

FORTY DAYS OF PRAYER GUIDE

PREPARATION FOR TRANSITION TO A NEW PASTOR FOR FBCBA

WEEK ONE - 10/1/18 - 10/5/18

MONDAY, 10/1/18:

UNDERSTANDING OF THE TRANSITION PLAN

Proverbs 19:21 - *Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.*

2 Timothy 2:7 - *Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.*

The Transition Plan presented to the church was the result of some of our members devoting over a year of their lives to pray for God's direction in how to lead our church into and through the process of seeking a new pastor. Since FBCBA has not done that in over three decades, this Transition Team knew they needed the mind of Christ to guide them. As they prayed, they read about other churches that had made this journey. They did interviews and talked to men that led large churches and Christian organizations through times of transitioning from a long-term leader to a new leader. And, they did their work extremely well as was evidenced by the report that was brought to the church.

Now, we need to pray for all our church to read, understand, and to embrace the implementation of this plan so that we can move together in unity, with a spirit of great anticipation of the arrival of the new person God has to lead us, and to be ever faithful so that when God brings our new pastor, we are already doing what the LORD has given us to do. In that way, our new Shepherd can build on the foundation of our devotion to Christ and move us to even greater assignments in Kingdom work than ever before.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Church to be active as regular prayer partners as we embark on this part of the journey.
2. For unity in purpose to prevail so that FBCBA grow stronger during the transition.
3. For the steadfast devotion to Christ to be evident in all we do as a church.

TUESDAY, 10/2/18: ACCEPTANCE OF THE PLAN

Colossians 1:9-13 - *And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father*

We read lots of materials. But, we do not read everything with the same degree of importance. Some articles or posts, we scan quickly. News stories we peruse for the key points. The Bible we read for personal application. Like the Bible, that which is important, we keep and read again from time to time to make sure we are "on track" in doing what the document stated.

As a church, our prayer is that FBCBA and CBC will be reading the transition plan to remember what has been proposed, accept the plan as a good direction for us, and then work to the best of our ability to pray for and work toward the implementation of each phase. Passively accepting is not beneficial for that simply postpones addressing the needs of the church in transition. Active acceptance is implementing the parts of the plan that each of us can be doing to make this church stronger than ever during the changing of pastoral leadership. The sign of a strong church is what the membership does when a pastor moves on. Now is the time for us to be strong in prayer, bold in vision, and steadfast in service to the ONE we serve Who changes not!

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. To pray for every member to yearn to be diligent in accepting and actively doing God's will for us as we seek His direction through this time of transition.
2. Pray for all of us to desire **Psalm 119:130** - *The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the "simple" "simple" means (those like "a little child" in their earnest desire to learn).* We need His Light and understanding!

WEDNESDAY, 10/3/18:

PRAYER FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE PLAN

In all that we have, all that we do, and all that we get to experience, we are just managers of what God has provided for us. We have been given a trust to manage for our LORD and we will give an account for how we managed it when we stand before our LORD. (2 Cor.5:10).

Success is found in serving the LORD in faith, obeying the LORD diligently, and trusting Him completely to bless abundantly! I love what Scripture records about Joseph serving in Potiphar's house....

*The LORD **was with Joseph** so that **he prospered**, and **he lived in the house** of his Egyptian master. **3** When his master saw that **the LORD was with him** and that **the LORD gave him success** in everything he did, **4** Joseph **found favor in his eyes** and **became his attendant**. Potiphar **put him in charge of his household**, and **he entrusted to his care everything** he owned. **5** From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the **LORD blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph**. The blessing of the LORD was **on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field**.*

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. That we will submit ourselves under the mighty Hand of God daily.
2. That we will trust Him to care for each of us, our families, and this church.
3. Believing that the church is the Lord's and that He wants what is best for us, we determine to trust Him steadfastly to guide us as into this great new era of growth.

THURSDAY, 10/4/18: FERVENT PRAYER FOR GOD'S BLESSINGS

Everyone has deep respect for the person that was consistently determined to accomplish some task that he/she set out to do. Respect only increases if the level of difficulty or the challenge is such that most would not see it through to success. The same is true in earnest, faithful, consistent prayer. Shallow requests do not require much from the person praying. But, God-sized prayers will be physically, mentally, spiritually, and emotionally demanding. As we are praying for this season of transition and the desire to see God bless us with a new pastor to lead us, surely we will be "steadfast, unmovable and always abounding in the work" of praying for God to lead us to His man to shepherd the flock of FBCBA.

Colossians 4:2 - *Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.*

Romans 12:11 - *Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.*

Psalms 145:18 - *The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.*

2 Thessalonians 1:11 - *To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power.*

James 5:16 - *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails (accomplishes) much.*

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray for your friends and family in FBC and CBC. Pray that your "circle" of folks you love will be so diligent in prayer that if no one else prayed, God would hear and answer.
2. If you have never had a specific place and time for prayer daily, make this the opportunity to establish that "holy habit" in your life daily.
3. Ask the Lord to convict all of us to BE FERVENT in prayer!

FRIDAY, 10/5/18:

BELIEVE GOD WILL PROVIDE HIS BLESSINGS FOR US

Eph. 3:20 - *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!*

Perhaps you or someone you know has the feeling that "one person's prayer" is not that important. Maybe you have even asked things like this: Is it really important for us to pray as a church for 40 days together? Is my prayer really that significant? Isn't God going to do what He plans to do anyway? I am not sure why we have been asked to pray...

United prayer times are called to get us as a church body in position spiritually for God to bless. We can do more together than we ever conceived. Think about these kinds of settings and ask "why" everyone's participation is the key to ownership. Why does a college rejoice in a sellout crowd to watch a ball game? Why do concert venues love to post "sellout" weeks before the event? Because when the arena, stadium, or auditorium is full, there is greater excitement, expectation, and interest. If we attend an event with only a fraction of the crowd that should have been present actually "present", there is a deflated spirit from the outset.

In Old Testament times, there would be holy convocations where all of Israel was called to come before God in unity and prayer. This is one of those times in the life history of FBCBA and CBC that we need every member of the church preparing each heart for God's blessing and God's direction. We pray with faith because we believe that *my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Phil. 4:19.*

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Ask the Lord to cleanse us of sin, fill us with His Holy Spirit daily, and enlarge our hearts to receive what He has in store for us just ahead.
2. Put your trust in the Lord to keep us together in unity as a body of Christ, to prepare us to be ready to embrace the ministry of our new pastor, and to ask our Lord to direct the Pastor Search team to find God's man for us.

