



## October 2020 Prayer and Praise

In January 2020, I had the opportunity to participate in my first InterVarsity staff conference. It was a large gathering of InterVarsity staff from across the country. As a part of the conference, participants were encouraged to spend time fasting and praying as we sought what God wanted to share with us about the year ahead. Three themes kept repeating over and over:

- Trust
- Transition
- Surrender

No one could imagine in those early days of a new year, the Year of the Nurse and the Midwife, what awaited each of us or how true these words would come to mean not only to our ministries, but for each of us as believers.

2020 has been difficult. There is not a single person I know who hasn't lost something or someone significant. Through this year of loss, I've also seen again and again reminders of hope and the opportunity to see new possibilities which the Lord is preparing. We are learning to lament – a spiritual practice most western churches have not been good at teaching. We are learning to listen. We are recognizing the need for connection and we are opening up about where we are and what is going on at work as well as in our personal lives. We acknowledge the need for self-care now more than ever. We are being reminded of the importance of family. We are learning how little we have control over. We are experiencing the lack of resources needed to do our jobs and to have even basic supplies we need at home. We are seeing the disparities that exist among different people. We are talking, crying, and yelling to God.

For me in my own pain and loss of this year, I've been caught again and again in the prayers and encouragement of other nurses of faith.

*When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;  
and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you.  
When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned;  
the flames will not set you ablaze.*

Isaiah 43:2 (NIV)

I have experienced for myself what Nurses Christian Fellowship is all about – relationship! There has been the opportunity to share my own story and to have others validate who I am...to be present with me in my pain and to ask the difficult questions. I cannot begin to tell you how important it's been to be able to be "real" with others. This is why Nurses Christian Fellowship

exists – to deepen our relationship with God, with each other, and with the communities and individuals we serve.

Wherever you are...whatever you are facing, there is hope! It's found in the scripture and the prayers we lift up for one another; it's there as we meet in larger groups or groups of two or three; it's in a bouquet of flowers that arrives unexpectedly; it's written in the emails we send or a card that arrives in the mail. You are not alone. Know that you are seen. You are heard.

Thank you for your prayers and your support of nurses and Nurses Christian Fellowship. It is a privilege to partner with you. God is at work. He has not changed. There is hope!

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

### **October Prayer Calendar**

- October 1 - Pray for all of the *online ministry* that is occurring due to COVID and that nursing students and nurses would experience God in the online meetings. God is providing new opportunities for ministry during these times together.
- October 2 – Lift up our faculty advisor prayer times, Fridays 12:30 EST, and that faculty would be encouraged as they gather in prayer and share requests for themselves, their students, and their campuses.
- October 3 – Pray for wisdom, discernment, and connection for our *Journal of Christian Nursing* team as we have a core team retreat planned and will later be brainstorming with our larger group of reviewing editors.
- October 4 – We ask that God would lead us wisely as we promote and engage NCF members and guests in our upcoming Journal Club. Pray we would bless nurses, faculty, and students with the information we provide.
- October 5 – Pray for Skip McDonald, who serves NCF students, educators, and nurses in the southeast, who experienced flooding in her home and for her neighbor who lives below. We ask for good communication with her neighbor and for the reconstruction process to move forward in a timely manner.
- October 6 – The Global Missions Health Conference is scheduled for November 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>. This is their first virtual conference! Going virtual is going to be new for many and we will need all our missions' flexibility and creativeness to make this a wonderful experience that meets the needs of nurses and nursing students interested in missions.
- October 7 – We pray for comfort for the families, friends, and peers of the more than 200,000 Americans who have died from COVID. We ask for wisdom as vaccines are developed and for strength, resources, and support for those at the bedside of these individuals. So many continue to experience feelings of loneliness. We remember especially the frail elderly who continue to be isolated due to COVID restrictions.
- October 8 – Ask God to use NCF's social media outreach to minister to and reach students, nurses, and educators who need encouragement and those who need to hear the Good News of Jesus. Pray for wisdom as we seek to reach younger generations.

