. Do you praise and think about God amidst the noise and business of your day? Thinking about God, His attributes, His power, His might, His mercy, His grace, and His goodness leads to praise. Praise allows God an open door to your heart and allows Him to work in your interactions with others.

PRAYER: Holy Father, thank you for Your mercy and Your grace. Thank you for my salvation, for Your peace that passes my understanding. Father, help me to praise You and to think about You throughout my day. When I am confronted with attitudes and dispositions that are without love, help me to show love. Help me to choose humility instead of pride. Help me to stay in an attitude of praise directed to only You. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

DECEMBER 27 - CONTRIBUTED BY: JOHN PARK FAMILY

SCRIPTURE: JOHN 15:5

"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."

QUESTION: What can Westside Baptist Church do apart from God?

APPLICATION: Our next 50 years will be determined by how we respond to this truth. Our children and the next generation of believers will be blessed by our faithfulness or cursed by our unfaithfulness to God. We must pray that our future will be marked by a love and passion to be obedient to our Lord and Savior. Jesus Christ is the future of Westside Baptist Church, for in His name is the power and source of eternal life.

PRAYER: Lord, help us to abide in you. We pray your blessings on our church family for our faithfulness to you through the years.

DECEMBER 28 - CONTRIBUTED BY: ROY KLOSSNER

SCRIPTURE: PROVERBS 28:27



"If you give to the poor, your needs will be supplied! But a curse upon those who close their eyes to poverty."

QUESTION: Am I closing my eyes to the physical needs of the poor in my community or am I giving to their needs?

APPLICATION: I want the blessings of God, not his curse, so I will give to help the physical needs of the poor.

PRAYER: Lord God help me to trust in your Word. Help me to give sacrificially to the needy and trust that you will continue to supply my needs. Keep my eyes open and my heart tender to the needy so I will not be cursed.

DECEMBER 29 - CONTRIBUTED BY: JUSTIN OKKEN FAMILY

SCRIPTURE: ROMANS 1:16-17

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "But the righteous man shall live by faith."

QUESTION: How can we pass on our faith to future generations, if we are ashamed of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ?

APPLICATION: Westside Baptist Church will impact the world if we proclaim the Gospel of Christ. The power of the Gospel begins with the transformation in our lives and into our families. As our lives are changed we will be burdened for the lost around us and throughout the world. Think about the impact of a small number of disciples. Can you imagine the impact Westside would have on the world if our entire congregation became passionate about the Gospel? We must continue believing in the power of the Gospel for salvation.

PRAYER: I stand in awe of you Lord. Give those that I serve and go to church with the same fire and passion for You, so that we together may live out Your plan for Gainesville.



DECEMBER 30 - CONTRIBUTED BY: KYLE DAVIS

SCRIPTURE: 2 CORINTHIANS 8:9

"For you know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich."

QUESTION: Why did Jesus leave his Kingdom and riches for us?

APPLICATION: From God's Grace he was willing to be obedient to the point of leaving his place of honor even giving into death for our sake.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, Thank you for loving us enough to leave your Kingdom and become poor so that we may be rich by what You did on the Cross. Thank you for your example of love and obedience. Help us to have a heart willing to give up the things we hold on to out of gratitude and help us be obedient. Jesus said "if you love me you will obey me". Cure our hearts so that we can love as we should. Amen!

NEW YEAR'S EVE - CONTRIBUTED BY: LAWRENCE COLE (MINISTER OF EDUCATION)

SCRIPTURE: JEREMIAH 33:3

"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."

QUESTION: Was there a time in your life when you called upon the Lord and He answered?

APPLICATION: This was the very first verse I committed to memory; I was in the fourth grade and just a few months before I accepted Christ as my savior and was baptized. A lot of life has transpired since then, the anticipated dreams and the stark realities of life have made for a wonderful journey. At each step, God's affirming promise has enabled me to turn to Him in confidence. What I would have done on my own would have been insignificant, but when I have called to Him and awaited His answer, then He has demonstrated great and mighty things I never envisioned.



PRAYER: This day Lord, I call to you fully confident of your response. I am trusting in you to do great and mighty things that are beyond my understanding and abilities. I anticipate the wonders that you will bring about in this new year. In the name of your son, my savior, Jesus Christ, I pray. Amen.