WEEK TWO - 10/8/18 - 10/12/18: PRAYING FOR OUR PASTOR SEARCH TEAM

MONDAY, 10/8/18: GOD'S HAND TO REST ON THE SEARCH TEAM

2 Thessalonians 3:3 - *But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one.*

Most everyone has been asked to do a team project sometime in life. Our enthusiasm for the assignment depended on how deeply we were committed to the person, group, or for the task we had been asked to do. The greater the importance, the more the assignment dominated our thoughts and required our commitment.

Imagine being asked to find God's man to be the pastor to all the membership of a church. For most of us, it would be a very sobering task that would drive us to our knees in prayer for God's constant direction to be made known. And, knowing that Satan despises any venture that has implications for one of God's churches, he will do everything in his power to disrupt, divert, and distract those on the Search Team. For that reason, we, as the membership, should be suited up in the "full armor of God" and ready to engage in prayer continually to ask the Lord to guard every member and their families from the assaults of Satan. We need to pray for their health and that of their family members; for their jobs and company's protection so that they are not pulled from the task of finding our next pastor; and pray for their spouses, children, and grandchildren so that there is no cause for their hearts or minds to be pulled away from this most important search.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. For the complete well-being of the Search Team and their families as they fulfill the task of seeking out a new pastor for FBCBA.
2. That "no weapon formed against them will prosper". **Isaiah 54:17**.

TUESDAY, 10/9/18:

“IF ANY MAN LACK WISDOM... ASK OF GOD”

James 1:5 - *If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.*

James 3:17 - *But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.*

What would you do if you were asked to find a man God has chosen to be the pastor of a church? Where would you begin the search? How would you even start the process?

The best place would be on your knees before God seeking His guidance and wisdom to direct you. Since the role that needs to be filled with a Servant of God that is under God's supervision and God's will, it would be prudent to seek wisdom from the One that knows the man, where he is, who he is, and how to stir his heart to prepare for a new assignment. It will also take God's working in behalf of the Search Team to move them to get the name of this candidate and to know that they should contact him.

So, the body of Christ should pray for wisdom for the Search Team. Wisdom from God is granted to those who ask for it. Surely the church will continually pray for the team to seek and know the wisdom of God for their benefit, the church's well-being, and for the new Pastor and his family.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. For the Search Team to seek and know the will of God which requires God's provision.
2. For the Search Team and the church to be zealous in seeking the wisdom that comes from God and gives life.

WEDNESDAY, 10/10/18: THE SPIRIT'S ANOINTING FOR UNITY

1 Peter 3:8 - *Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.*

Ephesians 4:3 - *Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*

Unity is the “high bar of excellence” that is the goal of Christians. Although we long for unity in every relationship, the reality is that we are not always serving “in one spirit and one accord”. Because each of us has individual concerns, goals, dreams, and expectations, bringing all of those for all of us to be together in unity takes the marvelous power of God working in us continually. It is to our benefit that we have so many ideas that are varied, contrasting, and non-conformist in some cases. That is what makes the church vibrant with energetic service and creative approaches to be ever more effective sharing Christ in the 21st century.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

It is that diversity that should drive us to our knees on behalf of our Pastor Search Team.

1. We need to pray for the Team to have unity.
2. We need to pray for their search so that when they discover God's man to lead us, they will be unified that he is the candidate for us to consider.
3. We need to pray that the man God leads our Team to consider will sense that it is God's will for him to come to FBCBA.
4. We need to pray that our church will vote to call God's man with a unified vote of affirmation.
5. And, we need to pray that our new Pastor can lead us as a unified people with all of our diversity to serve our LORD more effectively than ever before.

THURSDAY, 10/11/18: DISCERNMENT FOR OUR SEARCH TEAM

1 Samuel 16:7 - *But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."*

Prov.18:15 - *The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge, for the ears of the wise seek it out.*

Romans 12:2- *Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Our Search Team will not have any difficulty getting names and information regarding good men that are currently pastoring that might be a candidate to consider. What we should pray for them is that they would have great wisdom and discernment between a "good" man and "God's man" to lead our church. Everyone has stories of a person brought in to lead a church or organization that had great promise but was the wrong fit for the job.

The Search Team will face many challenges. Some of those will be.... developing good interview questions, listening for clarity on critical areas of need, seeking to know the heart of the candidate as well as his ability to understand ministries and activities that are essential in pastoring our church... all of those things along with his spiritual walk with God, his rapport with his family, and the nature of his leadership in the past must be critically examined to understand and discern the man God has ordained for us. We should daily pray for our Search Team and for their discernment in seeking God's will for our church.

So that we understand "discernment", here are two clear definitions. 1) *"the quality of being able to grasp and comprehend what is obscure* (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). 2)

Discernment – *the ability to think biblically about all areas of life* (John MacArthur).

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray for each of our Search Team to be so in tune with God through this process that the unity in their search and deliberations will be evidence of God's hand on them.
2. Pray that they can discern between what is good and what is best for our church as the process unfolds.
3. Pray that we will not look on outward appearance as man does, but on the heart as God does.

FRIDAY, 10/12/18: "PRAYING FOR DILIGENCE"

Galatians 6:9 - *And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.*

Ecclesiastes 9:10 - *Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might.*

Starting a project is not terribly hard most of the time. Finishing may be a different story. In the enthusiasm of "beginning", there is a zeal and anticipation of how meaningful this project is going to be. However, sometimes after the initial euphoria, a malaise and loss of passion for the assignment can begin to lodge in one's heart and mind. The demands for time exceed what had been expected. The task is going to require more attention than planned. Not everyone on the project sees "eye-to-eye" which creates unexpected friction.

Just like a long-distance runner has to be diligent and determined to "push ahead", so there will be times in the Search Process that both the Search Team and the church may well experience frustration in delays, fatigue in praying through, and falter in dedication. In those times, we need to realize that we have been called to be steadfast in lifting our Search Team in prayer, for their search to be effective, and for them to find the one who is to serve as the Shepherd of this flock of Sheep in Broken Arrow.

Diligence is not optional for the Search Team or for the Church. Each of us must resolve to find a time and place daily for specific, earnest prayer. We should be diligent to send prayer notes to those on the Search Team and their families to commend them for what they are doing for FBCBA and CBC in this process. And, be diligent to send notes of prayer to the staff and lay leadership who are diligently doing the work of our Lord daily.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray that the church will press on diligently in doing the work of the Lord and that we will “press together” as a spiritual family to preserve unity, vision, and community.
2. Pray for the Search Team to be filled anew daily with the Holy Spirit so that they are oft refreshed for the task before them.

