

February 2023 Prayer and Praise

“Forget the former things;
do not dwell on the past.
See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up;
do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the desert
and streams in the wasteland.”
Isaiah 43:18-19 NIV



God’s people, Israel, repeatedly chose a path away from God and his commandments. They worshipped idols. They followed their own desires. They disobeyed God and were exiled to Babylon for 70 years. In captivity, God wanted Israel to forget their hardships, to **not** remember and to forget the past, to **not** call to mind the former things, but to focus on what God would do for them, His plan of restoration.

Sometimes we may not see God at work in our lives and feel like we are wandering in a desert wasteland. Sometimes our past pulls us back towards old habits and thought patterns that can leave us angry, bitter, and isolated. But like Israel, God wants to do a new work in us, through our new life in Christ (2 Cor 5:17).

“See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?”

God is doing a “new thing” for each of us! At Urbana, I became aware of the opportunity to pass on the baton to a new generation of students. And in my role as a nurse staff minister, I will be supporting nurses who are taking a step towards something “new” as they begin new NCF nurse groups. I am asking God that I can “see” this “new thing.”

God is also calling me to set aside past mistakes as I move into a new ministry call - a new and fresh start. The same is true for each of us. Wherever you are...like streams in the wilderness; the emptiness, weariness, isolation, and old ways of thinking that have left us dried up can be renewed.

Look for God in your work. Look for God at home. We may struggle at first to see him. But God continues to move. Ask God for his insight and angle on things. He is making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland. Will you come with me?

Colleen Christenson RN, BSN, NCF Nurse Staff Minister

February Prayer Calendar

Week One:

- February 1 – We praise God for bringing Colleen Christenson to NCF's staff as a Nurse Staff Minister within our Professional Ministries team. Pray Psalm 90:17 for her and ask specifically for "the favor of the Lord" and for the Lord to "establish the work of her hands."
- February 2 – Thank God for the rich content and participation at the January Journal Club on spiritual care. We praise God for nursing experts such as Dr. Elizabeth Johnston Taylor who share their expertise with *JCN*.
- February 3 – Give wisdom and discernment to our state nursing boards as they follow up with individuals who used a fake nursing diploma or transcript in order to sit for their Boards and to begin practice as nurses.
- February 4 – Pray for Embrace Joy, our 3rd annual student ministry retreat happening today. Pray students and faculty would be met by God and embrace making space for joy in their lives.

Week Two:

- February 5 – God continues to build relationships through our [Sunday night prayer group times](#). Pray for more students and nurses who need prayer, support, and encouragement to commit to participating as they are able. Use this time to draw us into deeper intimacy with you, God.
- February 6 – Please keep Kathy Schoonover-Shoffner, NCF's Director and the Editor of *Journal of Christian Nursing*, and her family in your prayers as they grieve the recent death of Kathy's mother. Pray for comfort and strength now and in the weeks and months to come as they hold both joy and grief together.
- February 7 – Please continue to pray for nurses around the country who are tired, weary, and facing staff shortages as well as a lack of resources in their work environments. May they be reminded of God's presence in their lives and that they are not alone in the challenges they face. May NCF be used in their lives to be a support and encouragement in their faith and their practice.
- February 8 – Pray for the support needs of each of our staff. Pray for God to raise up prayer partners and those who can also provide financial support for the ministry as we follow God's leading to see students and nurses know and follow Jesus in nursing.
- February 9 – Pray for Mary Thompson, NCF's former director, and a woman of deep faith who has recently been diagnosed with lung cancer. Pray for strength, rest, relief of

the pain, and ease in her breathing. We ask that the chemo medication she is taking would work well to target cancerous cells in her lungs. We praise God for the way he is present with Mary and has provided encouragement and support through his Word and through home care, friends, neighbors, and colleagues.

- February 10 – Pray for our NCF student and professional nurse groups throughout the country. May the Holy Spirit protect and guide the 120+ student groups as well as the 40+ professional nurse groups and leaders. Pray for students and nurses who don't know Jesus to discover NCF groups and attend. Pray also for God's presence to draw each of us into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.
- February 11 – We ask for the *JCN's* special historical-themed issue which will be coming out in April/June 2023 to be widely shared and a blessing to all nurses during National Nurse's Week.

