

Monday - Be Watchful

Tuesday - Stand Firm in the Faith

Wed - Be Courageous

Thursday - Be Strong

Friday - Do Everything in Love

Saturday - A Refreshed Spirit

Ongoing Prayer Needs

Answered Prayer

At the end of last year's week of prayer and fasting, Chad shared that he felt God was calling our church to pursue holiness, to be counter-cultural, to give sacrificially, and to engage in the mission of sowing and reaping. Little did we know how prophetic his words over our body were that day.

Journeying for 41 weeks through 1 Corinthians certainly refined our body. We stepped deeper into believing the Bible is true, relevant, and inspired by God. We rejoiced as we witnessed deep renewal in our own lives and friends' lives. We also faced sorrow this year through the pain of death, the loss of relationship, and the grief of our own sin, our friends' sin, and our world's sin.

The phrase "buckle up and enjoy the ride" doesn't quite fit with the refinement we faced through 2016. For some of us, a more adequate phrase for the past year may be "buckle up or be thrown out of the car." Maybe it feels like the belt is still locked as it presses you into community. Maybe you feel all alone and ragged from the arduous trek of life. Maybe you have white knuckles from gripping the Word and your

friends' hands so dearly through life's difficulties. Maybe you still have one eye tightly shut and one eye open as you take a peek to see if we survived. Maybe you are overjoyed with all God taught us this year. More than likely, you live a combination of each sentiment.

Whatever your condition, here we are. The week of prayer and fasting for 2017. By God's grace we continue to journey together and ask him to "take us deeper than our feet could ever wander" on their own (Psalm 121).

Begin this week by asking Jesus to give you a willing spirit to fully engage. Each day, we will pray through a different aspect of 1 Corinthians 16:13-14. Ask him to help you when you feel weak, tired, or distracted. Ask him to give you and all of us who have linked arms this week a new heart, a new spirit, to remove the stony parts of your heart and replace it with a fleshy, pliable heart. Ask him to transform *us all* to be more like him as we set this week aside to seek him as a body.

This year let us truly, deeply, and like never before, link arms and tighten grips as we pray and live to glorify Jesus Christ. Let us buckle up and enjoy the ride that only the Holy Spirit can provide as we seek him with our whole hearts.

"Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think." Ephesians 3:20

Monday - Be Watchful

"Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love." 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

It is safe to say, we are a distracted people. Multiple sources pull and compete for our attention every moment of every day. Each of these distractions want us to believe something very simple: if we engage in what they are promoting, satisfaction and contentment will be the direct result.

Deep in the pit of our stomachs, we know this isn't really true, but it rarely affects our pursuit of these satisfactions. We continually allow ourselves to be pulled in every direction away from God.

In 1 Corinthians 16:13 Paul says to be watchful. The intent of his word choice is to make yourself ready for the coming of Jesus. This readiness is achieved by resting in the hope of a redeeming, restoring, renewing Savior.

"Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content." Philippians 4:11

Paul says that despite our surroundings, and regardless of our circumstances, contentment is possible. One way to be watchful and to guard your heart is to strive toward truth-filled contentment.

This week provides you the opportunity to ruminate on the questions you have concerning contentment. Fasting enables us to limit the distractions and lean in to the Great Author and Perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:1-3).

Be watchful of culture

Culture wants you to compromise. Begin by asking God to reveal to you the areas in your life in which you allow culture to compromise your faith. Ask the Spirit of God to give you the boldness to purge these specific areas of your life.

Consider these possible areas of compromise:

purity
friendship
sexuality
work ethic
entertainment

social media
unhealthy desire to please
integrity
addiction (food, substance, relationship, etc...)

Obviously, this list is not comprehensive. Stop and take the time to sit in quiet anticipation for God to open your mind and heart so that you can identify your personal places of struggle.

Be watchful of comparison

Do you find yourself trapped in the revolving door of comparison? If so, take each thought captive. Move to a place where you are not building a case of your own holiness compared to where you think others measure up. Ask Jesus to give you his eyes, ears, and heart concerning the dignity of people. Pray that the Holy Spirit will remove your bias and prejudices toward others.

What does it mean for you to live in harmony with God's family (the church)? Are you in good relationships with your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ? If not, why not? How do you need to be watchful in your relationships? Where do you need to offer forgiveness? In what ways do you need to ask for forgiveness?

Be watchful of your spiritual maturity

Are you being watchful of your spiritual maturity? What is the last thing that you have learned and applied that has bolstered your faith?

