

We are thankful that God lets us live in conversation with him. We embrace this gift of communication by voicing our hopes, fears, successes, failures, questions, thanks, and praise. By speaking these to God, we learn to trust him above our own abilities. We are thankful that God hears us, and that we see the power of a God who moves in response to people who look to him before looking to ourselves or our culture.

# SECOND MILE TWENTY- TWENTY-SIX WEEK OF PRAYER AND PRACTICE



## **2026 Week of Prayer and Fasting**

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## Introduction

*The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I told you about: ‘After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me, because he existed before me.’ I didn’t know him, but I came baptizing with water so that he might be revealed to Israel.” And John testified, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and he rested on him. I didn’t know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The one you see the Spirit descending and resting on – he is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.”*  
John 1:29-34

*The wind blows where it pleases, and you hear its sound, but you don’t know where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”* John 3:8

The Holy Spirit is on the move. He points us to Jesus. He advocates for us. He comforts us. He does what he pleases, and sometimes in our lives, his activity can be inconvenient and even jolting. We all walk through times in our lives that are spiritually jolting when we walk with the Holy Spirit – we must learn to change, grow, and receive his good work in our lives. He is forming us into the image of Christ.

In this booklet many of the reflections, questions, and prayer points are taken out of the Gospel of John message series. Look back through your sermon notes as a helpful resource or refer to the messages and notes on our website. This guide is written to teach, remind, and help you commune with the Holy Spirit which will require slowing down and listening to the Spirit.

- Do you need renewal? Ask the Spirit to breathe his breath into your dry bones (Ezekiel 37:1-6).
- Do you need redemption? Ask the Spirit to lead you into repentance which will provide refreshment (Acts 3:19).
- Do you need companionship? Ask the Spirit to comfort you and to envelope you in his presence.
- Do you need words to pray? Ask the Spirit to pray on your behalf, give you insight into what to pray, and to use this booklet to guide you into praying for yourself, your friends, Second Mile, Tucson, and the nations.

May the Spirit of God spiritually jolt you into prayer, ideas, action, life-change, gospel proclamation, and deeper faith, hope, and love. May he use this prayer guide to prompt you this week and throughout 2026.

*When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. For he will not speak on his own, but he will speak whatever he hears. He will also declare to you what is to come. He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.* John 16:13-14

*Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus. Do not stifle the Holy Spirit.* 1 Thessalonians 5:16-19 (NLT)

## Monday - Who Is the Spirit? What Does the Holy Spirit Do?

Athanasius was a courageous and steadfast defender of trinitarian theology in the fourth century. He articulated the essential mystery of God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit conveyed in the creed that bears his name. Spend time today reading through the Athanasian Creed. Set a reminder and every two hours read it again.

### Athanasian Creed

“Now this is the true Christian faith: We worship one God in three persons and three persons in one God, without mixing the persons or dividing the divine being. For each person—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—is distinct, but the deity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one, equal in glory and coeternal in majesty.

What the Father is, so is the Son, and so is the Holy Spirit. The Father is uncreated, the Son uncreated, the Holy Spirit uncreated; the Father is infinite, the Son infinite, the Holy Spirit infinite; the Father is eternal, the Son eternal, the Holy Spirit eternal; yet they are not three who are eternal, but there is one who is eternal, just as they are not three who are uncreated, nor three who are infinite, but there is one who is uncreated and one who is infinite.

In the same way the Father is almighty, the Son is almighty, and the Holy Spirit is almighty; yet they are not three who are almighty, but there is one who is almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God; yet they are not three Gods, but one God. So the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Spirit is Lord; yet they are not three Lords, but one Lord. For just as Christian truth compels us to confess each person individually to be God and Lord, so the true Christian faith forbids us to speak of three Gods or three Lords.

The Father is neither made nor created nor begotten of anyone. The Son is neither made nor created, but is begotten of the Father alone. The Holy Spirit is neither made nor created nor begotten, but proceeds from the Father and the Son. So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits.

And within this Trinity none comes before or after; none is greater or inferior, but all three persons are coequal and coeternal, so that in every way, as stated before, all three persons are to be worshiped as one God and one God worshiped as three persons. Whoever wishes to be saved must have this conviction of the Trinity.”

## Pray

- Ask the Triune God to give you insight into the gift and role of the Holy Spirit in the life of a follower of Jesus.
- Thank the Holy Spirit for his presence in your life. Think deeply about the beauty of God dwelling with his people.

It is the Holy Spirit who dwells (remains) in every believer.

