

A Deeper Experience

LEADER'S GUIDE

Welcome to Ten Days of Prayer 2019! God has worked many miracles through the Ten Days of Prayer program since it began as Operation Global Rain in 2006. The Holy Spirit has wrought revival, conversions, renewed passion for evangelism, and healed relationships. Truly, prayer is the birthplace of revival!

These guidelines are meant to help you as a leader. The first section covers topics related to Ten Days of Prayer 2019, and the second part includes pointers that will help you and your prayer group. Remember that these are just resources and ideas. Feel free to change things as the Spirit leads you.

During the Ten Days of Prayer, January 9–19, 2019, your group should meet daily in person or by phone for an hour of united prayer. You'll notice that January 19th is technically the 11th day. This is optional, but we suggest that you use this Sabbath as a celebration of all God has done in answer to united prayer. We hope these ideas and suggestions will help to make Ten Days of Prayer 2019 a powerful experience for your small group or church family.

As you embark on this journey, take time to read just a few testimonies from those who participated in Ten Days of Prayer 2018:

TASHA, ST. KITTS AND NEVES

"It seemed as if everything else was taking precedence over communing with Christ, and praying was just a ritual. These ten days have reminded me how peaceful and joyous it is to talk with my Savior and feel His presence."

SANDRA, MARYLAND, USA

"Each day's study seemed to be written for me. My faith has always been strong and is becoming stronger. Specific prayers are being answered as I pray. Some even before I ask. At the same time, I have been hit with numerous unexpected, uncontrollable trials, and God somehow has helped me overcome. His awesomeness is overwhelming!"

YAN, INDONESIA

"Ten Days of Prayer was such a wonderful experience! Our congregation gathered together and prayed for each other. There were tears and joy in this holy meeting, and as we prayed we saw God's love and His answer to our prayers."

RONALD, USA

"This has changed our prayer life."

JENNY, KOREA

"I feel like I have been infused with renewed power and strength. I am truly blessed to be a part of the group of prayerful people. God answered most of my prayers, and I leave those prayers still needing answers to His wisdom and timing."

IMA, NIGERIA

"The Ten Days of Prayer was very inspiring and encouraging. The most exciting experience was when a retired pastor who was bedridden as a result of diabetic complications and could not talk began making phone calls and is now in a wheelchair. This is just the beginning of our praise report!"

DORIS, VIRGINIA, USA

"This year is our fourth year of uniting in prayer. We fasted and prayed for ten days. We saw God work miracles in our lives. One sister prayed that she could contact relatives in another country whom she had not heard from in twenty years. After earnest prayer, God provided the connection! We praised God with her."

General Ten Days of Prayer Items

Why Talk About a Deeper Experience?

Ellen White writes, "Those who are engaged in service for the Master need an experience much higher, deeper, broader, than many have yet thought of having. Many who are already members of God's great family know little of what it means to behold His glory, and to be changed from glory to glory. Many have a twilight perception of Christ's excellence, and their hearts thrill with joy. They long for a fuller, deeper sense of the Savior's love. Let these cherish every desire of the soul after God" (*Gospel*

Workers, p. 274). We want to explore this idea of developing a higher, deeper, broader experience with Jesus and look at how this applies to our practical daily experience.

Daily Theme Sheets

A theme sheet has been prepared for each of the ten days. The first page opens with a Bible verse and a brief, practical devotional. The second page contains a suggested format for the prayer time and includes ideas for specific prayer items, hymns to sing, and promises to claim. We recommend that you copy the theme sheets so each participant can have one to follow during the prayer time.

Churches around the world will unite in praying about each day's theme. Join them in praying through the verses, quotes, and prayer requests on each theme sheet. However, don't feel that you must rush through the entire list of prayer suggestions. You may want to divide into small groups and have each group pray for a portion of the list.

Some of the prayer requests relate specifically to the Seventh-day Adventist World Church. It's important to pray together for our church family, but you may want to adapt your prayer time and use more general prayer themes if your group includes visitors from the community. Pray about how you can best welcome guests and make them feel a part of your group.

Suggested Times for Each Prayer Section

How much time you spend on each section of prayer will probably vary somewhat each time you pray together. The following timeframes are suggestions for what typically works well:

- **Welcome/Introduction:** 2 - 5 minutes
- **Reading of Devotional Thought:** 3 - 5 minutes
- **Praising God in the Prayer Time:** 10 minutes
- **Confession and Claiming Victory over Sin in the Prayer Time:** 3 - 5 minutes
- **Supplication and Intercession in the Prayer Time:** 30 - 35 minutes
- **Thanksgiving in the Prayer Time:** 10 minutes

Intercede for Seven

Encourage each person to ask God to show them seven people to pray for during the ten days. These may be family members, friends, coworkers, church members, etc. Encourage them to pray that the Holy Spirit will lead these seven people to abide in Christ. Group members should also ask God to show them how they can pray for specific needs and reach out to their seven people during the ten days. You may want to provide some cards or pieces of paper on which people can record the seven names they will be praying for.

Sabbath Services During Ten Days of Prayer 2019

Have a special prayer focus and share testimonies of answered prayer during the church services on both Sabbaths. Be creative—there are many ways to share with the church family what is happening during the daily prayer meetings.

Final Sabbath Celebration

The final Sabbath, especially, should be designed as a time of great rejoicing in all that God has done throughout the ten days. Include ample time for testimonies of answered prayer, biblical teaching/preaching on prayer, and singing. Lead the congregation in a time of prayer so that those who have not attended the daily meetings can experience the joy of praying with others. Please see the Sabbath Celebration handout for more information.

Follow-up to Ten Days of Prayer 2019

Pray about how God wants your church/group to continue what He has begun during Ten Days of Prayer 2019. Perhaps you will continue with a weekly prayer meeting. Or perhaps God wants you to begin a new ministry in your church or an outreach to the community. Be open and follow where God leads. You're sure to be amazed as you walk with Him. We've included an outreach challenge with suggestions at the end of this Leader's Guide.

Testimonies

Please share stories of how God has worked through Ten Days of Prayer 2019! Your stories will be an encouragement to many others. Testimonies may be sent to stories@ministerialassociation.org or submitted online at www.tendaysofprayer.org.

United Prayer Pointers

Agree Together

When someone prays a request to God, be sure some others pray for that same request and agree together—this is powerful! Don't think that because one person has prayed about the request, no one else needs to. "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 18:19). How encouraging it is to be lifted up in prayer!

Claiming God's Promises

You'll find topic-specific Bible promises included on each handout. Encourage the group to claim God's promises as they pray. It is so easy to focus on our problems. But when we claim God's promises, we increase our faith and remind ourselves that nothing is impossible with God. The promises help us take our eyes off of our weaknesses and difficulties and set them on Jesus. For every weakness and every struggle, we can find Bible promises to claim. Encourage people to search for more promises and write them down so they can claim them in the future.

Fasting

Invite those joining you in Ten Days of Prayer to consider some type of fasting, such as fasting from TV, secular music, movies, the Internet, sweets, or other types of food that are hard to digest. Use the extra time to pray and study the Bible, asking God to help you and your congregation to abide more fully in Christ. By adopting a simple diet, we allow our minds to become more receptive to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit

Be sure to ask the Holy Spirit to show you what to pray for in a person's life or in a particular situation. The Bible tells us that we do not know what to pray for and that the Holy Spirit is the one making intercession for us.

"We must not only pray in Christ's name, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This explains what is meant when it is said that the Spirit *'maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered.'* (Romans 8:26). Such prayer God delights to answer. When with earnestness and intensity we breathe a prayer in the name of Christ, there is in that very intensity a pledge from God that He is about to answer our prayer *'exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think'* (Ephesians 3:20)" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 147, emphasis supplied).

Physical Togetherness

As you begin a united prayer session, invite everyone to come close together. When people move close together to form a tight circle, it helps to promote a spirit of unity, which is very important for united prayer. If people are spread out in a room, it is also difficult to hear one another's prayers.

Journaling

Keeping a prayer journal during the Ten Days of Prayer can be a good way for participants to internalize the daily prayer theme, make concrete commitments to God, and recognize His blessings to them. Writing out our prayers and keeping a record of God's answers is a proven path to encouragement.

If you desire, journaling could be included in the Ten Days of Prayer in several ways. You could provide time during the prayer meeting for people to journal their responses to God in their private prayer journals. Or you could keep a group journal of prayer requests and answers—either in a notebook, on a large poster, or online. A simple way to do this is to draw a line down the middle of a large piece of paper. Write requests in the left column and answers in the right. It is exciting and faith-building to look back and see how God has answered prayers!

Reverence

Encourage and model a reverent attitude. We are approaching the throne room of the King of the universe. Let's not treat this prayer time carelessly in our posture or mannerisms. However, it is not necessary that everyone kneel continuously. You want people to be comfortable for an hour, so encourage people to kneel or sit or stand as God leads and as they are comfortable.

Sentence Prayers

Prayers should be short and to the point. This gives others an opportunity to pray as well. Try to limit your prayers to a few sentences. Each person can pray multiple times. Short sentence prayers keep the prayer time interesting and allow the Holy Spirit to impress the group how to pray. You don't need to open and close each short sentence prayer with phrases such as "Dear God" and "Amen." It is an ongoing conversation with God.

Silence

As a leader, don't dominate the prayer time. The goal is to get others praying. Times of silence are wonderful, as they give God time to speak to our hearts. Allow the Holy Spirit to work and give everyone time to pray.

Singing

Spontaneous group songs, mingled between prayers, add beauty to the prayer meeting. Appropriate songs are listed at the end of each theme sheet. Do not feel that you need to use all the songs—these are simply suggestions. Singing is also a good way to transition from one prayer section to another.

Taking Prayer Requests

Don't ask for prayer requests from the group. Instead, tell people to pray their requests and encourage others to join in agreement and prayer for those requests. Here's why: time! Talking about the requests will take up most of your prayer time. Satan is thrilled if he can keep us talking about the problem instead of praying about the problem. Group members will often begin counseling and suggesting solutions. The power is from God! The more we pray, the more His power is unleashed.

Your Daily Time

This is so important! Make sure that you as a leader are spending time daily at the feet of Jesus, talking with Him and reading His Word. If you will make knowing God a first priority in your life, it will open such a beautiful experience to you. "From the secret place of prayer came the power that shook the world in the Great Reformation. There, with holy calmness, the servants of the Lord set their feet upon the rock of His promises" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 210).

Ten Days of Prayer Outreach Challenge

Everyone can do something to hasten the coming of Jesus through Total Member Involvement.

"For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me" (Matt. 25:35, 36).

In *The Ministry of Healing* we read, "We must live a twofold life—a life of thought and action, of silent prayer and earnest work" (p. 512). It is our privilege to show others the love of Jesus. We have received so much love from our Savior; let's not keep it for ourselves. Let's share His love with others.

We encourage you and your church to ask God in prayer how you can reach out to others after the Ten Days of Prayer. Choose one or several activities, choose a day, and be the hands and feet of Jesus. As you work to organize everything, avoid letting these arrangements distract you from praying. "Personal effort for others should be preceded by much secret prayer; for it requires great wisdom to understand the science of saving souls. Before communicating with men, commune with Christ. At the throne of heavenly grace obtain a preparation for ministering to the people" (*Prayer*, p. 313).

We have prepared a list of ways you can help others. Choose whatever fits the needs of the people you are going to serve. Feel free to do something that it is not listed.