*“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, **to equip** the saints for the work of ministry, **for building up the body** of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **to mature** manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we **may no longer be children**, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are **to grow up in every way** into him who is the head, into Christ,” Ephesians 4:11-15 (emphasis added)*

Pray for Christ-centered maturity:

- Jesus, teach me to love your Word.
- Jesus, teach me to process your Word with others.
- Jesus, teach me to deeply search the truth that is found in your Word.
- Jesus, teach me to be a person that is radically dependent on you and is not tossed by the waves of doctrine, human cunning, craftiness, and deceitful schemes.
- Jesus, teach me to not be influenced by people who possess and propagate bad company and theology.

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you not be complacent, to create in you a longing to be watchful.

Read, meditate on, and pray the deep truths of the following passages of scripture.

“Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.” Ephesians 6:18

“Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.” 1 Corinthians 16:13

“But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap. For it will come upon all who dwell on the

face of the whole earth. But stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.” Luke 21:34-36

“Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 1:13

“Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” 1 Peter 5:8

“Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Mark 14:38

“If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.” Colossians 3:1

Tuesday – Stand Firm in the Faith

*“Be watchful, **stand firm in the faith**, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.” 1 Corinthians 16:13-14*

Paul's encouragement to stand firm in the faith implies that opposition to Jesus (and our faith in him) exists and that resistance is strong.

Think about what it means to stand firm in your faith as you pray through the following areas.

Stand firm to hold your ground in battle

In Ephesians 6, Paul reminds us that the battle we face is spiritual and to “put on the whole armor of God” that we “may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.”

Read through Ephesians 6:10-18. Spend time thanking God for the specific pieces of armor he has given to us as his children. Ask God to continue to equip you to use these specific pieces of armor in standing firm in the faith.

To hold your ground, you must know who you are. If you are a follower of Jesus, then you have been called and chosen by God to bring him glory.

“For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became of us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, ‘Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.’” 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

“and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.” 1 Corinthians 3:23

Ask the Spirit to solidify the identity you have been given through Christ so that you better know how to hold your ground in the battle. Pray for the Spirit to reveal any lies that the enemy has used in the area of your identity. Ask God to show you specific truth through his Word to use against any lies that may be revealed. Write down any lies he reveals to you along with the scripture to pray against it. Use it daily until you find complete freedom from the specific burden. Share your thoughts and prayers with a trusted friend or mentor.

Stand firm in obeying God's voice

Knowing who we are and whose we are reminds us whose voice we obey. We take our orders from our Shepherd and we follow with all perseverance.

“To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.” John 10:3

“I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.” John 10:14-15

Pray that the Holy Spirit would continue to tune your ears to better hear the voice of God. Pray that you would walk in obedience to his voice without surrendering to the distractions all around.

Through 1 Corinthians, Paul points to the testimony of God and the truth of the gospel so that “your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 2:1-5) Ask God to increase your trust in the wisdom, power, and strength of his Son. Pray for Holy Spirit to show you areas where you are choosing to surrender to worldly wisdom instead of choosing to surrender to the wisdom of God.

Pray for our Second Mile family to walk in the wisdom that God reveals. Pray for discernment for the leaders of our body to lead Second Mile according to godly wisdom and not the norms of our culture or world.

Stand firm in acting in a way that is consistent with Jesus

If you need a reminder of what we have studied through 1 Corinthians or if you are a newer part of our church family, take a few moments to skim through 1 Corinthians and/or your message notes. What are things that the Holy Spirit revealed to you about who Jesus is through this book of the Bible? What areas of your life need to better line up with Jesus?

Spend time thanking Jesus for who he is and how he has continued the process of sanctification in your life. Ask the Spirit to continue to refine you in these areas so that you better reflect Jesus.

Stand firm in his Word

The best way to understand who Jesus is and how we are to follow him is to consistently be reading and meditating on His Word.

- God promises understanding for those who are in His Word.

“Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.” 1 Corinthians 2:12

“The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple.” Psalm 119:130

- His Word is living and active in our lives.

“For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” Hebrews 4:12

- His word will accomplish his purposes in our lives.

“so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.” Isaiah 55:11

Pray that God would increase your desire to dig into his Word. Pray that you would feel a hunger for Scripture in your spirit as tangibly as your body hungers for food or thirsts for water.

“How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!” Psalm 119:103

“I open my mouth and pant, because I long for your commandments.” Psalm 119:131

Pray that each member of our Second Mile family would experience a year of exponential growth and depth in how they engage and dig into Scripture.

Psalm 119 is a chapter dedicated to the power of the Word of God in our lives. It is a powerful outline to use for prayer in asking God to cultivate your interaction and understanding of his Word. Consider praying through this chapter of the Bible, asking God to increase your desire and love for his word.

Wednesday - Be Courageous

*“Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, **act like men [be courageous]**, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.” 1 Corinthians 16:13-14*

The meaning of the phrase “act like men” is to be responsible and courageous by taking the initiatives God reveals through faith, to show oneself to be brave.

