

## February 2022 Prayer and Praise

Weariness...we feel it deep within the core of our being. It affects every part of who we are – physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. It's a word I hear more and more being shared by nursing students, faculty, and nurses to describe where they are at these days. It's a word we need to acknowledge in safe environments with others and in our own times of quiet and reflection. Sharing our stories with others can be a powerful experience. Verbalizing what we are feeling can be the tipping point towards deeper relationships with others and intimacy with God.



Recently I met with several of our professional nurse group leaders to look closer at a passage of scripture from the New Testament.

***<sup>16</sup> So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup> For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, <sup>18</sup> as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, II Corinthians 4: 16 – 18).***

The words “losing heart” stood out – it describes the *weariness* many of us have been or are experiencing. It's questioning how we will find the strength for another day or asking ourselves if the work we do is making a difference. It's wondering how the financial difficulties we face will be covered or if we will successfully graduate. It's standing at the bedside of someone who will not make it through our shift and will die without their family or personal support systems there for comfort.

As this group of nurses talked, I found their insights speaking to my own spirit and needs – one of the precious gifts we experience being in relationship together. As someone shared with me recently, “It's hard to lift the box you are standing on.” We need each other. We are created for relationship.

Hearts opened as truth was shared. We acknowledged the difficulty in giving to others what we did not possess ourselves. There was agreement that we only can give what we have been filled

with and many of us had experienced too many days where we felt we were running on empty...distracted by all that surrounded around us. How did we begin the process of looking at what was unseen?

One of the leaders shared how the care we needed for ourselves, the self-care our spirits craved, is developed in the ***secret place of our hearts***. It's in the secret place we develop intimacy with God. It's a relationship requiring time – time in the presence of God where we are unhurried enough to be still. Time to open the deep places of our hurt and need, and to acknowledge and turn from those behaviors we use to numb. Time to understand what is important to God. Time to respond to his voice and to walk in both love and obedience.

This is relationship. This is what gives us strength and purpose to look beyond the distractions that fill our days to what is found in the unseen. This is what gives us life, purpose, and meaning. This is our calling as men and women of faith and children of God. This is the deep intimacy with God our spirits need and crave.

*Note: Our professional nurse group leaders are men and women of faith who have an incredible love for Jesus and for the profession of nursing. They have acted upon a call on their lives to support nursing students, faculty, and nurses in the challenges we face in both our faith and our practice. If you would like to explore the possibilities of being a nurse group leader or becoming a part of a professional nurse group, please reach out to me at [Christy.secor@intervaristy.org](mailto:Christy.secor@intervaristy.org). We have face-to-face and virtual group possibilities available.*

*Christy Secor RN, DNP, CDWF, NCF Professional Ministries Director*

References:

*Holy Bible, English Standard Version. (2001). Crossway.*

### **February Prayer Calendar**

- February 1 – In November, NCF staff began praying for the ministry's year-end giving. One of our staff encouraged us to pray for a BHAG (a big, hairy audacious goal). While we laughed at the acronym, we agreed to pray, and God answered beyond our BHAG ask! We are grateful, excited, and so thankful to see how God provided through your prayers and gifts.
- February 2 – We praise God for all that is happening within our professional nurse groups. We ask God to provide wisdom, insight, and encouragement to our nurse group leaders as they reach out to support nurses in their faith and practice. Pray for God to

grow these groups into thriving communities of hope and presence with each other for the challenges we face personally and professionally.

- February 3 – We ask God for a “full house” of participants and stimulating discussion during the [live online Journal Club](#) taking place this evening as nurses and panelists discuss how to give sensitive and culturally competent care to refugees and other displaced people. Pray, too, that the technology will function without complication.
- February 4 – We praise God for the work and ministry of Jessica Harper, NCF’s Marketing and Communications Manager. Jessica is transitioning out of this role so that she can focus more of her time and energy with her growing family. Jessica has been a gift to NCF. We pray the Lord provides opportunities for her to rejoin NCF’s team when her “littles” are bigger.
- February 5 – Pray for NCF’s Marketing & Communications Manager position to be filled by a qualified candidate and for him/her to bless the ministry of NCF with his/her gifts and talents!
- February 6 – Pray for nurses, nurse leaders, and hospital administrators to make use of a series of in-depth papers posted by [The American Nurses Association National Commission to Address Racism in Nursing](#). Pray also for nurses to provide and [give feedback](#) to the Commission on this important reality in nursing (deadline is February 14). We ask God to give us as a profession strength, wisdom, and compassion to address these long-term issues.
- February 7 – We pray for students, faculty, and nurses across the country who are working long hours, caring for family members, facing challenges within their organization, and feeling stretched to the end of their strength and ability. We pray for God to bring something new out of the brokenness we see. Give rest, strength, and renewal to students, faculty, and nurses in their relationship with God and foster connection with others who can provide support, prayers, and presence.
- February 8 – Continue to pray for wisdom, discernment, and encouragement for Kathy Schoonover-Shoffner, NCF’s National Director, and for Christy Secor, NCF’s Professional Ministries Director, as they care for their husbands through the neurological challenges each man faces. We ask for God to speak deeply into each family’s life as changes and new challenges continue to arise.
- February 9 – We continue to lean on the Lord and ask him to increase our membership numbers so that more may experience the hope and encouragement that’s a part of NCF. Pray for new members to join and existing members to renew and maintain their relationship with NCF. We ask him to draw others to NCF who are interested in planting new student and nurse groups and equipping established groups to flourish!
- February 10 – We continue to ask God for wisdom and discernment as we seek a resolution in communicating between our membership platform, RegFox, and our

communications system in MailChimp. This connection will make information easier to share with our members.