WEEK THREE - 10/15/18 - 10/19/18
PRAYING FOR OUR CHURCH
STAFF THROUGH DAYS OF TRANSITION

MONDAY, 10/15/18:
REMAIN STEADFAST IN LEADING OUR CHURCH

1 CORINTHIANS 15:58 - *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.*

PHILIPPIANS 4:1 - *Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.*

The start of any venture is usually not difficult. We know that from experience. All of us have various jobs, projects, or plans that we started, but somehow, we were diverted or lost interest, and we never did finish. Spiritually, many Christians set out on a venture with great expectations and intentions. But, somewhere along the way, they set aside the passion for the task, and it has been abandoned.

Our Search Team will not abandon their assigned task until they present a person to recommend as our next Pastor. We would expect of them continual devotion to do what they were elected to do. In like fashion, we need to pray for our Church Staff. On their shoulders is the expectation that their ministry areas will continue without any change in scheduling or format. It is also likely that they will be called more often when there are needs that affect our membership or needs in the community in this time in the life of our church. They surely do deserve and require our faithfulness to pray for them, their families, their work, and their success while we do the work of the church and await God directing our Search Team to our next pastor.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. That the Lord keep our staff strong, focused, and steadfast in ministry.
2. That our Staff experience God's grace for every assignment daily.
3. That the families of the Staff would remain healthy and strong so that the staff can focus on their service to our Lord through FBCBA and CBC.

TUESDAY, 10/16/18:

DRAW EVEN CLOSER IN UNITY AS A STAFF TEAM

Psalm 133:1 - *Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!*

Proverbs 11:14 - *Where there is no guidance, a people fall, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.*

Teams train to work together. However, the best training is when team work is not a voluntary exercise but is required. Military training puts recruits through extremely strenuous training so that they are molded into a working unit to be victorious. Athletes spend a lot of time working out to make sure they are physically and mentally fit for the challenge of their sport, but equally important are team drills and scrimmages that allow that team to jell into a winning unit.

Seasons of life that are different from "the ordinary" can be frustrating and even devastating if they are not addressed with the right outlook. Our life experiences and training are put to the test when challenges to the "norm" arise. No test is pleasant. But, through the times of learning to pray for one another fervently, help one another in ministry, and converse with one another in how to best meet a challenge is the way that strong teams are developed.

Our staff has been used by our Heavenly Father to serve with great zeal and devotion. We have often thanked God for them. Now is a time for us to be found holding them up before the LORD in prayer as they are pressed to be ever more effective as a team caring for the flock of God.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Thank the LORD for the way that the staff serves the LORD and this church faithfully.
2. Pray that their hearts will be drawn ever closer to Christ.
3. Pray that they will be fervent in prayer, faithful in service, and fraternal in relationships with each other.

WEDNESDAY, 10/17/18: PRAY FOR OUR STAFF AS THEY CARE FOR US

In the months of transition, people will likely have lots of questions as well as various needs that will arise that may be out of the ordinary. In the “seams” of life’s fabric, Satan often finds a foothold to create confusion and strife. “Satan is a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.” When changes of any kind occur, church members gravitate to the staff person over their ministry area to provide information and preserve the assurance that all is well. It is important that the staff rely on each other for shared ministry opportunities as well as a strong camaraderie in doing the “usual and customary” ministry requirements.

Now is the time to truly be frequent in prayer for each staff member, their families, and their schedules. The enemy loves to attack when there may be an opportunity for discouragement, fatigue, or sensing frustration in getting everything done. As we pray for staff members, pray for our LORD to guard, strengthen, sustain, and empower them to see marvelous victories daily.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray for our staff to draw near to the LORD.
2. Pray for the staff families and staff members to remain healthy so that there are not additional family issues to pull on them presently.
3. Pray that the church family remains steadfast in their various roles to help the church continue to move forward in Kingdom work.

THURSDAY, 10/18/18: EXEMPLIFY WAITING ON THE LORD

Today, I have listed Scriptures that instruct us to “wait upon the LORD”. In this season while we are praying for our Search Team and Staff, we want to learn to wait upon our God to make His will known. While we are “waiting”, we will be steadfast in service and prayer.

Isaiah 40:31 - *But they who **wait for the LORD** shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.*

Psalms 27:13-14 - *I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living! **Wait for the LORD**; be strong and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!*

Lamentations 3:25 - *The LORD is good to those who **wait for him**, to the soul who seeks him.*

Isaiah 30:18 - *Therefore the LORD waits to be gracious to you, and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you. For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who **wait for him**.*

Psalms 27:14 - ***Wait for the LORD**; be strong and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!*

Psalms 130:5 - *I **wait for the LORD, my soul waits**, and in his word, I hope; my soul **waits for the Lord***

Micah 7:7 - *But as for me, I will look to the LORD; I **will wait for the God of my salvation**; my God will hear me.*

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray to discover new facets of God's grace as you wait and watch for Him to provide.
2. Pray that as we wait before Him, our devotion to our LORD will increase and intensify.

FRIDAY, 10/19/18:

BE WATCHFUL - THE BEST IS YET TO BE!

Romans 8:25 - *But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.*

Philippians 4:6 - *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*

John 14:27 - *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.*

Romans 15:13 - *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.*

Christ followers live in hope! We know that our God knows our needs, He can supply our needs from His vast holdings, and He is leading us to experience the very best in life now and has provided an even brighter future. Therefore, as we are investing in time spent in prayer before our Father, we pray with the confidence that the "best is yet to be". Every great saint of God in Scripture lived with that reality. So, we also live on the cusp of expectancy that He Who hears our prayers is going to "supply all of our needs according to His riches in glory"!

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray daily knowing God hears us and is providing exactly what we need each day.
2. Pray believing that God is directing our Search Team and is preparing our next pastor already to receive the Search Team knowing that God has directed them to him.

WEEK FOUR - 10/22/18 - 10/26/2018

PRAYER FOR OUR CHURCH

MONDAY, 10/22/18: THE PRIORITY OF PRAYER

Colossians 4:2 - *Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.*

Matthew 3:2 - *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

Romans 13:11 - *Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now, salvation is nearer to us than when we believed.*

Life has many facets and seasons. It is in the diversity that we find the challenges of continually looking to Jesus. Truthfully, we are much more prone to be found praying in crises than in calm days. But, there is ever an urgency to go before the LORD in daily prayer. The closeness we gain from time alone with God in the peaceful days prepares us for the urgent prayer needs when we are fervently seeking to know God's will. Now is the time that we truly need to seek, understand, and follow as a church the perfect will of God for us. That is discovered in time with God in prayer.

The Puritan Samuel Chadwick says, *"Satan dreads nothing but prayer. Activities are multiplied that prayer may be ousted and organizations are increased that prayer may have no chance. The one concern of the devil is to keep the saints from praying. He fears nothing from prayer-less studies, prayer-less work, prayer-less religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray."*

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. That each member will set a daily "time and place" to meet God in prayer.
2. That all of us as members of this church will realize our role in prayer is extremely important for us to receive a new pastor and to embrace him to lead us into God's promises for us.