Jesus told us in John 16:33 that in this world we would have trouble, but to take heart because he has overcome the world. There is no question that this world is saturated with trouble. Do you ever feel weak, inadequate, or unable to be courageous? Good news! He has given us his Holy Word to use for battle when we start to feel overcome by the world. In fact, he calls his Word the *sword of the Spirit* (Ephesians 6:17) which is a weapon for spiritual warfare to battle against the lies, schemes, and destruction of our real and present enemy.

We may sometimes be tempted to give into fear and hopelessness, but we have a great God who enables us to be courageous and stand firm through his very great and precious promises.

“His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.” 1 Peter 1:3-4

Today, content in the prayer guide will be significantly pulled back. If you are living with your eyes and heart open, you do not need to be told what trouble exists in the world, and you alone know the deep personal difficulties you face. So instead of extensive points of prayer, you hold an extensive list of scripture about standing firm and being courageous. Read and pray through these verses *as many times as you can* today. Praying scripture is the best and only true way to push back the darkness and set your feet on the firm foundation that is Jesus Christ.

“Your prayer must be firmly connected to and grounded in your reading of the Word. This wedding of the Bible and prayer anchors your life down in the real God.” ~ Timothy Keller

Read, pray, ponder, meditate, and wholeheartedly seek God as you pray through these passages. Make notes and add other scripture the Holy Spirit may speak to your heart.

*“Be of good courage, and **let us be courageous** for our people, and for the cities of our God, and may the Lord do what seems good to him.” 2 Samuel 10:12*

*“Be strong, and let your heart **take courage**, all you who wait for the Lord!” Psalm 31:24*

“Be vigilant just like that. You have no idea when the Son of Man is going to show up.” Matthew 24:44

“Now brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, and in which you **stand firm**.” 1 Corinthians 15:1

“Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are **standing firm in one spirit**, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.” Philippians 1:27

“For freedom Christ has set us free; **stand firm** therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.” Galatians 5:1

“Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.” Deuteronomy 31:6

“Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand firm**.” Ephesians 6:13

“He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he **set my feet on a rock** and gave me a **firm place to stand**.” Psalm 40:2

“When the storm has swept by, the wicked are gone, but the righteous **stand firm** forever.” Proverbs 10:25

“Have I not commanded you? **Be strong and courageous**. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9

“You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who **stands firm** to the end will be saved.” Matthew 10:22

“So, if you think you are **standing firm**, be careful that you do not fall!”
1 Corinthians 10:12

“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, **stand firm**. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” 1 Corinthians 15:58

“For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God. Now it is God who makes both us and you **stand firm** in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.” 1 Corinthians 1:20-22

“Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, **rooted and built up** in him and **established** in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.” Colossians 2:6-7

“...according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to **be strengthened** with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, **being rooted and grounded** in love, may have **strength** to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.” Ephesians 3:16-19

Thursday - Be Strong

“Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, **be strong**. Let all that you do be done in love.” 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

You Can't be Strong on Your Own

"If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together." 1 Corinthians 12:26

You've heard it said many times in Second Mile to link arms and tighten grips with one another. This is not a simple platitude to make us feel better about ourselves. The intent of this phrase is demonstrated in Ecclesiastes.

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up." Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

Spiritually speaking, when you fall down who do you have in your life to pick you up? With whom have you linked arms and tightened grips? Are you willing to go through life helping others and being helped by others?

As we've learned in 1 Corinthians, community is an essential part of living out our faith. We are not intended to experience a relationship with Jesus isolated from the lives of those around us. So much of our personal interactions are for learning and the building up of others.

"And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved." Acts 2:44-47

In the example of community found in the above passage, are you willing to both give *and* receive with a glad and generous heart? Sharing in the responsibility of growing and living in community with others requires selflessness, but is also meant to be life-giving. Are you making yourself available to those in need around you? Are you honestly opening your life and home to people?

Ask God to teach you to take responsibility in community through loving others and allowing yourself to be loved by others. Pray that you will enjoy the blessing of community. Ask God to help you love people with confidence, not entitlement which stymies community. Pray that he will continue to teach you the depth of what it means to link arms and tighten grips with others.

"And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." Colossians 3:14

Pray that God will enable you to rely on community when it isn't easy or comfortable. Repent from the fear of being an inconvenience to others. Ask Jesus to increase your thankfulness for the church as a whole and to show you the practicality of relying on one another.

Living in community with others is not always convenient or neat. It is tempting to give up on relationships when things become difficult or uncomfortable. How are you willing to push through those barriers and serve or pursue others despite the difficulty? Could you be passing up an opportunity to link arms tighter than before and strengthen your relationships? Are you reconciled in all your relationships? Is there someone with whom you need to reconcile? Pray and then act. Don't delay.

“Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.” 1 Peter 3:8

Have you chosen to be a member of the body of Second Mile? If not, why not? If yes, how are you contributing to the health of our body? We can't be strong on our own. Ask God to show you how you can personally participate in the church.

Praying for Second Mile to be Strengthened

“I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.” 1 Corinthians 1:10

“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:24-25

Our times of gathered worship are not meant for selfish gain, but rather to bring greater benefit and advantage to others. Paul references the gathered church 22 times in 1 Corinthians and nine times in chapter 14 alone!

Pray that our experience of community would glorify God and build up the church. Pray that the community of Second Mile will be pleasing to Jesus. Ask Him to teach us to be people who are united in love for one another.

Koinonia (koy-nohn-é-é-ah) – A close relationship involving mutual interests and sharing; an attitude of goodwill making clear the closeness of relationship and acts of generosity and hospitality; the bond created through brotherly and sisterly love; the act of being “all in” as a member of the body of Christ.

Pray that we as Second Mile would experience genuine koinonia, that we would honor close relationships through generosity and hospitality. Pray that we would not love the *idea* of community more than we love our *actual* community.

“The person who loves their dream of community will destroy community, but the person who loves those around them will create community.” ~ Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Would you be willing to take initiative and invite people from Second Mile into your home or out to a restaurant to share a meal? Are you waiting to be invited or will you be the inviter?

“Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!” Psalm 133:1

Pray for those looking to become a part of Second Mile community groups. If you are not currently part of a group, we ask that you prayerfully find a group to join. Contact a few community group leaders and be proactive about joining a group as soon as possible.

Think of your community group. Write down the names of the people in your group and pray for each person by name.

Ask God to establish true koinonia in your group. Pray that, as you link arms with one another, you will not become an exclusive clique, but will be strengthened to take initiative with people, especially those who are hurting and/or do not yet know Jesus. Pray that your group will grow this year with new followers of Jesus. Ask the Spirit to teach you holy openness to others as you link arms and tighten grips with your community group.

Pray for the community group leaders.

Ben & Bonnie Bordner
David & Britt Gouge
Dan & Erin Phillips
Joshua & Jenna Schaa
Matt & Susie Munsey
Carter & Nicky Wingate

Curtis & Jenna Miles
Phil & Erin Anderelli with Christe & Dave LePeau
Brad & Katie Southard with Breanna Flanagan
Brandon & Rahel Hodge
Mitch & Suzie Gallaher

Pray for a greater measure of provision to those who open up their homes and lives to lead and host you week after week. Ask the Holy Spirit to give them grace, wisdom, and confidence to be God-honoring shepherd leaders.

Children are also a vital part of our community. Their spiritual development is essential as we prepare the next generation to follow Jesus. Pray for the children who are involved in community groups. Pray for ways to be more intentional with them during our times together in order that they also may experience the joy and fulfillment that community brings.

Read through the following passage. Circle, underline, or highlight one or two ways you can pray for your community group, your leaders, and yourself. Take action to obey as the Spirit leads you to engage through his Word.

“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. 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. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” Colossians 3:12-17

Being Used to Strengthen our City

In 1 Corinthians, Paul spoke specifically about individuals in his life. He mentioned people by name in order to build up individuals and the church as a whole. Paul loved people well. Do you know and love people? Do they feel loved and encouraged by the ways you speak to them or about them?

Ask the Spirit to utilize *you* to make the community of Second Mile a place that binds people together in our city. Pray that those in your life through your school, your workplace, and marketplace will be drawn to Jesus through the authentic spiritual community of Second Mile.

Are you willing to take initiative and invite people from outside Second Mile into your home or out to a restaurant to share a meal? Write down 2-3 names of people you can seek to engage in relationship this year. Pray that God will give you the courage to speak to them about your love for Jesus.

Ask God to give you new insight with whom to engage. Ask him (and trust him) to provide new ways of connecting with relationships and to establish new ways of developing intentional community with people. Pray that he will teach you to engage with people in our city who do not yet know Jesus. He desires to use you to show your friends how much he loves them.

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

“Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.” Romans 12:16

Pray that we will be living examples of restoration for those who have been hurt by the church. Ask the Holy Spirit to give your hurting friends understanding that past hurts or failures stemming from the church are not a true reflection of Jesus himself. Pray that he will restore faith, hope, and grace in the church.

Pray that God will grow our church through people giving their lives to Jesus. Ask Jesus to use us to bring renewal to our city.

“So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.” Acts 2:41

Friday - Do Everything in Love

*“Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. **Let all that you do be done in love.**” 1 Corinthians 16:13-14*

Read 1 Corinthians 13 and consider God-honoring love as you pray today.

If our goal is to impress people, then we are only “a noisy gong or clanging cymbal.” (1 Corinthians 13:1)

Who do you seek to impress? Ask God to take you deeper into living a life for his glory alone. Pray that he will continue to teach us to love others for his glory and not for the praise of others. Ask God to help you seek the advantage of others over seeking your own advantage.

