

PRAYER CALENDAR 2024

*Part 1: Weeks 1-3*

# Fresh Prayers

for  
*Lent*



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GREENVILLE

# **Fresh Prayers for** *Lent*

## **A Prayer Calendar** **February 14 – March 28, 2024**

### *Part 1: Weeks 1-3*

Christians around the world associate the season of Lent with a period of prayer and fasting that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Maundy Thursday. This period of preparation commemorates the 40 days Jesus spent praying and fasting in the desert. It is a time of drawing closer to Christ as we remember all that He accomplished for us at Calvary, and it quietly prepares our hearts and souls for the celebration of the resurrection on Easter Sunday.

In our 2024 Prayer Calendar, we will be touching on some of the major themes from our Sunday sermon series in the Gospel of Matthew as we move through Lent, drawing closer to the celebrations of Easter Sunday. We will also approach fasting in a slightly different manner, as we did last year.



# Fresh Prayers for *Lent*

*Week 1* • Wednesday, February 14–Tuesday, February 20

**Matthew 8:2-13:** A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.” Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!”...

When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. “Lord,” he said, “my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering.” Jesus said to him, “I will go and heal him.” The centurion replied, “Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed...

When Jesus heard this, he was astonished and said to those following him, “I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith...”

Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go! It will be done just as you believed it would.” And his servant was healed at that very hour.

## **Ash Wednesday, February 14**

A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.” (Matthew 8:2)

Heavenly Father, during this season of Lent, grant deep within me a desire to draw closer to you in prayer. Enable me to intentionally carve out time for you each day, creating within me a profound

dependency on you as I look forward to spending time with you in prayer. Stimulate, strengthen, and cleanse me as I ask some of those fearless, searching questions about my relationship with you. Let me seek to live a life steeped in prayer as I draw closer to you over these next forty days. Amen.

## **Thursday, February 15**

A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.” (Matthew 8:2)

Father, as I quieten my heart today and seek to rest in you, enable me to put aside the frustrations, distractions, and busyness of this day while I dependently kneel before you as the leper did in Matthew 8. Allow me to intercede for all whom I love: children and grandchildren, siblings and parents, grandparents and grandchildren, friends and colleagues. May each one be renewed by your tender touch, and may they realize afresh the wonder of your love for each of them. Amen.

## **Friday, February 16**

The centurion replied, “Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed...” (Matthew 8:8)

Father, as I reflect upon the words of the centurion in Matthew 8, help me not to forget his astonishment as he interacts with you. Allow me today to discern your presence in my daily activities and to see you at work in the lives of those who use our church facilities and in the lives of new young families who gather for worship each Sunday. Let me also be astonished at how you are moving in the lives of our new members as they put down their spiritual roots and grow in intimacy with you. Finally, Father, allow me to see you at work in each Sunday television broadcast and livestream production. Bless each of our ministry endeavors as we prayerfully seek to “Transform the Spiritual Heart of our City and Beyond.” Amen.

**Saturday, February 17** — Personal Prayers

**Sunday, February 18** — Personal Prayers

## **Monday, February 19**

When Jesus heard this, he was astonished and said to those following him, “I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith...” (Matthew 8:10)

Father, as I begin a new week and seek to focus on my prayers for Lent, give me a hunger for your presence. Enable me to be consistent and faithful in my times of prayer. Create within me a deep and trusting faith, and like the centurion in Matthew 8, assist me to trust not in my strength but to rest in your goodness and grace. Let me have a living faith as I express my gratitude for so many who are actively involved in the life of the congregation. I pray for your hand of blessing upon the Children’s Ministry. Protect and watch over each child. Grant to each one an awareness of your love as they grow and develop. Let them see our congregation as a safe, warm, welcoming place where they are cared for and loved. Be with each parent living busy and demanding lives. Unclutter their souls and grant to them the wisdom they need as they raise each child in the knowledge of your love. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

## **Tuesday, February 20**

“Go! It will be done just as you believed it would.” (Matthew 8:13)

Heavenly Father, today I pray for the youth in the congregation who are full of life and energy. Wrap your arms of grace around each one. Impart to them an active, assured faith that is accompanied by the knowledge that they can come to you at any moment, bringing their burdens, uncertainties, and cares. Give to them the wisdom they need in forming friendships and making decisions about their futures. Lead each one as they prayerfully wrestle with course work, and grant to each one a sense of your guiding hand upon them. Above all, deepen and mature their faith as you retune the deepest affections of their souls. In your holy name I pray. Amen.