TUESDAY, 10/23/18: EACH FAMILY PRAY TOGETHER

1 Peter 3:7 - "Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered."

Acts 10:2 - (Cornelius) He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly.

Every where we look, we see ads, posters, magazine articles, and Christian posters with pictures of a smiling, happy, and what appears to be a perfectly happy family. And, that is just exactly what all of us have, right? Every member of the family is always doing all things just exactly right so that we could easily be a poster for a "perfect family image"! Is there anyone honest reading this paragraph? None of us are perfect. None of our families are. But, the good news, is that if we are following Christ, we are becoming what He desires for us to be.

Prayer has the power to strengthen us as families. And, as we are empowered spiritually, the church is empowered. Families are the building blocks of the church. As our Search Team will be seeking a new pastor, and eventually tell him about FBCBA and CBC, we want them to be able to tell him that we are a praying, serving, evangelism focused, and Godly people. Prayer convicts us of those things and presses us into Christ Who can continually shape us into that kind of people in our journey of faith.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. That every family will meet at some time each day for forty days to pray for each other.
2. That the times of prayer will be earnest and honest.
3. That as we pray for each other in our families, we will find it easier to pray daily for our church family.

WEDNESDAY, 10/24/18: FIND US FAITHFUL

1 Samuel 12:24 - *Only fear the LORD and serve him faithfully with all your heart. For consider what great things he has done for you.*

Luke 16:10 - *One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.*

History is kind to those who remain faithful to do what they set out to do until the job is done. It is the reason we admire veterans who served in times of war, athletes that overcame great physical pain to win, and common folks who are remembered for uncommon achievements because they refused to quit. Courage invested results in faithfulness achieved.

Churches would be packed to overflowing every Sunday if every member was found faithful. There would be more workers than needed for every position of service. Sunday School would be the largest "school" in every city. Everyone in a metropolitan area would know the Gospel by heart because every Believer would be so faithful in witness. And, the offerings would be so abundant that government welfare would cease since every need of all the poor would be met.

Now is a test for our congregation. Will the LORD find us faithful in every area including daily prayer? Wouldn't it be marvelous if we saw revival during this time between pastors because the "church" was so fervent in prayer and diligent in serving? May God help us to be so!

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray that more than ever, we will be *"steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."*
2. Pray that Jesus will *"see our faith"* (Mark 2:5) and rain down blessings, power, and victories on His church.

THURSDAY, 10/25/18: POWER IN THE CHURCH

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.*

Colossians 1:10-12 - *And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.*

They are found most everywhere in our state. Their appearances may vary, but the signs out front make it clear. A name appears before the word "church". Some are store-fronts, and some are extremely ornate. Some are in disrepair and some are "state of the art" outside and inside. Each one is a place where folks gather to worship God and a launching pad from which His people go to serve Him. Each proclaims the power of God, but many have come to measure success as simply meeting together for the "form" of a service to be executed.

Power of the New Testament church is not found many places. There is not a sense of "God At Work". The power of the Holy Spirit that thrusts the members out of the service to go into the streets to proclaim Jesus is missing. The proclamation of the members about various God-sightings and mighty works of God weekly are rare. When is the last time you heard an urgent, dire, desperate Christian begging our LORD, "Teach us to pray"? Wouldn't now be a great time to pray for God to teach us how to truly pray? And to plead for God's power to do mighty works among us?

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray for a mighty movement of God among us to revive His people and to grant us a fresh filling of His Holy Spirit.
2. Pray that through prayer, we will experience the work of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8-11).

FRIDAY, 10/26/18: PRAYING WITH EXPECTANCY

LUKE 11:9-13 - *So, I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Of if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!*

When those who profess to be Christians do not pray, it is not because they don't know how to have a conversation. People talk daily to other people. Christians don't pray because they have no confidence that God hears them, and that God will answer them. We don't ask people to help us in times of need if we have such a weak relationship that we feel confident they would not respond. For the same reason, prayers are often never offered. What an indictment about prayerlessness is given in James 4:2-3 - *You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. ³When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.*

May we pray with a holy expectancy and confidence. Jesus promised, "Ask, and you shall receive.... knock and it shall be opened." Surely, we will take our Lord at His Word!

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray for us to pray with expectancy.
2. Pray that we will "pray without ceasing". There are those requests that require "righteous men and women to pray fervent and effectual prayers" for God to move.

WEEK FIVE - 10/29 - 11/1/18:

PRAYING FOR CANDIDATES FOR PASTOR

MONDAY, 10/29/18:

PRAYING FOR MAN WHO IS A LEADER

1 Timothy 3:1 - The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task.

Psalm 78:72 - With upright heart he shepherded them and guided them with his skillful hand.

The secret of knowing the will of God is spending time alone with Him. And, that is certainly true if a church is to seek the man of God's choosing to be their pastor. Samuel was charged to find a king for Israel after Saul had been such a disappointment. He did not stay true to seeking to do the will of God, and it was evident that a new King would be selected. More than ever, Samuel wanted to make sure that he led the people to the right man to succeed Saul.

A great principle was stated in 1 Samuel because of Samuel's search. The Lord admonished Samuel to seek "as God seeks" and not as man would do. Here is God's admonition for finding the leader God has ordained. *But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature.... For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."* **1 Samuel 16:7.**

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray for our Search Team to seek for a pastor that has a heart that is upright and pure.
2. Pray that the church will be diligent in prayer and patient in the process to seek out God's man for us.

TUESDAY, 10/30/18:

PRAYING FOR MAN OF INTEGRITY

James 4:10 - Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

Phil.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.

Proverbs 4:23 - Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.

If one searches Wikipedia for the word "integrity", the definition that is listed is:

"The word "integrity" evolved from the Latin adjective "integer", meaning whole or complete. In this context, integrity is the inner sense of "wholeness" deriving from qualities such as honesty and consistency of character."

Giftedness, congeniality, kindness, excellence in communication...all those qualities are desired and admirable. But, "wholeness" is essential in the life of a spiritual leader. No man is perfect, but every Christian man and woman should be Spirit-filled, Bible based, and Christ focused in their life's journey. So, we pray for a man to lead us that has walked with God thus far and continues to desire to lead others to walk with Him, also, in personal integrity.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. The man of God's choosing for us is deeply rooted in the Word of God and seeks first His Kingdom.
2. Pray that our team will be drawn to the strength of character and the transparency of the candidate's heart.
3. Pray that we embrace the man God directs to us and keep him in our prayers for His time with God to be paramount in all that he seeks to do.

