

January 2022 Prayer and Praise

A new year ... is that good news for you? If I'm being honest with myself, I have mixed feelings. Maybe you do as well. The past two years have not been easy. We are all weary. My life feels like it's been divided into two time periods: pre-pandemic and post-pandemic.



The changes and losses of the past two years have left me different. My priorities are not the same as they were two years ago. Life is more fragile and precious. I have found only one thing to be a constant in the changes we've each experienced – the promises of God. His character remains the same. His love for us and desire for intimacy in our relationship with him has opened my heart and challenged me in ways I could never have imagined.

When I think back to the start of a new year pre-pandemic, it was typically a time when many of us set goals for the coming year. Goals we would often forget by the time spring rolled around. Post-pandemic experiences have left me and many of us traumatized by the tragedies of the past year. We are numb. So rather than goals, we acknowledge the lessons we've come to know:

- We can't give to others from a cup that's empty. And just as Jesus took time away, we need that time alone as well. Time to be...time to pray...time to take a walk...time to rest. Finding that time in the hecticness of our schedules and the staffing shortages we face feels next to impossible. Lord, hear our prayer for time with you.
- We need others. "Adulting" wasn't meant to be done alone. When I look back, I'm not sure where I would be right now if it had not been for the prayers and support of others. I know it would be a much darker place. Lord, hear our prayer for healthy connections and support with others.
- We recognize the need to hold onto things loosely. We remember this place is not our home. We yearn for what is eternal and cannot be taken away. We acknowledge that "control" is a figment of our imaginations – a step we take to cope with all the change taking place around us. Lord, hear our prayer to better understand and follow what it means to see your Kingdom here...your will being done.

- Memories can both bring us pain, or they can sustain us. One of the lessons God has been teaching many of us is the joy that can come from what is often overlooked - the ordinary, everyday tasks of our day. Taking in the beauty of the sun as it sets, the laughter of a child, a moment connecting with someone who needs prayer, or the lift in my spirit as we take in a song of worship. Lord, hear our prayer to give us eyes to see the blessings that are a part of our day.

- Our identity is found in God alone. It is not in what we do or in how much we do each day. We are his sons and daughters. We have purpose...we have value...we have worth. The Holy Spirit lives within each of us as believers. We are not alone. Lord, hear our prayer to have both head knowledge and heart knowledge as we claim the promises of what it means to be a child of the most High.

- A heart of gratefulness can fill us. Too often we take for granted the “basic” necessities of life such as heat, water, and food. We can be grateful for the laughter of our family and grateful for the presence of the Lord in all we face. We can be grateful for the smell of coffee or for the change of seasons. As we make this more of a practice, our minds will begin to look for *more* to be grateful for in our lives. Lord, hear our prayer to see and verbalize the many things that fill our hearts with gratitude.

- Trust in who God is...not in our circumstances. Lean on him as our source of strength. Lament the pain, questions, and frustrations we face. Spend time with God...listen. Discover his word for ourselves. Lord, hear our prayer to see your Word as bread to nourish our spirits in the stress and challenges we face.
 - He never changes. (Hebrews 13: 8)
 - He is good. (Exodus 34: 6-7; Nahum 1: 7; James 1: 17)
 - He is holy. (I Samuel 2: 2; Isaiah 6: 3; Isaiah 55: 8 – 9; Revelation 4: 8)
 - He is love. (Lamentations 3: 22-23; Psalm 107: 1; Romans 5: 8; Romans 8: 35 and 39; I John 4: 8 and 16)
 - He is all powerful. (Jeremiah 32: 17; Psalm 147: 5; Isaiah 40: 28).
 - He is wise. (Psalm 104: 24; I Corinthians 1: 21 – 29)
 - He is merciful. (Psalm 86: 15)
 - He gives grace. (Psalm 145: 17; Romans 5: 15 and 20; Hebrews 4: 16)
 - He is faithful. (Psalm 33: 4; Psalm 86: 15)

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

January Prayer Calendar

- January 1 – We pray for students and nurse educators to find rest and meaningful personal time with God as they finish their winter break and prepare for the new semester.
- January 2 – Pray for time management and workload priorities for the *Journal of Christian Nursing's* editorial team and for continued wisdom in collaborating with our publisher.
- January 3 – We ask God for 2022 to be a year of redemption. The past two years have been so hard for so many. Pray for unity in the church and for God to redeem the brokenness caused by the pandemic.
- January 4 – We continue to lift up nurses across the country who are working long hours, caring for family members, and feeling stretched to the end of their strength and ability. We ask God to bring something new out of the brokenness we see that addresses the needs we have in healthcare today. We ask for rest, strength, and renewal in their relationship with God as well as others who can provide support, prayers, and presence.
- January 5 – Praise God for how he uses the *Journal of Christian Nursing* and events for nurses and students to give rise to hope for worn out nurses and students. Recent feedback is re-energizing NCF staff as God speaks peace and restoration through articles and gatherings.
- January 6 – Thank God for his provision for NCF in 2021 in leaders of student and nurse groups, NCF staff members, resources, and ideas. Praise him for his great faithfulness!
- January 7 – We ask God to continue to provide fresh ideas for our team in 2022. 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?
- January 8 – As students come to campus for the new semester, many for the first time, we pray that the presence of the Holy Spirit is strong and draws them to communities like NCF where they can grow their faith related to nursing. Give wisdom in the use of each student's time as they grow in their understanding of nursing. We pray for strength, wisdom, and endurance through any challenges they experience and ask for these students to be blessed by the ministry of NCF.
- January 9 – Please pray fortitude and God's strength for nurse educators and faculty advisors that have had to be resilient for two years and continue to adapt as things change.
- January 10 – We give God praise for the donations that were received during our year-end giving. Hallelujah! Pray for additional donors to join NCF's ministry to connect students, nurses, and educators in their faith and practice. We ask for prayer support and financial giving that would continue into the new year.

