

## June 2021 Prayer and Praise

Creating sacred space...often it is expressed in needing the room in our lives to breathe. I hear this request frequently from nurses I talk with in my day-to-day work. It's repeated in the requests I pray for in my community. I believe it's a universal need. Stresses in our lives build. A major life event occurs – sometimes it's an unexpected or unwanted diagnosis. Sometimes it's a planned event such as a wedding, the birth of a baby, preparing for finals, graduating from nursing school, or taking your boards.



I found myself seeking space sitting on a gurney in an emergency room this past month as my husband and I waited for my x-rays to arrive. I had fallen backwards from a retaining wall in our yard while planting daylilies from my mother's and grandmother's gardens into my own. The stone I stepped back on shifted and down I went. As I assessed my injuries, I looked at my left ankle. A baseball-sized area of swelling pushed up through my sock. I decided it was best not to put weight on that foot.

Now in the emergency room, my husband received an alert on his phone. His MRI results were back. As I read through the radiologist's report, I looked up at my husband and told him, "There are changes in your MRI. It confirms what we've been seeing. It looks like Alzheimer's." As tears filled my eyes, I told him, "We'll walk through this together, babe. I might be hobbling on one foot, but we'll do it together." As we left the emergency room with my sprained ankle wrapped and supported by a brace, I felt numb. I kept reminding myself to breathe. We were entering a new journey together. Space was needed. Sacred space to grieve, to laugh, to plan, to pray, and to begin communicating with others.

As I shared these life events with the leaders of our NCF team and listened to the challenges and upcoming plans they were experiencing individually and in their own families, I was reminded of the gift we give each other through our presence, vulnerability, and openness with one other. We listened to each other. We prayed together. We prayed for wisdom in allowing God to create space within each of us to hold the complexity of life. We acknowledged our weakness. We gave permission to each other to let go and to say no. We affirmed for each other the presence of God in the day-to-day events of our lives. It was needed sacred space.

This sacred space is fostered in community together. It's the heart of the ministry of Nurses Christian Fellowship. It's shared through the articles written in the *Journal of Christian Nursing*. It's communicated through the stories shared in our blogs. It's found in the gathering of our student and professional nurse groups. It's a part of our Sunday evening prayer times. It's a focus in the Bible studies we create.

Sacred space is what God desires with each of us. Give yourself permission to breathe, to celebrate, to grieve, and to be present. Do it in community with God and with others who can remind you of truth. Sacred space changes lives – starting with our own.

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

## **June Prayer Calendar**

- June 1 – Pray for wisdom and the removal of any technical issues or barriers as NCF implements our new membership platform today. RegFox will enable us to provide better service to our members in communicating events, providing automatic renewal options, and correcting miscommunication about membership. We are grateful for the immense work Kathy Schoonover-Shoffner, NCF's National Director, and Jessica Harper, NCF's Marketing and Communications Manager, have done to make this transition possible. May God bless their efforts, dedication, and commitment to this project.
- June 2 – Pray for clear communication and technology that works as Skip McDonald, who serves NCF students, educators, and nurses in the southeast, leads the first virtual Mental Health First Aid class today. Pray for many insights from the learning.
- June 3 – We praise God for the ministry, work, and vision of Jen Wojtysiak, NCF's Student Ministries Director. Pray for Jen as she begins her six-month sabbatical. Pray for times of refreshment with her family and for God to use this time to continue building the call and vision he has placed on her life for student ministries.
- June 4 – Student Ministries will be reaching incoming nursing students with a special new student outreach project on social media culminating in a national online event on June 26. We would covet prayer for the messages based on "What I wish I knew then about nursing school now" throughout the month to reach and for new opportunities to connect with nursing students
- June 5 – Pray for Christy Secor, NCF's Professional Ministries Director, as she and her husband walk together through his recent diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease. We are grateful for the opportunity to be intentional with each other, the prayers and support of so many, and the ability to treasure the gifts and blessings present in each day.
- June 6 – We ask for continuing clarification and communication between our *Journal of Christian Nursing* staff and our publisher as we tweak the system surrounding the proof stage of JCN's production.
- June 7 – As Marketing Manager Jessica Harper reduces her working in hours in anticipation of a third child in their family, pray for clarity in understanding how other NCF staff can take on tasks efficiently. We also ask for wisdom as she trains other team members in these responsibilities.
- June 8 – Pray for God's blessing, wisdom, and leading as we continue to develop a national mentorship program for new grads.
- June 9 – Pray for encouragement and opportunities for connection as NCF reaches out to the staff and employees who work with Allina Health in Buffalo, Minnesota. Today marks the four-

month anniversary of the shooting at the clinic there. Continue to pray for the community as well as the staff and employees of Allina Health as they cope with the trauma of this event.