- Cook a meal for someone who has been sick.
- Invite a neighbor/co-worker to a social gathering.
- Give food to a homeless person.
- Donate clothing that you would want donated to you.
- “Adopt” an elderly person. Visit the person on a regular basis and help with chores, shopping, cooking, or garden work.
- Bake some bread and share a loaf with a neighbor.
- Help with neighborhood projects.
- Offer to stay with a sick or disabled person so their caretakers can run an errand.
- Participate in neighborhood projects.
- Introduce yourself to a new neighbor by taking them a meal. Make them feel welcome in the neighborhood.
- Buy groceries and deliver them to a needy family.
- Donate your old eyeglasses.
- Offer to give a Bible study.
- Visit people in nursing homes.
- Give some “food” money to a student.
- Collect clothing for the needy. You might start a clothes closet at your church for sharing with those in need.
- Donate your old laptop or other electronics.
- Donate a used car.
- Organize a “Health Expo.”
- Send a card to a shut-in.
- Organize an evangelistic series.
- Call your neighbors and ask how they’re doing.
- Give someone a book you think they’d like.
- Pass out GLOW tracts (available to order here: www.glowonline.org/glow).
- Invite someone to accept Jesus.
- Hold a cooking school.
- Do the “28 Literature Project.” In Week One, give away one book. Week Two, give away two books. Week Three, give away three books. Continue until you have given away 28 books.
- Take some food to someone who has lost a loved one.
- Visit someone in the hospital to encourage them or help them in some way.
- Read to an elderly person.
- Visit a children’s home and offer your help to the staff.
- Start a sewing/knitting/crocheting group to make clothes for those in need.
- Read the Bible aloud for someone who can’t see or read.
- Host a youth night at your home.
- Volunteer at a shelter for abused persons.
- Donate some books to a children’s home or shelter.
- Take children from your church to visit a home for elderly people. Present a program for them.
- Plan and host a fun day for special needs kids and their families.
- Have a community clean-up day.
- Start a health club in your church. Invite friends and neighbors.
- Ask someone if they would like to join you in watching a DVD with a spiritual message. As you watch together, pray that the Holy Spirit will speak to the person’s heart.
- Design your own project.

For more resources on witnessing, visit www.revivalandreformation.org/resources/witnessing.

A Deeper Experience

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Ten Days of Prayer 2019! We are so thankful that we can start this year with prayer. God has worked many miracles in past years as we have sought Him in prayer and fasting. The Holy Spirit has wrought revival, conversions, renewed passion for evangelism, and healed relationships. Truly, prayer is the birthplace of revival!

We believe your life and the lives of those you pray for will be changed as you join fellow church members in praying for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, whom the Father has promised to give to those who ask Him. Here are just three responses from those who participated in the last Ten Days of Prayer:

HOWARD, ZIMBABWE

“I have been blessed beyond measure throughout the Ten Days of Prayer. At our church in Zimbabwe, the Lord has answered our prayers and there is unity in the church. Families have been reunited, and church members are willing to serve the Lord.”

GLENNY, NEW YORK, USA

“The church has been truly blessed. Most members are asking if we can do it again. Everyone talks about feeling

closer to God, and there is a strong sense of unity in our midst.”

DERECK, SOUTH AFRICA

“Through prayer the sick were healed, estranged family members were reunited, hope was present even in the death of loved ones, and people recommitted their lives to God. We serve a living God! We cannot wait to see what He has in store for us this year. Glory to His name!”

Our Prayer Theme: A Deeper Experience

During Ten Days of Prayer 2019, we will look at how to have a deeper, richer Christian experience. Whether new believers or longtime church members, we all need to have a fresh, daily encounter with Jesus. This series features real-life lessons, Bible promises, and encouraging Spirit of Prophecy quotes to strengthen our daily walk with Christ.

We read about the early believers: “The Corinthian believers needed a deeper experience in the things of God. They did not know fully what it meant to behold His glory and to be changed from character to character. They had seen but the first rays of the early dawn of that glory. Paul’s desire for them was that they might be filled with all the fullness of God, following on to know Him whose going forth is prepared as the morning, and continuing to learn of Him until they should come into the full noontide of a perfect gospel faith” (*Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 307, 308).

We pray that this prayer focus will help us develop a deep, abiding relationship with Jesus until we “come into the full noontide of a perfect gospel faith” and fully reflect His character of love.

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR THE PRAYER TIMES

- Keep your prayers short—just a sentence or two on one topic. Then give others a turn. You can pray as many times as you’d like, just as you talk in a conversation.
- Do not be afraid of silence, as it gives everyone time to listen to the Holy Spirit.
- Singing songs together as the Spirit leads is also a huge blessing. You do not need a piano for this; singing acapella is fine.
- Rather than using up valuable prayer time talking about your prayer requests, simply pray them. Then others can also pray for your requests and claim promises for your need.

Claiming the Promises

God has given us many promises in His Word. It is our privilege to claim them in our prayers. All His commandments and counsels are also promises. He would never ask from us something that we could not do in His strength.

It is so easy to focus on our needs, our difficulties, our challenges—and to wail and whine about our situation when we pray. This is not the purpose of prayer. Prayer is meant to strengthen our faith. That is why we encourage you to claim God's promises in your prayer time. Take your eyes off yourself and your weaknesses and look to Jesus. By beholding Him, we become changed into His image.

“Every promise in the Word of God is for us. In your prayers, present the pledged word of Jehovah and by faith claim His promises. His word is the assurance that if you ask in faith, you will receive all spiritual blessings. Continue to ask, and you will receive exceeding abundantly above all that you ask or think” (*In Heavenly Places*, p. 71).

How can you claim His promises? For instance, when praying for peace, you can claim John 14:27 and say, “Lord, You have told us in Your Word, ‘Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.’ Give me the peace that You promised to leave with us.” Thank the Lord that He is giving you peace, even though you may not feel it right then and there.

Topic-specific promises are included on each nightly handout.

Fasting

We encourage you to do a Daniel Fast during these ten days. Starting the year with prayer and fasting is a great way to consecrate our lives to God for the upcoming year. Ellen White tells us, “Now and onward till the close of time the people of God should be more earnest, more wide-awake, not trusting in their own wisdom, but in the wisdom of their Leader. They should set aside days for fasting and prayer. Entire abstinence from food may not be required, but they should eat sparingly of the most simple food” (*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 188, 189).

We know about Daniel, who ate fruits and vegetables for 10 days. We likewise encourage you to adopt a very simple diet during these ten days. A simple diet that leaves out sugar, processed and refined foods, and sodas can benefit us on different levels. First, eating simply means less time needed to prepare food and more time available to spend with the Lord. Second, the simpler our diet, the easier it is for the stomach to digest it, and the clearer our minds will be. We all know that sugar beclouds the frontal lobe, the center of our thinking. If we want clearer minds for hearing God's voice, and if we want to draw closer to Him, we need to make sure that our diet is not hindering us.

Fasting is not only about abstaining from food. We also encourage you to fast from TV, movies, computer games, and even Facebook and YouTube. Sometimes things that are not bad in themselves, like Facebook and YouTube, can take so much of our time. Put aside everything possible so you can have more time to spend with the Lord.

Fasting is not a fast way to obtain a miracle from God. Fasting is all about humbling ourselves so God can work in us and through us. “For certain things fasting and prayer are recommended and appropriate. In the hand of God, they are a means of cleansing the heart and promoting a receptive frame of mind. We obtain answers to our prayers because we humble our souls before God” (*Medical Ministry*, p. 283).

Let's humble ourselves before God and search for Him with all our heart, mind, and strength. Let's draw closer to Him through prayer and fasting, and He will draw closer to us.

Holy Spirit

Be sure to ask the Holy Spirit to show you what you should pray for in a person's life or in a particular situation. The Bible tells us that we do not know what to pray for and that the Holy Spirit is the One making intercession for us.

“We must not only pray in Christ's name, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This explains what is meant when it is said that the Spirit ‘maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered.’ Romans 8:26. Such prayer God delights to answer. When with earnestness and intensity we breathe a prayer in the name of Christ, there is in that very intensity a pledge from God that He is about to answer our prayer ‘exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.’ Ephesians 3:20” (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 147).

Faith

We read in the Spirit of Prophecy that “prayer and faith will do what no power on earth can accomplish” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 509). We are also encouraged to pray and have faith that God heard and will answer our prayer.

“Christ says, ‘Ask, and ye shall receive.’ In these words, Christ gives us direction as to how we should pray. We are to come to our heavenly Father with the simplicity of a child, asking Him for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus says again, ‘When ye pray, believe that ye receive the things ye ask for, and ye shall have them.’ You are to come to the Father repenting and confessing your sins, emptying the soul of every sin and defilement, and it is your privilege to prove the promises of the Lord. . . . We are to believe the word of God; for the test of character is found in the fact that you are building yourselves up in the most holy faith. You are proved of God through the word of God. You are not to wait for wonderful emotions before you believe that God has heard you; feeling is not to be your criterion, for emotions are as changeable as the clouds. . . . While on earth, we can have help from Heaven. . . . for I have tested God a thousand times. I will walk out by faith, I will not dishonor my Savior by unbelief” (*Review and Herald*, Oct. 11, 1892, par. 1, 3, 6).

We are also told that “for any gift He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received” (*Education*, p. 258). So make a habit of thanking God in advance through faith for what He is going to do and how He is going to answer your prayers.

Pray for Seven

We encourage you to pray during these ten days in a special way for seven people whom you would like to see experiencing a “life more abundant.” They can be relatives, friends, coworkers, neighbors, or simply acquaintances. Take some time and ask God whom would He like you to pray for. Ask Him also to give you a real burden for these people. Write these names down on a piece of paper and keep it in a prominent place, such as in your Bible. There is something powerful about writing the names down, and you’ll be amazed at how God works in response to your prayers!

Ten Days of Prayer Outreach Challenge

Everyone can do something to hasten the coming of Jesus through Total Member Involvement.

“For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me” (Matt. 25:35, 36).

In *The Ministry of Healing* we read, “We must live a twofold life—a life of thought and action, of silent prayer and earnest work” (p. 512). It is our privilege to show others the love of Jesus. We have received so much love from our Savior; let’s not keep it for ourselves. Let’s share His love with others.

We encourage you and your church to ask God in prayer how you can reach out to others after the Ten Days of Prayer. Choose one or several activities, choose a day, and be the hands and feet of Jesus. As you work to organize everything, avoid letting these arrangements distract you from praying. “Personal effort for others should be preceded by much secret prayer; for it requires great wisdom to understand the science of saving souls. Before communicating with men, commune with Christ. At the throne of heavenly grace obtain a preparation for ministering to the people” (*Prayer*, p. 313).

In the online resources, you’ll find a special sheet with suggestions for reaching your community for Jesus.

Materials prepared by Ministerial Association, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Principal contributor for daily prayer guides: Jodi Genson.

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- Take some food to someone who has lost a loved one.

- Visit someone in the hospital to encourage them or help them in some way.
- Read to an elderly person.
- Visit a children's home and offer your help to the staff.
- Start a sewing/knitting/crocheting group to make clothes for those in need.
- Read the Bible aloud for someone who can't see or read.
- Host a youth night at your home.
- Volunteer at a shelter for abused persons.
- Donate some books to a children's home or shelter.
- Take children from your church to visit a home for elderly people. Present a program for them.
- Plan and host a fun day for special needs kids and their families.
- Have a community clean-up day.
- Start a health club in your church. Invite friends and neighbors.
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- Design your own project.

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A Deeper Experience

A NIGHT OF PRAYER: OPTIONAL ALL-NIGHT PRAYER MEETING FOR DAY 10

Why a Night of Prayer?

