

February 2020 Prayer and Praise

God is at work! We just need eyes to see. Eyes that are open to finding Him in unexpected places. Eyes that can see Him in the middle of our pain and the stress, worry, and fear that's a part of our lives. This past week, a friend shared this quote with me:

“God uses crooked sticks to draw straight lines.”

-Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuit Order



It was an unexpected gift. Immediately my mind went back to men and women of faith God used. Abraham who gave in to his wife's urging to take another woman to fulfill God's promise; Moses who wandered for decades as a shepherd and then with the people of Israel; Rahab, a prostitute, who would become part of the genealogy of Jesus Christ; David who was a man after God's own heart, but sacrificed a leader of his army so that he could have his wife; Job who suffered tremendous loss after loss and wondered if God was there; Peter who denied the Lord three times, but would be used to build the church; and Paul who persecuted Christians with all his might, but would be stopped in his tracks by the power of the living Lord! In each of these lives, God would be present and at work.

I have been meditating on this especially in light of a close call my oldest son experienced in Colorado on a snowy mountain road. As he saw 18-wheelers, cars, and trucks begin to spin out of control; my son cried out and prayed for protection. He watched as a car avoided hitting him only to strike a vehicle that had spun out ahead of him.

Was God with my son and not with the other driver? Do we equate God's presence to be there only when our prayers are answered in the way we want? How often do we feel the loneliness, pain, and despair of life and ask God where is He?

I have walked and wandered in my faith for years. I walk a crooked path. I am only beginning to awaken to who He is and to the knowledge that He is there in it all. God was present with my son as well as with the driver whose vehicle was struck. God is with me in my pain. May we each have eyes to see Him in all we experience.

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

February Prayer Calendar

- February 1 – Pray for Skip McDonald, NCF’s Regional Contact for the Southeast, as she speaks at two Black student conferences around topics of mental health this month.
- February 2 – Praise! The *Journal of Christian Nursing* staff is grateful that God has been answering prayer for more articles for upcoming issues. Ask Him to keep spurring nurses and educators to share their knowledge and faith through the *Journal*.
- February 3 – We ask God to move and provide wisdom as well as insight as we work through the technical IT aspects of our online membership system. It is our prayer that becoming a member of NCF would be a simpler process so that nurses and students can receive the benefits of being a member of this ministry and organization.
- February 4 – Pray for wisdom, discernment, and openness as we ask God to lay on our hearts special things we can do for our members that would make them feel loved and cherished.
- February 5 – Pray for Christy Secor, Interim Director of NCF/Professional Ministries Director, as she shares tonight and on February 12 with survivors of domestic violence. Pray for God to use these times to reflect His healing, love, and grace.
- February 6 – We are grateful for the way the Lord is using the prayer postcards sent to our members and for the response we have received. Continue to pray for and lift up the needs of nurses as they work and serve in challenging times personally as well as at the bedside and in administration, academia, and in the community.
- February 7 – Pray for Jen Wojtysiak, NCF’s Student Ministries Director, as she speaks at the South Dakota Winter Conference February 7-9. The conference includes a day for NCF and for nursing students from the around the state to participate. Pray for safe travel, for NCF students to attend, and for good connections to be made with the InterVarsity Chapters in South Dakota.
- February 8 – We ask God to move and to speak through Skip McDonald as she works specifically with nursing students and educators at Chamberlain College of Nursing and Perimeter College at Georgia State University.
- February 9 – Grace Tezelaar, NCF’s Mission Director, is so thankful for the great care and good recovery she has had following her fall, hip replacement surgery, and rehab. All is going well and she is grateful for each person who had a part in the wonderful care she received in the hospital, rehab facility, and in her retirement community.
- February 10 – Continue to pray for Kathy Schoonover-Shoffner, NCF’s Director/*JCN*’s Editor-in-Chief, while she is on sabbatical. Pray specifically for rest, healing, refreshment, reflection, and productivity.
- February 11 - Pray for our NCF ministry partner development sprint February 11th - 18th. A sprint is time where we can concentrate our time of sharing the vision and mission of NCF and invite other to join us prayerfully and financially in the work we are doing. Pray for people to say ‘yes’ to partnering with NCF.