*“I am telling you the truth. It is for your benefit that I go away, because if I don’t go away the Counselor will not come to you. If I go, I will send him to you.” John 16:7*

*“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever. He is the Spirit of truth. The world is unable to receive him because it doesn’t see him or know him. But you do know him, because he remains with you and will be in you.” John 14:16-17*

The Holy Spirit in Scripture is referred to as Counselor, Helper, Comforter, and Advocate.

- The Spirit is given as a gift through faith (John 7:39).
- The Spirit is present with those who are committed to Jesus (John 14:17).
- The more you walk in the ways of the Lord, the greater the power given by the Holy Spirit for obedience (2 Timothy 1:6).
- The Spirit enables believers to grow in strength and perseverance.
- The Spirit fuels right living – giving us strength to overcome sin and resist the temptations of the flesh, the world, and the enemy (Romans 8:1-17).
- In times of difficulty, followers of Jesus will have the support of the Spirit of truth.

*“I have spoken these things to you while I remain with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you.” John 14:25-26*

The Holy Spirit is the complete representative of Jesus.

- The Spirit enabled the first generation of disciples to accurately and fully understand the truth of Jesus. We have the New Testament because of the witness of this first generation which was empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- Each generation that follows is also empowered by the same Spirit, enabling believers to embrace the witness of the first generation and see the complete revelation brought by Jesus himself.



## The Holy Spirit

- Allows Jesus people to continually be aware of his presence.
- Enables Jesus people to continuously apply the teachings of Jesus to every new situation without becoming dominated by rigid legalism.
- Equips the saints to love their neighbors in the most difficult of circumstances and opposition.
- Speaks up in defense of those he loves before the accusers.
- Advocates for Jesus followers toward the world (John 16:7-11).
- Testifies to the truth of Jesus and the necessity of remaining in him.
- Exposes the deceit of the world.

Breathe in deeply all that the Holy Spirit is and how active and personal the Spirit is in our daily lives.

- Slowly re-read through the lists of what the Holy Spirit does. As you read the lists, focus on your breathing and ask God to make you more aware of his presence through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Did you notice anything you weren't aware of concerning the presence of the Holy Spirit in your daily life? Ask the Spirit to make that specific aspect more apparent in the weeks to come. Example: The Spirit enables believers to grow in strength and perseverance. In the last three months, have you grown in strength and perseverance concerning your faith? Ask Jesus to give you insight into how to trust him to grow in strength and perseverance.

## Practice

Lectio Divina (Lectio 365 app, <https://lectio365.com/>)

1. Read/Bite a small passage (What sticks out to you?)
2. Meditate/Chew (Sit with God in what stands out.)
3. Discuss/Savor (Talk to God about it.)
4. Contemplate/Digest (Rest in his presence.)

Using the passages below, take the time to practice Lectio Divina. Let the theme of boldness and courage start to wash over you. Read through the passage at least four times as you focus on each step of Lectio Divina.

*Haven't I commanded you: be strong and courageous? Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."*  
Joshua 1:9

Allow your thoughts and emotions to rise to the surface. Perhaps you feel outnumbered. You may feel insignificant and overwhelmed with darkness. You may continue to question, "When will all of this hardship end?"

*I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. You will have suffering in this world. Be courageous! I have conquered the world."* John 16:33

*Therefore, since we also have such a large cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us lay aside every hindrance and the sin that so easily ensnares us. Let us run with endurance the race that lies before us, keeping our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. For the joy that lay before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:1-2*

But God...Rest in his presence.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the confidence and the endurance to participate fully in this week of prayer and practice.
- Let the Holy Spirit lead you into new territories of joy. Ask Jesus to encourage you. Ask Jesus to give you tangible moments of truly experiencing the Father's love.

## Tuesday - The Fruit of the Spirit

*“But an hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth. Yes, the Father wants such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and in truth.” John 4:23-24*

*“The one who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, will have streams of living water flow from deep within him.” He said this about the Spirit. John 7:38-39*

*“I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me.” John 15:5*

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The law is not against such things. Galatians 5:22-23*

As humans, our tendency is to want to do something—how do I serve, where do I go, how do I help, who do I talk to, tell me what to do. We jump into *doing* without considering our being because in some ways, it's easier.

Today in the prayer guide, we will focus on our being which overflows in evidence of lives filled with the Holy Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit in one's life is evidence of *maturity*, or *being*, while the spiritual gifts of the Spirit are evidence of *ministry*, or *doing*. Maturing in Christ leads to good fruit *and* good service. Fruit without gifts is like fruit flavored candy – no substance or sustenance. Gifts without fruit are like a plastic apple – all show leading to burnout or self-glorification. The life-maturing process of *being* will sustain you in the ministry-maturing process of *doing*.