Week Three:

- February 12 – Pray for more student leaders and interdisciplinary events on campuses across the country.
- February 13 – We ask God to create a desire among students and nurses to want and know more about how to share their faith and be witnesses of Christ in their communities and professional practice. May we use events such as Saline training to foster knowledge and deeper conversations around these possibilities.
- February 14 – Pray for God to help us to let go of our past and the things that hold us back. Give us eyes to see the new things he is doing in our lives (Isaiah 43: 18-19).
- February 15 – We pray for the strength and healing of NCF staff and their families. Some are dealing with chronic issues, pain, and a lack of energy; others are experiencing the impact of colds and flu that continue to drag them down for weeks and weeks. Pray for staff who are also supporting and caring for family members with long-term needs. Help us to be wise in the decisions we make and walk in hope knowing that we are not alone.
- February 16 – We remember our faith community nurses in the unique and different areas where they serve. May God provide insight, wisdom, sensitivity, and presence to the needs they face in their work and ministry.
- February 17 – Pray for nurses as they explore the possibilities of starting a nurse group locally or virtually. We ask God to smooth any rough places and remove any barriers in starting their groups. Give wisdom and insight as these nurses listen to the needs of other nurses and the call of the Holy Spirit.
- February 18 – Praise God for continued quality manuscript submissions from authors throughout the country and even other countries. May God use these to deepen our faith and our practice.

Week Four:

- February 19 – Pray that those interested in caring for the poor and underserved register for the Christian Community Health Fellowship life-giving conference, Anchored: Prisoners of Hope, which will be held March 16 – 18. Pray for connections and a building of community among those who seek to minister to others in need.
- February 20 – As the *JCN* editors meet with the *JCN* editorial board tomorrow, we ask that God guide the discussion and decision-making with the goal of producing a vital and practical resource for students, nurses in all practice areas, and educators.
- February 21 – Pray for the Twin Cities NCF group as they present [NCF Conversations: Understanding Effective Faith Sharing Within the Nursing Profession](#). We ask God to guide Rick Mattson, an apologist in InterVarsity's Graduate-Faculty Ministry, and Christy Secor, NCF's Professional Ministries Director, as they lead the conversation for ways we can strengthen the spiritual care we provide. May God use this to create ripples of change in the way we practice.
- February 22 – Pray for nurses, students, and healthcare practitioners to register for the [Texas NCF Refresh Retreat: Knowing God and Making Him Known](#), which is scheduled to take place March 31 - April 2, 2023, in Gilmer, Texas.
- February 23 – Pray for our Marketing and Leadership team as we prepare for Nurses Week this May. We ask the Holy Spirit to help us follow his lead for themes, topics, and resources that will be meaningful to students, faculty, and nurses across the country.
- February 24 – Pray for nurses who continue to face difficult choices and moral distress in the places where they work. We ask God to lead them and surround them with his truth and wisdom.
- February 25 – We praise God for the leadership of our Student Ministries team: for Jen Wojtysiak, NCF's Student Ministries Director, and for Katharine Provost and Lara Kaiser, NCF Student Ministries Associate Directors. Pray for wisdom and leading as these women lead a team of nurses across the country who seek to make a difference in the lives of students.

Week Five:

- February 26 – We ask God to pour his truth over each of us. Help us to recognize the lies of the enemy and to walk knowing our identity, purpose, and value as sons and daughters of God. May we reflect the love and compassion of Jesus in all we do and stay deeply rooted in his teachings.
- February 27 – Pray for wisdom and discernment for Christy Secor, NCF's Professional Ministries Director, as she prepares for NCF's next Tabletop Discussion on March 21st.

May God use the discussion to [Be Still and Know: A Deeper Look at Psalm 46](#) to provide support, encouragement, hope, and deeper dependence on God.

- February 28 – We thank God for each one of our nurse group leaders and the commitment they make to supporting nurses in their work and faith. Pray as we gather this evening to celebrate the work God is doing in the lives of our groups, share insights from the scripture, pray, and talk through any barriers.