WEDNESDAY, 10/31/18: PRAYING FOR MAN OF THE WORD

Titus 1:9 - He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

2 Timothy 2:15 - Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom.

Standing on the Word of God is the only foundation for a faithful servant and ambassador of the Almighty. Human experience, opinion, and observations are fickle and change with our emotions. Just as God is *"the same yesterday, today, and forever"* so it is stated that *"not the smallest letter or one stroke of a letter will pass away from the law until all things are accomplished."* (Matt. 5:18 - CSB). In a world that espouses that there are no absolutes, the Word of God is a prime contradiction. For the Scriptures are the very foundation of all truth, life, and eternal understanding. They are God-breathed and *useful for instruction, teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness.* (2 Timothy 3:16).

For a pastor, the Bible is his sword, defense, and comfort. When he speaks, Christians expect their pastor to have the precepts of God's Word in his conversations and counsel. And, when He preaches, it is demanded that He speak the truth of God's Word. Every Bible believing church would agree that a pastor should heed Paul's admonition to Timothy, *"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth"*. (2 Timothy 2:15).

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray that our Search Team will be drawn to a man whose preaching and ministry has been based on the power of God's Holy Word to save and to establish God's people.
2. Pray that our Search Team is led to a man because of the evidence of the Word of God vibrantly at work in the candidate's life.

THURSDAY, 11/1/18:

PRAYING FOR MAN OF SOUND DOCTRINE

Titus 2:1 - But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.

Acts 20:28 - Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

Many churches and Christian groups are adrift. The convictions that were once held as inviolate are eroding due to social trends and spiritual anemia. Our predecessors felt so strongly about Christian principle and faith doctrines that prisons often housed pastors and laity who dared to uphold the truth in eras of heresy or the fallacy of traditions of men.

Doctrine is the back bone of one's faith and practice. The "bones" on which the "muscles, tissues, nerves, and flesh" hang is not optional for a body to function. The skeletal structure of faith is our doctrine. Doctrinal beliefs are the core of our being and the way that we preserve and defend our faith. Doctrinal convictions either make us stronger in our commitments or give way to secular views that dilute what we believe and observe to do. Doctrinal strength is required in spiritual leaders. Without that, the members grow weak, complacent, and cold.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. In this generation of false teachers and spiritual acceptance of things that are not of God, pray that we find God's man who "seeks after God's heart" and longs to be faithful to the truths and doctrines that are eternal.
2. Pray that the doctrines of our faith will be the very core of our new Pastor's beliefs and that he will lead us to be strong in faith and in our resolve to please God.

FRIDAY, 11/2/18: PRAYING FOR A FAMILY MAN

1 Timothy 3:2 - Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,

Ephesians 6:4 - Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

The first covenant a man makes is with God when he enters a faith covenant through salvation with the Lord. The second covenant is marriage. Close to those two covenant bonds is the call of God in a pastor's life to serve the LORD. No man can be qualified as a pastor that has not experienced the grace covenant of salvation. No man is effective in serving God as pastor if his marriage and household is in shambles. The call on one's life to follow Christ as a minister is an awareness on his part of stepping into the light for all to see how a pastor treats his wife and children.

The relationship that a pastor has with his wife and family are not only essential to being an example, but it is also absolutely necessary for the man of God to know that his home is an oasis to which he can go for laughter, encouragement, and time with those he loves most. Pray that God will lead us to the man who loves the Lord, his wife and family, and serves them with honor and deference even as he serves the flock of God.

PRAYER REQUESTS -

1. Pray that our new preacher and family find our church and community a welcoming place very quickly so that nothing at home is a distraction to our pastor's success in serving.
2. Pray that even as the new minister is loving his wife and family that they make his life a joy as they serve and engage in the ministry of FBCBA and CBC.
3. Pray that the schools chosen, the friends that are made, and the extra-curricular things the children seek are enriching, fulfilling, encouraging, and a blessing for the whole family.

**WEEK SIX - 11/5 - 11/9:
PRAYING FOR GOD TO PREPARE
OUR NEXT PASTOR FOR THIS ROLE**

**MONDAY, 11/5/18:
PRAY FOR OUR TEAM TO AGREE
ON THE MAN TO LEAD OUR CHURCH**

1 Samuel 16:7 - But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."

Romans 15:5 - Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus,

1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.

The Book of Acts written by Dr. Luke is a record of the days and years following the resurrection of our Lord. In the second chapter of Acts, Luke makes a statement that we have read so often, we don't stop to think about the content. Luke records, "*They were all in one place and one accord*". Why is that in print? Isn't that true of every church after any time of upheaval? Are we not always in "one accord"? Isn't every church filled with every member every Sunday morning being "in their place in worship"? You know better!

Luke stated what was a first. Even in the earthly ministry of Jesus, the disciples of Jesus were not always "in one accord". And, at the time of the arrest, they had all scattered. Now they were back. And, in the ten days since the ascension of our Lord, they had been in significant times of prayer. Now, Luke stated that since they were together in locale and spirit, God sent His Holy Spirit in power at Pentecost. Unity is a precursor to a great demonstration of God at work.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray that our church, our families, and our Search Team will be united through this time of transition so that when God is ready to send us a pastor, our lives are ready for God to work mightily in our midst.
2. Pray that our Search Team will spend quality time in prayer so that as they draw nearer to God they draw nearer to each other in unity of vision, direction, and confirmation of God's man to lead us when they meet him.

TUESDAY, 11/6/18:
PRAY THAT GOD WILL PREPARE
HIM NOW FOR THE ROLE OF PASTORING FBCBA

Romans 15:30 - Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.

Romans 12:1-2 - I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Somewhere, our new pastor is busy caring for the church where he is currently serving. His week is likely filling up with many meetings, ministry opportunities, staff meetings, evangelistic calls, and sermon prep. As we are praying, his heart is being stirred in a strange way. Although he is happy in the church where the Lord has placed him, he senses that there may be a change coming. He cannot define it and doesn't understand this spiritual restlessness that he is experiencing.

God stirs the hearts of His servants to prepare them for what is ahead. We pray that our Lord will already be stirring the heart of our next preacher so that he has an awareness that God is up to something in his life. And, in that way, when our Team contacts him, he will be open to their visit and entertain praying for God's will for his life's work.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray fervently for our Lord to go before us to create a holy expectancy in the man God has selected to be our next pastor.
2. Pray that God will work in our next pastor's heart to know that God is at work, that God will lead him and his family to be submissive to God's will for a move.
3. Pray that each meeting he has with our Search Team will be more and more confirming that God is calling him to a new work.