NEW YEAR'S DAY - CONTRIBUTED BY: ASA WALKER (YOUTH MINISTER)

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 9:6

"And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the Gospel and healing everywhere."

QUESTION: What are the villages where you have influence? How do the people there need healing?

APPLICATION: Every day, I pass through countless "villages." Sometimes they are the coffee shop on the corner. Sometimes they are a public school classroom, or a practice field where the football team has met or the office, the department store, a waiting room where I sit impatiently. The villages are many, and in every one of them, I find people in need of healing. Spiritual healing.

Westside has been to and through many villages. Fifty years from now, we will still be scratching only the surface in the work to be done. But one thing must remain true: then, as now, this church must send its thousands into the villages daily to preach the Gospel and heal. One by one, these villages turn to Jesus, uniting in him, until at last they vanish into one eternal Kingdom. How may I build the Kingdom? Go to the village.

PRAYER: Father, use me today, wherever You lead me, let me heal the sick by preaching the Gospel. Bless Westside as your Kingdom is built by Your work through us in this new year.

JANUARY 2 - CONTRIBUTED BY: JANE MCEWEN

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 28:19

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."



QUESTION: Are we being obedient to Jesus' command? How do I become an effective witness for Christ?

APPLICATION: We are all disciples of Christ. We are His bond servants. To quote a popular praise song, "It's not about me as if You should do things my way. You alone are God and I surrender to your ways." If we are to be effective in any aspect of service, we must be faithful in the day to day obedience to His commands.

The ability to share the Gospel is within all of us. Jesus challenged his disciples to do so at the very last. Remember, you can do all things (including this), through Him who strengthens you. Be obedient to His command so that one day He will tell you, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

PRAYER: Father, may our days reflect our love for you. May we always be willing to talk about You. May your love be reflected through us that others will know that the difference in us is You. Give us the strength and the courage to step out in faith sharing your Gospel anywhere and everywhere, every day and every hour. May I always remember that if I don't speak . . . who will?

JANUARY 3 - CONTRIBUTED BY: BRANDON SASSER

SCRIPTURE: HEBREWS 10:23-25

"Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another — and all the more as you see the day approaching."

QUESTION: How can we, as a body of believers, hold fast the confession of our hope and continuously encourage and disciple brothers and sisters who join our fellowship?

APPLICATION: The Bible describes the unique composition of the church like a body with many members, each gifted by the Holy Spirit. As each Christian is navigating an individual pilgrimage through life, the church is the corporate epicenter for encouragement along the journey. To function independently of the church is like a hand without an arm or a foot without a leg. The actions become almost futile. As Christians, we need to encourage one another in



the faith as spiritual struggles abound and times of persecution increase. Corporate worship, discipleship, and fellowship are not mere suggestions for the church. They are the pillars of it. As Westside reflects on fifty years of God's favor, God's people must value the institution of the church as it glorifies God, reaches the lost, and strengthens the believer along his or her Christian pilgrimage. At this milestone in the history of Westside, prayerfully consider opportunities of service that align with your spiritual gifts and pray for God's direction in serving Him and other members of our church body.

PRAYER: Father, thank you for the establishment of your church through your precious Son, Jesus Christ. As you have called us unto yourself, you have also called us never to forsake the gathering of your people in worship and service. Help me take advantage of opportunities to be humbled in complete service to you and to your people and to give you all the praise and glory forever. In the name of Jesus I pray, Amen.

JANUARY 4 - CONTRIBUTED BY: RUTH DEAN

SCRIPTURE: PSALM 18:30

"This God—his way is perfect; the word of the LORD proves true; he is a shield for all those who take refuge in him."

QUESTION: How do you handle tough times in life? Are there people that you go to for wisdom and guidance when the tough times hit?

APPLICATION: We are not meant to go through tough times on our own. God has put people in our paths to help us and to guide us. It would be great if we could skip over the hard things and get right to the prize, but it's through the tough stuff that we grow and learn more about God's character. I have found in my life that even when I'm going through difficult times, I find the most comfort in God's Word. So, always be on the lookout for the amazing gifts from God.

