In every situation, by *prayer* and *petition*,

with *thanksgiving*, present your requests to God.

And the *pCaCC* of God, which transcends all understanding,

will guard your *hearts* and your *Minds* in Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

ADDAYS² ORAYER² 7

> First Presbyterian Church Greenville, SC

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HOW TO USE THIS 40-DAY PRAYER JOURNAL

We are excited to see what God has in store for First Presbyterian Church—and you—over these next 40 days. This Prayer Journal includes ten specific prayer requests by First Pres, along with a place for you to name specific prayer requests for yourself, your family, or others. Our Prayer Journal is loosely modeled after the Pittsburgh Experiment (pittsburghexperiment.org) to enable "people to open their lives to God so He can make Himself known. It also serves as a tool of discipline and focus in seeking God's guidance and direction."

Below you will find an explanation of the steps to follow, the significance of 40 days, and how to pray, along with several different types of fasting to follow over the next 40 days.

Steps to Follow

(Steps 1-5 contain, in part, material from the Pittsburgh Experiment)

1. Decide What to Pray For

First Pres has put down the requests we would like for you to pray for over the next 40 days. But as far as what you should put down, consider the following:

- Right now, what is your relationship like with God, yourself, and others?
- Are there unresolved portions of your past, or do you seek answers for the future?
- What is the need in your life that concerns you the most right now? Be specific.
- Are there any Kingdom-focused concerns or needs in your life, the life of First Pres, our community, or the world? Be specific.
- Focus on just one need at a time.

2. Pray Every Day

- Commit yourself to praying consistently about First Pres and your prayer requests every day for 40 days.
- Setting a regular time each day is not necessary, but it can be helpful. Pray wherever you are and as often as you can.
- Lift the situations up to God, and ask Him to meet you at the point of your need.
- Read the selected scriptures as a source of encouragement and guidance.

3. Listen

- Take time to be quiet in God's presence. Silence is the language of the Holy Spirit (*John Main*, "*The Meaning of Silence*," *p.156*, *Spiritual Classics, Edited by Richard J. Foster and Emilie Griffin, 2000*)
- There might be things God, through the Holy Spirit, wants to say to you.
- There might be things in the church or in you that need to change before our or your situation is changed.
- Any ideas, questions, convictions, or concerns that come to your mind during prayer could be part of the answer.
- Write them down each day in the spaces provided.

4. Have an Open Mind

- Let go of preconceived ideas about possible solutions. For example, if you aren't getting along with your boss, pray for that relationship rather than a transfer.
- Believe that God is at work, even if you cannot see a difference.

5. Review the Results

- At the end of the 40 days, see where you are.
- Look at where you started—the situation, your attitude, emotions, everything that went into making it a need or prayer request. Look at where you are now.
- What was the progress from Day 1 to Day 40?
- What has changed? Situation, attitude, relationships—have you changed?

Answers may come in a variety of ways: Common sense, intellectual conclusions, circumstances, emotions, a decision of the will, other people, Scripture, sermons, direct inspiration. Answers may be "yes," "no," or "wait."

6. Share What God is Doing in Your life

To share how you are being affected through this time of prayer, email us at prayer@firstpresgreenville.org, drop off a card in the prayer boxes located in the back of the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall, or turn the card in to Congregational Care. Prayer requests and stories of encouragement and praise are welcome.

Significance of 40 Days

(From New Psalmist Baptist Church, Baltimore, Maryland, "40-Day Stretch Prayer Journal", 2010)

A goal of the 40-Day Prayer Journal is for one day to lead to 40 days, and for 40 days to lead to a lifestyle of prayer. Here is the Biblical significance of 40 days:

- Judgment: 40 days was a sign in the Bible that God was removing evil (Genesis 7:4).
- **Preparation:** 40 days was a sign in the Bible that God was getting people ready for action (Matthew 4:2).
- **Restoration:** 40 days was a sign in the Bible that God wanted to win people to Himself (Jonah 3:4).

How to Pray

(Bill Hybels, Too Busy Not to Pray, 2008)

Bill Hybels reminds us that we are God's adopted children, Jesus' brothers and sisters. We are God's family and we matter to Him. God is interested in your prayers because He is interested in you. He's your Father and He wants to hear what you have to say (pp. 28-29).