There is nothing “holy” in staying awake and praying a whole night or part of a night. However, night might be the only time when people are not busy or in a rush. We believe that your purpose should not be to stay up the whole night but to pray as long as necessary and until you have prayed for all the things you feel God wants you to pray for.

We suggest that several people lead out during the night. Be sure to have some breaks. As a leader, you can sense the atmosphere and know when a break is needed and when you need to move on to the next section of prayer. We suggest that you take a ten-minute break at least every ninety minutes. You can also incorporate the reading of Bible passages into your prayer time. You may want to do all of the suggested items or only some of them, depending on what it is best for your group. Feel free to change the order.

Here is our suggested format for the night of prayer:

- **Start with a session of praise.** Praise God in your prayers and also through songs.
- **Take some time for confession,** making sure that nothing is hindering God from hearing you. Give people time for private confession and have a time of corporate confession. Encourage the people to confess private sins privately and to confess publicly the public sins. In Daniel 9:1-19 we read about Daniel, who interceded and publicly confessed the sins of God’s people. Encourage people to confess publicly the sins of the church.
- **Pray for the needs of those present at the prayer meeting.** So many people are hurting or in need of prayer or know someone else who is in desperate need of prayer. Make a circle, put a chair in the middle, and invite those who have special prayer requests to come one by one and share their requests. Then gather around the person and have two or three people pray for the person’s specific need and claim God’s promises. You will be surprised at how many people are hurting and in need of prayer.
- **Divide the group in two.** Have the females pray in one room and the males in another. Have a female leader for the female group and a male leader for the male group. Many personal needs cannot and should not be shared with everyone. It is easier to share with those of the same gender.
- After you come back together, **pray for the list of needs found below.** These are suggested prayer requests from the world church. Don’t feel that you must rush through the entire list. You may want to divide into small groups and have each group pray for a portion of the list.
- **Pray for the seven people** you have prayed for during these ten days.
- **Choose a Bible passage and pray through it.**
- **Close the prayer time with another session of praise and thanksgiving.**

Prayer Needs

- Please bless the hundreds of thousands of outreach activities around the world during 2019. We pray especially for Total Member Involvement evangelism efforts in India, June 2019, and Papua New Guinea, May 2020.
- We pray for Adventist members who face persecution or imprisonment because of their beliefs.
- We pray for a spiritual revival among Seventh-day Adventist young people who attend public colleges and universities worldwide. May they become vibrant ambassadors for Christ.
- We pray for the 69 percent of earth’s population who have not received an unclouded presentation of Jesus.
- We pray for the 62 million people in the 28 least-reached cities of the former Soviet Union (Euro-Asia Division).
- We pray for God to raise up brave missionaries willing to work among the 746 people groups in the 20 countries of the Middle East.
- We pray for the 1,000 Missionary Movement in Northern Asia-Pacific Division and Southern-Asia Pacific Division. As these young people serve in countries such

as Taiwan, China, Russia, and Burma, may they be baptized with the Holy Spirit and empowered to do God's work.

- We pray for a mighty surge of Adventists who will serve God by loving others and by sharing with people from other cultures and religions.
- Please raise up modern-day Waldensian students who are willing to serve you in difficult places.
- We pray for the 202 million people in the 41 least-reached cities of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division to know Jesus.
- We pray for the Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department of each local church as they seek God's plan and reach out to their communities with loving service, Bible study, and personal witnessing.
- We pray for Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) as they meet practical needs around the world.
- We pray for the 16 million people in the 6 least-reached cities of South Pacific Division. We pray for the daily baptism of the Holy Spirit on members as they reach out in love to the unreached.
- We pray for the Holy Spirit to help us know how to reach the 406 million people in the 105 least-reached cities of Northern Asia-Pacific Division.
- Please bless as Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries mobilizes chaplains and interested members to minister to those in prison.
- Lord, we remember our Sabbath School teachers. Please let them know how important their work is for our children.
- Lord, we seek your guidance for the many Centers of Influence, health and family programs, and Pathfinder clubs around the world.
- We pray that more and more young adults will get involved in Mission to the Cities.
- We pray that You will help us love and nurture new members.
- Lord, please show us how to send more truth-filled literature (printed and electronic) into our communities. We pray that people will read it and that the Holy Spirit will convict them of Bible truth.
- Lord, we ask for Your protection over missionaries working in dangerous places.
- Please raise up literature evangelists, student volunteers, authors, media specialists, and financial supporters to spread words of hope and life.
- We pray for the 8,208 Adventist schools with almost 2 million students. May these schools always teach Bible truth and lead young people into mission and service.
- Lord, give us wisdom to reach secular cultures that have no interest in religion. Let Your Holy Spirit break down the walls that surround secular hearts.
- We pray for the unreached people groups in Asia, including Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus. Many have never heard the name of Jesus. Give us special wisdom for meeting their needs.
- Bless us as we reach out to people enslaved by spirit worship, idolatry, and animistic beliefs. Help us to understand their worldview and introduce them to a personal Savior.
- Lord, please inspire Seventh-day Adventists around the world to pray as never before. Let us plead together for the latter rain of the Holy Spirit. We ask You for the promised fulfillment of Joel 2, Hosea 6, and Acts 2.
- We pray for the 541 people groups in the 18 countries of Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division. Please lead them to biblical truth.
- Show us how to meet the practical and spiritual needs of refugees. May our church be known for our love of all people, no matter who they are or where they come from.
- May we faithfully and fully proclaim the three angels' messages of Revelation 14. May we center all our teachings on the love and righteousness of Christ.
- We ask You to raise up urban missionaries to plant churches for the 806 people groups in the 20 countries of Inter-European Division.
- Please raise up an army of workers to plant churches for the 948 people groups in the 38 countries of Inter-American Division.
- Please teach us how to proclaim our fundamental church beliefs with clarity, creativity, and biblical authenticity. May the love of Jesus be at the core of everything we believe.
- We ask You to prepare young people to plant churches for the 789 people groups in the 9 countries of North American Division.
- We ask You to prepare volunteers to serve the 70 people groups in the Israel Field.
- We ask You to raise up medical missionaries to plant churches among the 830 people groups in the 11 countries of East-Central Africa Division.
- We ask You to raise up prayer warriors to intercede for the 2,568 people groups in the 4 countries of Southern Asia Division. We especially remember Hope TV India and Asian Aid School for the Blind.
- We pray for the work of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division's publishing houses.

- We pray You will do as You promise in Psalm 32:8, by leading and guiding us as we do the Ten Days Outreach Challenge.
- Please let our families reveal Your love in our homes and communities. We ask You to bring harmony into homes, heal broken relationships, protect the vulnerable from abuse, and reveal Your sanctifying power in seemingly hopeless situations.
- May our church members, pastors, and leaders around the world feed on God's Word every day. May we also seek You daily in personal prayer. Remind us that without You, we can do nothing.
- We ask You to raise up nurses and doctors to plant new churches among the 1,978 people groups in the 22 countries in West-Central Africa Division.
- We pray for the 49 million people in the 19 least-reached cities of Trans-European Division.
- We pray for our children. Please empower them to stand boldly for you when they encounter obstacles and pressure. Help them to make wise choices and stand for truth (Isa. 44:3, 4).
- Teach us to follow Christ's selfless example by meeting the daily needs of people close to us. Equip us to serve as medical missionaries, community volunteers, and friends to the needy.
- Lord, may a mighty revival of primitive godliness sweep Your church in the final days. May we stand for truth though the heavens fall.
- Lord, show us how to share the gospel with Muslim people groups. We pray that they hear and respond to Your offer of grace.
- We pray for the seeds of truth sown in Japan during last year's Total Member Involvement outreach. Please send laborers to work and pray for Japan.

A Deeper Experience

PROMISES TO CLAIM IN PRAYER

All Scripture NKJV

God gives us abundant promises in His Word. It is our privilege to claim these promises in prayer. All His commandments and counsels are also promises. He would never ask from us something that we could not do in His strength.

It is so easy to focus on our needs, our difficulties, our challenges—and to wail and whine about our situation when we pray. This is not the purpose of prayer. Prayer is meant to strengthen our faith. That is why we encourage you to claim God's promises in your prayer time. Take your eyes off yourself and your weaknesses and look to Jesus. By beholding Him, we become changed into His image.

“Every promise in the Word of God is for us. In your prayers, present the pledged word of Jehovah and by faith claim His promises. His word is the assurance that if you ask in faith, you will receive all spiritual blessings. Continue to ask, and you will receive exceeding abundantly above all that you ask or think” (*In Heavenly Places*, p. 71).

How can you claim His promises? For instance, when praying for peace, you can claim John 14:27 and say, “Lord, You have told us in Your Word, ‘Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.’ Give me the peace that You promised to leave with us.” Thank the Lord that He is giving you peace, even though you may not feel it right then and there.

Promises for the Holy Spirit

“Ask the Lord for rain in the time of the latter rain. The Lord will make flashing clouds; He will give them showers of rain, grass in the field for everyone.” Zech. 10:1

“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” Luke 11:13

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. . . . And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” John 14:26; 16:8

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.” John 14:12-14

“So he answered and said to me: This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the Lord of hosts.” Zech. 4:6

Promises that God Answers Prayers

“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.” John 15:7

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Heb. 4:16

“Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.” Mark 11:24

“Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.” Ps. 50:15

“Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.” Matt. 18:19

“And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.” Matt. 21:22

“And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” John 14:13, 14

“And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.” John 16:23, 24

“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.” 1 John 5:14, 15

Promises About God’s Power

“Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.” Gen. 18:14

“The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.” Ex. 14:14

“But Jesus looked at them and said, ‘With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.’” Mark 10:27

“He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.” 1 Thess. 5:24

“I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You.” Job 42:2

“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?” Rom. 8:31, 32

“God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?” Num. 23:19

“Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, but those who wait on 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.” Isa. 40:28-31

Promises for God’s Guidance

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” Josh. 1:9

“Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.” Gen. 28:15

“Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared.” Ex. 23:20

“But from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul.” Deut. 4:29

“Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” Jer. 33:3

“Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth.” Isa. 40:4, 5

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.” Ps. 32:8

“And the Lord, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed.” Deut. 31:8

“Who is the man that fears the Lord? Him shall He teach in the way He chooses.” Ps. 25:12

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.” Prov. 3:5, 6

“If you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the noonday.” Isa. 58:10, 11

“It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.” Isa. 65:24

Promises for a Changed Heart

“Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart.” Jer. 24:7

“And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.” Deut. 30:6

“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.” Ezek. 36:26

“Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Phil. 1:6

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” 2 Cor. 5:17

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Gal. 2:20

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Thess. 5:23, 24

Promises for Forgiveness

“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 will forgive their sin and heal their land.” 2 Chr. 7:14

“For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You.” Ps. 86:5

“And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.” Mark 11:25

“And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.” Eph. 4:32

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9

“Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord, though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Isa. 1:18

“I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins.” Isa. 43:25

“For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.” Jer. 31:34

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.” Eph. 1:7

Promises for Victory Over Sin

“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.” 1 John 5:4

“Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.” Rom. 8:37

“But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Cor. 15:57

“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” Isa. 41:10

“Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.” Eph. 6:16

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Gal. 2:20

“For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.” Phil. 2:13

"I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." Gal. 5:16

"And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen." Rom. 16:20

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

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." 1 John 2:15

Promises for Healing

"If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you." Ex. 15:26

"Your sandals shall be iron and bronze; as your days, so shall your strength be." Deut. 33:25

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's." Ps. 103:2-5

"Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil." Prov. 3:7, 8

"He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed." Isa. 53:3-5

"Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, for You are my praise." Jer. 17:14

"For I will restore health to you and heal you of your wounds,' says the Lord, 'because they called you an outcast saying: This is Zion; no one seeks her.'" Jer. 30:17

"Behold, I will bring it health and healing; I will heal them and reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth." Jer. 33:6

"But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings; and you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves." Mal. 4:2

"Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." James 5:14, 15

Promises for Strength to Do God's Will

"Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the Lord!" Ps. 27:14

"Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Cor. 4:16-18

"And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart." Gal. 6:9

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Phil. 4:13

"For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure." Phil. 2:13

"And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 Cor. 12:9

Promises About Being God's Witnesses

“Do not fear, nor be afraid; have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one.” Isa. 44:8

“Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.” Isa. 60:1

“Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.” 2 Cor. 5:18

“But the Lord said to me: Do not say, ‘I am a youth,’ For you shall go to all to whom I send you, And whatever I command you, you shall speak.” Jer. 1:7

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1:8

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” 1 Peter 2:9

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.” 1 Peter 3:15

A Deeper Experience

DAY 1—TO KNOW AND BELIEVE

“Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, yet I will not forget you” (Isa. 49:15).