PRAYER: God, help us to lean on you and constantly be looking for your mighty hand at work in the big and small stuff of life. Help us not to miss the amazing gifts that you provide for us through the difficult situations of life. We look forward to the next fifty years here at Westside and pray that we will be a people who seek you and lean on you for all things.



JANUARY 5 - CONTRIBUTED BY: TOM GRUBBS (RECREATION MINISTER)

SCRIPTURE: 1 CORINTHIANS 9:24&25

"Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever." (NIV)

QUESTION: What are you racing towards? What is the prize you are seeking?

APPLICATION: We love this verse because it is not about a physical run, but an eternal run for Christ. We strive every day in the Recreation Ministry to move the ministry forward for Christ's sake, not man's. So when you come to the Family Life Center to purchase a coffee from the 924 café or to work out, be reminded that we are striving to connect our community through community transformation. Remember we are running the race for the crown that will last forever.

PRAYER: Father, help us to seek you above all else. We want to run our race for your glory and honor. May you be the prize we all seek!

JANUARY 6 - CONTRIBUTED BY: SMITTLE FAMILY

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 6:27

"Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?"

QUESTION: How do I keep from being overcome by worry when it always seems there is another challenge or problem in front of me to handle?

APPLICATION: Worrying will not resolve the daily challenges of life; in fact, worry can make you physically ill and then you have another issue to deal with. Instead, do your best to keep your focus on God and not on your problems. This doesn't mean you shouldn't be concerned about your problems — you should, because God wants you to resolve them with His help, not ignore them. How do you do this when the problems are so overwhelming and life seems out of control? Remember that God is always in control and look to Him for guidance for everything,



no matter how big or small — He loves you and cares about you and wants you to seek His guidance. So instead of looking at the problem or situation and what you can't control, give it to God and let Him show you what you CAN do to resolve it . . . and do it!

PRAYER: Lord, I thank you for the many blessings you give me every day, and I thank you for being with me through every step of my life. Please help me to stay focused on you, to look to you for guidance when life becomes overwhelming and I can't see how it will ever get better, and to grow my faith in you so that instead of telling you how big and overwhelming my problems are, I'll learn to handle my problems by realizing how big my God is! Help me to live Philippians 4:6-7 that says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

JANUARY 7 - CONTRIBUTED BY: SCOTT HERRON FAMILY

SCRIPTURE: EPHESIANS 6:10-17

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

QUESTION: Are we putting on the full armor of God (Truth, Righteousness, Salvation, Gospel of Peace, Faith, The word of God)?

APPLICATION: If our church wants to be relevant in the future, the full armor of God needs to become involved in everything we do. This passage is not just for our children to learn, but is



the call for the future faithfulness of Westside Baptist Church.

PRAYER: Heavenly father, it's our prayer that we would clothe ourselves daily with the full armor of Christ. Help us to resist temptation and stand firm on truth each day.

JANUARY 8 - CONTRIBUTED BY: SARAH REID (DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS)

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 9:37-38

"Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'"

QUESTION: How can God use me to reach the harvest? How can I share Christ with those God has placed in my sphere of influence?

APPLICATION: Scripture tells us that there are people waiting to hear the good news of the Gospel, but that there is a shortage of believers willing to go and tell them. Jesus tells us to pray specifically for workers who are willing to respond in obedience to go. Commit to pray for more workers and ask God to show you how He desires to use your life to share the Gospel, locally and globally.

PRAYER: Lord/Heavenly Father, create in me a willingness to respond in obedience to your call. Create in me a love and awareness for the people you have placed in my life. Help me to be sensitive to the opportunities you provide to share with others about your Truth. Help me to pray for the lost and pray for believers/workers who will share the Gospel with those who need you, both locally and globally. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

JANUARY 9 - CONTRIBUTED BY: DOUG MEDLIN

SCRIPTURE: JOHN 13:2-5

"The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal . . . and began to wash his disciples' feet"



QUESTION: Where is your day spent? Are you consumed by a schedule or daily routine? Are you plugged-in to what really matters?