Jesus taught us how we should pray in Matthew 6:9-13, "The Lord's Prayer." Hybels states, "No other passage in Scripture reveals in such straightforward fashion how to pray:

- Pray regularly. Jesus said, "When you pray...," not "If you pray..."
- **Pray privately.** God is not impressed by public displays of piety.
- **Pray sincerely.** God is not interested in formulas. He wants to hear what is on our hearts.
- Pray specifically. Take the prayer we call the Lord's Prayer as a model (pp. 50-51)."

Remember that the Lord's Prayer begins with the following words: *"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done."* Although personal concerns or needs are real and should be prayed for, we encourage you to prayerfully have Kingdom thinking and Kingdom focus for requests that impact His rule and reign in our hearts, our church, our community, and the world.

We also suggest that you get in the habit of kneeling while you pray (Psalm 95:6).

Lastly, Hybels reminds us that "busyness" is the archenemy of spiritual authenticity. Therefore, make an effort to slow down, reflect, and listen to God over these 40 days (p.125).

Fasting

We are providing three different types of fasting for you to participate in over these next 40 days: (1) a traditional food fast; (2) an Isaiah 58 "fast" by getting involved serving the poor, oppressed and hungry; and/or (3) a "fast" from any personality trait or habit that God is convicting you to change.

1. Food Fast

Following are guidelines for fasting from food for short periods of time, written by Pastor George Moore:

Presbyterians generally understand a call to prayer, but few Presbyterians have been urged to fast as an act of worship and humility. Why then are we now being urged to fast? Fasting is a spiritual discipline taught in the Bible. Jesus expected His disciples to fast, and He said our Heavenly Father rewards fasting. Matthew 6:16–18 states, "When you fast...," not "If you fast...."

- **Fasting gives you more time to pray.** Use the time normally spent eating as time to honor God as we are present with Him in humble prayer. (See Romans 12:1-2.) At such times God often reveals His will. (See Acts 13:2-4 and Ezra 8:23.)
- **Fasting and prayer become partners in demonstrating the depth of our desire when praying.** Fasting helps to put down our fleshly desires, including self-gratification and pride, while at the same time increases our spiritual strength and awareness. It shows we are serious enough about prayers to pay a personal price. (See Joel 1:14.)
- **Fasting releases God's supernatural power.** It is a discipline often used for empowerment from God. (See Acts 14:21-23.)

- Fasting is a way God prepares us for major events in our lives, such as an overwhelming victory or some astounding new enlightenment or an awe-inspiring answer to prayer. Through fasting, we humbly receive God's awesome blessings. Meditate on these scriptures: 2 Chronicles 20:2-3; Daniel 9; Nehemiah 1:4; Luke 4:2; Acts 13:2-3.
- Fasting does not manipulate God to get His blessings of answered prayers. God answers our prayers out of His grace. Fasting is a way He prepares us for His answers.

If you have any health issues, an eating disorder or are pregnant or nursing, you should not participate in a food fast.

Before deciding to go forward with a food fast, we strongly recommend a detailed review of scriptural fasting as contained in an article we have placed in the literature racks around the church. This article can also be accessed online by going to the following link: cru.org/train-and-grow/devotional-life/personal-guide-to-fasting.html.

2. An Isaiah 58 "Fast"

Isaiah 58:6-11

"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail."

We encourage you to participate in an Isaiah 58 "fast" during these 40 days and beyond by getting involved in ongoing First Pres ministries for the poor, oppressed, and hungry such as:

• Hollis Academy Elementary School: A local public school with approximately 650 students, kindergarten through 5th grade, 99 percent of whom live at or below poverty level; FPC ministers in multiple ways to the students, families, and faculty.

Contact: Beth Simmons 787.3159, simmonsfam@charter.net

• Neighborhood Focus: Neighborhood Focus is a free, faith-based extended learning program (Afterschool and Summer) that provides year-round academic support, spiritual enrichment, and life skills development for at-risk children and students in the White Horse Road corridor of Greenville. Building hope one life at a time, our goal is to provide a solid foundation for future success.

Contact: Keith Groce, Executive Director, 704.7848, kgroce@neighborhoodfocus.org

To view all of the ministries First Pres supports, please go to our church website: FirstPresGreenville.org.