“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” 1 Corinthians 10:31

Spiritual Gifts

We spent much of last year learning about spiritual gifts and how they are used to glorify God and edify the church (1 Corinthians 12-14).

In Paul’s first mention of spiritual giftedness he gives us the foundational functions.

1. To strengthen others. Our gifts are not primarily for self. They are primarily for the benefit of others.

2. To bolster faith. They remind, uplift, and sharpen the focus on God's kingdom.

Spiritual gifts provide support to the body in times of weakness. When a brother or sister is in a season of weakness, we can move them to strength by utilizing the gift(s) the Spirit has given us.

Have you discovered your gift/gifts? Write them down. Ask God to show you how you are currently and continually using them to love his church. Spend time listing ways you are using your gifts. To know your gifts with head knowledge is different than knowing your gifts with experiential knowledge. How are you using them? Pray through your ideas and actions.

If you discover you don't know your gifts or you aren't sure how to use them, ask God to reveal to you ways you can begin to actively engage in using them. Pray for the courage, determination, and grit to take one action step to begin to use your gifts. Share your plan with a trusted friend who will hold you accountable to follow through.

Pray that our church would be a church full of people actively engaged in using their gifts to bolster faith and strengthen others.

Building others up

"What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up." 1 Corinthians 14:26

Opportunities to build up others continue to grow in our body. You may have heard a leader say that Second Mile is not a program-based church. This simply means that our church does not have a planned series of future events, items, or performances of ministry obligations. Ministry happens out of the overflow of the Holy Spirit moving in individuals lives who then influence others to join them in loving our church, city, and world.

Please pray through the following (and add others that are not listed) people in Second Mile who minister to others with love. Ask God to pour out his favor on each ministry and to encourage those who faithfully serve in these areas. Ask God to show us more and more ways to love people in our city.

Contact people and/or leaders are listed for each area of ministry. For more information about these opportunities, contact the leader or an elder.

Be the Bridge (A first step to begin to tear down racial barriers) - Christe LePeau

Homeless Ministry - Mitch & Suzie Gallaher

Youth Ministry - Austin & Corrie Smith

Children's Ministry - Tori Einstein

Vessel (college ministry) - Curtis & Jenna Miles

Overflow Tucson (A church plant) - Luke and Jolene Safford

Cord of Hope (A ministry to women who work in men's clubs) - Tia Edwards

Refugee Ministry - Angela DeSoto

Boys Group Home - Matt Hixson

Foster Care - Nicky Wingate

Arizona Baptist Children's Services - Cheryl Hutchins or Anna Babler

Neighborhood Kid Outreaches - Lawson & Laura Moore

InterVarsity at U of A and Pima - Brandon Hodge & Ivanna Harrison

Navigators at U of A - Ryan and Ariel Mullarkey

Crash Groups (men's discipleship groups) - Hector Valenzuela & Nate Edwards

Moxie Mentors (women's mentoring) - Angel Haynes

Hands of Hope, Break Down (empowering youth) - Sarah Cameron

Hospitality - Britt Gouge

The Arts - David Gouge

Worship - Angela DeSoto

Building/Grounds Maintenance - Ben Bordner, Stephanie Hansen, Dan Phillips

Prayer - Nate Edwards

Finance classes - Dave LePeau

Structure and order in God's economy

"But all things should be done decently and in order." 1 Corinthians 14:40

Ask the Holy Spirit to move in and through us in miraculous ways, to enable us to love one another deeply, and to draw people to himself.

Ask God to help us trust his structure of leadership in the church and to increase our love for our leaders. Pray for the elders (Chad, Nate, and John) as they listen to God and lead our church. Ask God to nourish and encourage them this week. Spend time thanking God for their leadership.

God's love for us

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?" Romans 8:31-32

God is *for* us. Our ability to love others begins with understanding his love for us. He did not keep his love secret, but made it known through Jesus' death and resurrection. God is patient and kind. Love is patient and kind.

Ask Jesus to help you truly know that you are loved, that he is **for** you. Spend time meditating on his love.

Ask God to enlighten the eyes of your heart to his patience and kindness towards you. How has he been patient with you? How do you see his kindness in your life? How do these demonstrate his love for you? Express your gratitude to him. Allow yourself to be overwhelmed by his great, great love.

How can his love, demonstrated by patience and kindness towards you, move you to love others? Ask the Holy Spirit to move you to deeper love for humanity as a whole. Pause and ponder what it means to love humans.