# Fresh Prayers for *Lent*

*Week 2* • Wednesday, February 21–Tuesday, February 27

**Matthew 11:1-5:** After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee. When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, “Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?” Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.

## Wednesday, February 21

After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee. When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, “Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?” (Matthew 11:1-2)

Father, as I reflect upon the question asked by John the Baptist in Matthew 11:1-2, allow me to not forget the wonder of your love, especially when I get distracted and caught up in the busyness of the day. I freely confess that some Sundays I leave church encouraged and enthused, determined to live for you in the week ahead. Yet I also recognize that I forget much of what I have learned; I fall back into old habits and patterns of behavior that are not good for me and at times lead me into sin and betraying you. Please enable me to recognize those areas in my life that do need to change. Help me to not forget that by your grace I can overcome them and seek to live for you in holiness and purity. Amen.

## Thursday, February 22

After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee. When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, “Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?” (Matthew 11:1-2)

Gracious God, in these quiet moments of prayer, help me to not take for granted the multiple blessings you have given me. Help me to not look or expect to receive deep, abiding contentment from circumstances or from anyone else but you. Help me to remember that you—who are infinite, immeasurable, incomprehensible, omnipotent, and invisible, unchangeable in your being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth—call and equip me to live in obedience to your word. Instruct me as you did your own disciples through the pages of your word. Enable me, like them, to be drawn into a maturing relationship with you, knowing moments of tender intimacy with you, the living God. Grant within me the commitment I need as I seek to be submissive to your word and obedient to your call. In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.

## Friday, February 23

After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee. When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, “Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?” (Matthew 11:1-2)

Gracious Father, as I move toward the end of this week and look forward to the weekend, I gladly come before you, knowing that you are so pleased when your children come to you in prayer. Yet I freely confess there are moments when I, like John the Baptist, struggle and have significant questions; moments when I wonder why there are challenges, distractions, and frustrations in my life that push me toward discouragement and uncertainty. Often these moments threaten to overwhelm me and leave me tired, open to temptation, insensitive and unthinking, selfish toward those around me. Please forgive me for those moments, and refresh and renew me with your comforting presence and tender touch. Amen.

## Saturday, February 24 — Personal Prayers

## **Sunday, February 25** — Personal Prayers

### **Monday, February 26**

“Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.” (Matthew 11:1-5)

Father, as I enter into a new week of this season of Lent, let me express my deep and lasting gratitude to you for all that you mean to me. I know that each day you lavish your love upon me when I don't deserve it. You consistently listen when I pray, you answer my prayers in ways that are truly beyond my understanding, and although I may not always get what I want, I often get what I had hoped for. Help my attitude to be reflective of the words of Jesus when he sought to encourage John the Baptist when he was spiritually low. Help me to reflect on all that you have done in my life. As I pray this week, take me to a sacred place, a place of unfathomable riches as I rest in you and you alone. Amen.

### **Tuesday, February 27**

“Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.” (Matthew 11:1-5)

Gracious God, as this second week of Lent comes to a close, enable us all to look back with lasting gratitude on what you have accomplished in the life of our congregation over the last few years. As we continue through Phase II of our Capital Campaign, we so appreciate your love and faithfulness towards us. We have indeed witnessed “faith in action.” We know that prayerful and thoughtful sacrifices have been made, and we come again in faith, seeking to honor you in our action. We ask that your Holy Spirit would enable us to complete the work you have begun. Father, we recognize that we are a blessed people and pray that the outstanding facilities we now have will enable us to be a shining light of hope and transformation at the heart of our city. Put your hand of blessing upon us once more as we respond to the financial challenges we face. Permit us to seize the opportunities which lie before us, and to do so in your name. Amen.