3. Fasting From a Personality Trait or Habit

(Catherine Marshall, "A Fasting on Criticalness", Spiritual Classics, Edited by Richard J. Foster and Emilie Griffin, 2000)

You may want to pray over a particular personality trait or habit of yours, one from which you would like to "fast." Catherine Marshall teaches us about a way of fasting that is not from food, but from a critical spirit. One of the things we learn from fasting is how it reveals what controls us. Here, Catherine Marshall saw what was controlling her, and this released her to begin moving in a new direction, a direction free of a critical spirit.

Excerpts from Catherine Marshall's selection on fasting from criticalness follow. Is God convicting you of any personality trait or habit to "fast" from? If so, you can use Catherine Marshall's methodology as a template.

The Lord continues to deal with me about my critical spirit, convicting me that I have been wrong to judge any person or situation:

Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way as you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you (Matthew 7:1-2 NIV).

One morning last week, He gave me an assignment: for one day I was to go on a "fast" from criticism. I was not to criticize anybody about anything.

...For the first half of the day, I simply felt a void, almost as if I had been wiped out as a person... I listened to others and kept silent. Barbed comments on the tip of my tongue... were suppressed... Now it was apparent what the Lord wanted me to see. My critical nature had not corrected a single one of the multitudinous things I found fault with. What it had done was to stifle my own creativity—in prayer, in relationships, perhaps even in writing—ideas that He wanted to give me...

What He is showing me so far can be summed up as follows:

- 1. A critical spirit focuses us on ourselves and makes us unhappy. We lose perspective and humor.
- 2. A critical spirit blocks the positive creative thoughts God longs to give us.
- 3. A critical spirit can prevent good relationships between individuals and often produces retaliatory criticism.
- 4. Criticalness blocks the work of the Spirit of God: love, good will, mercy.
- 5. Whenever we see something genuinely wrong in another person's behavior, rather than criticize him or her directly, or—far worse—gripe about him behind his back, we should ask the Spirit of God to do the correction needed.

Convicted of the true destructiveness of a critical mindset, on my knees I am repeating this prayer: "Lord I repent of this sin of judgment. I am deeply sorry for having committed so gross an offense against You and against myself so continually. I claim Your promise of forgiveness and seek a new beginning." (pp. 57-61)

Upon completion of your fast from whatever personality trait or habit you select, summarize what God is showing you and what steps you can take to change.

God's Love, Peace, Hope, Healing, and Blessings, First Presbyterian Church Session Prayer Committee, 2017

First Pres Prayer Request:

That the gospel doctrines of sin and grace are actually experienced in our lives and not just intellectually accepted in our hearts and minds

My Prayer Request:

DAY 1-MARCH 1

Ephesians 2:8-9: For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

DAY 2-MARCH 2

Ephesians 2:10: For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

DAY 3-MARCH 3

Philippians 2:13: For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

DAY 4-MARCH 4

Ephesians 1:4-5: For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will...

DAY 5-MARCH 5

Galatians 3:26-27: So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

DAY 6-MARCH 6

Galatians 2:20: I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

DAY 7—MARCH 7

Galatians 5:1: It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

DAY 8-MARCH 8

Philippians 1:21: For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

First Pres Prayer Request:

That we become more aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives and develop a relationship of communication and communion with the Spirit as we meditate upon the Word of God

My Prayer Request:

DAY 9-MARCH 9

Ephesians 1:13-14: When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

DAY 10—MARCH 10

Galatians 5:16-17: So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.

DAY 11—MARCH 11

Galatians 5:19-21: The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

DAY 12—MARCH 12

Ephesians 5:18-20: Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

First Pres Prayer Request:

That we be aware and convicted of our sin and separation from God and that we repent of our sinful thoughts and actions and look to Jesus for forgiveness

My Prayer Request:

DAY 13—MARCH 13

Galatians 5:13: You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.

DAY 14—MARCH 14

Ephesians 4:30-32: And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

DAY 15—MARCH 15

Galatians 5:7: You were running a good race. Who cut in on you to keep you from obeying the truth?

DAY 16—MARCH 16

Colossians 2:8: See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.

First Pres Prayer Request:

That we repent of our use of careless and hurtful words and actions toward others, and that our speech always be seasoned with grace and love

My Prayer Request:

DAY 17—MARCH 17

Ephesians 4:26-27: "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.