- October 9 – Pray for energy, wisdom, encouragement, and strength for Kathy Schoonover-Shoffner, the Director of NCF and the Editor-in-Chief of the *JCN*, as she balances both her NCF and *JCN* roles. We are grateful for her nursing expertise, knowledge, leadership, and love for the Lord and the scriptures.
- October 10 – Pray for campus groups to continue to be able to reach new students even with the changes to schedules and moving classes online.
- October 11—Lippincott/Wolters Kluwer, the publisher of the *Journal of Christian Nursing*, is requiring changes in journal articles that offer continuing education for nurses. Pray that God will give understanding and clarity to *JCN* editors who must implement these changes beginning with the January/March 2021 issue which is already well into the editing process. Give us patience and grace as we work on changes in processes, workflow, and design with our publisher.
- October 12 - Pray for the many virtual retreats and conferences NCF is sponsoring and participating in during the upcoming months. Pray these times together would develop real and lasting community and relationships with one another and with God. We ask the Lord to use these events to grow awareness of and support of NCF.
- October 13 – We ask God to continue to intervene and lead in helping NCF choose the best software for serving NCF members and constituents. Pray for continued blessing over our search for a new memberships system. May God provide a solution quickly and the funding and support to make the transition.
- October 14 – Pray for our professional nurse groups as they meet virtually and creatively face-to-face. Some are taking the brave step to learn new ways of meeting. Others are facing the challenges of the fires in California. COVID is impacting other groups. Leaders are dealing with job challenges and personal loss. Pray for God to give them wisdom, encouragement, and insight as they lead. Pray for strong connections in their groups and for new people to be drawn to them.
- October 15 – We ask God to be present in all the details and the technology as we meet this evening for our October Journal Club. Pray for a meaningful online discussion with participants who attend. We ask God to encourage and support nurses through the discussion of *Using Upstream Thinking to Improve Flu Vaccination Rates*.
- October 16 – Pray for student leaders and faculty advisors to experience joy while leading their NCF groups, even in uncertain times.
- October 17 – Pray for God to guide and direct Skip McDonald as she continues the writing of the depression Bible study.
- October 18 – Tonight is our first ever national prayer event for students, educators, and nurses. Pray for the technology to work as individuals from across the country gather. Pray for the Lord to guide and to be lifted up. We ask that this time would be an encouragement to those who participate and for each person to sense the Spirit's presence.
- October 19 - Thank God for the NCF Marketing Team members who faithfully post on Facebook, our NCF blogs, Instagram, and keep the NCF website updated. We ask God to bless them richly.

- October 20 - Thank God for stamina and skill he has given to Mary Helming, one of *JCN*'s contributing editors, who has been involved in the publication of a holistic nursing textbook, which will be published before the end of the year.
- October 21 – We praise God for a steady increase in manuscripts to the *JCN*. Pray this flow of new authors and strong manuscripts continues
- October 22 – Pray for God to guide and direct in the numerous training opportunities around mental health that Skip McDonald is leading.
- October 23 – Pray for Christy Secor, NCF's Professional Ministries Director, as she continues to heal from the flashbacks and deep grief of caring for her father while he was on hospice until his death in early August. God has provided incredible support through the NCF team and the nurses who lead our professional nurse groups. Pray for focus and for the lessons God has to teach her in this journey.
- October 24 – We ask God to be present in the East Texas NCF Zoom Retreat that's being held today from 10-11:30 am as they explore with students, educators and nurses from across the nation what it's like Walking with God in the Season of COVID. Pray for God to bring all who need to be encouraged and to know that Jesus is their source of strength and hope to experience this and more.
- October 25 – We thank God for the new student contacts we have been receiving over our social media campaign. Pray that these students would take a risk and say 'yes' to getting plugged into a NCF community.
- October 26 – We ask for wisdom and discernment as many are getting ready to vote. Pray that we would remember that God is King here on earth and in heaven and that all things are under his authority. We need not fear any outcome because he is sovereign.
- October 27 - Pray for the Lord to bring additional reviewers to build and enhance the outreach and work of the *JCN*.
- October 28 – Pray for the financial support of our staff and ministry to be maintained (and even to grow) during these uncertain times. We ask God to bring in needed donations and income to support NCF's staff and our ministry's outreach to students, nurses, and educators.
- October 29 – We remember our faith community nurses and the incredible work they do in communities across the nation. We ask God to bring in more nurses to take the FCN course and for him to equip those who are completing these courses. Pray for openness and strong communication as nurses approach their congregations about this work in their own churches and parishes.
- October 30 – Pray for the continued health and wellness for NCF's staff as we approach flu season.
- October 31 – We thank God for all he is doing in and through the ministry of NCF. May we continue to seek his leading and direction in reaching students, educators, and nurses across the country. We thank God also for the many nurses across the country who live their faith in the work they do. We ask God to continue to bless them and to make us all truer reflections of Jesus Christ.