APPLICATION: Amazing Jesus! His continuous focus was not to betray these final moments with those He loved. For many people, the day ends before it starts. Time passing with the focus of school, work, constant schedule demands and expectations consume the day from beginning of daylight into the late darkness of evening. Reflections of old and coming difficulties or fears build on our anxious behavior to prepare, plan, and prioritize our calendar toward a proper balance of time. In the present state of time known as “now”, many people are constantly passing moment by moment, trying to live life to its fullest. Our life purpose should be not to betray the moment and share Christ in all relationships, even with the relentless schedules of activities or demands.

PRAYER: Dear Wonderful Father, we thank you for your One and Only Son, Jesus and His life, death and resurrection that allows us to come into your presence. Thank you for Westside Baptist Church with its strong leadership of staff and lay leaders and for their faithful service to stay in the moment for these past 50 years. Help us to remain steadfast in our individual commitment and be focused in the moment to stretch us toward each of the lost. Thank you for a promised future that is so bright and wonderful that we want to share The Message of Hope with all people. We pray for our continued attention to remain in the moments through the leadership of your Holy Spirit. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

JANUARY 10 - CONTRIBUTED BY: KENNETH AND DEBORAH ALLEN

SCRIPTURE: PROVERBS 3:5&6

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding; think about Him in all your ways, and He will guide you on the right paths.”

QUESTION: The author of this passage reminds us to “think about Him in all your ways.” Westside is blessed to have an active and diverse ministry for children. Our kids have benefited greatly from the teaching and activities and we will always be indebted to those who have been a part of their lives. Core to this ministry is the focus on Him. Whether dancing, singing in choir, listening in Sunday school or even making crafts in preschool, it is all done pointing to a greater



purpose. The need to involve Christ in every aspect of our lives is a trait of this ministry and a challenge to us as parents. The Message translates “Listen for God’s voice in everything you do, everywhere you go.”

APPLICATION: Life can frequently seem like one issue after another. Often our first instinct is to try and solve the situation ourselves. The wisdom in Proverbs advises us to not lean on our own understanding but rather trust in the Lord. Over the years, our family has found comfort through prayer and the ways in which He has directed our paths, whether in seemingly large or small decisions.

As Westside focusses on the next fifty years, the goal must be to follow the right path under the Lord’s leadership for our children. A ministry focused on anything but Him, even otherwise well intended goals, will cause us to stray from that path.

PRAYER: Lord, may our eyes remain fixed on you. May we trust you with our heart and not rely on our own understanding. Let unity bind our families and homes that we might trust you to guide our ways.

JANUARY 11 - CONTRIBUTED BY: ADAM AND JOY WHITE

SCRIPTURE: JEREMIAH 1:5

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”

QUESTION: How do you value life? What is the level of importance that is placed on this issue in your family? Talk about how this issue has shaped our culture.

APPLICATION: Brainstorm with your family practical ways that you can share with those around you that you value life.

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, we know that you value life. Help us to know how to stand firm for life in our culture. Help us to show that we value the life we have been given in Christ by loving those around us the way that you would love them.



JANUARY 12 - CONTRIBUTED BY: DENISE LOWENSTEIN (MINISTRY ASSISTANT)

SCRIPTURE: ISAIAH 30:18

"Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; he rises to show you compassion. For the Lord is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for Him!"

QUESTION: Are you willing to accept the love and compassion of the Lord? Are you willing to wait for Him?

APPLICATION: God's timing is not always the same as what we would like.

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, I praise you for your many blessings in my life. I pray for your guidance and clear direction that I may follow the right path, a path that will glorify you. I pray for your continued blessings on my family and that they will come closer to you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

JANUARY 13 - CONTRIBUTED BY: JACK LEATHEN (COLLEGE MINISTER)

SCRIPTURE: 1 CORINTHIANS 16:13-14

"Keep your eyes open, hold tight to your convictions, give it all you've got, be resolute, and love without stopping."

QUESTION: How is God calling you to stand up for Him? Who is he leading you to share his love with?

APPLICATION: It is important for Christians to stand strong in the midst of troubled circumstances. Even though their tangible world might be crumbling around them into darkness, Christians ought to be a beacon of unwavering light. Being resolute means that Christians should be ready and willing to speak out against idol worship and especially sin in their cultures. Within this witness, Christians also need to have compassion in their hearts, being bold in truth and reaching out to the broken with unconditional love.