Can a child fully understand the love of God if he has not felt the love of an earthly father? In my experience, it is very difficult. I had four fathers. My birth father divorced my mother when she was pregnant with me. I felt his rejection deeply. My mother’s second husband was an alcoholic and very abusive—he even attempted to kill her. My next stepfather was kind but greedy. He, along with two friends, robbed three banks. He ended up in prison, and my mother divorced him.

My childhood years were anything but glamorous. I was insecure, had low self-esteem, and felt very unloved. It was difficult for me to make friends in school. As a teenager, I longed for acceptance from my peers, but my search for love only left me feeling empty and alone. I didn’t know that my Father in heaven was working behind the scenes to fill that void. “Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. . . . I have called you by your name; you are Mine” (Jer. 1:5; Isa. 43:1). “I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor. 6:18). “When my father . . . forsake[s] me, then the Lord will take care of me” (Ps. 27:10).

When I was 19, a friend invited me to attend a Christian concert at her local church. One of the music group leaders gave this invitation: “*If your life is empty and you feel alone, won’t you give Jesus a chance?*” His words and the music touched my heart, and I responded to the call to come forward and receive Jesus.

I was reading the Gospel of John when I came across this phrase: “the Father Himself loves you” (John 16:27, first part). It struck me! I had heard that Jesus loved me, but the Father? Could I really believe that? All I knew of God the Father was that He seemed far away from me—somewhere in heaven—and that He could see everything I was doing. I was afraid of Him. As I read the Scriptures, I fell in love with Jesus. Jesus came, however, to show us the love of His Father. When Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father,” Jesus answered, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father” (John 14: 8, 9).

I had to accept that God the Father truly loved me through His Son, Jesus Christ. “The very first step in approaching God is to know and believe the love He has to us; for it is through the drawing of His love that we are led to come to Him” (*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 104, 105). “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). Also, “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them. . . .” (2 Cor. 5:19).

Once I understood that God loved me unconditionally, I found strength to forgive my earthly fathers for rejecting me. God gave me grace to move on. I know now that I have a heavenly Father and that I am a daughter of the Most-High God, the King of kings. Our heavenly Father understands the human need for love and acceptance. He didn’t forget about me.

So what about my fourth father? I was 11 when my mother remarried. Because all the other men left us, I wondered if he would stay. He did. I adopted him as my dad and love him as if he were my biological father. He has provided the security and love that any father should. My mother is gone now, but my dad remains a vital part of my life. A father is more than blood.

How about you? Have you been abandoned by a parent or family member? Do you long to be accepted and secure? Do you ache to be loved unconditionally? “Live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold you firmly by a hand that will never let go. Know and believe the love that God has to us, and you are secure; that love is a fortress impregnable to all the delusions and assaults of Satan” (*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 119). “The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe” (Prov. 18:10).

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR THE PRAYER TIME

Praise

- Father, we praise You for loving us first.
- We praise You that You draw us with Your love (Jer. 31:3).
- We praise You for Your unfailing care.
- Lord, we praise You for Your healing power.

Confession

- Lord, please forgive us for any sins that keep us from having a deeper experience with You. [Spend a few moments in personal, silent prayer, allowing the Holy Spirit to search your hearts and show you any sins you may need to confess privately to God, not publicly.]

Supplication and Intercession

- Lord, we pray, as Paul did in Eph. 3:17-19:
 - That You will find a permanent home in our hearts as we learn to trust You.
 - That our roots will go down deeply into the soil of Your love.
 - That we will understand the width and length and depth and height of Your love.
 - That we will be filled with all the fullness of God.
- We ask that You fill us with Your love and make us passionate about loving others to Jesus.
- We pray for families whose world is filled with chaos, sorrow, and confusion.
- Please bless the hundreds of thousands of outreach activities around the world during 2019. We pray especially for Total Member Involvement evangelism efforts in India, June 2019, and Papua New Guinea, May 2020.
- We pray for Adventist members who face persecution or imprisonment because of their beliefs.
- We pray for a spiritual revival among Seventh-day Adventist young people who attend public colleges and universities worldwide. May they become vibrant ambassadors for Christ.
- We pray for the 69 percent of earth's population who have not received an unclouded presentation of Jesus.
- Lord, we pray for the seven (or more) people on our individual prayer lists. May they let the Holy Spirit work in their lives. We also pray for the personal needs of those gathered here and for our local prayer requests.

Thanksgiving

- Father, we thank You for those [name specific people] who have loved and nurtured us.
- Thank You that You had Your hand over us before we were born (Ps. 139:13).
- Lord, thank You that even if I had been the only one, You would have died for me (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 187).
- Thank You for answering our prayers even before we ask.

SUGGESTED SONGS TO SING

"The Wonder of It All" (SDA Hymnal #75); "And Can It Be?" (SDA Hymnal #198); "I Will Sing of Jesus' Love" (SDA Hymnal #183)

PROMISES TO CLAIM AS YOU PRAY

- "For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God" (John 16:27).
- "The Lord has appeared of old to me, saying: 'Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you'" (Jer. 31:3).
- "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him" (1 John 3:1).

A Deeper Experience

DAY 2—FROM THE INSIDE OUT

“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

I was a pretty good child growing up. I wasn't rebellious toward my mother; I was attentive in school and respectful to my teachers. I didn't participate in wild parties, drink alcohol, or experiment with drugs like other youth in my high school.

After I became a Christian, I prided myself that I was a good person. I ate the right foods, replaced my rock music with Christian music, dressed modestly, taught the Sabbath School lesson, organized evangelistic events and outreach, and even shared my personal testimony. I had given my heart to Jesus, was baptized, truly believed in His Word, and looked forward to living eternally in His kingdom. My whole world revolved around the church and its activities and doing good things. By outward appearances, I was living a righteous life. I soon learned, however, how shallow my Christian experience really was—and how much I needed Jesus.

One evening I attended a seminar at my church on Christian living. The speaker said that unless a person is born again, he is not in a saving relationship with Christ. She quoted this statement from Ellen G. White: “The Christian's life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 172). The stark reality hit me: there is more to the Christian life than I thought! It was true, my life *was* different than before I received Christ, but it was improved, modified. I *was* a Christian, but self was still alive. I still had a temper and was easily wounded. I was proud and demanded that things be done my way. I had not yielded myself to Christ. I thought my salvation was secure through all the things I was doing, but I was missing the *joy* of my salvation! I had made a profession of Christ but did not have the *love* of Christ; I had not surrendered to Him. I needed Jesus to be formed within.

How does a person surrender to Christ? First, it is imperative to recognize the need for a Savior—to choose Him.

“Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. . . . unless he shall receive a new heart, new desires, purposes, and motives, leading to a new life, ‘he cannot see the kingdom of God’” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 18). I could not change my heart, but I could choose to give Him my will. I responded to the gift of repentance and confessed my sin of self-righteousness, self-importance, self-indulgence, and self-pity, and then placed my will on the side of Christ, for Him to control.

Second, spend quality time getting to know Him who is Life Eternal. “And this is life eternal, that they might know You, the only True God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (John 17:3). As I spent time in Scripture and prayer, becoming intimately acquainted with my Savior, my life began to take on new meaning. Jesus began the process of making something beautiful out of my life. My mind was being renewed—new attitudes and new affections were being developed. My desire to serve God deepened.

You may say, “I was born into this church. I've been a Christian all my life!” “I've never been out in the world!” “I've worked for the Master for as long as I can remember.” These things might be true, and praise the Lord for that! However, you can have all this and still not have the Son.

Perhaps you, too, have been impressed by the Holy Spirit that your Christian experience is shallow. What can you do? You can pray this prayer: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Ps. 139:23, 24). Surrender your heart and life to Him and, one by one, He will reveal areas of your life that need to be changed. As you cooperate with Him, your life will never be the same!

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR THE PRAYER TIME

Praise

- Father, we praise You that You have cleansed us from all sin and unrighteousness.
- Lord, we praise You that You are able to keep us from falling and that You present us to the Father with great joy (Jude 24).
- We praise You for convicting us of sin and extending mercy.

Confession

- Lord, please show us areas in our lives where self is still alive.
- Please forgive us when we have been self-righteous and self-indulgent, practicing self-pity.
- Please reveal areas in our lives that need to be transformed [take few moments of silence].

Supplication and Intercession

- Lord, please fill us with the knowledge of Your will, and may we walk worthy of You.
- We pray for those in spiritual and mental prisons to be set free from their guilt.
- We ask You to fill us with the fruit of righteousness.
- Lord, we pray for a mighty surge of Adventists who will serve God by loving others and by sharing with people from other cultures and religions.
- Please raise up modern-day Waldensian students who are willing to serve you in difficult places.
- We pray for the 62 million people in the 28 least-reached cities of the former Soviet Union (Euro-Asia Division).
- We pray for God to raise up brave missionaries willing to work among the 746 people groups in the 20 countries of the Middle East.
- We pray for the 1,000 Missionary Movement in Northern Asia-Pacific Division and Southern Asia-Pacific Division. As these young people serve in countries such as Taiwan, China, Russia, and Burma, may they be baptized with the Holy Spirit and empowered to do God's work.
- We also pray for our list of seven or more people [name the names if appropriate].

Thanksgiving

- Lord, thank You for individuals who have guided us to make a decision for You.
- Thank You for not abandoning us to our past failures and mistakes.
- Thank You for the gift of repentance and for revealing our need of You.
- Thank You for knowing the end from the beginning and for answering our prayers in Your time and way.

SUGGESTED SONGS TO SING

"Lord, I Want to be a Christian" (SDA Hymnal #319); "Be Thou My Vision" (SDA Hymnal #547); "Give Me Jesus" (SDA Hymnal #305); "I Would Be Like Jesus" (SDA Hymnal #311); "Nearer, Still Nearer" (SDA Hymnal #301)

PROMISES TO CLAIM AS YOU PRAY

- "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).
- "Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness" (Lam. 3:22, 23).
- "But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior" (Titus 3:4-6).
- "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh" (Ezek. 36:26).

- “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Gal. 2:20).

A Deeper Experience

DAY 3—THE GREATEST BATTLE

“And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jer. 29:13).

“The whole heart must be yielded to God, or the change can never be wrought in us by which we are to be restored to His likeness. . . . The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever fought. The yielding of self, surrendering all to the will of God, requires a struggle; but the soul must submit to God before it can be renewed in holiness” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 43). Since childhood, I had a desire to be like Jesus. As I daily consecrated my life to Him, I prayed for Him to change me. He answered my prayer in a most interesting way.

My father-in-law, George, moved in with us after his wife passed away from cancer. We were happy to have him closer to us and wanted him to be part of our young daughter’s life. We hoped that living in our home and participating in family worships would have a positive spiritual influence on him.

