

PRAYER SERVICE

Stand Alone

Date: March 15, 2026

Transition: Worship Leader Prays & Seats

While everyone in the house is saying “Hi” I want to take a moment and say “Hi” to everyone joining us online or on our app, we are so glad you are here. You are a part of our family, and whatever you are walking through right now, we want to walk through it with you. So please, reach out and let us know how we can pray for you or serve you this week.

AND whether you are watching, or **HERE** in the house, today is going to be a little different...

I thought about giving everyone the heads up—sending out a push notification on our app and posting it on our social channels, but honestly, I decided not to. And here's why: **sometimes the thing your soul needs most is the very thing you didn't see coming.**

So, here's where we are. We have been in a remarkable collection of messages called “Bless Your Heart” where we have been unpacking this amazing thing that God does that so many Christians miss. We've been discovering how God doesn't just forgive you and your wicked heart, He actually gives you a **NEW** heart, a good heart! And from that good heart you can now trust those deep, deep desires in your heart and lean into the unique way He designed you **AND** find the life God made you for! Amen?

We've got some exciting ground to cover still so that's not going away, we will pick it back up next week.

SO, about today... as I was going through the week I had a feeling, a nudge, a prompting from the Holy Spirit that I could not shake. It actually has been building for a few weeks now, but so many of you are dealing with a crisis on one level or another. A couple of people in crisis at any one time is normal, that's life, we live in a broken world. **BUT** when almost everyone I talk to on a regular basis is going through something—that makes you pause and wonder what is **REALLY** going on, amen?

So, instead of me getting up here and preaching and you listening, we are going to stop and spend our time today in:

PRAYER

Now I know some of you just tensed up a little. You heard “we're going to spend the morning in prayer” and your brain immediately went, “How long is this going to go? Is somebody going to get weird? Am I going to have to hold hands with a stranger?” Right? And I get it. I really do.

AND if you are new here today, or you are still kind of figuring out this whole faith thing, I could see how you could have just broke out in a cold panic. You're kinda checking to see if you can still slip out the back, maybe check things out again on Easter when things are more normal. If that is you, I get that too.

BUT I want you to know that you are not only welcome today, but you are specifically invited in. You don't have to pray out loud. You don't have to do anything. You can just sit and breathe and let whatever happens in this room wash over you. Some of you, just sitting in a room where people are genuinely crying out to God may be one of the most powerful things that's ever happened to you. So, stay. Engage as you feel comfortable and I think you'll be glad you did.

Here's how this is going to work. I'm going to give you a little context for each area of prayer—just a few minutes of Biblical grounding—and then I'm going to turn it over to you and give you three or four minutes to actually pray. Not to think about praying. Not to plan your prayer. Just to talk to God as openly and honestly as you can.

Some of you may whisper your prayers. Most of you will pray quietly in your seat. Both are absolutely fine. This is not a performance. There are no right words. God is not grading your grammar or your theology in these next few moments. He's just listening to the worries and cares of our hearts because that's who He is.

We are going to pray through six different areas today, and I want to walk you through what they are—not to explain them yet, but just so you know where we're headed.

In a moment we're going to start by preparing our hearts. We are going to confess to God the stuff that gets in the way of prayer working in the first place.

Then we're going to step into some territory that might feel a little new to some of you—we're going to pray against the forces that are actively working against your life, your family, and this church. We're going to deal with that, not in a scary way, but in a real way.

Then we're going to bring our physical bodies, our mental health, our spiritual dry seasons, and for some of you your battle with addiction right to the feet of Jesus.

After that, we're going to pray over finances—over the people in this room who are barely making it, who are one car repair away from a crisis, who are carrying the weight of inflation and medical bills and a job market that feels rigged against them.

We're also going to hold space for everyone in this room who is grieving. For those who have recently lost someone, or are in the middle of losing someone and you are carrying that ache today.

And then we're going to close by praying for ourselves as a church—specifically for Easter, which is coming up fast, and for everyone in our lives who needs an encounter with a risen Jesus.

That's where we're headed today. Six areas. And we're going to take them one at a time. You guys down for this?

Well, before we can pray for anything else, we've got to deal with the condition of our hearts. Because here's what Jesus says in Matthew 5:

⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

When Jesus says this He's not just talking about eternity or heaven. He's talking about right now. Today. The purity of our hearts in some way impacts our ability to see God at work. **The Psalmist knew this too.** Psalm 66:18 says:

¹⁸ If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.

That's not God being cold or distant. That's just how it works. Unconfessed sin creates static on the line. It doesn't mean God stops loving you, it just means the signal is getting blocked. You only have 1 bar instead of 4 bars, right? **Then James, the half-brother of Jesus says** this in James 1:

⁶ But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷ That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. ⁸ Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

So, before we go anywhere else today, we're going to do a little housekeeping of the soul.

