



WOODBURY
CHURCH OF CHRIST

40 DAY PRAYER CHALLENGE

March 3 - April 11, 2020

www.woodburychurch.org

40 Day Prayer Calendar:

We are a church focused on Discipleship. That means we need to be a church focused on prayer. This is one tool to help us get there as a unified family. We are asking everyone to devote time to prayer each day from March 3 through April 11, 2020. For some of us this may become a time of testing or challenge as 40 days was for Moses, Elijah, and Jesus.

We have broken down the calendar into four ten-day segments with a little different focus for each segment.

- **Disciples are learners.** "Disciple" literally means "learner". We want to know and become more like Christ. We learn best when we are Seeking *God's face*.
- **Disciples don't just attend they engage.** We aren't disciples in order to do our own thing and building our own kingdoms. We get involved and seek first *His kingdom*.
- **Disciples are warriors.** Anytime we seek to build God's Kingdom or become more like Christ we will be met with resistance. Therefore true discipleship is *spiritual warfare*.
- **Disciples are being transformed into the image of Jesus.** We want to see ourselves, our families, our church and our communities transform. We are praying for *revival!*

If you want to take an extra step in your focus on prayer then this may also be a good opportunity to fast. A fast is simply eliminating something to help us understand and concentrate on our need for Christ. It can be done for just about any length of time. Some choose to fast for a day or two. Others fast for a whole week. Of course, Jesus fasted from food for 40 days.

You can fast from food like Jesus did, but you can also fast from things like Netflix or Facebook. Some even choose to do an all-media fast and cut out all television, radio or podcasts. You may be surprised at how much our lives are filled with noise and, once we eliminate those distractions, how much easier it is to speak to God.

Thank you for teaming up with us! May God bless you as you grow closer to Him and as we seek to have God's will done on earth as it is in heaven.

Section One - Disciples are learners

Disciples are learners who constantly seek *His face*. May the next 10 days be your "burning bush moment" or your "gentle whisper moment" as God gives you new direction or a new challenge.

Day 1: *My heart has heard you say, "Come and talk with me." And my heart responds, "LORD, I am coming."* (**Psalm 27:8**)

God, you are always speaking. Sometimes we ignore your voice, but most often we are distracted to the point that we do not hear.

Pray: Father, we believe that you desire time with us as your children. Help all your children to know of your love for them. Help us devote time to you each day. May time with you be the deepest longing of our heart.

Day 2: *They will receive the LORD's blessing and have a right relationship with God their savior.*
⁶Such people may seek you and

worship in your presence, O God of Jacob. (Psalm 24:5-6)

Our actions are not what makes us right with God. We all depend on the actions of Jesus to have a right relationship with God.

Pray: Father, we confess that we are unworthy to approach your throne. But we know that we may freely speak with you because of what Jesus has done for us.

Day 3: *The one thing I ask of the LORD – the thing I seek most – is to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, delighting in the LORD's perfections and meditating in his Temple. (Psalm 27:4)*

We have many distractions in life. Even good things can be distracting.

Pray: Father, may we value you above all things this life has to offer. May we honor You every day. May we make Sundays a delight to us and to You.

Day 4: *But even as he spoke, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy. Listen to him."*
⁶The disciples were terrified and fell face down on the ground.

⁷ Then Jesus came over and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid." *⁸ And when they looked up, Moses and Elijah were gone, and they saw only Jesus.*
(**Matthew 17:5-8**)

We want Jesus to be recognized as the Son of God; not just another religious leader.

Pray: Father, we pray specifically for those that do not know you as the one true God. May You draw them and may they see Jesus as your divine Son.

Day 5: *You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water.*
(**Psalms 63:1**)

Most of us have not been truly thirsty. I hope we begin to desire God in the same way we would water if we were truly dying of thirst.

Pray: God, the things in this world promise to satisfy, but they can not. May we seek God, knowing that He is our only true satisfaction.