- February 12 – We thank God for the incredible men and women who are part of our 40 professional nurse group teams. We ask for wisdom in leading these groups and for new nurses to drawn to participate. May these groups continue to be places of support, encouragement, and learning. May other nurses also feel and act on God’s leading to explore the possibilities of starting a group where they live.
- February 13 – Pray for Christy Secor as she shares today on how to build resilience physically, emotionally, and spiritually as part of a living well series sponsored by the Faith Community/Parish Nurses of West Suburban area of the Twin Cities.
- February 14 – We lift up those who have lost loved ones as well as those who are experiencing personal pain and loss and find the holidays to be difficult. May they feel the love of the Lord today and know that they are never alone.
- February 15 – We praise God for the increase in *JCN* manuscript submissions that have been received! May God continue to nudge nurses to write feature articles that can be shared through the *JCN*.
- February 16 -Pray for Skip McDonald as she leads a session at a church's health fair. We ask for this time to be meaningful for all who participate. We lift up faith community nurses everywhere who are serving in their local church, community, hospital or government agency, or as chaplains.
- February 17 – We thank God for the team He has knit together who are a part of NCF and the *JCN*! We ask for wisdom, discernment, good communication, and time management for Christy Secor as she also serves as NCF’s Interim Director and for Kris Mauk as she leads our *JCN* team.
- February 18 – The structure of our nursing programs leads to expected turn-over with our student leaders as they graduate. Pray for new leaders to be developed in our student groups this spring semester.
- February 19 – We are grateful to God for the fresh ideas and new initiatives we are trying to provide stronger connections with our faculty advisors, nurse group leaders, and members. Pray we would be a light to those we are developing new and deeper relationships with.
- February 20 – Pray for Christy Secor and Twin Cities NCF leaders as they share tonight at the Twin Cities NCF meeting on moral distress. We ask for God to draw those nurses to this time together that need to share their story and experience healing or be a part of the healing of others.
- February 21 – We lift up nurses everywhere in this “Year of the Nurse and Midwife” as they teach, care, and advocate for others. May they serve from a cup that overflows and be grounded in their faith as well as their practice. May we also lean in deeply into the strength of the Lord and the fellowship of other believers for the challenges we face.
- February 22 – We praise God for the work Skip McDonald has completed on her LifeGuide Bible study on anxiety. We ask for wisdom in writing the revisions that are being recommended and pray that it will be meaningful and encouraging. Pray also for the Holy Spirit to work through Skip McDonald as she writes other Bible studies around mental health and for Christy Secor and Jane Hall as they prepare new Bible studies for NCF.

- February 23 – Pray for wisdom for the nurse leaders who are a part of the Caribbean and North American (CANANA) region of NCF International as they plan for 2020. May God bless and guide their work.
- February 24 - Pray for new nursing students to catch the vision for NCF on their campuses and to want to say 'yes' to leading in the fall. Pray also for encouragement and blessing of our faculty advisors who support these teams.
- February 25 – Tonight Christy Secor will be hosting the first in a series of online meetings for NCF's professional nurse group leaders around the country. Pray this would be a time of encouragement and deepening connection as we share the good work that's taking place and provide insight to address any barriers that are being experienced in our nurse groups.
- February 26 – We pray for God to move in the hearts of faith community nurses to write and share the value, impact, and lessons they are learning through their work in the *JCN*.
- February 27 – Pray for delegates around the world to be able to secure the visas, documentation, and finances needed to participate in the NCF International World Conference that is being held this July at Colorado Christian University. We pray specifically for the nurses in Cuba who are facing unique challenges in making this trip. We ask God to move in the hearts of leaders so each of these nurses can participate.
- February 28 – We ask God to continue growing the faith and witness of Christian nurses, including opportunities through mentoring and discipling. Pray that nurses with solid faith will extend themselves to support and mentor other nurses and students.
- February 29 – Your prayers mean so much to the staff of NCF and the *JCN*. Please continue to lift up members of our team as we travel; manage hectic schedules and timelines; support the physical, emotional and mental health needs of our families; and plan for upcoming weddings for some of the children of our team.