DAY 18-MARCH 18

Ephesians 4:30: Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths,

but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

DAY 19—MARCH 19

Colossians 4:6: Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

DAY 20-MARCH 20

Galatians 5:14: For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

First Pres Prayer Request:

My Prayer Request:

That we rely on our defender and protector, Jesus Christ, as we face spiritual warfare

DAY 21—MARCH 21

Ephesians 6:11-12: Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

DAY 22—MARCH 22

Ephesians 6:13-15: Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

DAY 23—MARCH 23

Ephesians 6:16-17: In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

DAY 24—MARCH 24

Ephesians 6:18: And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

First Pres Prayer Request:

That we would live out the gospel in love and humility as we seek to serve others

My Prayer Request:

DAY 25—MARCH 25

Galatians 6:9: Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

DAY 26—MARCH 26

Ephesians 4:1-3: As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

DAY 27—MARCH 27

Philippians 2:3-4: Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

DAY 28—MARCH 28

Philippians 2:5-7: In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

First Pres Prayer Request:

That we find our ultimate satisfaction and contentment in Jesus Christ and that we believe that He is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine

My Prayer Request:

DAY 29—MARCH 29

Philippians 3:7-9: But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

DAY 30-MARCH 30

Philippians 4:12-13: I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through Christ who gives me strength.

DAY 31—MARCH 31

Colossians 3:1-2: Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

DAY 32-APRIL 1

Ephesians 3:20-21: Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

First Pres Prayer Request:

That God opens the eyes of our hearts to see the glorious salvation He has provided for us and that we would be rooted and grounded in His love

My Prayer Request:

DAY 33—APRIL 2

Ephesians 1:18-19: I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened

in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you,

the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

DAY 34-APRIL 3

Ephesians 3:17b-19: And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

DAY 35-APRIL 4

Philippians 4:4-7: Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

DAY 36-APRIL 5

Colossians 3:12-14: Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved,

clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone.

Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

First Pres Prayer Request:

That we will be filled with the Spirit and experience the fullness of the fruit of the Spirit so that we can walk in a manner worthy of our calling

My Prayer Request:

DAY 37-APRIL 6

Galatians 5:25: Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

DAY 38-APRIL 7

Galatians 5:22-23: The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

DAY 39-APRIL 8

Colossians 3:15: Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

DAY 40-APRIL 9

Philippians 4:8: Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

WHAT HAPPENED?

Please use the lines below on the left to write in what God revealed to you about the First Pres prayer requests and on the right what God revealed to you about your own prayer requests.

Please share how you were affected through this time of prayer. Email us at prayer@firstpresgreenville.org, drop off a card in the prayer boxes located in the back of the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall, or turn the card in to Congregational Care. Prayer requests and stories of encouragement and praise are welcome.

PHILIPPIANS 3:12-14

I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me... one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

My Prayer Requests: First Pres Prayer Requests:



First Presbyterian is a House of Prayer where we love and pray diligently, fervently, and expectantly for one another, our visitors, the downtown community, and missions locally and around the world.

OPPORTUNITIES TO RECEIVE PRAYER

Prayer Room

Intercessors on the Prayer Room Team spend one to two hours a week praying for our congregation, our staff, and our missionaries. All requests are kept confidential.

Prayer Cards

Prayer cards are mailed to the congregation throughout the year to let them know that they are being prayed for and to give them an opportunity to write down any requests and mail them back to the church to be prayed for by the Prayer Room Team.

Prayer Following Worship

First Presbyterian's Elders and Deacons are available to pray with anyone following Sunday morning services and in Harper Prayer Chapel from 9:30–10:00am.

Tuesday Evening Prayer

This service, held every Tuesday evening at 7:00pm in Harper Chapel, includes praise and worship, ministry by the Prayer Team, and expanded opportunities for prayer.

Prayer Requests

Prayer requests may be made using the cards found in the pews or by calling the following prayer lines.

- Call 672.1838 to leave a message for the Prayer Room Team.
 - Call 672.1848 to schedule a Prayer Appointment.

• Call Congregational Care Director Tammy Burkhalter at 672.0327 to place a name on the Prayer List published weekly in the *GrapeVine* newsletter and Sunday bulletin.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE IN THE PRAYER MINISTRY

Prayer Card Team

Contact Dody Cunningham (325.2934, dixon4@charter.net)

Prayer Room Team

Contact Marion Austell (270.5779, mimi.austell@gmail.com)

Tuesday Night Prayer Service Team

Contact Wendy Gaillard (982.6716, emgail@aol.com)



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