Day 6: *As Jesus and the disciples continued on their way to Jerusalem, they came to a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. ³⁹ Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord's feet, listening to what he taught.* (**Luke 10:38-39**)

Jesus later tells Martha that Mary has chosen the most important thing.

Pray: Lord Jesus, may we always seek to know your teaching and follow your way. Give us strength to say no to anything that might get in the way.

Day 7: *Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land.* (**2 Chronicles 7:14**)

If we understand prayer, then humility and repentance will accompany it.

Pray: Dear God, prayer is such a gift. We are humbled by your availability. Show us the things we

need to change for you to hear our prayers.

Day 8: *"O our God, won't you stop them? We are powerless against this mighty army that is about to attack us. We do not know what to do, but we are looking to you for help."* (**2 Chronicles 20:12**)

Sooner or later we realize how little control we have. When we do it should push us to seek God in prayer. Prayer should be our first response, not our last resort.

Pray: God, sometimes we do not know what to do. Many times it seems things are against us. May we look to You in all times; may we have confidence in your ability alone.

Day 9: *Suddenly, their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And at that moment he disappeared! ³² They said to each other, "Didn't our hearts burn within us as he talked with us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?"* (**Luke 24:31-32**)

Jesus was present with these disciples and yet they did not recognize his presence.

Pray: Lord Jesus, thank you that you are always present with us. May we enjoy You on our journey and recognize Your presence and activity in our lives.

Day 10: *Some will proudly claim, 'I belong to the LORD.' Others will say, 'I am a descendant of Jacob.' Some will write the LORD's name on their hands and will take the name of Israel as their own."* (**Isaiah 44:5**)

We must realize that God is not just a help to us. He is everything to us. We belong to Him.

Pray: Holy God and Father, we are yours! We confess that we are nothing by ourselves and that we must always seek your face. What a joy to belong to You!

Section Two - Disciples don't just attend, they engage.

Disciples are devoted workers who seek *His kingdom* first. Over the next 10 days, may you see how *expansive* the kingdom of God truly is.

Day 11: *Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.*
(**Matthew 6:33**)

We must allow *God* to show us what seeking his kingdom first means; rather than trying to figure that out by comparing ourselves to *others* or by looking at our own past experience.

Pray: Father, tell me what it means to seek your kingdom above all else.

Day 12: *Then Jesus said to his disciples, "I tell you the truth, it is very hard for a rich person to enter*

the Kingdom of Heaven.
(**Matthew 19:23**)

The rich man wasn't really seeking truth but approval. He wanted to be told that everything was just fine the way it was. When Jesus focused on his wealth it revealed his heart. This is important, the average North American is wealthy by just about any standard.

Pray: Lord Jesus, may we want to follow your words; even when those words require a change of heart on our part. May we hold on loosely to material things and hold tightly to You. May we allow absolutely nothing to keep us from following You.

Day 13: *For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but of living a life of goodness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.* (**Romans 14:17**)

It is not a "physical kingdom"; but it can be lived out here on earth. The Woodbury Church is a small part of the "Kingdom of God". How can we bring that peace and joy to those outside our walls?

Pray: God, we know this world is longing for peace. Peace cannot be found apart from You. May we look to share peace and joy from Your Spirit with all those who are looking for it apart from You.

Day 14: *Never forget the day when you stood before the LORD your God at Mount Sinai, where he told me, 'Summon the people before me, and I will personally instruct them. Then they will learn to fear me as long as they live, and they will teach their children to fear me also.'* (**Deuteronomy 4:10**)

God has used the Woodbury church in many ways that you may not have even realized! We have taught hundreds of kids at VBS. We have a wonderful Children's Ministry and thriving Youth Ministry. We have provided for countless weeks of Bible Camp. Woodbury has even helped plant the St. Paul Urban Ministry, which has grown from a primarily Hmong children's group to youth group and now it's own congregation who are teaching their own children to be disciples of Christ.

Pray: Father, we praise you for drawing all people to yourself. Thank you for what you are doing in the Urban Ministry. Please bless them and their growth both spiritually and numerically as you see fit.