This first window of prayer is for four things:

Confessing sin.

The stuff you already know about, the things that have been bothering your conscience. You don't have to be dramatic about it. Just honest. Second:

Confessing doubts.

The questions you're afraid to ask out loud, the moments where you weren't sure God was real or that He cared. He can handle your doubts. Bring them. Third:

Forgiving people.

Let the Holy Spirit bring to mind anyone you are holding something against. Unforgiveness doesn't hurt them. It hurts you and in some way blocks our intimacy with God. So, choose to let them go. Finally:

Opening our hands.

Surrendering your agenda for the next few minutes and asking God to meet you here.

So, get comfortable, relax your body, and take :45 seconds to a minute for each of these. Got it? Do that now...

[PRAYER WINDOW]

Alright... how did that feel? Next I want to step into something that I think needs to be said clearly, and I want to say it with as much pastoral care as I can—because the last thing I want to do is make this feel weird or dramatic or over-the-top. But I'd be doing you a disservice if I didn't tell you the truth: we are in a war.

Not a metaphorical war. Not an abstract theological concept. A real, actual, spiritual war being fought in the unseen realm for the souls of people, for the health of families, and yes—for the life of this church.

The Apostle Paul was not exaggerating when he wrote in Ephesians 6:12:

¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Your fight is not with your spouse. It's not with your coworker. It's not with your own mind. Behind so much of what we are struggling against: the anxiety, the exhaustion, the temptation, the cynicism, the division... There is an enemy who has been working overtime. And he is not creative. His playbook is ancient. John 10:10 says he comes to steal, kill, and destroy. That's it. That's his whole agenda. Steal your joy. Kill your faith. Destroy your relationships.

BUT here is the part I really need you to hear. We do not fear him. Not even a little! Because here's what else the Bible says. 1 John 4:4:

Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.

Luke 10:19, Jesus himself said:

¹⁹ I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.

Colossians 2:15 tells us that Jesus:

¹⁵ In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross.

Let me translate that into plain English: the enemy has already been defeated. We are not fighting FOR victory; we are fighting FROM victory. There is a massive difference between those two postures. This is not a war we are trying to win. This is a war that has already been won, and our job is to enforce what Jesus secured at Calvary.

C.S. Lewis wrote in *The Screwtape Letters* that the enemy wants two things from us:

“Either complete ignorance that he exists, or total preoccupation with him.”

Both extremes serve his purposes. The truth is we acknowledge the fight, but we don't give the enemy our attention. We give that to Jesus.

So, what does this mean practically in prayer? It means we pray with authority, not anxiety. We don't beg God to maybe, possibly, if He's willing, think about dealing with the forces of darkness. We pray as people who understand that the King has already spoken, that the battle is already won, and that in His name—in Jesus's name—we have every right and every authority to stand against whatever is coming against us, against our families, and against this church!

This is the moment! This is why we showed up today!

AND I want you to pray out loud if you are able. Maybe quietly under your breath, maybe with more volume if you feel it. Pray for your home. Pray for your marriage. Pray for your kids who are being targeted. Pray for this church, for our leadership, for every person in this room. Command the enemy to release what he has stolen. Invite the peace, the protection, the presence of Jesus to fill every space where the enemy has had a foothold.

You have that authority in His name. So, let's put it to use! Let's step out with a little faith here and do some violence against the forces of darkness even if it is just a whisper.

[PRAYER WINDOW]

Alright, we pray all this in Jesus name!

For this next section let's acknowledge we are not just bodies with a soul somewhere floating around inside. We are not just intellects with a spiritual side we visit on Sundays. We are whole, integrated people—and God cares about all of it.

James 5:14-15 says this:

¹⁴ Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven.

That's not a first-century idea that doesn't apply anymore. That's a promise. And it's for right now.

In this room today, there are people who have family members fighting cancer. There are people who haven't slept well in months. There are people whose anxiety has reached a level where getting out of bed feels like climbing Everest. There are people quietly losing a battle with alcohol, with pills, with things that

started as coping mechanisms and became chains. There are people in a spiritual dry season—they want to feel God but can't, and they're scared they never will again.

All of that comes under the domain of God's healing power. All of it! Psalm 103:3 says He:

...heals all your diseases.

Not just the ones that are easy, not just the ones that are socially acceptable to talk about in church.

So, in this window, I want you to pray specifically. Name the body part, the diagnosis, the mental health struggle, the addiction. Don't be vague with God. He already knows. Being specific is for you! It's an act of trust. It's saying, "I believe you are actually able to touch this specific thing."

Pray for yourself. Pray for someone you love. But take a few minutes and pray now.

[PRAYER WINDOW]

Amen. So, a few more. How are we doing? Let's shift to finances now.