We lived on a farm with a barn, lake, pasture, and wildlife that frequented the property. George was an avid outdoorsman, so this was a prime location for his retirement. Every morning he took a walk by the lake. One day when he didn’t return from his walk at the usual time, my husband went looking for him. He was slumped in a blackberry bush where he had fallen. Over the next few weeks, George complained that his legs and feet tingled, and he found it difficult to walk. Tests revealed a tumor which had metastasized onto his spine. His physician scheduled surgery to remove the tumor, which caused permanent paralysis from the waist down.

Rather than admit him to a nursing facility, we decided that I would care for him at home. I had no nurses’ training, only a crash course by the discharging nurse when we left the hospital. My day consisted of bathing George, caring for his bed sores, administering his medications, and transferring him from bed to chair, then back again. It was incredibly humiliating to him that he could not take care of himself anymore, and I took the brunt of his frustration.

My husband and I planned a weekend getaway and arranged for a young man to care for George while we were gone. The night before we were to leave, I tucked George into bed, kissed him on the forehead, and reminded him that we would leave in the morning for the weekend. With that, George angrily blurted out, “I’m *your* responsibility! You have no right to leave me with someone else!” I snapped back with, “You are a selfish, unreasonable old man!”

Instantly, I was convicted that my actions were wrong and very un-Christlike. Weeping, I ran to my room and fell onto my bed. “Lord, what is wrong with me? Why can’t I control my temper? Are you really working in my life?” The answer came so gently, “I am working in your life. I am answering your prayer to be more like Me. You are resentful of George. He takes up your time, leaving you feeling overwhelmed with no way out. Resentment is sin, and if you give it to Me, I will give you grace to continue caring for George.”

“Many who sincerely consecrate their lives to God’s service are surprised and disappointed to find themselves, as never before, confronted by obstacles and beset by trials and perplexities. They pray for Christlikeness of character, for a fitness for the Lord’s work, and they are placed in circumstances that seem to call forth all the evil of their nature. . . . [Then] He gives them opportunity to correct these defects and to fit themselves for His service” (*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 470, 471).

“Repentance includes sorrow for sin and a turning away from it. We shall not renounce sin unless we see its sinfulness; until we turn away from it in heart, there will be no real change in the life” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 23).

I saw what resentment looked like, and I did not want it to be in my heart. I confessed my sin and resolved to live for God. I asked Him to wash me and give me a new heart. I got up from my bed, dried my eyes, and asked George for his forgiveness. Peace filled my heart, and my defeat was turned into victory. We eventually had to place George in a nursing facility as his care became impossible for me to provide. We received a call one evening telling us to come because George had suffered a stroke.

My husband sat beside him and whispered in his ear, "Dad, you know Jesus loves you? If you ask in your heart, He'll save you." The only visible sign that George understood was a tear that trickled down his cheek. In his last moments, I believe that he accepted Jesus as His Savior.

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR THE PRAYER TIME

Praise

- Lord, we praise You that You give us strength and uphold us when we are weak.
- We praise You that when we fall, You do not forsake us.
- We praise You, Lord, that You cast our sins into the depths of the sea and remember them no more.

Confession

- Lord, forgive us when we've allowed self to gain the mastery.
- Please forgive us when we've misrepresented You to others.
- Forgive us for when we've clung to sin instead of allowing You to remove it from our lives.
- Lord, please search our hearts. See if there is any wicked way in us, and lead us in the way everlasting (Ps. 139:23, 24).
[Spend a few moments in personal, silent prayer, allowing the Holy Spirit to search your hearts.]

Supplication and Intercession

- Lord, help us to be patient and kind, showing Your love and pity to those who annoy and accuse us.
- Please help us to persevere through hardship, especially when love is inconvenient.
- We pray for those who care for elderly and/or sick family members. Give them patience, strength, and love.
- Lord, please ease the anxiety of those facing terminal illness. Grant them courage and the peace of Jesus.
- We pray for the 202 million people in the 41 least-reached cities of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division to know Jesus.
- We pray for the Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department of each local church as they seek God's plan and reach out to their communities with loving service, Bible study, and personal witnessing.
- We pray for Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) as they meet practical needs around the world.
- We also pray for our list of seven or more people [name the names if appropriate].

Thanksgiving

- Thank You that You will set a watch before our mouths and keep the doors of our lips.
- Thank You for the Christlike love You give us for those who are difficult to love.
- Thank You that as Your character is formed in our lives, others will be drawn to You.
- Lord, thank You for hearing us, for answering our prayers, and for working behind the scenes to accomplish Your will.

SUGGESTED SONGS TO SING

"Rejoice! Ye Pure in Heart" (SDA Hymnal #27); "Live Out Thy Life Within Me" (SDA Hymnal #316); "O for a Closer Walk with God" (SDA Hymnal #315); "Because He Lives" (SDA Hymnal #526); "Abide with Me" (SDA Hymnal #50)

PROMISES TO CLAIM AS YOU PRAY

- "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholds him with His hand" (Ps. 37:23, 24).
- "But those who wait on 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" (Isa. 40:31).
- "The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart greatly rejoices, and with my song I will praise Him" (Ps. 28:7).

A Deeper Experience

DAY 4—THE VALUE OF SURRENDER

“I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance” (Luke 15:7).

He grew up in a logger’s home, the youngest of four children. His siblings were much older and had lives of their own; his father and mother were preoccupied managing a tavern in the small town where they lived. Eddie was often left to care for himself. The local movie theater was his babysitter on weekends, and many times he came home after the double feature to an empty house. Sometimes he sat in the family car well after other seven-year-old children were asleep in their beds and cried for his mother to come out of the tavern and take him home.

When Eddie was 14, his mother became a born-again Seventh-day Adventist Christian, and things dramatically changed. Instead of patronizing the tavern, his mother began attending prayer meeting and church services. Eddie joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church with his mother and enrolled in church school. By the time he was 17, however, he lost interest in church. Two years later, he was drafted into military service. His pastor encouraged him to get re-baptized before facing the dangers of battle. This sounded like a great plan, and Eddie agreed to do so when he came home on leave. He studied the fundamental beliefs of the Adventist Church for a second time. This provided head-knowledge, but he still didn’t know Jesus.

Eddie found that trying to meet church standards on his own was a challenge. He was tired of trying to be a Christian, playing church, trying to obey. He was powerless to maintain the Christian life and fell back into his old ways. What was wrong? “There are those who profess to serve God, while they rely upon their own efforts to obey His law, to form a right character, and secure salvation. Their hearts are not moved by any deep sense of the love of Christ, but they seek to perform the duties of the Christian life as that which God requires of them in order to gain heaven. Such religion is worth nothing. . . . A profession of Christ without this deep love [of Christ] is mere talk, dry formality, and heavy drudgery” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 44).

Eddie’s mother and sister attended an all-night prayer meeting at the church that New Year’s Eve. They prayed specifically for Eddie. They saw the answer to their prayers over the next few weeks when things started to go wrong for him. He lost his girlfriend, his job, and his car. *Why is my world falling apart?* he wondered. After a night of drinking with friends, Eddie came home in a drunken stupor. He cried out, “God, if you’re real, I need you! I know a lot about you, but now I want to know you!” A sweet, still, small voice made its way through the fog in his mind: “I AM real, and I love you.” This broke his heart. “How could You possibly love me after how I’ve lived?” he asked. “I’m so tired of my life the way it is. Please make me a true Christian. I want to serve You the rest of my life, but I can’t do it by myself.”

That night, Eddie surrendered his life to Jesus and accepted Him as Lord and Savior. He believed by faith that his sins were forgiven and that he was a new creature in Christ Jesus; old things were passed away. Through this simple act of believing the promise of God, the Holy Spirit began a work in his heart. A new life emerged, and Eddie did not turn back.

“Now that you have given yourself to Jesus, do not draw back, do not take yourself away from Him, but day by day say, ‘I am Christ’s; I have given myself to Him;’ and ask Him to give you His Spirit and keep you by His grace. As it is by giving yourself to God, and believing Him, that you become His child, so you are to live in Him. The apostle says, ‘As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.’ Col. 2:6, KJV” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 52).

Eddie began to read the Bible and learned to pray. As he studied the Scriptures and learned more about the love of God through the life of Jesus, his own life became transformed. The drinking, smoking, and other lifestyle choices that once made him happy were no longer part of his life.

Eddie's mother suggested he read the little book *Steps to Christ* to help him in his new journey. He found it difficult to read at first—his mind wandered many times—but as he persevered, taking one page at a time, the book became precious to him. He found in its pages the love of God, and by faith accepted that the promises of God were meant for him. He finally found peace.

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR THE PRAYER TIME

Praise

- Lord, we praise You that You never give up on anyone.
- We praise You for Your marvelous works for the children of men.
- Lord, we praise You for the joy we find in Your presence and for giving us a hope and a future.

Confession

- Please, Lord, forgive us for holding onto things that separate us from You.
- Forgive us for when we try to live the Christian life on our own.
- We confess that we need a personal experience with you, not just head knowledge.

Supplication and Intercession

- Lord, we ask You to give us fully surrendered hearts to live in obedience to Your word.
- Please baptize us daily with the Holy Spirit and make us more diligent in our efforts to win people.
- We pray that our loved ones who have left the faith will remember what it was like to be in fellowship with You and will long to be reunited with You. Help them sense and accept Your love and forgiveness.
- Please fulfill your promise in Joel 2:25: restore the years the locusts [sin] have eaten in our lives and in the lives of our loved ones. Give us faith to believe You will keep Your Word.
- We pray for the 16 million people in the 6 least-reached cities of South Pacific Division. We pray for the daily baptism of the Holy Spirit on members as they reach out in love to the unreached.
- We pray for the Holy Spirit to help us know how to reach the 406 million people in the 105 least-reached cities of Northern Asia-Pacific Division.
- Please bless as Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries mobilizes chaplains and interested members to minister to those in prison.
- We also pray for our list of seven or more people [name the names if appropriate].

Thanksgiving

- Thank You, Lord, that You gave us the Holy Spirit to continually guide us into all truth.
- Thank You for working to answer our prayers in ways we cannot see.
- Lord, we thank You in advance for answering our prayers, not because we are worthy, but because Jesus is.

SUGGESTED SONGS TO SING

“Come, Thou Fount” (SDA Hymnal #334); “Have Thine Own Way” (SDA Hymnal #567); “All the Way” (SDA Hymnal #516); “Because He Lives” (SDA Hymnal #526); “Faith is the Victory” (SDA Hymnal #608)

PROMISES TO CLAIM AS YOU PRAY

- “Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him” (1 John 5:14, 15).
- “I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, for My anger has turned away from him” (Hos. 14:4).
- “I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance” (Luke 5:32).
- “So rend your heart, and not your garments; return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm” (Joel 2:13).

A Deeper Experience

DAY 5—THE PRIVILEGE OF PARTNERSHIP

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Cor. 5:17).

When I gave my heart to Jesus at age 19, my whole life changed. Bible study and prayer became my daily companions. I looked forward to attending prayer meeting, Bible study groups, Sabbath School, and church—anywhere that the Word of God was presented and testimonies were shared. I hungered for more and still more of Jesus. The more Christ filled me, the more my taste in music, entertainment, clothing, everything, changed! My Sabbath School teacher, who was very dear to me, used to say that when we fully give ourselves to Christ, consecrating our lives to His service, we will “no longer fashion [ourselves] according to the former lusts, but by the faith of the Son of God [we] will follow in His steps, reflect His character. . . . The things [we] once hated [we] now love, and the things [we] once loved [we] hate” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 58, emphasis supplied).

