

July 2021 Prayer and Praise

This week has been a difficult one. Maybe for you as well. The ground underneath my feet is shaky. It can leave you feeling alone and isolated. And then I read these words from Psalm 69 (ESV):

¹ Save me, O God!
For the waters have come up to my neck.
² I sink in deep mire,
where there is no foothold;
I have come into deep waters,
and the flood sweeps over me.
³ I am weary with my crying out;
my throat is parched.
My eyes grow dim
with waiting for my God.



David, the psalmist, knew times of uncertainty. He longed for solid ground. He was weary. He felt alone. He wondered when the swirling around him would stop.

So often when I find myself in places like this, I look for answers out of the situation I'm facing. I numb in ways that only bring a temporary fix to the pain and discomfort I'm feeling. I seek to control the situation. I tell myself that loving carries too high of a cost. I long for certainty and for clarity. Give me a goal... a target I can aim for rather than the waiting in the face of the unknown.

And yet I know control to be just an illusion. I know God is sovereign. I know God is present with me regardless of what my emotions may be screaming inside of me.

As I shared what I was feeling with my brother and sister this week, they reminded me of important truths. My brother stated, "we are each hungering for the Kingdom that is but is [also] still to come. The older I get; I find I cling less to now and more to what is to come because that is a restored Kingdom...that is where our hope is. My hunger for the Kingdom grows when I'm face-to-face with all that is broken now. And God is always about the long game."

His words gave me a different way to look at what I was experiencing. It helped me to take my eyes off the uncertainty of today and look at what is real and lasting – a hope that runs deeper than the circumstances of today. It created space for me to breathe. It brought peace and healing to my troubled heart. It gave me courage to love again.

Later in the day, I also came across these encouraging words from Mother Teresa. "The success of love is in the loving – it is not in the result of loving. Of course, it is natural in love to

want the best for the other person, but whether it turns out that way or not does NOT determine the value of what we have done.” Yes...it’s in the loving we grow and reflect that same kind of sacrificial love shown to each of us.

As a follower of Jesus Christ, know that your pain is seen. You are not alone. You have value and worth. Draw near to him. Stay in his Word. Connect with others who are willing to be present with you and speak truth over you. Continue to love. Know that in the refiner’s fire something beautiful is being created for today and for eternity as well.

Grace and peace to you all in your journey...

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

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July Prayer Calendar

- July 1 – Pray for encouragement, refreshment, and renewed vision as Skip McDonald, who serves NCF in the southeastern United States, begins her sabbatical today.
- July 2 – Thank God for meeting NCF’s financial needs as we ended the fiscal year June 30. Pray that he continues to call people to support his ministry to students and nurses.
- July 3 – Intercede for the *Journal of Christian Nursing* team as they receive, study, and prepare manuscripts for publication. Pray for material for the JCN’s “Called to Teach” column. Ask Jesus to be in the intricate details of publication.
- July 4 – We praise God for the sacrifices made for our freedom as a country. We ask for wisdom and discernment for our local, state, and national leaders to provide justice and equity for all they serve. Help us, God, to listen and address the challenges of racism and persecution in this country. Protect also those serving our communities and nation.
- July 5 – Ask God to carefully watch over new NCF provisional staff Wendy, Tiegan, Leah, and Nicole as they work on raising funds and seeking ministry partners. Ask Jesus to meet their needs and bring partners for the work.
- July 6 – Pray for the NCF leadership team - Kathy, Christy, Jessica, Jen, and Kris as they discern God’s best for NCF.
- July 7 – Rejoice with the new NCF groups on campus for students and in the community for nurses. Pray for the leaders and for rich times of Bible study and fellowship.
- July 8 – Pray for restful time off for Jessica Harper, our Marketing/Communications Manager, with her family in July.
- July 9 – Pray for the NCFI World Congress that begins today and continues through July 11. The conference will be held virtually in two different hemispheres. We ask for protection over the technology that will be used and for God to use the content shared to encourage and equip nurses around the globe in their faith and practice.