PRAYER: God give me opportunities to reach the lost for you today. Open my eyes to the broken people around me, and give me the appropriate message that will draw people towards you. Send your Holy Spirit to spark the life transformation with those that I share my faith with.

JANUARY 14 - CONTRIBUTED BY: MATTHEW DIEHL (MINISTER AT WESTSIDE AT PARAMOUNT)

SCRIPTURE: 2 CORINTHIANS 6:3

"We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry."

QUESTION: What is your motivation for living?

APPLICATION: What is it that drives your daily decisions? The Bible is explicit on certain things we should or should not do, while being implicit on other things. And more often than not, we find ourselves justifying the choices we make, using the excuse that they are not explicitly addressed in the Scriptures. Paul, however, takes the question of "what motivates your choices" to the next level by saying that he refrained from partaking in any act that might cause a hindrance to the Gospel's advance. Paul demonstrated that our choices should be motivated by Gospel precedence, not personal preference. Jesus calls us a "city on a hill" (Matthew 5:14) and calls us to be a people that display the Gospel in everything we do (1 Corinthians 10:31). What motivates your choices? Is it a passion for God and the advance of Gospel? Are you removing the personal preferences of your life in order that the Gospel would not be hindered? Or are you driven by personal pleasures and desires?

PRAYER: Father, make us a people who delight in you, and that our delight in you would make us a people who burn with passion to spread the Gospel to the nations. Help us in your power to remove the obstacles that would hinder the spread of the Gospel, and help us to understand that the eternal destination of each person carries more weight than the fleeting pleasures of sin. Amen.

JANUARY 15 - CONTRIBUTED BY: STEPHEN GREGORY

SCRIPTURE: JEREMIAH 33:3



“Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.”

QUESTION: What are these “great and unsearchable things”? How does this apply to my life and circumstances?

APPLICATION: God’s word is full of His promises for those who place their faith and trust in Him. “For I know the plans I have for you”, declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (Jeremiah 29:11 NIV) As Jeremiah and the exiles experienced, we sometimes find ourselves in situations and circumstances that defy this proclamation. We say “how can God allow this” or “I do not see how God can work out these circumstances”. He states “call out to me”, that is acknowledge who He is, his power, greatness, compassion and mercy. If you do He will respond, He will not go against his Word. God’s response will be to open our eyes to a better understanding of himself and his plans. We cannot see through our human understanding but God will allow us to see through his perspective. All things are possible with God. What is required is humility and faith that God will do what He has proclaimed. This will give us strength to bear our present trials and assurance in what God has promised.

PRAYER: Father, I acknowledge you are the creator of all things; you are sovereign over the affairs of men. Nothing happens that is outside your sight or will. Father, there are times when I falter in my faith, I ask your forgiveness. Whatever you bring my way is an opportunity to grow closer to you and have a greater understanding of You. Help me to trust you more, to not rely on my limited understanding but trust in you completely with my life and circumstances. In Jesus’ name I pray, amen.

JANUARY 16 - CONTRIBUTED BY: MIKE TICKEL FAMILY

SCRIPTURE: 2 SAMUEL 24:24

“However, the king said to Araunah, “No, but I will surely buy it from you for a price, for I will not offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God which cost me nothing.” So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.”

QUESTION: What will it cost for our ministry to remain strong?



APPLICATION: Serving the Lord is a costly decision. We must lay down our lives to have a relationship with the Lord. The success of our future as a church will be costly if we want to make an eternal impact. We must remember that nothing in life has true value without a cost.

PRAYER: Thank you Lord for giving us the opportunity to make an impact for you. Lord please help me remember that this is not easy and will come with a cost, but will be worth so much more than what I will give up.

JANUARY 17 - CONTRIBUTED BY: WES JOHNSON FAMILY

SCRIPTURE: EPHESIANS 3:20

"Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us."

QUESTION: What limits have we placed on God for our church and families?

APPLICATION: God is going to do His work through us according to His plan. He has no limits to what He can do. We limit our lives and those around us because we believe that we are doing it in our own strength and power. Our limitations many times have to do with schedule, check book and ability. Our faithfulness for the future of our families will be determined by our close walk with the Lord. We cannot know God without spending time with Him. We must set aside time as families to pray and study His word.