- February 11 – [Christian Community Health Fellowship](#) is gearing up for its conference in April. Brook Gumm is an APRN nurse in Cincinnati who is heading up the prayer ministry. Pray for Brook as she leads this ministry and for the CCHF conference to make a tremendous impact on God's Kingdom work.
- February 12 – Pray for NCF's marketing and leadership team as we continue to plan and create new ideas for National Nurses Week/Month and the coming year. Ask Jesus to show NCF staff and leaders how he wants to minister to and bless nurses and students through NCF ministry – what new ideas and resources does Jesus want for 2022? How will he provide for new materials and events?
- February 13 – We are seeing God at work through the connection and support that's a part of our [Sunday evening times of prayer](#). We ask for God to continue to use the prayers of others and truth from his Word to support the needs of students, faculty, nurses, and our profession.
- February 14 – How can we as editors communicate with relevance with young nurses? Pray with *Journal of Christian Nursing* staff who are asking God for insight and skill in providing articles and other media about practice and spiritual strengthening for this demographic.
- February 15 – Pray for God to draw students, faculty, and nurses to the Twin Cities NCF's second webinar, [Practicing as a Spiritually Healthy Nurse: Thriving Through Today's Challenges](#), as insights for addressing our own spiritual care needs during this difficult time are shared. We ask specifically for the protection of the technology being used and for the webinar to draw all into deeper intimacy with God.
- February 16 – Pray for Christy Secor, NCF's Professional Ministries Director, as she shares on lament with the faith community nurses of Hoag Hospital. We ask God to use this spiritual practice to strengthen and grow our intimacy with God.
- February 17 – Remember in prayer our faith community nurses as they continue to provide care, wisdom, and insight for the congregations, parishes, institutions, and communities they serve. Provide encouragement in the work they do. Give them strength for the ongoing challenges they face.
- February 18 – Pray for wisdom and blessing as we seek a new Nurse Staff Minister to support the amazing work of our professional nurse groups.
- February 19 – Pray for the planning of NCF's next Tabletop Discussion on March 28<sup>th</sup>, ***The Power of Relationship: Sharing Our Stories of Difficulty and Hope***. We ask God to use the stories we share as we break into small groups to provide times for deep connection, reflection, prayer, healing, and time in the Word.

- February 20 – NCF staff raise their own support through the gifts and prayers of others. This money funds our salaries for ministry in student ministries, professional ministries, and as part of the editorial staff for the *Journal of Christian Nursing*. Pray for new donors and opportunities to share about the work and ministry of Nurses Christian Fellowship!
- February 21 – Our vision for a mentorship program is taking shape! After months of waiting, we sense the timing is right for establishing a pilot program for graduating seniors this spring. Pray for God to draw mentors who are willing to invest into the lives of new graduates during their first year of practice. Pray also for connections to be made with seniors who would like to be mentored.
- February 22 – Pray for our professional nurse group leaders who will be gathering this evening for our monthly Zoom call together. We ask God to speak to us through his Word and for his Spirit to give us a vision for what he sees as possible in and through these groups.
- February 23 – Pray for authors for the *Journal of Christian Nursing* who are willing to write Bible studies and “Called to Teach” material. Pray also for reviewing editors to provide feedback to authors on any revisions that may be needed that will be helpful and strengthen the quality content of the article.
- February 24 – Pray for the planning and financial gifts to sponsor students to participate in ***Kept: Finding Peace in Nursing School Online Retreat***. This NCF Student Ministries outreach will take place on April 2<sup>nd</sup> and focuses on trusting God and developing lifelong spiritual disciplines to strengthen our identity in Christ.
- February 25 – We praise God for the way [NCF’s Self-Care Proxe](#) for students is being used throughout all of InterVarsity! We ask God to continue to use this resource to draw students into opportunities for connection with InterVarsity and NCF student groups.
- February 26 – We are grateful for the work of Karen Schmidt, contributing editor for the JCN and author of many of our [blogs](#). Karen captures the stories of others in such a profound way. We ask God to build the use of this resource, and to use the stories, insights, and experiences of others to encourage both our work and our faith.
- February 27 – Pray for planning, safety, and encouragement at the NCF East TX Retreat taking place April 8 - 10 in Gilmer, Texas. The retreat, [Refresh](#), is a time for students, faculty, and nurses to grow deeper with God and to allow God’s Word and the Holy Spirit to transform and empower you in the work you do.
- February 28 – We thank God for the outreach many of our professional nurse groups are taking towards nursing students. We ask God to continue to move and work through these relationships to provide safe places for students and nurses to share.