

March 2023 Prayer and Praise

Gratitude is a powerful trait or skill that we can each cultivate. The Bible is filled with verses that speak about gratitude. Two from the book of Proverbs that bring out the polarities we so often can experience are:

*Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down,
but a good word makes him glad.*

Proverbs 12:25 (ESV)

*A joyful heart is good medicine,
but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.*

Proverbs 17: 22 (ESV)



I have learned over the course of my life and practice to pay attention to those who have made gratitude a part of their way of life. One of those unique people is Mary Thompson, former Director of Nurses Christian Fellowship. Mary has taught me so much about ministry, faith, and what it means to walk daily in relationship with Jesus Christ.

Through some significant health problems over the past few months, Mary has continued to express gratitude. Gratitude for the prayers that have been lifted up for her, God's continuing presence in her life, and the healthcare team who has supported her in her recovery (and with whom she has shared about the ministry of Nurses Christian Fellowship).

Mary has a way of making others feel safe. She invites conversation. A nurse group leader who was part of a call with Mary communicated something simple Mary had said that had a profound effect on her. It's a statement that reflects our practice as students, nurses, and educators.

"You share. I'll listen."

~ Mary Thompson

Mary invites others to share their story. And she listens ... she truly listens. How many times would this approach to our students, patients, or colleagues make a significant impact on the way we relate to one another? It reflects the priority of relationship and reminds us that our stories have value and worth.

Mary, thank you for the way you incorporate gratitude into all you do. Thank you for your prayers for me, this ministry, and students and nurses across the country. Thank you for reminding me that the little things in life are not little.

Prayers and blessings to you, my friend.

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

You can download the March Prayer Calendar [here](#).

March Prayer Calendar

Week One:

- March 1 – Praise for the opportunity that Skip McDonald, who leads our work in the southeast, has to lead InterVarsity's Southeast Region spiritual retreats.
- March 2 – Pray for NCF Student Ministry as we focus on fundraising from February 27 to March 3. Pray for courage to make connections and engagements. Pray for people to respond who will financially and prayerfully support our team.
- March 3 – Pray as our next cohort of mentors and mentees begins to meet. Pray for good conversations and connections. We ask that these relationships would help draw each other into a closer relationship with Jesus Christ and provide the strength and foundation needed as they begin their practice.
- March 4 – Please pray for comfort, strength, and peace for the family of Heather Gammon Cutillo. Heather went home to Jesus on February 13 after a long three-year battle with cancer. Heather became involved with NCF as a student and served as a missionary nurse in Zambia and Zaire. She later worked with her husband in serving the underserved and individuals who were experiencing homelessness in the inner city. Heather also volunteered with Nurses Christian Fellowship International.

Week Two:

- March 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.
- March 6 – Pray for Kathy Schoonover-Shoffner, NCF's Director, as she continues to grieve the passing of her mother. Pray for support and encouragement for their family.
- March 7 – It has been a l-o-n-g winter and several of our staff are needing prayer for good health, strength, and activity for aging bodies! Pray also as a number of our staff provide support for family members who have unique and challenging health needs.
- March 8 – Pray for NCF's incredible marketing team as we meet today and plan for Nurses Month as well as ways we can support and encourage younger nurses in their faith and practice. Help us to use our time and resources well as we seek to see students and nurses know and follow Jesus in nursing.

- March 9 – 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.
- March 10 – We praise God for the feedback of *JCN*’s Editorial Board and the wisdom they share as we strive to be intentional, supportive, encouraging, and informative with the *JCN*. May God use the *JCN* to impact generations of nurses in their practice.
- March 11 – Pray for the Charlotte Area Nurses Christian Fellowship group as they meet today. We ask for a great time of fellowship and insights from the Word of God.

Week Three:

- March 12 – Pray for 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.
- March 13 – We ask for God's will and guidance on a proposal written to begin Trauma Healing groups in the southeast. Pray that these groups could be used as a model for other areas of the country.
- March 14 – Pray for Mary Thompson, NCF’s former director, and a woman of deep faith who has recently been diagnosed with lung cancer and is also recovering from a stroke. Pray for strength, rest, relief of the pain, and ease in her breathing. We praise God for the way he is present with Mary and has provided encouragement and support through his Word and through rehab, friends, neighbors, and colleagues.
- March 15 – Today is the closing date for the *Journal of Christian Nursing* writing contest. We thank God for entries sent in by nurses and students, and for prospective new authors the contest may bring to *JCN*.
- March 16 – Pray for travel mercies as Grace Tazelaar, NCF’s Missions Director, as she joins others interested in caring for the poor and underserved for the Christian Community Health Fellowship conference, [Anchored: Prisoners of Hope](#), which will be held March 16 – 18. Pray for Grace to make connections with others and to build community among those who seek to minister to others in need.
- March 17 – Praise God for Rowan Kulp, a nursing student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, who is also a vital part of our NCF team. Pray for Rowan as she balances school, clinical, and ministry with NCF. Pray for increasing opportunities for her to share her faith on campus.
- March 18 – We are grateful for Marlena Jones who provides support in the office to so many staff and members. We ask God to bless the work of her hands at home and with NCF. Pray for understanding and discernment with the many tasks she takes on each day.

Week Four:

- March 19 – 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.
- March 20 – Praise for interdisciplinary worship nights taking place on campus. Pray for new students this semester to connect within Nurses Christian Fellowship and grow deeper in their faith!
- March 21 – Pray for wisdom and discernment for Christy Secor, NCF's Professional Ministries Director, as she presents tonight at our Tabletop Discussion. May God use the discussion regarding [Be Still and Know: A Deeper Look at Psalm 46](#) to provide support, encouragement, hope, and deeper dependence on God.
- March 22 – 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.
- March 23 – Praise for the continual development Skip McDonald is having as a Spiritual Director. We ask that God would use Skip's work in this area for his glory.
- March 24 – Pray for wisdom and insight as we complete the editing of Embrace Joy, our 3rd annual student ministry retreat. We ask God to use this time in the lives of nursing students across the country.
- March 25 – 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 Five:

- March 26 – Pray for God's abundant provision and meaningful connections for NCF staff seeking financial partners for their ministry. We could not do ministry without you!
- March 27 – We ask God to create a desire among students and nurses to want to 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.
- March 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.
- March 29 – 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. Help them to know they are not alone.
- March 30 – We ask for the *Journal of Christian Nursing'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.

- March 31 – Today through April 2, the Texas Nurses Christian Fellowship group is hosting their annual retreat, [*Knowing God and Making Him Known*](#), at Camp Gilmont located in Gilmer, Texas. Ask God to bless the speaker, Debbie Lascelles from Mercy Works, and all the participants to know him more deeply so that we can make him known.