Day 15: *He said to them, "The Scriptures declare, 'My Temple will be called a house of prayer for all nations,'..."* (**Mark 11:17**)

The Woodbury church also has a Spanish worship service that meets in the Conference Room simultaneously with our English service in the main auditorium. May those of us at Woodbury be in prayer for that group and may we be willing to sacrifice our time to help them.

Pray: Father, we know that You want all nations to know You. God we pray for our Spanish speaking group. We pray that they will be led by your Spirit and that you will create opportunities to serve and that the good news will spread through that group as well.

Day 16: *And I tell you this, that many Gentiles will come from all over the world—from east and west*

—and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven. (Matthew 8:11)

Woodbury reaches out globally as well as locally. We help support the Raab family who are on mission in The Netherlands and Belgium.

Pray: Father God, thank you for the opportunity to see your work in other countries. We pray for the Raab's and ask that you give them energy in serving you where you have called them. Bring them people who have been moved by your Spirit to seek the truth of your love and grace.

Day 17: *Moses' arms soon became so tired he could no longer hold them up. So Aaron and Hur found a stone for him to sit on. Then they stood on each side of Moses, holding up his hands. (Exodus 17:12)*

The Hebrew people were engaged in a physical battle. As long as Moses held up his arms, Israel was winning. When he became tired the tides began to turn. Aaron and Hur helped Moses hold up his arms for victory. Woodbury also supports the McEntire family in Peru.

May we help them by "holding up their arms in the battle".

Pray: Father, thank you for the McEntire family. Bless them as they share with those in Peru. Bless them as they raise their children. And bless them to see a great harvest of souls for your glory.

Day 18: *And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come. (Matthew 24:14)*

The kingdom of God is huge! It will include every nation, and tribe. The Jackson's are our newest missionaries. They have just arrived in Greece where they will be working with Greeks and with Muslim refugees who are fleeing violence from many nations. What an opportunity! These refugees will then settle in other parts of the world and the Gospel can spread like it did in the first century.

Pray: God, you are truly an awesome God. You work in ways we cannot see. Thank you for preparing the way for the Jackson's. The fields are white

with harvest. We ask you and depend on you to overcome all obstacles in the way- language, culture, and governments. Empower the Jackson's to share Jesus with many and may you open hearts to hear as you did in the first century.

Day 19: *May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. (Matthew 6:10)*

What does it mean to call for God's Kingdom to come? Among many things it means that we need to pray that God's Kingdom would continue to advance on the earth as it is in Heaven. Jesus told us to pray in this way.

Pray: Lord Jesus, we want your kingdom to come. We know it will mean peace. We know it will be full of joy. We do not deserve it, but we ask for You to bring it as we lay down our will.

Day 20: *I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me. (John 17:21)*

When Jesus was praying for the kingdom, His focus was on unity. Jesus' kingdom is bigger than we realize. As we seek His kingdom, we better follow His desires.

Pray: Father, we want to be devoted workers in your kingdom. Help us to see with your eyes and with your heart. May we seek unity with all believers, so we will be a more powerful witness to non-believers.

Section Three - Disciples are Warriors

Disciples are Warriors. We are in a battle. Being engaged in war means sacrifice and we don't like to be asked to give anything up. But Jesus said, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must *give up your own way*, take up your cross daily, and follow me." *True disciples* are involved in *spiritual warfare*.

Day 21: *For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this*

dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. (**Ephesians 6:12**)

Paul makes it clear that our real enemies are unseen. That causes us to ignore the fight and focus on what we can see.

Pray: Lord Jesus, we often forget that you are Lord and King. We want to accept you as Savior, but often we do not want to make you our Lord and King. Please forgive us.

Day 22: *"Let's go across to the outpost of those pagans," Jonathan said to his armor bearer. "Perhaps the LORD will help us, for nothing can hinder the LORD. He can win a battle whether he has many warriors or only a few!"* (**1 Samuel 14:6**)

Jonathan is an incredible example of faith in God. We need to be warriors, but our battle is not against flesh and blood nor does our strength lie in ourselves.