- January 11 – Please pray for Jen Wojtysiak, NCF’s Student Ministries Director, and Katharine Provost, NCF’s Campus Staff Minister, as they plan and work out details for the next NCF Student Ministries online retreat this spring. Pray for God to use this in the lives of students.
- January 12 – Intercede for the NCF and InterVarsity staff who work on the myriad technology platforms used in ministry; ask God to go before the work and resolve ongoing challenges that arise. Pray for patience and endurance as we continue to manage technology for God’s glory.
- January 13 – We pray that God will prepare hearts for fellowship in and around each area of our professional nurse groups. May nurses be strengthened by his Word and for significant advances in each of our spiritual lives.
- January 14 – We ask God for specific insight into how to continue to make the *Journal of Christian Nursing* more relevant to staff nurses and new nurses in the profession. Ask him for beneficial input from the new Editorial Board and for the editorial team to be of one mind in this work.
- January 15 – We 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 new challenges arise.
- January 16 – Pray for NCF’s quarterly Journal Club, *Simulating the Refugee Experience to Cultivate Cultural Competence and Sensitivity*, that will be held on February 3. Pray as final preparations are made in discussing compassionately caring for displaced refugees and immigrants while also confronting the compassion fatigue many of us are dealing with now in our practice. Pray for this conversation to increase the reach of the *JCN* into other universities, with students, and with additional member nurses who join us.
- January 17 – The leadership, faith, and courage shown by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the 1960s is continuing to be demonstrated by nurses of color today. We pray for our brothers and sisters who continue to cope with microaggressions and racism today. Pray for us as nurses of faith to continue having conversations with each other to break down barriers in our profession and our communities.
- January 18 – Ask God to show NCF a resolution for communication between our membership platform RegFox and our communications system in MailChimp, so that member communications are correctly managed.
- January 19 – Intercede for students and nurses who are weary and need to hear and come to Jesus to help carry the load (Matthew 11:29-30).
- January 20 – We thank God for the leaders of our professional nurse groups and their heart for nursing students, nurses, and especially for Jesus. Pray for wisdom for these men and women as they lead their groups and for Jesus to be made known. Pray also for the next generation of leaders for these groups.

- January 21 – We lift up our faith community nurses as they continue to provide care, wisdom, and insight for the congregations, parishes, institutions, and communities they serve. Give them strength for the ongoing challenges they face.
- January 22 – Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to nurses in their time with God; to speak words of encouragement and grace as they seek him for their lives and nursing practice.
- January 23 – Praise God for the *Journal of Christian Nursing's* new Editorial Board which has been finalized and will meet in February for the first time. Pray for wisdom with strategic planning for the journal moving forward with each member who is a part of this Editorial Board.
- January 24 – We are grateful for the answer to many, many prayers that have been offered in planting an NCF student group at the University of Minnesota. Pray for Lindsey, the student group leader, as she takes this step of faith. May God continue to bless and grow all our student groups and their leaders. May he also provide wisdom and insight in preparing the soil for new groups that are to come.
- January 25 – 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.
- January 26 – We entreat the Lord on behalf of NCF staff members as they continue to seek God's will for the various aspects of NCF work with students, nurses, *Journal of Christian Nursing*, and marketing. Ask God to continue to guide our steps in this critical ministry to nursing.
- January 27 – Thank God for Christian nurses who have gone before us and now surround us as a great cloud of witnesses (Hebrews 12); pray that we can run with perseverance the race marked out for us in 2022, serving Jesus in nursing.
- January 28 – We thank God for the Twin Cities NCF Group and their faithful witness to nursing around the country. Ask God to bless and use the February 15 webinar *Practicing as a Spiritually Healthy Nurse: Thriving Through Today's Challenges* mightily.
- January 29 – We beseech the Lord to increase our membership numbers; 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!
- January 30 – We praise God for the connection and support that is being experienced through our Sunday evening times of prayer. God's spirit is moving. We are seeing prayers being shared for specific needs and then days later hearing affirmation how this prayer was needed in the lives of nurses. God is at work!

- January 31 – Pray for additional authors for the *JCN* who would be willing to write Bible studies and “Called to Teach” material. Pray also for reviewing editors to provide wise counsel to authors on any revisions that may be needed.