Now begin to narrow your focus. Ask him to soften your heart towards people it is difficult for you to love. Think through national leaders, your employer, professors/teachers, or coworkers that may be difficult to love. Pray that God will first increase your desire to be patient and kind to them. Ask God to surprise you today, and through this year, by increasing your love for them. Pray that he will remind you regularly to pray for them and give you opportunities to demonstrate love for them.

Narrow your focus even more. Ask God to show you three to four people in your life who do not yet know Jesus as their Savior. The ultimate way to love someone is to tell them about Jesus Christ. Ask God to increase your faith in this area, to embolden you to open your mouth about Jesus, and to provide opportunities to speak of his love for them.

Write their names down in a place that will remind you to pray for them often. Be faithful to pray for them and engage with them as long as it takes. Do you have stamina in loving people? Ask God to help you. Pray that you will be God's representative of love to people in your life.

"In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us." 1 John 4:9-12

Saturday – A Refreshed Spirit

*"Now I urge you, brothers—you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints—be subject to such as these, and to every fellow worker and laborer. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence, for **they refreshed my spirit as well as yours**. Give recognition to such people." 1 Corinthians 16:15-18 (emphasis added)*

The emphasized phrase above can be translated as "they have filled his feelings and emotions." Pause and reflect on this concept.

Do you feel refreshed this week? Undoubtedly, God is moving among his people, and most of all, we want to finish this week feeling full of him and refreshed by his Spirit. Take time to enjoy his presence today. Take a few deep breaths. Go on a walk. Look out at the mountains. Focus on what it means for God to "fill your feelings and emotions."

Consider Others

Paul wrote that Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus refreshed his spirit. Paul recognized that community was critical to a disciple's spiritual condition. He understood how valuable time is with people. Spending time with people is a deeply spiritual act.

Followers of Jesus should be overflowing with deep satisfaction in God and how he is presented among his people. Can you say this about the people with whom you live life?

Pray that we will be overflowing with deep satisfaction in God. Pray that our satisfaction in God will be amplified in how we live in community. Ask Jesus to make us discontent with surface level conversations alone. Ask Holy Spirit to guide our conversations with the body and to teach us to ask intentional, difficult, and faith-building questions.

Who are the people in your life that refresh your spirit? What specific characteristics of God do they reflect? Write their names and specifically how they refresh you. Pray for them by name and thank God for providing refreshment through them.

Have you ever told these friends that they are refreshing? Consider writing them a note of encouragement. Refresh their spirit as they have refreshed yours.

“I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus,” 1 Corinthians 1:4

“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:23-25

“On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation.” 1 Corinthians 14:3

Consider Yourself

“A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.” Proverbs 17:22

Are you refreshing to others? How can you learn from others to become a more refreshing member of the body?

If it is difficult for you to connect with your feelings and emotions, ask God to show you his deep love and affection for you. Ask him to overwhelm your mind *and* emotions with his unfailing love. If it is difficult for you to engage your mind as you worship God, ask him to teach you to engage your heart, soul, and mind as you enjoy his steadfast love.

“I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge — even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you—so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” 1 Corinthians 1:4-9

“Hard words are never received if gentle words are the only things ever spoken. If encouragement is never (or rarely) spoken, then every correction is received as painful discouragement.” ~ Chad Haynes

1 Corinthians is full of admonition (counsel, advice, caution), rebuke, teaching, and correction. Are you open to giving and receiving admonition?

Pray that you will be a person who speaks with both truth and love. Ask God to make you a person who fills others feelings and emotions. Pray that you will be sensitive to the emotional, mental, and spiritual needs of the people in your life. Ask God to increase your sympathy, brotherly love, tender heart, and humble mind.

“Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.” 1 Peter 3:8

Consider Our Leaders

“Far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you.” 1 Samuel 12:23

“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.” Hebrews 13:17

Spend time thanking God for the leaders of Second Mile. Pray for their refreshment and emotional filling.

What practical ways can you love our leaders and seek to refresh their spirits? Make it a goal this year to see how you can continually encourage our leaders. Ask God to enable you to influence the people in your community group to join you in filling the feelings and emotions of the leaders of Second Mile.

Pray for our Elders.

Chad Haynes, John DeSoto and Nate Edwards

Pray for the staff.

Chad Haynes, Angel Haynes, Tori Einstein and Angela DeSoto

Ask God for wisdom, spiritual insight, vision, holiness, stamina, grit, knowledge, unity, and humility for each elder and staff member.

The following are nine ways you can continually pray for the elders and staff of Second Mile throughout this year.