- June 10 – Pray as we plan for our July Journal Club that will be held July 29. We'll be discussing moral courage as we discuss the article "On Defying the King: Peril and Pluck." We ask God to use this discussion to address the ethical concerns that are a part of our practice.
- June 11 – We are grateful for the new Bible studies created by NCF staff for National Nurses Month. May God continue to use these studies to help nurses around the country connect more deeply with each other and with him. May these Bible studies be a light in each nurse's practice.
- June 12 – We ask God to lead and to bless opportunities to reach new nursing graduates and guide them in staying connected to NCF for community, support, and encouragement in their clinical practice and personal lives.
- June 13 – We remember our Sunday evening prayer times and ask for God to use these weekly meetings to bring revival in our lives personally and professionally. May these be sweet times for us to pause and create sacred space that's needed in our lives.
- June 14 – As the United States emerges from the pandemic, we pray for those living in countries where the pandemic still has a hold and resources are scarce, especially in countries like India and Nepal. May Christians living and ministering in those countries be representatives of Christ to the many who do not yet follow Jesus and may their lives be spared from the virus.
- June 15 – Pray for the next issue of the *JCN* as it is released mid-June to be used in significant ways in the lives of nurses. We are grateful for our authors and editorial team who work diligently to provide issues that are meaningful for us both personally and professionally.
- June 16 – We pray for strong attendance from nurses around the world as they register for the Nurses Christian Fellowship International World Congress that is being held virtually July 9 – 11. We ask God to protect the technology as individuals present through recorded sessions. May the insights shared enrich and support our practice and faith.
- June 17 – We thank God for the ministry Katharine Provost, NCF's Campus Minister, who has such an incredible heart for students, faculty, and nurses. Katharine understands relationship! We ask God for joy, wisdom, discernment, and management of her time as she leads the work of Student Ministries while Jen Wojtysiak is on sabbatical.
- June 18 – Pray for Christy Secor as she shares today with nursing students at the University of Northwestern in St. Paul. We ask God to use what is shared to equip, encourage, and empower students in their learning and practice.
- June 19 – Pray for Jessica Harper, NCF's Marketing and Communications Manager, and her family as her husband transitions into a new job and as they expect their third child in November.
- June 20 – Today we celebrate fathers who provide strength, support, love, and laughter in our lives. May God draw our fathers into closer relationship with him. Give our father the ability to lean into and trust God through the ups and downs of life. We ask for a special blessing for those fathers who work in nursing and provide care both at work and at home. We are grateful for their example to us.
- June 21 – We remember the "Innovations in Faith-Based Nursing" conference that begins today at Indiana Wesleyan University. Pray for the plenary speakers and breakout sessions as they

explore Christian foundations and worldviews in professional nursing; identify innovative strategies for nursing education and practice; embrace cultural attributes in the profession of nursing in local and global settings; and network with others in a Christian community.

- June 22 – Pray for deepening of relationship between our nurse groups who have “adopted” several of our NCF student groups in prayer. We lift up the student leaders and faculty advisors who lead these groups in challenging times.
- June 23 – We continue to pray for additional peer reviewers who are needed to assess articles for the *Journal of Christian Nursing*.
- June 24 – Pray for refreshment, growth, and new learning opportunities for Skip McDonald as she completes final details before she begins her sabbatical on July 1.
- June 25 – We are grateful for our faith community nurses and their commitment to the communities, congregations, and parishes they serve. May God continue to bless and guide their work. We ask for doors to be opened as nurses approach their church leaders about the possibilities of starting a ministry that would better care for and support others.
- June 26 – Pray for the NCF Student Ministries online event, “Thrive: Preparing for Nursing School” taking place today. We pray the online event is well attended by those who are hungry to prepare for school through strengthening their faith, solid connections are made, and for no technical issues. May God be lifted up through this event.
- June 27 – We pray for those who work in administration of our care facilities and nursing programs. May God give them wisdom and discernment as they make difficult decisions. May they be reminded that nursing is a calling and the gift it is for us to connect with our patients, residents, clients, and students in a wholistic manner that respects the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs we all have.
- June 28 – We lift up our new grads as they continue to prepare for and take their boards. May God give them peace and bless their work. May he provide clarity of thought as they work through each question.
- June 29 – We thank God for our professional nurse group leaders and their commitment to nurses across the country. May God lead and direct them in reaching nurses in their communities. May God also provide new insights and bless these leaders who will be joining tonight for our monthly meeting as we support, pray, encourage, study the scripture, and pray for one another.
- June 30 – Today marks the end of NCF’s fiscal year. We praise God for his provision for this work and ministry through the prayers and financial gifts of others. May God direct and lead so that we can finish the fiscal year strong. We ask God to “expand our borders” to reach more nurses as we seek to support and encourage nurses in their faith and practice.