WEDNESDAY, 11/7/18:

PRAY FOR A MAN TO BUILD UP THE BODY OF CHRIST

1 Cor.14:3 - The one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation.

1 Peter 5:2-3 - Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

So often, when the word “church” is mentioned, our minds go to a building where we gather for worship. Indeed, those are special places in our lives. And, they are the places that some of our most meaningful spiritual markers have occurred.

Depending on how long we have attended a certain church, that locale may be the place where we grew up, were baptized, married, and possibly the place of the funeral for a parent or very dear friends.

But the building of the church that is recorded in Scripture is the building up of the saints of God in their Christian faith and practice. Paul, the Apostle, stated the role of a pastor is to be a “builder” of the people of God.... *Their (pastors) responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.*

(Ephesians 4:12). The confusion and conflict that Christians are facing requires that the time invested in the church must impact our lives with greater practical truth, knowledge, and spiritual discernment if we are to be effective in being “*light in this crooked and perverse generation.*” **(Phil.2:15).**

PRAYER REEQUESTS:

1. Pray that God's man for us has a passion for building up the body of Christ through teaching, ministry opportunities, and sound Biblical convictions.
2. Pray that all of us as members will be zealous and eager to grow in our walk with God so that as we make the journey of faith together, we are ever more effective in what we do for Christ.

THURSDAY, 11/8/18: PRAY THAT HE WILL BE BOTH A VISIONARY AND A DOER

Philippians 2:13 For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Jeremiah 29:11 - For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Proverbs 29:18 - Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint

Visionaries move us from our present comfort zone to new challenges and greater accomplishments. Spiritually, the work of a pastor is to shepherd the flock of God. That means that he is always thinking ahead of the next advance that the church needs to make. Those dreams are not foolish but are readily seen by others as he shares what God has shown to him.

Dreaming and visions may come easily for many leaders. The more difficult part of future-casting is to be able to unveil the stages of progress that will move the church forward to accomplish the task ahead.

As our new pastor comes to lead us, he will see many areas that need attention. His vision to strengthen and "build us up" will likely be painful for some because we have grown accustomed to what we have done for so long. We need to realize that we called a new pastor to see us with a new set of eyes, to pray about what would make us more effective, and to implement changes for our good. Our response is to be "doers" and not "hearers" only.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray for our new pastor will be able to see the good things, but also to readily see those things that we have not done well. And, ask that he would have the support of the church to move us forward to make necessary changes.
2. Pray for our new pastor to have courage and boldness and yet, tenderness toward us so that like a good shepherd, he is sensitive to the well-being and nurture of “his sheep” as he leads us.
3. Pray that he will do the work of an evangelist so that the church grows to be a dynamic force to bring lost people to the light of God’s truth.

FRIDAY, 11/9/18: PRAY THAT HE FEARS GOD ALONE

1 Timothy 4:8 - For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come

Exodus 18:21 -Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy

Psalms 112:1 - Praise the LORD! How blessed is the man who fears the LORD, Who greatly delights in His commandments.

Colossians 3:23 Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,

Acts 5:29 But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men.

Everything in the heart of a man of God is directed toward knowing, serving, pleasing, and continually reflecting the glory of God. It was the great pastor and author, Oswald Chambers that wrote, "The remarkable thing about God is that when you fear God, you fear nothing else, whereas if you do not fear God, you fear everything else." Churches that flourish are those that have a burning desire to seek and honor the Lord. Therefore, the highest standard is set for the pastor when those he seeks to lead agree to "follow the pastor who follows the Master".

Diversions are present every single day for all of us. That is also true for a minister. One of the greatest distractions is a disgruntled church member that is eager to find fault over a less than critical issue when the battle is raging over a matter of great importance for the church. In those moments, the membership learns if the pastor is so focused on God that he fears not pleasing Him or is he more focused on the opinions of men lest he be displeasing in the eyes of members for not doing what is demanded. Pray that our team unifies in their desire to call a man who fears God above all else.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray for the right candidate that will grasp the hearts of our Search Team. Pray that our team will seek a man that can “stand in this evil day in the full armor of God” and proclaim “Thus saith the Lord” to this generation with confidence and without compromise.
2. Pray that he can teach and preach with clarity, compassion, and lead us as well as tell us.

WEEK SEVEN 11/12– 11/16: PRAYING FOR TRANSITION

MONDAY, 11/12/18: LOVE FROM THE PEOPLE FOR PASTOR

Hebrews 13:17 - Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that [is] unprofitable for you.

Acts 20:28 - Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Some people have a very hard time feeling “at home” with those that are new in their circle. The reality is that most all of us are the same in our needs, daily routines, and in our joys and hurts. The variance in temperament, personality, attitude, and congeniality is what takes us a while to learn and accept in the new people we meet and vice versa. Some of us are quiet by nature and prefer calm surroundings. Others of us are loud, hyper-active, and never comfortable in a room that is not cranked up with laughter, conversations that are lively between every single person. That group never wants any “dead air” anywhere or anytime!

When our new pastor comes, we want to be quick to welcome him and his family. We will have prayed for him, been eager for his first day, and excited about what God will direct us to do under his leadership. The key to acceptance for both pastor and people is that we continually speak good things “about” him and “to” him and to his family. We will seek to be quick to tell our names each time we greet him so that he can begin to learn who we are. We will invite him to get to know us through various types of settings (and give him grace that he cannot accept every invitation to do all we ask!). And, we will love him and let him know that he is loved through our faithfulness, willingness to help when asked, and our notes/texts/cards/emails of

encouragement. We will remember special days in his life and the life of his wife so that they continually know the love of this great church.

PRAYER REQUEST:

Pray that we will demonstrate our thanks to God for bringing us a new pastor and family by the many ways we will show the love of God to them regularly and by praying for them daily!

TUESDAY, 11/13/18: TO ACCEPT HIM AS OUR PASTOR

1 Thess.5:12-13 - And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. [And] be at peace among yourselves.

1 Timothy 5:17 - Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine.

Hebrews 13:7 - Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.

Genuine acceptance is not given in a first visit. Truly, we want to see, hear, and reflect on a person's demeanor before we determine the level of our acceptance. That is also true of church leadership. Just hearing a preacher preach a good sermon does not mean he will be quickly entered into our circle of friends. The most difficult thing for any new family is the experience of feeling like an outsider. People in an existing group can be courteous but not open to new friendships.