PRAYER: Thank you Lord for your faithfulness to work in and through my life to your service. Help me remember that it is not about what I can do, but about what You can do through me.

JANUARY 18 - CONTRIBUTED BY: PHIL LINDSAY FAMILY

SCRIPTURE: PHILIPPIANS 4:13

"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."

QUESTION: Who gives us strength and who are we looking to for our future?



APPLICATION: Pray for the future of Westside Baptist Church, that our faith would be this strong. May our children and future generations believe that they can do all things through Christ who gives them strength. Please Lord, allow our church family to continue with this perspective.

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, we pray that you would help us as we raise up the next generation of Christian leaders. Please help them to hold strong to their faith in an ever-changing culture, Amen.

JANUARY 19 - CONTRIBUTED BY: MARCELINE BEEM (MINISTRY ASSISTANT)

SCRIPTURE: 1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-6

"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men."

QUESTION: What spiritual gifts do I have? How can I use my gifts at Westside, in my community, and in the reaching the lost world?

APPLICATION: Paul tells us that every believer has been given a spiritual gift. Each believer has a unique gift, so that together we work together as a fully-functioning body of believers. But when someone is not using their gift – it's like the body trying to function without a limb. The church needs every believer serving together for God's glory. Find out what gifts God has given you, and discover how He desires to use you for the edification of the church, and for ministry to our lost world.

PRAYER: Lord/Heavenly Father, help me identify and use my gifts for your glory. Help me to find an area of ministry where I can use my strengths and talents to be a blessing to those around me, and use them in such a way as it draws people closer to you. Use me to encourage the church you have placed me in, to serve alongside them in ministry, and to tell others about you. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.



JANUARY 20 - CONTRIBUTED BY: OSCAR JOHNSON

SCRIPTURE: ACTS 1:8

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

QUESTION: What is the purpose of this power? How can I best apply it in my life?

APPLICATION: Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks... and when the Holy Spirit is in and upon you, you shall speak and teach of Jesus.

PRAYER (BORROWED, IN PART, FROM THE PRAYER OF JABEZ):

Lord/Heavenly Father, give me a sense of your continual presence and direction, guide me as I journey through my life, moment by moment, one day after another, and through every decision I make. Prompt me to do the right thing when you know I'm about to take a wrong turn, using me completely for your Glory in every avenue of my life by increasing my influence and opportunities for you. Bend and shape me into the person you intended me to become. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

JANUARY 21 - CONTRIBUTED BY: OSCAR JOHNSON

SCRIPTURE: COLOSSIANS 3:16

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

QUESTION: When confronted with decisions that impact the lives of others, who do you consult first to explore answers? How do you go about this?

APPLICATION: Our life takes on a richer, more meaningful direction when we apply Christ's love and wisdom to our ordinary, everyday decisions. This concept is more evident, powerful and contagious when our decisions have an effect on others. For example, during discussions at home, the tone of our voice and nonverbal expressions set an example to family members, whether positive or negative. When a difficult decision affecting your family must be made,



proactively seeking Biblical guidance beforehand arms you with the Word of God. Use the Bible to support your reasoning in a Christ-like manner. Have you ever considered how this practice can take some of the heat off of a family controversy? Likewise, in the community and workplace, the manner you arrive at, and convey decisions has a considerable impact on the willingness and attitude of others to carry them through.

PRAYER: Lord, I ask that you fill me up with your peace and love as I pray each morning and seek your wisdom. As I read your Word, guide me with fresh ways to apply it throughout my day. Walk alongside me, and open opportunities for me to influence others in a positive way. Through your Spirit, prompt me to consistently honor every blessing you've given me, and give me the strength and discipline to be obedient and to honor your commandments. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

JANUARY 22 - CONTRIBUTED BY: MELISSA STABLE (MINISTRY ASSISTANT)

SCRIPTURE: PROVERBS 31:25

"She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come."

QUESTION: How often do we allow the future to cause us anxiety?

APPLICATION: When we rely on Christ alone, he gives us strength and allows us to feel dignified in the decisions we have made with his direction. We should not be worried about what is to come.

