



May 2021 Prayer and Praise

God is at work and sometimes in the most surprising and unexpected ways. We just need eyes to see the lessons He wants to teach us.

One of those lessons for me took place as my four-year-old grandson greeted me after church holding a handful of dandelions he had picked. He was so excited! His hazel eyes sparkled. "Look at the flowers!" he cried. I thought to myself that these were the very "flowers" my husband was intent on doing

war against in our yard. What a difference perspective and a few decades can make.

What happened next took me completely by surprise. I watched my grandson race up the hallway of the church giving away one precious yellow dandelion at a time. "Here you go," he'd say. "It's a flower." He gave his "flowers" away to moms, teenagers, and other four-year-olds. There were no requirements other than a willingness to receive the gift.

II Corinthians 9:7 (ESV) tells us, *"Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."* Watching my grandson brought me up short. How do I give? If I'm honest, it's because of the reaction or affirmation I hope to receive. His joy rested in the giving and only in the giving.

I also wondered what do I have to give? Do we only consider a "gift" as something that is store-bought and wrapped up in pretty paper? We often forget the gifts we can offer others through our care, our time, our words, our prayers, and our presence.

This month as we celebrate nurses and the American Nurses Association theme, Nurses Make a Difference, be reminded of the gifts we each bring to the table. Gifts for those in our care. Gifts of self-care we need to offer to ourselves so that we can give from a place of overflowing.

Each time I pass a field of yellow dandelions (or find the occasional bright, yellow face of one growing in my own yard), I am reminded of a boy's simple gift. Our lives are a gift. Our time is a gift. Our care is a gift. They reflect the love of One who gave all for us. Join me in learning how to give again.

We'd also love to hear your stories of giving. Reach out to us at ncf@intervarsity.org and share your own story of giving. There is power in our stories. We'd be honored to hear and share yours.

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

May Prayer Calendar

- May 1 – We praise God for the men and women who are willing to submit their stories and research through quality manuscripts to the *Journal of Christian Nursing*. Pray for the impact these articles have on students and nurses to connect our faith and our practice. Pray for a continuing flow of strong manuscripts.
- May 2 – We are grateful for the nurses who were able to participate in our April Tabletop Discussion which asked the question, “Where Is God When It Hurts?” Pray the recording of this session can be used in the lives others to bring comfort, healing, and a deeper trust with God.
- May 3 – Thank you for your continuing prayers for NCF’s transition to a new membership platform. The transition to our system has had its ups and downs with one step forward and two steps back. We are grateful for the strides that are being made and for the staff who are championing this work. Pray for wisdom as we navigate the remaining issues and as our staff learn the new system.
- May 4 – Pray for wisdom and insight for Skip McDonald, who serves NCF students, educators, and nurses in the southeast, as she continues to plan the first virtual Mental Health First Aid class.
- May 5 – Thank God with JCN staff for the nurses who gained insight and encouragement about caring for themselves from a spiritual perspective during our Journal Club in April. Pray for nurses who are worn out and emotionally/spiritually empty—that they will choose to take time for rest and being attentive to the Spirit for refreshment and renewal.
- May 6 – As we begin National Nurses Week, we remember students, faculty, and nurses across the country who care for others and give of themselves as a part of their calling each day. May they be encouraged and strengthened for the work they do. May they see the difference they make in the lives of others. We ask for healing for those who have had trouble with job loss, burnout, compassion fatigue, and moral distress. Strengthen us, God. Strengthen our profession.
- May 7 – We ask God to support NCF’s outreach and promotions for this ministry, the Bible studies that have been developed, and the resources being shared during this month. May this outreach be meaningful and well-received.
- May 8 – Pray for encouragement for our nurse group leaders who volunteer their time and have such an incredible heart for others. NCF has groups that are just a few months old and others that have been together for more than three decades. We praise God for the faithfulness of these men and women who took that next step to reach and support nurses providing a safe place for them to share, hear God’s Word, be prayed for, and supported.
- May 9 – We remember our physical mothers, our spiritual mothers, and the mothers who are a part of the nursing profession on this special Mother’s Day. May we continue to learn from their example and may be examples of faith, prayer, and love in the lives of our children and our communities.
- May 10 – Pray for additional peer reviewers who are needed to assess articles for the *Journal of Christian Nursing*.