Before you pray, contemplate these questions:

- How are you experiencing streams of living water in your life?
- How is your faith producing abundance?
- How is the Holy Spirit evident in your life?

Read through the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23 again.

- What characteristics stand out to you?
- What other qualities would you add to the list that provide evidence of a Spirit-saturated life?

## Pray

- Ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate areas of your life that do not reflect his good fruit. Spend time in repentance – turn to God and let his refreshment wash over you (Acts 3:19).
- Ask the Spirit to show you specific fruit in your life. Take time to celebrate his work in you!
- Pray for deeper insight into what “streams of living water” can mean for you personally. Spend time in quiet reflection on this point. Linger as long as you are able.
- Implore the Spirit of God to help you maintain balance in your *being* and *doing*: In tandem, serve the Lord with gladness *and* be filled to the measure of the fullness of God (Psalm 100:2; Ephesians 3:19).

## Pray for Second Mile

- Pray that our pastors (Chad, David, Angel) will overflow with the fruit of the Spirit, that they will know the refreshment of Jesus, the Living Water.
- Pray for our staff directors (Angela, John, Cara) to experience the abundance of God's presence in their lives resulting in good fruit. Pray that their *being* with God will never outpace their *doing* for God.
- Pray for our ministry deacons to cultivate awareness of God's pleasure in who they are beyond what they do. Pray that their character will be strengthened as they abide in Christ.
- Pray for our ministry team volunteers (Amplify, Kids, Hospitality, Finance. Ask God to strengthen their joy as they remain in the vine (John 15). Pray for depth in their relationship with Jesus to overflow into the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

## Practice

Often we only reflect on the one list of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5. However, all good and perfect gifts come down from the Father (James 1:17). In your practice today, read 1 Corinthians 13 as a meditation on the fruit of the Spirit that he wants to grow in your life.

- Write down what love is, slowly and thoughtfully. Practice deep breathing as you read and write, focus on inhaling.
- Write down what love is not. Practice deep breathing as you read and write, focus on exhaling.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate one verse in this passage on which he wants you to focus. Write it out a few times, inhaling and exhaling. Write it on something you can take with you throughout the week and weeks ahead. Commit the words to memory. Consider memorizing the whole chapter this year.



## Wednesday – The Gifts of the Spirit

*When the Counselor comes, the one I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father—he will testify about me. You also will testify, because you have been with me from the beginning. John 15:26-27*

*When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. For he will not speak on his own, but he will speak whatever he hears. He will also declare to you what is to come. He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you. Everything the Father has is mine. This is why I told you that he takes from what is mine and will declare it to you. John 16:13-15*

*Now concerning spiritual gifts: brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be unaware. 1 Corinthians 12:1*

*Pursue love and desire spiritual gifts. 1 Corinthians 14:1*

A large portion of the class Walking the Second Mile is spent on teaching and discussing spiritual gifts. Some of today's content is taken directly from the class. If you have the Discover and Walking the Second Mile material, please refer to the notebook for more depth and information. If you have not yet attended Discover or Walking, please make plans to attend in February.

What are spiritual gifts?

- Any ability that is empowered by the Holy Spirit and used in any ministry of the church.
- All spiritual gifts must be empowered “by one and the same Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:11), are given for the “common good” (1 Corinthians 12:7), and are all to be used for the “building up” (1 Corinthians 14:26) of the church.

Spiritual gifts should not be mystical or hard to understand. In Scripture, it is assumed that followers of Jesus will discover their spiritual giftedness and continuously use their gifts for the glory of God.

Please remember: Labels and titles are not the point. The point is to use our gifts to strengthen one another and build up the church. The New Testament lists spiritual gifts in six different passages. All the lists are different. No list contains all the gifts mentioned, except for prophecy.

Open your Bible and read these passages. Use the space provided to write down the specific gifts you see in each passage.

Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 7:7; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Peter 4:11

As you can see, there is overlap and diversity in the lists, and no two people's gifts are exactly alike. Because of the varied gifts in these passages, we can also see that the lists of gifts in Scripture are not exhaustive.

### Pray

How do you discover the spiritual gifts given to you by the Holy Spirit?

- Pray and ask him to help you love and serve the family of God.

First Corinthians 13:1-3 reminds us that if a person speaks in tongues, has the gift of prophecy, or gives generously, but has no love, we are only noisy, are nothing, and gain nothing. Again, this corresponds to our *being* and overflowing with the fruit of the Spirit. Loving others is essential for Spirit-filled *doing*.