- July 10 – Pray for NCF staff as they begin a new year of raising prayer and financial support. Pray for God to provide abundantly to those who are doing Kingdom work!
- July 11 – Praise God for our new membership system that is easier for members to join or renew. We are grateful also for NCF staff (Kathy, Marlena, and Christy) who are supporting our members with the adjustment.
- July 12 – Pray for Jen Wojtysiak, Student Ministries Director, as she is on sabbatical and is spending precious time with her husband and children. Ask God to refresh her.
- July 13 – Ask the Holy Spirit to guide NCF Director Kathy Schoonover-Shoffner as she leads NCF. Pray for encouragement for Kathy as she cares for her husband after his severe TBI, and her 90-year-old mother who recently broke her hip.
- July 14 – Pray for our monthly online Student Ministry gatherings that will be beginning this month. We hope to reach students who do not have NCF on their campus. Pray we can reach into the corners of every campus and for students to not be too timid or busy to join.
- July 15 – Pray for JCN staff members and their families as they flex with minor NCF/JCN staff changes due to sabbaticals and family commitments. Pray for clear communication as they work in different time zones.
- July 16 – Pray for wisdom and discernment for Christy Secor as she seeks answers to understand the type of dementia her husband is experiencing so she can better advocate for him. Pray also for understanding as they both cope with the changes taking place.
- July 17 – We pray blessing over our nursing students who are taking a break for the summer. Pray their time would prepare them for the fall semester.
- July 18 – Pray for God to use our Sunday evening times of prayer to bring support and encouragement to students, faculty, and nurses across the country. Pray as we lift up the challenges we face and for God to bring revival throughout our profession.
- July 19 – Pray for those who are discouraged, that they would sense God's presence and support.
- July 20 – Pray for unity among all NCF that we would always model the powerful love between Jesus and the Father and glorify God.
- July 21 – Ask God to continue to bring students and nurses to NCF who need Jesus and spiritual encouragement. Ask God to also grow our membership.
- July 22 – Pray for those who continue to struggle with mental health issues due to COVID. Pray also for those who are experiencing weariness physically, emotionally, and spiritually.
- July 23 – Pray for additional reviewers that are needed for the *Journal of Christian Nursing*.
- July 24 – We praise God for two new professional nurse groups that will soon be meeting. We lift up these men and women who will be leading groups in Winston-Salem, North Carolina and in Gainesville, Florida.
- July 25 – Pray for our staff, faculty, and student leaders as we prepare for reaching new nursing students in the fall. There were many changes faced in this past year but also huge opportunities. Ask God to multiply our reach!

- July 26 – Pray for our faith community nurses around the country as they support their communities and places of worship. We ask God to bless them with wisdom, courage, and insight as they provide resources and care to others.
- July 27 – We thank God for our professional nurse group leaders who give of their time and talents to encourage and lead their groups. Pray for God to bring new nurses to these groups for fellowship, Bible study, prayer, and support. Pray for our leaders who will be meeting tonight to offer insight and fellowship with one another as we gather to talk, pray, and study God's Word together.
- July 28 – We praise God for the continuing flow of manuscripts to the *Journal of Christian Nursing*. We are in a wonderful position with new articles and authors. May God continue to use the JCN to support nurses in their faith and practice.
- July 29 – Pray for a meaningful discussion this evening as we discuss the important topic of moral courage during our Journal Club webinar, *On Defying the King: Peril and Pluck*, with ethicist and nurse Dr. Marsha Fowler.
- July 30 – Intercede for NCF staff who always want to hear from the Holy Spirit and closely follow Jesus in this work. Pray for good quiet times in his Word and rich times of fellowship with other believers.
- July 31 – Pray over the ways the Lord is moving among nurses and nursing students. Pray for his peace to transcend difficult work situations and challenging classes.