- May 11 – Pray for the Twin Cities NCF team as they present via Zoom this evening “Nurses Make a Difference: Taking Time to Remember, Reflect, and Renew.” Pray for the technology and sound to work and for the content that is shared to be an encouragement for those who participate.
- May 12 – Continue to pray for inspiration from the Holy Spirit for Skip McDonald as she continues writing on the Depression Bible study. Pray for God to use this study to bring healing in the lives of many.
- May 13 – Pray for our Christian Community Health Fellowship (CCHF) partners who have committed their lives to living out the gospel through healthcare among the poor and underserved. These nurses have been on the front lines of health disparities during the pandemic and have worked tirelessly to bring healthcare to their communities.
- May 14 – We ask for blessing for the work NCF is taking to establish mentorships across the country. May God give us wisdom and urge nurses of faith to step forward as mentors.
- May 15 – Pray for training efforts as we ensure all bases are covered as Jessica Harper, our Marketing and Communications Manager, takes a step back from her work schedule. We are grateful for a team who is willing to step up and help.
- May 16 – Remember our Sunday evening prayer times as nurses around the country gather to pray for the issues we face in our country and profession today. These times of prayer have become a place to lift up the needs of students, faculty, and nurses. It’s a time for us to encourage one another through the Word and share the issues we face personally. Pray for revival among our profession and for others to join as we gather to pray.
- May 17 – Pray for nursing students across the country who are graduating this month. Pray for wisdom and discernment for them as they prepare for their Boards and begin looking for jobs. Pray for them to learn quickly as they navigate the blessings and challenges of the profession and for courage as they take their faith into their practice.
- May 18 – We ask God to give wisdom and discernment to the student leadership and faculty advisors as they continue planning for a NCF student chapter at Middle Georgia State University in the fall. May this group be a light of Jesus Christ to others.
- May 19 – Many nurses have no knowledge of Nurses Christian Fellowship. As NCF staff promotes the organization during the month of May, ask God to make NCF known to more nurses nationwide.
- May 20 – Pray for wisdom and discernment for our faith community nurses as they continue to provide care, support, and information to others about the COVID vaccine and opening their churches and parishes in a safe way. Pray for clarity of their message and understanding as they speak with people who have many different beliefs about the pandemic.
- May 21 – Pray for the staff of Nurses Christian Fellowship and the *Journal of Christian Nursing* who are facing personal challenges in their families. We ask God for wisdom and discernment as difficult decisions are made. Pray for us to love as He loves. Pray also for focus and for clear communication with each other as responsibilities change. We remember, God, that this is your ministry.

- May 22 – Pray for courage and leading for students, faculty, and nurses who are praying about starting a student or professional nurse groups. There can be many questions and the task can seem daunting. Pray for wisdom for Jen Wojtysiak and Katharine Provost who support our students and faculty and for Christy Secor who supports our professional nurse groups. May God bless and grow our groups as we seek to share the good news of Jesus Christ.
- May 23 – We pray for wisdom for the leaders of the Nurses Christian Fellowship International World Congress as they prepare for the first virtual 2021 World Congress July 9 – 11. Draw nurses from around the world to sessions that will enrich and support their practice and next steps of their faith.
- May 24 – Pray for Jessica Harper and her family as we encounter some big life changes with her husband's new job that begins this summer. Pray also for continuing health for their family.
- May 25 – Pray for our nurse group leaders who are meeting tonight for prayer, fellowship, Bible study and encouragement. Pray these times would offer support and insight for those who participate.
- May 26 – Pray for refreshment, growth, and new learning opportunities for Skip McDonald as she prepares to go on sabbatical July 1st to December 31st.
- May 27 – We pray for healing and racial reconciliation needed in communities across our country. We ask for the minds and hearts of our government and faith community leaders to work intentionally together to build communities of respect, acceptance, and opportunity for all.
- May 28 – We pray for strength for nurses across the country who are tired and worn out especially through the long months of caring for others throughout the pandemic. May they have the courage to take the steps needed to address their physical, emotional, and spiritual health. May they be able to give from a place of overflowing. Pray for understanding of leaders and administration to provide support and openness in caring for their staff and providing resources that are needed.
- May 29 – We pray for forgiveness, truth, and love to be paramount in our Christian communities of faith. We recognize the divisions we see among Christians. We struggle to speak with our brothers and sisters and find ourselves separated by the polarities of our belief. May we be willing to give up our rights to love as Jesus loves and to be His church first.
- May 30 – Ask God to give much discernment to JCN editors as they evaluate potential articles, that the nursing practice and spiritual concepts will be clear and accurate.
- May 31 – We remember those men and women who have given their lives in service to their country on this Memorial Day. We honor their service and pray for their families who continue to grieve. We are grateful for their sacrifice.