Our new pastor needs to know that he is welcomed and is going to be received into our hearts as our pastor. That means we must be zealous to accept him as a person needing friendship ties to us as much as possible. No pastor is effective if he is on the "outside" of the groups in the church and seen only as the man in the pulpit on Sundays. He will become to many of you a person that you will meet for lunch on occasion or he may "work out" in your gym. You will invite to your class social, and you will be the person that he loves to see coming his way because of your smile, pat on the back, and good word of what God is doing in the church.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray that when our new Minister comes to Broken Arrow, that our Pastor and family will experience the love of this great church and each one of us will determine that we are the “welcoming committee of one” to make sure that our church surrounds them with affection.
2. Pray that he is commended often for what he does well by our texts, verbal compliments face-to-face, and our cards that express our prayers and love for him and his leadership.
3. Pray that his family is so readily accepted here in the church, the children in their schools, and each of them into our hearts that they feel at home immediately.

WEDNESDAY, 11/14/18: THIS IS A NEW DAY

Jeremiah 29:11 - For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Jeremiah 33:3 - Call to me and I will answer you and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known.

Philippians 1:6 - And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

There is a surge in enthusiasm over new beginnings! When a couple weds, a baby is born, or a child graduates from high school to go to college, there is a new anticipation of great new experiences. The same is true for a grand opening of a new business. Lots and lots of people want to see what this new business has to offer.

We are in a new day! It has been over 30 years since we had a new pastor with new vision, emphases, and direction. We rejoice over the victories of past years. Today, we build on that foundation to launch into a bold new adventure that will take us to new heights, new dimensions of walking with our God, and new ministries and mission efforts bringing new people into the Kingdom. That is cause for prayers of intercession for our new pastor; prayers of thanksgiving for God's hand that has been upon us through the years, and for prayers of God's Holy Spirit to guide us as we travel together on this part of the journey with our Lord Jesus.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray for our new preacher to be true to his calling and true and obedient to do what the Lord wants him to do.
2. Pray that we will be good, faithful, and prayerful followers of the will of God for this church and the scope of the impact she has and that she will have.
3. Pray that we will do our very best to embrace changes that our new shepherd will bring to us in this new day.
4. Pray for God to cover our pastor with His Spirit so that no weapon formed against him shall prosper.

THURSDAY, 11/15/18: HIS MINISTRY WILL BE EMBRACED

Psalms 37:23 - The steps of a [good] man are ordered by the LORD: and he delights in his way.

Isaiah 55:4 - Behold, I have given him [for] a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

Galatians 6:6 - One who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches.

Sometimes, we ask for God's provision and then do not thank God for what He has provided! Isn't that strange? And, for those of you that know history, you know that humans have always been quick to complain and slow to change when God opened the way to get to a higher plain. Ask Moses. He came with the good news that the LORD was going to free His people. Hallelujah! But, very quickly, the people were tired of the sand, weary from the hot sun, no longer enjoying even the very meager amenities of slave's holdings in Egypt, and living on the same food every single day. They fussed, scowled, murmured and wanted to go back. They stated they wanted a "leader" to take them back. Leaders don't take a group backwards!

Although we never complain (do we???), we can see God's hand doing what we asked if we keep our eyes on him. Change can be uncomfortable, inconvenient, challenging, aggravating, and a real pain. But, the only way to move forward is through those irritating steps to exercise spiritual muscles that we have allowed to grow weak. Challenges are what stir us. What we do with new visions and dreams will result in greater victories or tragic defeats depending on our faith in God and faithfulness in obedience. No team advances without injuries, substitutions, fumbles, interceptions, and poor performance. But, once a team learns from those things, they can advance to defeat any opponent. That is what our LORD is desiring to do. So, let's keep focused on the LORD and the rewards of faithfulness so that we remember in the years to come... this new beginning was the best thing that ever happened to our church.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray that we will be eager to volunteer to serve in the church.
2. Pray that we will respond positively to requests made from our Pastor to embrace new ministries that are on his heart.
3. Pray that as we pray and serve, we commend our shepherd to the LORD daily in prayer, frequently in commendations, and often in texts of encouragement to let him know of our support.

FRIDAY, 11/16/18:

GOD WILL CONTINUALLY BLESS HIM

Jeremiah 3:15 "And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding."

Psalm 5:12 - Surely, LORD, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield.

Psalm 84:11 - For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.

Perhaps it is because of what gets our attention for most of the hours of a day. Or, maybe it is because they are tangible, and we can see them readily. But, do you find it strange that many of God's people measure the blessings of God in material possessions that have been acquired? For those of us that know our LORD, it seems a bit unusual that when asked in a group to share what "we are thankful for", most often it is people around us, salvation, and then personal health. Rarely, do we list the additional abundant number of spiritual victories, provisions, and favor bestowed on our lives. After we state that we are thankful that we are saved, our testimony shifts to "stuff".

Do we praise him in private for those mighty gifts that enable us to live victorious? Are we somewhat embarrassed to tell of his goodness to us spiritually lest we sound like we are boasting? Do we proclaim the spiritual victories that He has given to us? Or, are we unaware of the spiritual bounty of beneficent blessings that are poured out on us in abundance? Paul, the Apostle, stated the reality of spiritual bounty to the church in Corinth.... *God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.* **2 Corinthians 9:8.**

PRAYER REQEUSTS:

1. Pray that our LORD will open the windows of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. (Mal.3:10).
2. Pray that we are spiritually sensitive to the presence, power, and privileges that the Holy Spirit provides us from the hand of God.
3. Pray that our great God daily provides His blessings and favor on our pastor as he prays for us, seeks God's will for us, and leads us as God directs him.

**WEEK EIGHT - 11/19 - 11/23:
PRAYING FOR OUR LAUNCH
INTO GOD'S WILL FOR OUR FUTURE**

**MONDAY, 11/19/18:
CELEBRATION OF A NEW BEGINNING**

Lamentations 3:22-23 - The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Jeremiah 29:11-12 - For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you.

Isaiah 43:18-19 Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

You know the sound. It is common around our nation. The sound of fans shouting, blowing horns, clapping hands, and celebrating the fact that their team just won! You have heard the celebration of folks whose candidate just won the election. And, you have had the misfortune of staying in a hotel where revelers were celebrating long into the night when you were desperately hoping for quiet so that you would be rested before the full day facing you in the morning.

But when is the last time you heard people pouring out of church so blessed, excited, thrilled, and jubilant of God at work that there were loud shouts, hands clapping, horns honking, and people jumping for joy at the evidence of God's presence? Somehow, we have convinced ourselves that is inappropriate for church. Have you not read....

At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, the Levites were sought out from where they lived and were brought to Jerusalem to celebrate joyfully the dedication with

*songs of thanksgiving and with the music of cymbals, harps and lyres...I had the leaders of Judah go up on top of the wall. I also assigned two large choirs to give thanks. The choirs sang under the direction of Jezrahiah. And on that day, they offered great sacrifices, rejoicing because God had given them great joy. The women and children also rejoiced. **The sound of rejoicing in Jerusalem could be heard far away. Nehemiah 12:27, 31-32, 41- 43.***

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. That we will see such great victories in the days to come that there will be those events that cause us to rejoice with great fervor and the "sound to be heard far away".
2. Pray that we will pray as if the work all depends on God, work as if it all depends on us, and celebrate because when the victories come from the LORD, He is worthy of our highest praise.