PRAYER: Thank you Lord for giving me peace about my future when I am following your will for my life.

JANUARY 23 - CONTRIBUTED BY: MATT SWANSON FAMILY

SCRIPTURE: PSALM 73:25, 26

"Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth. My flesh and my heart may fail; But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."



QUESTION: Are we afraid of the future, or are we anticipating God's use of our families in His kingdom?

APPLICATION: Sometimes the world, government and news make us fearful and depressed about the future of our church. The things we deal with every day may disappoint us, but we do not need to become defeated. Our future will always be bright if God is our strength. His Kingdom will come and He is victorious. We do not need to lose heart.

PRAYER: Allow us Father to see through your eyes. Let us look at struggles as opportunities to serve you greater, and let us never forget that we are on the winning team. If God is for us, who can be against us?

JANUARY 24 - CONTRIBUTED BY: JONATHAN AND JULIE PEINE

SCRIPTURE: PHILIPPIANS 2:14 & 15

Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation."

QUESTION: How do you guard against grumbling and complaining in your home?

APPLICATION: I think this passage relates to just about everything, especially working with young children as they learn so much by example. Our words become their words. It's so easy to complain. In our family, we are seeking to instill early that our words and attitudes matter. What a goal to work towards by guarding our grumbling, whether in the home or through family ministries.

PRAYER: Lord, please help us to be a people of grateful and thankful hearts. When we begin grumbling and complaining, please help us to be reminded of all you have done for us. We desire our children to love you with thankful hearts, let us be setting that example for them.



JANUARY 25 - CONTRIBUTED BY: DANNY AND STEPHANIE CHRISTMAS

SCRIPTURE: PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving; present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your mind in Christ Jesus.

QUESTION: How does our anxiousness interfere with our ability to minister to others?

APPLICATION: Anxiety and worry can completely overcome us on a daily basis. Whether we are worried about health, finances or a situation completely out of our control like a car accident, that anxiety or worry can stop us in our tracks. Anxiety is nothing more than lack of faith. That is just one of many tools that Satan has in his arsenal. When the seed of doubt is planted it can quickly grow unless we are firmly planted in our faith. In this passage we learn that the simple answer to anxiety is prayer. The answer to all of our problems that is repeatedly addressed in scriptures.. PRAYER!! "Submit your requests to God". What do we receive when we ask in faith? We receive the Peace of God that transcends all understanding. That peace can allow us to walk firm in our faith, erasing all doubt, worry and anxiety so that we can continue on in the good works that God has called us to do. What anxiety is interrupting your ministry today? Ask God to remove those worries, claim Philippians 4 and surrender to the peace that can only come from our Savior Jesus Christ. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." John 14:27

PRAYER: God we come to you in faith, asking that you would fill us with your peace as we encounter the situations of life. We ask that you would bind Satan in our lives and not allow him a strong hold. Help us to not be anxious, but in turn stand strong on your promises.

JANUARY 26 - CONTRIBUTED BY: PASTOR PHIL YOUNG

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 8:23-27

Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him. Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. The disciples went and



woke him, saying, “Lord, save us! We’re going to drown!” He replied, “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?” Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm. The men were amazed and asked, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!”

2 QUESTIONS ARE RAISED IN THIS TEXT:

“What kind of man is this?” and “Why are you so afraid?”

APPLICATION: When we truly embrace the reality of the kind of man Jesus is, the Creator of all, the Savior, the Holy One, the Lamb of God, the One who sits on the Throne, the Righteous Judge, the Eternal King, the Prince of Peace, the one who can calm any storm with His spoken word and bring perfect peace; we no longer need to be afraid. Fear comes from not knowing our future, our security, our safety, our provision. We are assured of all these things in Christ who provides for all of our needs according to His riches in glory. [Phil. 4:19] Perfect love drives out all fear [1 John 4:18] so we need not fear anything when Christ is our Savior, Lord, Master, and Redeemer.

PRAYER: Lord help me today not see you as the world does, but as you truly are, all powerful, righteous, and holy. Help me experience the perfect peace of fully trusting in you for ALL things. Do something so big through me God that it is obviously from you. I love you Lord. I trust you Lord. With your help, I will not fear. In Jesus name, Amen



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