# Fresh Prayers for Lent

*Week 3* • Wednesday, February 28–Tuesday, March 5

**Matthew 11:25-30:** “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

## **Wednesday, February 28**

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:25)

Holy and gracious God, as I continue to focus on developing my prayer life during this season of Lent, today I pray for those in positions of leadership in this busy, vibrant, and growing congregation. Grant to each one the ability to come to you and rest in you. Refresh each heart, renew each soul, and clarify their minds as they ultimately depend on your leading and direction. Thank you for each leader and their families. Bestow upon them and consecrate them to the service you have called them to, giving them the godly wisdom, insight, and integrity they need to lead our congregation. Place your hand upon them and strengthen them for each of the days ahead. Amen.

## Thursday, February 29

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:25)

Heavenly Father, as I seek to develop a healthy habit of daily prayers, allow me to take seriously the words from Matthew 11:25 and your invitation to come to you and rest in you. Father, assist me as I persevere in prayer to learn to be transparent and vulnerable with you in ways I cannot with any other. Forgive me for the moments when I am easily distracted, when my mind wanders and I focus on my frustrations with others, mentally finding fault with everyone and everything around me. Protect me from such behavior and allow me, through the indwelling power of your Holy Spirit, a change of heart and behavior. Help me to practice fasting in this area of my life so that I control my tongue, think before I speak, and refrain from disapproval and judgment of others. Help me to recognize such distractions for what they are. Still my anxious thoughts and wandering mind and let me rest in you. Amen.

## Friday, March 1

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:25-30)

Gracious God, as I take seriously the words of Jesus in Matthew 11:29—“Take my yoke upon you”—I am aware that He is calling me to be dependent upon His strength and to “learn” from Him. Help me, please, to learn and then intentionally participate in a Christ-like lifestyle. Work in my soul in order that I would be Christ-like in my interactions with my family and my children. Help me to model for them genuine, authentic faith. Strengthen my resolve in the most practical way when I am tempted to be critical and negative about those around me. Keep me from the temptation of gossip and painfully wounding others when they are not present. Enable me to be Christ-like in actively avoiding the sins of the tongue, including dishonesty, unkindness, flattery, impurity, blasphemy, pride, criticism, exaggeration, temper, greed, slander, and boasting. Help me to put down such temptations and to rest in you and reflect you in all aspects of my life. In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.

**Saturday, March 2** — Personal Prayers

**Sunday, March 3** — Personal Prayers

**Monday, March 4**

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:25-30)

Father, as I move into a new week, enable me to once again rest in you. As I profoundly trust in you for my family and all whom I love, assist me to also trust you for the future of our nation. I am conscious that we live in a culture dominated by social media, which seems to thrive on criticism and cynicism. Allow me, please, to be Christ-like toward the culture we live in and to rise above the political polarization and negativity that surround us. Help me to resist feeding my soul on controversy and fault-finding. Move me to pray for our elected leaders, our nation, and those who seek to serve in a local capacity. Grant to each one a profound dependence on you, a trust and reliance on your sovereign purposes as they wrestle with complex and challenging national and international issues. In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.

**Tuesday, March 5**

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:25-30)

Heavenly Father, as a congregation we draw to a close this third week of prayers for Lent. Today we pray for the seniors in our congregation, individuals who have prayed and served, sacrificed and committed, dedicated and built up our congregation into the people we are today. We ask that you would draw each one of them closer to you with great tenderness, enabling them to put down the burdens and challenges of the day, along with their fears and concerns. Allow each one to experience the fullness of your promise, “For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” Amen.

A vertical photograph of a mountain range, heavily tinted with a purple hue. The mountains are layered, with the foreground being the darkest and the background being the lightest, creating a sense of depth. The sky is a uniform, light purple. The overall mood is serene and ethereal.

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