Pray: God, help us remember that it does not matter when it seems like we are up against something beyond our control. May we put our faith in You!

Day 23: *David slipped over to Saul's camp one night to look around. Saul*

and Abner son of Ner, the commander of his army, were sleeping inside a ring formed by the slumbering warriors. (**1 Samuel 26:5**)

Too often, we are like Saul's warriors. We fall asleep and ignore the fight. It takes a daily decision to follow Jesus to keep from falling asleep and ignoring real spiritual issues in ourselves or those close to us.

Pray: Holy Spirit, keep us alert. May we take up our cross daily, so we cannot lose sight of the battle.

Day 24: *The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too.* (**Genesis 3:6**)

We tend to think Adam and Eve were pretty foolish to let Satan deceive them. And they were - but how many times have we been deceived just as easily? We need to focus on the unseen daily,

so that we are not deceived by what we see.

Pray: Father, forgive us when we disobey you. Forgive us when we use our own wisdom to make decisions. Help us to not make decisions based on what we desire, but what you desire for us.

Day 25: *In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. (Ephesians 6:16)*

We need the full armor. But against Satan's attacks, we need to put our trust in God. If our confidence is in ourselves, we will fail. If our faith is in God alone, then he will defend us.

Pray: Father, thank you for your promises and for always keeping your promises. Thank you for your faithfulness. We cannot stand against the devil's attacks and schemes, but You have the power to do that for us.

Day 26: *But Moses told the people, "Don't be afraid. Just stand still and watch the LORD rescue you today. The Egyptians you see today will never be seen again. ¹⁴ The LORD himself will fight*

for you. Just stay calm." (Exodus 14:13-14)

Most of us will likely never see action in a military battle. The bravery required likely won't be one to face a well-armed, enemy who is shooting at us. However, we are in a spiritual battle and faith in God will require us being able to draw from the the same well of courage.

Pray: God, we praise you that nothing is too difficult for you. We are often overwhelmed, but we do not have to worry because You are a great and powerful God!

Day 27: *Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness. (Ephesians 6:14)*

Today, some in America believe there is no absolute truth and therefore right and wrong varies.

Pray: Holy God, look down on us and be merciful. We do not accept your truth and follow what you say is right. We follow what is right in our own eyes. May we as followers of Christ stand up under your armor and lovingly,

courageously teach truth and righteousness or we will fall.

Day 28: *Pilate said, "So you are a king?" Jesus responded, "You say I am a king. Actually, I was born and came into the world to testify to the truth. All who love the truth recognize that what I say is true."* (**John 18:37**)

Jesus is King. We are his warriors. We fight for Him because he is the truth. True followers or followers in name only?

Pray: Lord Jesus, we should be more devoted followers. As we pray, strengthen our desire to follow You and lessen our desire for things in this world.

Day 29: *We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do. ⁴We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments.* (**2 Corinthians 10:3-4**)

Prayer is our greatest weapon! It is greater than our mind, our logic, our skill, or anything else we possess. Paul knew this. Paul used these other things, but he

knew they would not amount to much without being bathed in prayer.

Pray: God, we fail to see value in things we cannot see. But, we must learn. Our greatest enemies are unseen; You are unseen. May we learn to rely on prayer as our greatest weapon in the fight!

Day 30: *Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.* (Ephesians 6:18)

"All times" and "every occasion"... to be honest, sometimes we don't believe in prayer. Scripture teaches us to pray for each other, and for our governmental leaders. Prayer is extremely important. That is why after talking about the Christian armor, he spoke about prayer and asked the Ephesians to pray for him.

Pray: Father God, we believe that we can win the battle in prayer. We believe we can impact what you are doing even on the other side of the world when we pray. May we pray for our brothers and sisters here at the Woodbury Church of Christ, other believers in Woodbury and surrounding suburbs, and for *all believers everywhere.*

Section Four - Disciples are being transformed into the image of Christ.

Disciples are changed when they seek God for *transformation* and *revival*, starting in their own lives, and then in their churches, communities and their nations. Over the next 10 days, may we prepare the way for the LORD, and make straight paths for Him so that He can demonstrate through our lives the awesome, transforming power of Jesus Christ.