I found this to be true. A desire bloomed in my heart to tell everyone I could that Christ loved me and forgave my sins, that I was clean and precious to Him. “No sooner does one come to Christ than there is born in his heart a desire to make known what a precious friend he has found in Jesus; the saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart. If we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and are filled with the joy of His indwelling Spirit, we shall not be able to hold our peace. If we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good we shall have something to tell” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 78).

Where could I begin? I didn’t have the slightest clue how to share with others, so I prayed and asked God what I should do. I was impressed, “Freely you have received, freely give” (Matt. 10:8). This was easier said than done. *What do I tell them?* I thought. During my devotions, I found this quotation: “They [the demoniacs] bore in their own persons the evidence that Jesus was the Messiah. They could tell what they knew; what they themselves had seen, and heard, and felt of the power of Christ. This is what everyone can do whose heart has been touched by the grace of God. . . . We can tell how we have tested His promise, and found the promise true. We can bear witness to what we have known of the grace of Christ. This is the witness for which our Lord calls, and for want of which the world is perishing” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 340). I waited for the Lord to give me opportunities to witness for Him.

I was working as an office receptionist when breaking news came across the television screen, alerting us that a terrible hurricane had struck the U.S. state of Florida and was moving north along the Atlantic coast to the Carolinas. As we watched the broadcast, Ginger, one of my co-workers, asked, “What is happening? Things are just crazy!” I blurted out, “Jesus is coming!” I hadn’t been working there long and was surprised that I answered so matter-of-factly! I quickly made my way back to my desk. Soon, Ginger came to the front where my desk was and plopped herself down in a chair. She said, “So, tell me about this Jesus-coming stuff. I want to know!” Prayerfully, I gave her a brief Bible study on the signs of Jesus’ second coming and shared how I prepared my heart to know Him as a Friend and be ready to meet Him. I then extended the invitation to her to do the same. The Lord opened a door, and I chose to walk through it.

God has given me the privilege of working with Him for nearly 40 years. I’ve been a Bible worker; taught Bible at an Adventist boarding school for six years; preached in front of thousands of people in the Philippines; shared my testimony before hundreds of high school students during weeks of prayer; and conducted seminars for women’s retreats, camp meetings, and churches. These have all been wonderful opportunities to share what God has done, but the most effective way to win souls for the Master is by coming close to people through the tender touch of compassion, by meeting their needs and winning their confidence. Then you can invite them to follow Jesus.

“Those who wait for the Bridegroom’s coming are to say to the people, ‘Behold your God!’ The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His

glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 415).

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR THE PRAYER TIME

Praise

- Lord, we praise You that You have changed us. We are new creations!
- We praise You for the security we find in You (Isa. 49:16).
- We praise You for the daily mercies You show to us.

Confession

- Lord, forgive us for when we have not shared our faith because of fear.
- We confess that we need Your strength to witness effectively.
- Lord, please point out areas in our life that keep us from being a positive witness for You.
- Forgive us, Lord, for not revealing Your character of love to others.

Supplication and Intercession

- Lord, please refresh the hearts of all those in ministry who are weary. Remind them that they are doing Your will. Please let them see the fruit of their labor, even if it is only one soul.
- Lord, we remember our Sabbath School teachers. Please let them know how important their work is for our children.
- Lord, we seek your guidance for the many Centers of Influence, health and family programs, and Pathfinder clubs around the world.
- We pray that more and more young adults will get involved in Mission to the Cities.
- We pray that You will help us love and nurture new members.
- Lord, please show us how to send more truth-filled literature (printed and electronic) into our communities. We pray that people will read it and that the Holy Spirit will convict them of Bible truth.
- Lord, we ask for Your protection over missionaries working in dangerous places.
- Please raise up literature evangelists, student volunteers, authors, media specialists, and financial supporters to spread words of hope and life.
- We pray for our lists of seven names. Please work powerfully in these lives. We claim 1 John 5:16.

Thanksgiving

- Thank You that You answer our prayers according to Your will.
- Thank You for using us to share with others!
- Thank You, Lord, that Your promises are true and trustworthy.

SUGGESTED SONGS TO SING

"Lift High the Cross" (SDA Hymnal #362); "I Love to Tell the Story" (SDA Hymnal #457); "Trust and Obey" (SDA Hymnal #59)

PROMISES TO CLAIM AS YOU PRAY

- "For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say" (Luke 12:12).
- "So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it" (Isa. 55:11).
- "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15).

A Deeper Experience

DAY 6—THE GIFT OF REPENTANCE

“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time” (1 Pet. 5:6).

Mr. G was a respected teacher at a small boarding academy in the rolling hills of Eastern Washington in the United States. This school taught not only the principles of reading, writing, math, and vocational skills but also the fundamentals of practical Christian living. Students learned to give Bible studies, preach evangelistic meetings, and lead out in their home churches by teaching the Sabbath School lesson, preaching the sermon, and doing community outreach. Mr. G was a vital part of that education.

Mr. G taught from the book *Steps to Christ* for his eleventh-grade Bible class. He used practical methods to impress on his students’ minds the simplicity of the gospel, and his burden was that they would grasp the principles of how to walk with Jesus and abide in Him daily. His life was a testimony to the power of God, and he stressed upon the minds of his students the importance of starting the day with Christ. “Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, ‘Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee’” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 70).

Mr. G taught not only upper grade Bible class but also carpentry to ninth-grade boys. The class was divided into two sections. First, they studied a book; next, they applied what they had learned in a practical way. One day during class, Mr. G was helping three of the boys build a supporting wall, while the other three played on a pile of lumber. Mr. G asked the boys to stay off the lumber since it could fall and injure someone. The boys continued to wrestle on the wood, and when he went over to talk with them, a large plank fell on his foot. He danced around in pain, clutching his foot. The boys, thinking this was very funny, laughed and pointed at him. Instantly, Mr. G became angry. Heated words flowed from his lips. Like Moses, who lost his temper with the children of Israel, he lost his temper in front of his students.

Running into a nearby office, Mr. G cried out to God, “I blew it, Lord! I can’t teach anymore!” Quietly, the tender mercy and compassion of Jesus comforted his heart, bringing repentance. “Many who are really conscientious, and who desire to live for God, [Satan] too often leads to dwell upon their own faults and weaknesses, and thus by separating them from Christ he hopes to gain the victory. . . . Rest in God. He is able to keep that which you have committed to Him. If you will leave yourself in His hands, He will bring you off more than conqueror through Him that has loved you” (*Steps to Christ*, pp. 71, 72).

While he was praying, the thought came to him, “You can’t stay in this office all day; you must go and tell those boys that you misrepresented Me by your actions.” Humbled, he returned to the boys, who were standing outside and blamed themselves for his outburst. “I did not represent Jesus to you today, and I’m sorry,” he apologized. The boys tried to comfort him saying “It’s OK! Everyone does it. It’s normal!”

The next class period for Mr. G that day was Bible. He had assigned his students to read the fifth chapter in *Steps to Christ*, “Consecration,” and write down a thought that impressed them. As he entered his classroom, he didn’t feel emotionally prepared to teach. The students came in and took their seats, and one of the girls put her assignment on his desk. Mr. G glanced down, and his eyes caught one sentence: “Your hope is not in yourself; it is in Christ” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 70). That one sentence was just what he needed.

Years later, he received a letter from one of those boys. “I know that you weren’t proud of your actions that day in carpentry class,” the letter read. “But I want you to know that your example of humbling yourself and making things right, apologizing to us, spoke volumes to my heart. Now that I am a father, I have had to ask my children many times to forgive me for when I failed, and because of your example, it has helped me be a better father.”

“We shall often have to bow down and weep at the feet of Jesus because of our shortcomings and mistakes, but we are not to be discouraged. Even if we are overcome by the enemy, we are not cast off, not forsaken and rejected of God. No; Christ is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 64).

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR THE PRAYER TIME

Praise

- Lord, we praise You for our Advocate, Jesus Christ, who intercedes on our behalf.
- We praise You because You can turn our defeat into victory.
- We praise You, Lord, that even if we do fall, we are not cast down and forsaken.

Confession

- Lord, please show us the areas in our lives that need Your softening and refining Spirit.
- Forgive us for when we lose our patience with others and speak angry or hasty words.
- Please give us Your strength to apologize when we have mistreated others.

Supplication and Intercession

- Lord, we ask You to give us Your spirit of peace when we are confronted with irritations.
- We pray for the 8,208 Adventist schools with almost 2 million students. May these schools always teach Bible truth and lead young people into mission and service.
- Lord, give us wisdom to reach secular cultures that have no interest in religion. Let Your Holy Spirit break down the walls that surround secular hearts.
- We pray for the unreached people groups in Asia, including Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus. Many have never heard the name of Jesus. Give us special wisdom for meeting their needs.
- Bless us as we reach out to people enslaved by spirit worship, idolatry, and animistic beliefs. Help us to understand their worldview and introduce them to a personal Savior.
- Lord, please inspire Seventh-day Adventists around the world to pray as never before. Let us plead together for the latter rain of the Holy Spirit. We ask You for the promised fulfillment of Joel 2, Hosea 6, and Acts 2.
- We pray for the 541 people groups in the 18 countries of Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division. Please lead them to biblical truth.
- Show us how to meet the practical and spiritual needs of refugees. May our church be known for our love of all people, no matter who they are or where they come from.
- May we faithfully and fully proclaim the three angels' messages of Revelation 14. May we center all our teachings on the love and righteousness of Christ.
- We also pray for our list of seven or more people [name the names if appropriate].

Thanksgiving

- Thank You, Lord, that You are able to keep us from falling (Jude 24).
- Thank You for repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation.
- We thank You for the example of service that Christ left us. Please give us the strength to follow His pattern.

SUGGESTED SONGS TO SING

“Just When I Need Him” (SDA Hymnal #512); “I Must Tell Jesus” (SDA Hymnal #485); “Whiter Than Snow” (SDA Hymnal #318)

PROMISES TO CLAIM AS YOU PRAY

- “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).
- “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1).

A Deeper Experience

DAY 7—THE GLORY OF THE PURPOSE

“Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to me” (Matt. 25:40).

“That which selfish hearts would regard as humiliating service, ministering to those who are wretched and in every way inferior in character and rank, is the work of sinless angels. The spirit of Christ’s self-sacrificing love is the spirit that pervades heaven and is the very essence of its bliss. This is the spirit that Christ’s followers will possess, the work that they will do” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 77).

“Lord, I don’t think I can do this! You made a huge mistake this time! I want to work for You, but not here!” This was my cry to the Lord after He placed me in an alternative high school for teenagers who needed to complete their education certificates and prepare for the work world. Many of these children were homeless, victims of abuse, or involved in gangs, drugs, and even prostitution. I had spent over 20 years teaching in a sheltered Christian school environment, and this new assignment seemed like more than I could endure.

Students entered the classroom on the first day holding up their pants and wearing hoodies that covered their faces. Trouble broke out within the first hour as one boy began to shout threatening obscenities toward two other young men. Here I was, totally out of my comfort zone, with a fight about to begin. I was intimidated. Their crude language, music, and explicit images displayed on their computer screens made me long for my protective environment. I didn’t belong here. I felt like a lamb among wolves; like the disciples on the turbulent sea, I cried out, “Lord, save me!”

I had been reading Jeremiah for my devotions, and the Lord brought to mind these words: “‘Do not be afraid of their faces, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord. . . . They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you, for I am with you,’ says the Lord, ‘to deliver you’” (Jer. 1:8, 19).