1. Pray they will keep their eyes on God.

“For we are powerless before this vast number that comes to fight against us. We do not know what to do, but we look to You.” 2 Chronicles 20:12

2. Pray they will not take a step apart from God’s leading.

“If Your presence does not go,” Moses responded to Him, “don’t make us go up from here.” Exodus 33:15

3. Pray they will beware of relying on their own strength.

King David after he relied on his own schemes: *“I have sinned greatly in what I’ve done. Now, Lord, because I’ve been very foolish, please take away Your servant’s guilt.” 2 Samuel 24:10*

4. Pray they will be wise in leading God’s people.

“So give Your servant an obedient heart to judge Your people and to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?” 1 Kings 3:9

“Where there is no vision, the people perish.” Proverbs 29:18

5. Pray they will weep over the sin and failures, as well as the victories of God’s people.

“When I heard these words, I sat down and wept. I mourned for a number of days, fasting and praying before the God of heaven.” Nehemiah 1:4

“Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.” Romans 12:15

6. Pray they will know when to push away from the crowds to pray.

“But the news about Him spread even more, and large crowds would come together to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses. Yet He often withdrew to deserted places and prayed.” Luke 5:15-16

7. Pray they will walk worthy of their calling.

“And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;” Colossians 1:9-10

8. Pray they will speak the gospel boldly.

“Pray also for me, that the message may be given to me when I open my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel.” Ephesians 6:19

9. Pray they will finish well.

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” 2 Tim. 4:7¹

Ongoing Prayer Needs

These topics are needs we pray about every year. Dog ear, mark, or make note of this section so you can quickly refer to it throughout 2017. We will continue to ask God to answer with a clear yes or no, and we trust him as he has continued to ask us to wait.

Second Mile

El Centro

The elders and finance team are in constant communication about purchasing El Centro. Please continue to pray that God will direct our church in this process. Ask him to continue to move in the hearts of the sellers to see Second Mile as a continuation of their ministry legacy. Pray that we will be able to purchase the building at a low price and pay it off quickly.

A staff pastor

For a few years we have been praying for God to give us the resources to hire another full-time pastor and to show us who to hire. Please continue to ask God to bring the right man at the right time and to provide the resources to provide for him and his family.

Seeds Community Center

Seeds is a non-profit 501c3 Second Mile started several years ago. Currently, we are waiting for God to move in Seeds in the areas of leadership, organizational structure, and renewed interest.

We have begun to see the rumblings of people’s curiosity concerning Seeds. Pray that Jesus would give us wisdom and discernment as it relates to the timing and restructuring of Seeds. Pray that God will bring the right people to the table for the next season of Seeds. Pray that Seeds could be used in a powerful way to creatively serve and reach our city with the power of the gospel.

Local

Overflow Tucson

Second Mile sponsors a church plant called Overflow Tucson. Luke and Jolene Safford have been in the process over the last two years of learning and growing in their love for Tucson. They regularly gather with their core team, and continue to press into the process of forming a vibrant, gospel community. Here are the Safford’s requests:

- Pray that we and our church planting team would see outside of ourselves and be a welcoming community for the unchurched.

¹ Rainer, Thom. “Nine Ways to Pray for Church Leaders,” Thom S. Rainer (blog), December 2, 2014, <http://thomrainer.com/2014/12/nine-ways-pray-church-leaders/>

- Pray for Overflow Tucson to identify and engage in opportunities to collaborate with other churches to bless our community.
- Pray for growth that is displayed in maturing Christ-followers, people coming to know Jesus for the first time, and multiplying Overflow Community Groups.
- Pray for us as we balance planting a church, family life, and work. Pray that we will seek Jesus first and persevere in prayer and Scripture.

Global

New Tribes Mission

The aviation division of New Tribes Mission (NTM) is very close to Tucson in Cochise County. We have an opportunity to connect with this mission agency that has a local presence, as well as a multi-faceted global presence. NTM Aviation is passionate about empowering tribal church planting and Bible translation in Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Philippines and Brazil.

The leadership of Second Mile has been in conversation with NTM to explore and develop an on going partnership with them in local and global missions. The aviation division's significant and specific need is to tell the stories of how aviation affects global church planting. They need videography, photo journalism, social media development, and web design and implementation.

Pray that God would give vision to Second Mile for tangible ways to partner with NTM Aviation. Ask Jesus to stir in our hearts to engage in God's global agenda. Pray for key people to lead, organize, and develop strong, on-going relationships between Second Mile and NTM Aviation.

Japan

Our church is developing a relationship with Evan and Audrey Eusey, who serve with OMF International in Japan. They have three children: Gus, Elsa, and Moses.

We are praying and strategizing with Evan & Audrey in order to see if God would have us partner with them in their work in Japan. These are some of their personal prayer requests:

- Pray that we would walk in step with the Spirit, with hearts in tune to the Lord's leading. Pray that we might draw closer to Christ and abide in him daily.
- Pray for the salvation of three Japanese young women with whom we have the most contact during this Home Assignment: Hinano, Natsumi, and Aoi. We see all of them regularly; none of them is a believer.
- Pray that we'd be able to schedule meetings with current and potential ministry partners, and that more people would partner with us financially and in prayer.
- Pray for someone to accompany Audrey and the kids to Japan in July and stay for a little while to help us get settled. Evan will probably return to Japan a month before the rest of the family in order to find housing, a car, etc.
- Pray for quick connections in our new community in Sapporo, especially with people who are seeking God. Pray that we might understand how we can serve our neighbors.
- Pray for new financial and prayer partners for our ministry.