Day 31: *For thus says the High, Exalted One who lives forever, whose name is Holy: 'I live in the high and holy place but also with the broken and humble, in order to revive the spirit of the humble and revive the hearts of the broken ones.'* (**Isaiah 57:15**)

Are we *gripped* by the ultimate holiness of God? Do we understand how utterly dependent we are on the God above ALL? Do we bow our heart humbly before Him as Lord and look to Him for everything? We must confess prideful and arrogant ways and seek the Lord

in genuine humility and repentance.

Pray: Sovereign Lord...bend us; give us a fresh and powerful vision of your holiness.

Day 32: *Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.* (**Psalms 139:23-24**)

We must come to a place where we are dissatisfied with anything that gets in the way of our relationship with God. Ask God to convict your heart and be sensitive to His conviction.

Pray: O Lord, create in me a clean heart and renew a steadfast spirit within me that is willing to obey you in all things because of your goodness to me. Remove anything in my life that would hinder my heart from being responsive to your Spirit/Word.

Day 33: *When I brought your people out of Egypt, I spoke to them. But I did not just give them commands about burnt offerings and sacrifices. ²³I also gave them*

another command. I said, 'Obey me. Then I will be your God. And you will be my people. Live the way I command you to live. Then things will go well with you.' ²⁴ *But they did not listen. They refused to pay any attention to me. Instead, they did what their stubborn and evil hearts wanted them to do. They went backward and not forward. (Jeremiah 7:22-24)*

We must train our heart to obey the Lord completely and without hesitation, knowing and trusting our God. Our obedience cannot be based on our own understanding of a situation.

Pray: Lord, reveal to me any areas of partial obedience in my life. You know what is best for me in every situation. You are God and I am not. I place my trust in you.

God knows that we need His Spirit and that His Spirit will change us.

Pray: Align my heart with Yours so that I may gain a heart of understanding and eyes that truly SEE.

Day 35: *Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. (Romans 12:2)*

Transformation occurs first in our mind, then in our behavior, and then our "hearts"/ our desires are changed.

Pray: God, you have the power to transform me. May I decide to follow you so closely that my desires are changed by your Spirit in me.

Day 36: *So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like*

Day 34: *I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you. (Ezekiel 36:26)*

him as we are changed into his glorious image. (**2 Corinthians 3:18**)

As important as obedience is to our relationship with God, our confidence is *not* in our obedience, but in the grace of God. We either reflect God's grace to others or we do not, there is no middle ground.

Pray: Father God, help us by your Spirit live lives of joy that reflect the work you have done in us. May others see that God's grace is available to them as well!

Day 37: *Then the righteous will shine like the sun in their Father's Kingdom. Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand!* (**Matthew 13:43**)

We shine because we reflect Jesus. We shine because we have been brought from death to life!

Pray: O God, please come near to us. We desire more of you, so more of You can be seen in us.

Day 38: *If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and*

turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land. (**2 Chronicles 7:14**)

God, the creator of the heavens and the earth and all that is within them, is calling us to recognize that we have strayed from Him and is inviting us to come back to Him and experience His forgiveness and renewed blessings. May we, as His Beloved, accept God's invitation to return to Him in repentance.

Pray: O Lord, only You can heal our land. Please pour out revival and spiritual awakening on our land, and Lord, please begin with me.

Day 39: *Jesus replied, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: "Love your neighbor as yourself."* (**Matthew 22:37-39**)

Pray: Oh God, grow our Church to be a Body of members who love You with

every part of our hearts, every part of our souls, and every part of our minds; and may we grow to love all those around us more and more as we see them through Your eyes.

Day 40: *The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus. (Acts 4:13)*

Above all, prayer moves us to be with Jesus. That is its greatest gift.

Pray: Lord Jesus, we want desperately to seek your face and seek your kingdom. We want to be warriors carrying out your purposes. May our hearts and minds be set on You, Lord.