Sending up a prayer for help, I pressed the Lord to fulfill His word given to Jeremiah and bring calm into the room. Then, with an unnatural courage, I told the students, “I will not allow this kind of behavior in this classroom. Each of you must take your seats and quietly begin working on your assignments.” Imagine my surprise when they quietly complied! I glorified God in my heart, praising Him for His goodness and mercy. Over the next few weeks, I continued to plead with the Lord to take me out of my work situation. I believed I didn’t belong there. He answered my prayer in an unusual way—by showing me the condition of my own heart.

I was working with a student at the computer when he asked me a strange question, “Jodi, you came from a Christian school, right?” When I answered, “Yes,” he said, “Then why are you here with us?” His question pierced my heart. The Lord impressed me, “You are not ready to minister to the world. Not until you move beyond your built-in prejudice and fear will you be able to reveal My love to these children. You are here to make a difference in their lives, to reveal My character to them.” God was right! I wasn’t ready to minister because I did not have love. “I guess I just want to make a difference in your life,” I told him. Later that afternoon, the same scenario happened, this time with a young girl.

What difference could I make? It began with little things, such as providing a healthy breakfast so they could start the day with at least one good meal. I won their confidence by listening to their stories and entering into their sufferings and by becoming a friend and mentor.

When the 2004 tsunami struck Asia, the students wanted to find out what I thought of the tragedy. I told them that the tsunami was a sign of Jesus’ soon return. One of my students, who boasted that he was raised in church, said, “Doesn’t it talk about that in Revelation?” I invited him to read a passage. The students were very sober when I explained that Jesus was warning the world to get ready. I added that if anyone wanted to know how to prepare for Jesus’ coming, I would be happy to tell them. Later that day, a girl came into my office and said, “Please, I want to know.” I told her of Jesus’ love for her and her son and led her to receive Christ as her Savior. Throughout that year, I had several opportunities to present Jesus to “my kids” and lead them to accept Him.

“God never leads His children otherwise than they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning, and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as coworkers with Him” (*Conflict and Courage*, p. 278).

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR THE PRAYER TIME

Praise

- Lord, we praise you for being sensitive to our sufferings.
- We praise You for those who have nurtured us in the faith, leading us to a closer relationship with Jesus.
- We praise You for Your never-ending faithfulness to us.

Confession and Claiming Victory Over Sin

- Father, please show us which sins to confess openly and which to confess privately. We claim Your victory over those sins.
- Lord, forgive us for doubting Your leading. Forgive us for trying to find our own way out of a challenging situation, when You may have put us there for a reason.
- Forgive us for when we allow fear or prejudice to keep us from sharing Your love with others.

Supplication and Intercession

- Lord, we pray for Your protection for vulnerable children and teens. We ask You to guard them from those who seek to exploit them.
- Lord, may those who are caring for homeless children have hearts of compassion, gentle hands, and kind words.
- We pray for the family members of children who are in rebellion against authority. Please give them Your grace to deal with the situation compassionately.
- We ask You to raise up urban missionaries to plant churches for the 806 people groups in the 20 countries of Inter-European Division.
- Please raise up an army of workers to plant churches for the 948 people groups in the 38 countries of Inter-American Division.
- We pray for the heart burdens of our own church members and everyone here at this prayer time.
- We uplift the seven names we’ve written down on our cards. Father, You alone know every situation that our friends, family, and co-workers are experiencing. Guide them in Your path and bring them close to You.

Thanksgiving

- Thank You for Your unfailing love and compassion toward us.
- Father, thank You for always watching over us with tender regard.
- Thank You for understanding and pitying us in our weakness.

SUGGESTED SONGS TO SING

“Lead Them, My God to Thee” (SDA Hymnal #653); “Rescue the Perishing” (SDA Hymnal #367); “Seeking the Lost” (SDA Hymnal #373); “Work, for the Night is Coming” (SDA Hymnal #375); “Far and Near the Fields are Teeming” (SDA Hymnal #358)

PROMISES TO CLAIM AS YOU PRAY

- “Defend the poor and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy; free them from the hand of the wicked” (Ps. 82:3, 4).
- “But thus says the LORD: ‘Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible be delivered; for I will contend with him who contends with you, and I will save your children’” (Isa. 49:25).
- “Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27).

A Deeper Experience

DAY 8—THROUGH THE VALLEY

“The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit” (Ps. 34:18).

We were on a two-week mission trip in Iloilo City, Philippines, when I was called to the business office of the church. “Missy, you have a call from the United States—come quickly!” My heart pounded as I ran to the office and picked up the phone. Breathless, I said, “Hello?” On the other end I heard a teary voice say, “Jodi, Danny is dead!” I clutched my chest in disbelief. “How? What happened?” I asked.

My youngest brother, Frank, broke the news to me that our oldest brother, Danny, an alcoholic and drug addict, was found with a needle in his arm in a motel room. He overdosed on a deadly cocktail of heroin mixed with alcohol. In shock, I hung up the phone and fell weeping into my husband’s arms. I was too far from home to rush to my family’s side and had to wait another week until our mission trip was over.

During the long flight home, childhood memories flooded my mind. I remembered special moments playing with my brother. I remembered how protective he had been of me. I thought about Danny’s life, of the choices he had made. My heart had ached for him to have a better life, to know God and find peace and contentment.

Danny always found it easy to make friends. He seemed to be the “popular” one. But when he entered high school, his friends were the ones who partied, drank alcohol, and experimented with drugs. It was not long until Danny became an alcoholic and drug addict, which made him a frequent visitor to the county jail and court-ordered detox centers. Finally, a court-appointed attorney warned Danny that if he didn’t get out of town and away from his friends, he could potentially end up in prison. So Danny came to live with my husband and me for a while.

While he was in our home, Danny showed an interest in spiritual things. He participated in our family worship and even enrolled in a correspondence Bible study course. He knew all the right answers and completed his lessons in record time. His life was taking a different course and, believing himself to be stable, he returned home. Soon, he was back with his old friends and into the drugs—this time deeper, using stronger drugs, which eventually took his life. How it must have broken God’s heart to see the one for whom He paid the redemption price in that condition, degraded to a slave of habits. “Divine love sheds tears of anguish over men formed in the likeness of their Maker who will not accept His love” (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, p. 13).

I felt sorry for Danny. Watching his struggle with addiction was devastating to our family. Many times he took advantage of our parents, stealing from them to support his addiction and lying to cover it up. They could not allow him to keep living in their home, so then he became homeless. How it broke my mother’s heart to think of her son sleeping on the street in the winter, eating in shelters, if he even ate at all, wandering the streets in search of more drugs. She gave him many “second chances,” but he never changed. He died alone. I am so weary of this world and Satan’s manipulation of those who are weak and without Christ. It was never God’s plan that humanity should go through life suffering pain and loneliness, enslaved by Satan.

I often wonder if Danny believed that God loved him. I wonder what was going through his mind in those last moments of his life. Did he call out to God? Will he be saved? I will never know the answer in this life, but I am confident that our Heavenly Father had His hand over Danny from the time he was born. I know that God’s love was his constant companion, ever drawing him with lovingkindness and offering him salvation.

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR THE PRAYER TIME

Praise

- Lord, we praise You for the gift of Jesus, who died to redeem us and our loved ones.
- Lord, we praise You that You hear us when we talk to You and that You answer according to Your will.
- We praise You for Your life-changing power.

Confession and Claiming Victory Over Sin

- Father, please show us which sins to confess privately. We claim Your victory over those sins.
- Forgive us for times we have been unwilling to follow Your will written in Your Word.
- Thank You that You forgive us according to 1 John 1:9.

Supplication and Intercession

- Father, we intercede for those who may be victims of circumstances or controlled by addictions. Please break the chains that bind them! May we win them back to You through our love and concern.
- Lord, please give us understanding, compassionate hearts for family members who have taken advantage of us. Help them to see Your love through our actions.
- Please teach us how to proclaim our fundamental church beliefs with clarity, creativity, and biblical authenticity. May the love of Jesus be at the core of everything we believe.
- We ask You to prepare young people to plant churches for the 789 people groups in the 9 countries of North American Division.
- We ask You to prepare volunteers to serve the 70 people groups in the Israel Field.
- We ask You to raise up medical missionaries to plant churches among the 830 people groups in the 11 countries of East-Central Africa Division.
- We ask You to raise up prayer warriors to intercede for the 2,568 people groups in the 4 countries of Southern Asia Division. We especially remember Hope TV India and Asian Aid School for the Blind.
- We pray for the work of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division's publishing houses.
- We pray You will do as You promise in Psalm 32:8, by leading and guiding us as we do the Ten Days Outreach Challenge.
- Thank you, Father, for sending the Holy Spirit to convert the seven people on our prayer lists.

Thanksgiving

- Lord, thank You that Satan has no power over us.
- Thank You that You provide a way of escape so that temptation cannot overwhelm us (1 Cor. 10:13).
- Thank You that if You set us free, we are free indeed! (John 8:36).
- Thank You, in advance, for answering our prayers.

SUGGESTED SONGS TO SING

"Does Jesus Care?" (SDA Hymnal #181); "Hiding in Thee" (SDA Hymnal #525); "Burdens Are Lifted at Calvary" (SDA Hymnal #476); "We Would See Jesus" (SDA Hymnal #494)

PROMISES TO CLAIM AS YOU PRAY

- "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19).
- "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds" (Ps. 147:3).
- "I will say of the Lord, 'He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will trust.' Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence" (Ps. 91:2, 3).
- "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

A Deeper Experience

DAY 9—A STRENGTH GREATER THAN DOUBT

“For I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day” (2 Tim. 1:12).

“The test is positive; you’re pregnant!” I could not wait to share this good news with my husband. Our daughter was almost two, and this pregnancy would space the children perfectly. Our joy turned into sadness, however, not once, but twice. Later that same day I experienced some pain in my lower abdomen and ended up in the hospital. Testing proved the doctor’s suspicion—an ectopic pregnancy. One of my fallopian tubes had ruptured, causing life-threatening internal bleeding. Surgery repaired the physical damage, but not my disappointed heart.

After many years of unsuccessful attempts to get pregnant, my physician told me that it was impossible due to the tissue damage caused by the hemorrhaging. I was determined to prove him wrong! In my heart I said, “I serve a big God; He performed a miracle for Sarah, allowing her to get pregnant against all odds, and He is able to perform a miracle for me.” I put all my faith in the hands of God, and it wasn’t long before I found myself pregnant again. God answered my prayer! We were so excited. Our faith in God’s promises and our love for Him increased.

My husband and I were walking along a peaceful river on a sunny Sabbath afternoon when I felt a familiar pain in my side. I had felt this way before, but quickly dismissed it. Later that evening, the pain intensified, and again, I ended up in the hospital. Tests confirmed my fears—it was a second ectopic pregnancy, and I needed emergency surgery.

What happens when a Christian puts all of his faith in the promises of God, only to be disappointed? Where is the good spoken of in Romans 8:28? Clouds of doubt covered me. I wondered, *Why, God? I don’t get it! Why did you answer my prayer, then take it away? Why did You let me down?*

I lay in my hospital bed feeling very discouraged. I was physically in pain and emotionally drained. I didn’t want to see anyone! My nurse assured me that hot water would help me feel better and helped me into the shower. Tears streamed down my face. I thought I should pray but couldn’t. I felt totally abandoned by God. The steam from the shower was like the dark clouds of a storm. The devil was right on time to suggest, “Is this how God rewards those who place their trust in Him? Is this how He shows His love?”