Answered Prayers

God hears us when we pray and answers according to his will because he loves us, gives good gifts to us, and is faithful to accomplish his purposes through the prayers of his children.

Enjoy reading through these answers to our corporate prayers. As you read, allow your heart to overflow with thankfulness to him. Worship him and express your gratitude. Please make notes about each situation and add any answers not listed as they come to mind.

“And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.” 1 John 5:14-15

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

- From February to December we journeyed through the book of 1 Corinthians. God challenged and sifted our body through personal and corporate refinement. We are confident we will continue to see the movement of God in our lives from what we learned through this message series.
- We hosted two Easter gatherings at El Centro for the first time. Approximately 300 people attended and heard the good news of the Resurrection!
- Through 1 Corinthians we spent a few weeks discussing spiritual gifts. Many people continue to process through how to use their gifts to edify the church. As a result, the number of volunteers has increased in areas such as hospitality, music, and kids ministry. There are many ways to serve in our body and we look forward to seeing how God uses each person's gifts to build his church and increase our faith in this coming year.
- Four new community groups launched and three new leaders took over an existing group! We are so thankful for how God continues to raise up leaders.
- In June, we hosted a day and a half training for 53 new and current leaders called Persevering in the Second Mile. God answered our prayers by challenging and equipping these leaders, and we continue to see the fruit of the training.
- Austin and Corrie Smith started investing in the youth of our church.
- Families grow and continue to be vital to our church life.
 - 5 children were adopted.
 - 4 families engaged in foster care and others are beginning the process.
 - 3 couples were married this year.
 - 3 babies were born.
- We hosted our second annual Fall Family Fun. Hundreds of people came to play games, eat hot dogs and popcorn, and enjoy a family friendly event.
- Over 130 people went to the Iron & Iron and Moxie Retreats.
- Crash groups, which are discipleship groups for men, launched this year! Many women continue to be invested in through one-on-one mentoring.

- We continue to give women who work in men's clubs gifts through the ministry of Cord of Hope. During the two main outreaches over 300 beautiful gifts were given. God continues to grant Second Mile favor to bring smaller gifts throughout the year, as well. Also, God spoke to Angel about transitioning out of leading this ministry. We are currently praying for the future of Cord of Hope.
- Matt Hixson led us to love some boys that he and other men in our church continually invest in. We overflowed ten stockings and bought an Xbox with five games for their group home. God keeps using members in our body to help us love different areas of our city.
- We moved to a morning gathering after meeting in the evenings for the previous 11 years. This change brought many new people to our church!
- Chad continues to have good conversations with the owners of our building about purchasing/transferring the ownership of El Centro to us.
- With almost 70 children in Second Mile Kids, we have 58 adult and youth volunteers who invest in them each quarterly rotation. Our church continues to place high value on cultivating the next generation. Do not be deceived into thinking your help is not needed because we have "so many" volunteers. It takes many workers and helpers to maintain high investment in the children of our church.
- Nearly 30 people attended the Tucson Refugee Ministry training we hosted in May. Many from Second Mile continue to pray about how to serve and love the refugees of our city and are doing so in tangible ways.
- Through much prayer and waiting God moved in our body to begin a homeless ministry. Teams meet new friends at Santa Rita Park and the Veterans' Camp where they bring food, clothing, and the love of Jesus to those in need.
- Several leaders have stepped up to bring momentum to our prayer ministry. We introduced one-on-one prayer after the gatherings and have seen much fruit from this. Other leaders are also being raised up and trained in prayer.
- The Safford family began weekly gatherings with their core team. We continue to pray for them as they launch their church plant called Overflow Tucson.
- We prayed for skilled and gifted people to take on the responsibility of church finances. God answered our prayer! Erin Anderelli took over as Finance Administrator, and we now have a finance team that manages the long-term budget. They are so skilled at what they do!
- We held our first ever Covenant Member finance meeting in April. The staff and elders were so encouraged to see these Covenant Members take on this responsibility and take their role seriously.
- Our yearly budget increased by \$60,000, the largest yearly increase we've experienced. We made budget this year! God continues to provide all that we need even as we take on the responsibility of our own facility.
- Praise God, nine people were baptized this year!
- People continue to desire to link arms and tighten grips with us. 25 people became Covenant Members in 2016!

"I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise will always be on my lips." Psalm 34:1