TUESDAY, 11/20/18:

SEEKING ABUNDANT BLESSINGS OF GOD

2 Cor.9:8 - And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

Psalms 84:11 - For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor. No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly.

Philippians 4:19 - And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

If our LORD chose to pour out His Spirit in a mighty movement and a great awakening to touch the nation, what kind of church would He choose? Is it likely He would desire holiness to be prevalent? Would He entrust His work to faithless or to faithful saints? How would He determine if a church had the character and heart to seek out the lost to bring them in and nurture new Christians to empower them? Would He check to see if a church was faithful "first" in how it gave and used the money given to Kingdom work before He entrusted great spiritual opportunity? Would He examine to see if those in membership were disciples of Jesus or simply attenders of the church?

In this generation and in this turbulent time spiritually, we need to be that kind of church listed above. One that is totally focused and about the Master's business. One where every member is "all in" to accomplish the will of God set out for us. No church needs blessings to sit through meetings or the rudimentary elements of a worship service. We need the abundant, vibrant, fearful outpouring of God's blessings that would thrust us out into the world in the same manner the disciples were compelled at Pentecost. This should be our passion and our plan. That way, when the blessings fall, we are in position to utilize each one for God's great glory!

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Ask God to send His supernatural power upon us provided by the infilling and indwelling of His Holy Spirit.
2. Pray that we will be a church that is experiencing God's presence so continually that those in the community come wanting to see what is happening as God works among us.
3. Pray that the blessings of God would fall on our every spiritual endeavor so that we know the abundance in every area of the church that comes when God is doing what He does best!

WEDNESDAY, 11/21/18: MAKING OUR HEARTS READY TO OBEY

Psalm 51:10 - Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Romans 12:2 - And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

James 4:7 - Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Preparation is the key to doing anything well. We prepare as students for tests by studying, for musical proficiency tests by practicing, and as athletes by continually doing the basics until it is second nature. One prepares the home for company, a business prepares for an audit, and a church prepares for worship.

This is a time of preparation for a new beginning with a new leader. So how can we prepare? Several simple and yet powerful things we can do...1. Ask our Lord to forgive and cleanse us of all sin so that we are in the right attitude to hear from God and our new pastor. 2. Pray for God's anointing to rest on our new preacher. 3. Pray that we will determine to be eager to volunteer when asked, diligent in doing the responsibilities we currently have, and begin now to plan a way to personally welcome our new pastor and his family. 4. Be praying and inviting folks that have been out of church to come to hear and meet our new pastor. 5. Pray that God will enable you to bring at least one person that needs to know Jesus in the first year of this new beginning.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray for the Lord to do a new work in your heart, life, and family in these days of preparation of a new beginning for your church.
2. Pray for God's Holy Spirit to tabernacle on this hilltop so that each time we enter here, we can sense that our God is about to do great things.
3. Pray, serve, give, and attend with an expectancy that as we are faithful in preparation, God will be faithful in pouring out a blessing so great *"that there will not be room enough to receive it"*.

THURSDAY, 11/22/18:

GRATEFUL OUR GOD IS LEADING US

Isaiah 30:21 - Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it."

Isaiah 58:11 - 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.

Proverbs 16:9 - In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps.

Psalms 37:23-24 - The LORD makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand.

"We walk by faith, and not by sight!" (2 Cor.5:7). The more we seek the LORD, the more we are aware of His presence. Depending on the closeness of our walk, He brings to mind the Scriptures that are hidden in our hearts just when we need them. God will put people in our path that need to hear what we most recently have learned so that it becomes etched into the core of our being. And, He will send those alongside to assist us at just the time we need it so that our lives are enriched by His provision.

FBCBA and CBC is going to need to daily seek the LORD so that as we travel this part of the journey, we are aware of God's hand upon us, His Holy Spirit within us, the Lord Jesus walking with us. Scripture states that the walk with God is on a "path of righteousness". Paths are proven, solid from many people walking that same direction before us, and they are dependable. However, they are narrow, not always on level ground, and can have rocks or roots along the way that force us to pay close attention. This is not the time to "assume" we are walking with God. This is the time as a church to be certain we are walking with Him. *Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: ¶ Let the wicked forsake his way, and the*

unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah 55:6-7).

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray for a fresh encounter with the Lord today! Ask Him to fill your life with His power, your mind with His thoughts, your heart with His love, your spirit with His Spirit, and your day with His Presence that is manifested in a significant way.
2. Pray that you and all our church family is more aware of God's hand upon us and His Spirit leading us than ever before.
3. Pray that the evidence will be a season of repentance, reconciliation, revival, and reaching out to our city with the Gospel with a renewed fervor and effectiveness.

FRIDAY, 11/23/18:

PRAY FOR WORKERS IN GOD'S CHURCH

Hebrews 6:10 - God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them."

1 Peter 4:10 - Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms."

Romans 12:9-13 - Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality."

Colossians 3:23-24 - "Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ."

You have been there. It is not pleasant. It can create great frustration and even a sense of anger if any of us has been given a huge task to accomplish and we're expecting a group of our co-workers to pitch in to help us, but they did not come to our aid. When they gave excuses as to why they could not help, and others just did not show up, the work that could have been done quickly became a heavy burden that was very challenging to complete. How did you feel when that was "you" left to do a big task alone?

Sadly, so much of the work of the church is left undone because the workers are few. Many enjoy the blessings of someone else's work to be sure all was done for their benefit. The old adage is true even in the work of the Lord...20% do the work giving, praying, inviting, teaching, and ministry for 80% of the people. I don't read in Scripture that is the plan of God for His people. Sometimes, we hear a zealot proclaim that we are "the army of the LORD". If so, we have too many who are AWOL. Now is the time to re-enlist in the service of your King Jesus. For those who are

serving in some capacity in your church, please remain steadfast. For those that used to serve, please step up to work again in the Kingdom's task. And, for those who have never served, now would be the time to say, "Here am I, Lord. Use me!" The church needs you. The LORD has called you. Our world is desperate for you to be bold, true, and faithful in the work of our God!

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray for this season of change to be the most active, productive, and vibrant that we have seen.
2. Pray that as the Spirit of God falls on us in a powerful manner, we will rise to the occasion to be the church that God chooses to use as a leader in this region!
3. Pray that we are an example to other churches how a church can move from one pastor to another and do it in such a way that the church rallied and grew in the seam of transition.

May God work mightily in our midst!