But God had not left me. I was impressed to repeat the following words aloud: “God loves me.” I wasn’t sure I could—or even wanted to. But I was impressed a second time with great intensity, so I said, “God loves me.” I repeated the same phrase three times, each time emphasizing a different word. “GOD loves me.” “God LOVES me.” “God loves ME!” With the third declaration, the darkness left me! I returned to my bed totally exhausted and wanted to be alone.

When the hospital chaplain entered my room, she looked at my chart and asked, “Mrs. Genson?” When I responded, she came to my side and took my hand in hers, saying, “It’s hard to lose a baby, isn’t it?” The clouds returned! Not wanting to burst into tears in her presence, I covered my head with my blanket and said aloud, “God loves me! I know whom I have believed! I have given my life to Christ, and what He decides to do with me is OK, because my life is hid in Christ.” With this, the clouds once again left me.

These words that Jesus spoke to Peter brought comfort to my heart later: “What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this” (John 13:7). I wrestled with God over my loss. I couldn’t understand why it had happened, especially when I exercised faith. It would be ten years before I understood that God wanted me to experience that faith must reach beyond the clouds to what is unseen, that His grace is made perfect in our weakness. I prayed for a miracle, and God gave me one. But I learned that the real miracle was that God’s strength was greater than my doubt and that He could keep me

together through any difficulty. Like Job, I can say, "Though He slay me, yet I will trust Him." "He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 13:15; 23:10).

"God gives us lessons of trust. He would teach us where to look for help and strength in time of need. Thus we obtain practical knowledge of His divine will, which we so much need in our life experience. Faith grows strong in earnest conflict with doubt and fear" (*Testimonies*, vol. 4, pp. 116, 117). "In the future life the mysteries that here have annoyed and disappointed us will be made plain. We shall see that our seemingly unanswered prayers and disappointed hopes have been among our greatest blessings" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 474).

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR THE PRAYER TIME

Praise

- Lord, we praise You that You are the Father of all compassion, the God of all comfort (2 Cor. 1:3-7).
- We praise You for healing our broken hearts and binding up our wounds.
- We praise You for letting us lay our burdens on You. You will sustain us in our hour of grief, for You have experienced grief.

Confession and Claiming Victory Over Sin

- We ask for Your Holy Spirit to point out any sins that are separating us from You.
- Forgive us, Father, when our doubts overwhelm our ability to trust in You.
- Thank You for the forgiveness You so wonderfully offer.

Supplication and Intercession

- Lord, we pray for wisdom and grace to accept our disappointments, knowing that You love us and will work all things for good, though we may not understand it now.
- We ask that our faith will be strengthened as we face doubt and fear.
- Please let our families reveal Your love in our homes and communities. We ask You to bring harmony into homes, heal broken relationships, protect the vulnerable from abuse, and reveal Your sanctifying power in seemingly hopeless situations.
- May our church members, pastors, and leaders around the world feed on God's Word every day. May we also seek You daily in personal prayer. Remind us that without You, we can do nothing.
- We ask You to raise up nurses and doctors to plant new churches among the 1,978 people groups in the 22 countries in West-Central Africa Division.
- We pray for the 49 million people in the 19 least-reached cities of Trans-European Division.
- We pray for the seven people on our prayer lists. Give them hearts to know You as Your Word says in Jeremiah 24:7.

Thanksgiving

- Father, thank You that because Christ is interceding for us, we have a hope and a future.
- Thank You for comforting us in all our troubles, so that we may comfort others.
- Thank you, God, that Your strength is made perfect in our weakness.

SUGGESTED SONGS TO SING

"I Know Whom I Have Believed" (SDA Hymnal #511); "Moment by Moment" (SDA Hymnal #507); "My Faith Looks Up to Thee" (SDA Hymnal #517); "It Is Well with My Soul" (SDA Hymnal #530)

PROMISES TO CLAIM AS YOU PRAY

- "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).
- "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand" (Isa. 41:10).
- "Cast your burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved" (Ps. 55:22).

A Deeper Experience

DAY 10—LET GO OF THE THORNS

“Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13, 14).

My older brother and I were abandoned by our biological father. Because he left our mother when we were very young, we never met him. All we knew of him was that he was a sailor, tall and handsome with fiery red hair and freckles, and spoke with a southern accent. All attempts to locate him failed, so we gave up. I grew up wondering why he didn't want us, which left a scar on my young heart.

I was clumsy, often tripping over “nothing” on the playground. I was made fun of at school. My hair was short and cut square around my pale face. My eyes lacked the sparkle of happiness that should characterize a typical eight-year-old. I was frequently the brunt of jokes and teasing.

Because I often played by myself, recess was my least favorite time of day, but physical education class was even worse. We played kickball, also called soccer baseball, which I hated. The game involved kicking a ball and running around bases. As the children lined up, captains chose their teams. I was always chosen last. The teams took their positions, and I was sent to the far section of the field because I wasn't very good at this game. Then my team began to yell, “Get back! Timmy's up!” Timmy always kicked the ball really hard. I just stood with my arms crossed. Suddenly, I heard the cries, “Dumb DeWeese! The ball is coming to you! Catch it!” Looking up, I saw the ball heading straight for me. I stretched out my arms and caught it! In disbelief the other children erupted in praise, “Yay! Dumb DeWeese caught the ball!” For a brief moment, I was a hero, praised by my classmates, but it was short-lived. Things returned to normal when it was my turn to kick the ball and I struck out, causing my team to lose the game.

Insecurity and low self-esteem stayed with me into my teens and adulthood. Events in early childhood can affect who we become, but we don't have to stay that way. I had every right to be bitter and angry; after all, I was rejected by my father, friendless, and easily taken advantage of because I longed to be accepted. The more I dwelled on it, the more it became a reality. I gathered a bouquet of thorns. But holding onto past experience, as bitter as it may have been, becomes too heavy to bear and may eventually affect our health. We become slaves to our feelings.

I read this account by Ellen White recently:

“Many, walking along the path of life, dwell upon their mistakes and failures and disappointments, and their hearts are filled with grief and discouragement. While I was in Europe, a sister who had been doing this, and who was in deep distress, wrote to me, asking for some word of encouragement. The night after I had read her letter I dreamed that I was in a garden, and one who seemed to be the owner of the garden was conducting me through its paths. I was gathering the flowers and enjoying their fragrance, when this sister, who had been walking by my side, called my attention to some unsightly briars that were impeding her way. There she was mourning and grieving. She was not walking in the pathway, following the guide, but was walking among the briars and thorns. ‘Oh,’ she mourned, ‘is it not a pity that this beautiful garden is spoiled with thorns?’ Then the guide said, ‘Let the thorns alone, for they will only wound you. Gather the roses, the lilies, and the pinks.’ Have there not been some bright spots in your experience? . . . When you look back into the chapters of your life experience do you not find some pleasant pages? Are not God's promises, like the fragrant flowers, growing beside your path on every hand? Will you not let their beauty and sweetness fill your heart with joy? . . . It is not wise to gather together all the unpleasant recollections of a past life,—its iniquities and disappointments,—to talk over them and mourn over them until we are overwhelmed with discouragement. A discouraged soul is filled with darkness, shutting out the light of God from his own soul and casting a shadow upon the pathway of others” (*Steps to Christ*, pp. 116, 117).

I chose to let go of my thorns and gather the roses. When Christ came into my life, I discovered who I was in Him! I was once a skinny little girl who thought she could do nothing right—but became a child of God, a royal princess of the King of kings (1 Pet. 2:9). No longer am I fatherless, for He became my Father (Ps. 27:10; John 16:27). No longer am I rejected and friendless, for my Father in heaven calls me His friend (John 15:15). I know I have great value, for He gave His life for me (John 3:16). What a reason to rejoice!

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR THE PRAYER TIME

Praise

- Lord, we praise You for Your transforming power!
- We praise You that You have called us Your friends (John 15:15).
- We praise You for choosing us to be Your children.

Confession and Claiming Victory Over Sin

- Lord, we claim Your victory over the sin in our lives.
- Forgive us for choosing to dwell on the “thorns” of the past and allowing those experiences to discourage us. Thank You that if we confess our sins, You are faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us (1 John 1:9).

Supplication and Intercession

- Lord, we uplift our church leaders around the world. Please grant them wisdom as they make important decisions and lead Your people.
- We ask for Your grace to forgive those who have wronged us. Lord, please bring healing and restoration to families.
- Lord, may each of us be a friend to the friendless, revealing God’s love to those in need of affection.
- We pray for our children. Please empower them to stand boldly for you when they encounter obstacles and pressure. Help them to make wise choices and stand for truth (Isa. 44:3, 4).
- Teach us to follow Christ’s selfless example by meeting the daily needs of people close to us. Equip us to serve as medical missionaries, community volunteers, and friends to the needy.
- Lord, may a mighty revival of primitive godliness sweep Your church in the final days. May we stand for truth though the heavens fall.
- Lord, show us how to share the gospel with Muslim people groups. We pray that they hear and respond to Your offer of grace.
- We pray for the seeds of truth sown in Japan during last year’s Total Member Involvement outreach. Please send laborers to work and pray for Japan.
- We pray for the seven names on our lists. Please show each person how much Jesus loves them.

Thanksgiving

- Lord, thank You for Your promise: “He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:6).
- Thank you, Lord, that You can fill us with joy and peace.
- Thank You that You are already working in the hearts of people we are praying for.

SUGGESTED SONGS TO SING

“A Child of the King” (SDA Hymnal #468); “Blessed Assurance” (SDA Hymnal #462); “There’s Sunshine in My Soul” (SDA Hymnal #470); “Wonderful Peace” (SDA Hymnal #466)

PROMISES TO CLAIM AS YOU PRAY

- “When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take care of me” (Ps. 27:10).
- “What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Rom. 8:31).
- “Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, yet I will not forget you” (Isa. 49:15).

A DEEPER EXPERIENCE

SABBATH CELEBRATION, JANUARY 19

Suggested Format for the Final Sabbath

This final Sabbath should be a time of great rejoicing in all that God has done for you and your church during the Ten Days of Prayer. Design your day to celebrate God's goodness and mighty power. Consider how you have experienced the outpouring of the Holy Spirit during the past ten days. This Sabbath is an opportunity to rejoice in what He has done, is doing, and will do.

The needs of each congregation are unique, so please work with local leaders to develop a specific plan for your church. Here are some suggested items to include in your final Sabbath church service.

THEME TEXT

"And this is life eternal, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:3).

- **Testimonies:** Include ample time for testimonies of answered prayer. Those who have participated in the Ten Days of Prayer should have many stories they can share with the congregation, but encourage them to be brief so that everyone can participate. Others may also have stories. It might be good to have some testimonies pre-planned, in addition to having an open sharing time.
- **Prayer Time:** Invite the whole congregation to join in a time of united prayer. You could lead the congregation through an interactive prayer similar to what you have used throughout the week. You can pray over a specific passage together. This could be done with people in small groups or with everyone praying together. Another option would be to have several different kinds of prayer throughout the service—praying the Scriptures, small-group, individual, congregational, silent, and so on.
- **Singing:** This is a day to rejoice in all God has done, and music is a great way to celebrate. If a certain song has become a theme song for your group, make sure to sing that with the whole congregation.
- **Future Plans:** If God has led you toward a special outreach or ministry through the Ten Days of Prayer, let your church family know about your plans and invite them to join in. (Some suggestions are included in the Leader's Guide for the Ten Days of Prayer.)
- **Children/Youth:** A children's story about prayer would certainly be appropriate. Also, if you have had any children or youth involved with the prayer meetings, have them share their testimonies and/or lead out in a prayer time.
- **Flexibility:** Make sure to be flexible in your plans so that you can follow the Holy Spirit's leading throughout the service.