Money is one of the most real, most daily, most unspiritual-feeling things we deal with. And yet the Bible addresses it more than almost any other topic. Jesus talked about money more than He talked about heaven and hell combined. Because He knew that financial stress is one of the most powerful forces that can pull a person away from faith, away from family, and away from a clear mind.

And the people in this room are carrying some heavy financial weight right now.

The economy is putting pressure on families in ways we haven't seen in a generation. Inflation has eaten into savings that took years to build. Medical bills arrive in the mailbox and feel like physical blows. Some of you need a job—not eventually, but now. Some of you have a job but it's not enough, and you're doing math at 11 pm that you can't make work no matter how many times you run it. Some of you have made some poor choices with money that you are now facing the consequences of.

Hear me, this is not a spiritual failure. This is a human reality AND God is not embarrassed by your financial need right now.

Paul says in Philippians 4:19:

¹⁹ And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

Not some of your needs. Not the manageable ones. All of them! In Matthew 6 Jesus tells us the Father knows what we need before we even ask. But He also says ask anyway. Because prayer isn't about informing God of your situation—it's about inviting Him into it.

So, in this window, I want you to be specific. Name the number if you need to. Name the job. Name the bill. Tell God exactly what provision would look like and ask Him for it with faith, not with desperation.

[PRAYER WINDOW]

Amen! In Matthew 5:4, Jesus said it simply:

⁴ Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Not “blessed are those who have it together.” Not “blessed are those whose faith is strong enough to not really feel it.” Blessed are those who mourn.

There is something sacred in grief. And there is a promise attached to it, that God draws near to the broken-hearted in a way that He doesn't in the easier seasons. Psalm 34:18 says:

¹⁸ The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

In this room today there are people carrying fresh grief, someone who passed in the last few months, someone they loved deeply, someone they weren't ready to lose. And some of you are in that slow, agonizing grief of watching someone you love decline. It's not an event you can process it's an ongoing ache that gets up with you every morning.

Hear me today, grief is not the absence of faith. Grief is love with nowhere to go. And God receives it!

SO, this next window is for you to bring your grief to the One who understands it. Remember, Jesus stood at the grave of His friend Lazarus, fully knowing He was about to raise him from the dead, and the Bible says He wept anyway. He didn't skip past the grief to get to the miracle. He entered it.

AND He will enter yours too.

If you are mourning today, give yourself permission to actually feel it in front of God right now. Bring the person's name. Bring the memory. Bring the ache. And receive the comfort He promises.

AND if you are not in the middle of this, then be praying for your church family who is.

[PRAYER WINDOW]

Amen. I can't tell you how proud I am of you guys...

As we close today, let's close where we should probably always close, with something bigger than ourselves.

Easter is coming. And in just a few weeks, this room is going to be full of people who don't normally sit here. People who are skeptical, curious, wounded, searching. People whose kids dragged them here. People who made a promise to a parent before they died to give church one more try. People who are right on the edge of a decision that could change the entire trajectory of their lives.

And here's the thing about Easter—it doesn't happen because we promoted it well. It doesn't happen because we put up a nice graphic on social or ran a good ad. It happens because people pray, and the Holy Spirit shows up and does what only the Holy Spirit can do.

John 6:44, Jesus said:

⁴⁴ “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them.”

The drawing is God's job. Our job is to pray, to invite, to show up, to serve, and to trust Him with the results.

Acts 2:47 says that in the early church:

And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

That's not a strategy. That's a move of God in response to a people who were praying with expectation.

So in this final window, pray for Easter. Pray for the specific people in your life you want to invite. Pray for our worship team. Pray for our kids' ministry. Pray for our leaders. Pray that God would do something this Easter in this church that we couldn't manufacture, couldn't plan, and couldn't take credit for.

Pray like it matters. Because it does. **Worship team you guys can come help us close this out.**

[PRAYER WINDOW]

Amen and amen... Church I want you to hear this before the band takes us into worship. What just happened in this room was not nothing.

I know it didn't look like much from the outside. A bunch of people sitting in seats, eyes closed, lips moving, some of you barely whispering. But here's what Scripture says about that. Revelation 8:3-4 gives us this incredible image of heaven, an angel standing at the altar with a golden censer, and the smoke of incense rising before God. And then it says:

⁴The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of God's people, went up before God.

Your prayers, the ones you just prayed, land before the throne of God, and they don't come back empty!

Prayer offered in Jesus name, in faith, covered by the blood of the Lamb, those prayers do not evaporate! They are not lost! They are not just us venting into the atmosphere hoping someone is listening! God is listening! And He moves in response to the prayers of His people!

This is not the end of what God is doing in us and through us and around us! This is the beginning of a new chapter, one written by prayer, soaked in faith, and anchored to the God who is already in the future preparing the way!

The worship team is going to lead us now. If you want to come forward, the front is open. If you need prayer, our prayer team is at Care & Prayer in the back. And if something broke open in you today— don't leave without letting someone know.

Let's worship our God!