- Ask God to increase your love for Second Mile.
- Pray for eyes to see what needs to be done in Second Mile.

The Holy Spirit fits Second Mile together like a body – hands, feet, eyes, tendons, lungs, etc. We need the *whole* body to function with

*wholeness*. We need one another and Second Mile needs you. What you see and discern in the church is unique to how the Holy Spirit is working in you!

- Is there something that you noticed needs attention in Second Mile?
- How do you feel compelled to serve?
- Do you serve with joy or grumble about how you would do it differently?
- What is not happening in Second Mile that would make our body more whole?

As you process these questions, consider that your insights could be ways the Holy Spirit is empowering you to love and serve our church. Do not get hung up on trying to give your insights and particular spiritual gifts a name. Practice what you see and trust that the Spirit will give you more and more insight into how he is equipping you to serve.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the gumption to act in the areas he is showing you that you could serve, speak, work, and minister within Second Mile.

#### Pray for Second Mile

- Pray for various ministries in our church: Amplify team, Second Mile Kids, Youth, Hospitality, Finance team.
- Pray that the people who serve in these teams will experience the pleasure of working for God. Ask God to enable all our volunteers to “do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Colossians 3:17).
- Pray for Angel, our Leadership Development pastor, as she develops classes to help our covenant members understand and grow in knowledge and practice of spiritual gifts. (Coming in 2026!)

#### Practice

You may be asking, “What if I can’t discern needs in Second Mile? What do I do now?”

- Contact a pastor, staff director, or ministry leader and ask how they need help or what holes they see in our church.
- Pick a ministry team and commit for six months to try out different types of serving: Offer smiles and warmth as a greeter on Sunday morning; teach 4th graders (or other ages) Bible lessons for an hour and a half a week in Second Mile kids; send two encouraging notes a month to leaders and/or people you see serving in the church. The list is as long as you can learn to listen to the Spirit, be creative, and take actual steps for *doing*.

The following areas need help in our church. Help and training are available, so be creative and courageous. Where is the Holy Spirit asking you to help and serve? Could the Spirit be revealing a specific spiritual gift he wants to help you mature?

Administrative needs: human resources development, facility care, communications (Weekly newsletter and website), and more

Connection and spiritual formation needs: more core communities, ongoing book groups, men’s ministry leaders, mentors for women and men

Second Mile Kids needs: volunteers to teach and assist in various classes

Youth needs: Wednesday meal providers, people to invest in teenagers

Amplify team needs: vocalists, musicians, sound and video techs

Mission needs: a point person for our partnership with Bonillas, leaders for various partnerships

Hospitality team needs: greeters, coffee makers, dish washers, party planners, supper club hosts

Spiritual practice isn’t only for our personal faith building. We practice serving, encouraging, and building one another up in faith and good deeds (1 Thessalonians 5:11). A final reminder: we need one another and that includes you.

*Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ’s body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other. In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly. Romans 6:4-8 (NLT)*



## Thursday - Peace and Joy through the Spirit

John responded, “No one can receive anything unless it has been given to him from heaven. You yourselves can testify that I said, ‘I am not the Messiah, but I’ve been sent ahead of him.’ He who has the bride is the groom. But the groom’s friend, who stands by and listens for him, rejoices greatly at the groom’s voice. So this joy of mine is complete. He must increase, but I must decrease.” John 3:27-30

John the Baptist had a kingdom perspective:

- Everything is given from God.
- I am not the Messiah.
- My joy is complete.
- He must increase, but I must decrease. (Taken from the March 23, 2025 message, *Living with Joy and Contentment*, John 3:14-36)

### Pray

Start today in declaration and confession.

- Father, I acknowledge that you are the giver of life. I ask that you give me your perspective.
- Jesus, you are the savior of the world. You have forgiven me and purified me. Jesus, you have brought renewal into my life. I acknowledge that there are many times when I want to be in control. I confess that there are moments throughout the day I do not trust that you are the Good Shepherd.
- Holy Spirit, I am your dwelling place. Allow my heart to overflow with the joy of Jesus-centrality. Allow my thoughts to be changed and refined into your thoughts. Teach me to be exceedingly grateful for your presence in my life.
- Father, your ways are the best. Jesus, your love is beyond comprehension. Holy Spirit, your help is abundant. I confess my pride and my tendency to compare myself to others. Teach me to embrace humility. Teach me to abandon my selfishness. Shape me to consider everything to be a loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord (Philippians 3:8).

In order to be a people of peace and joy, we must be a people who accept the sacrifice of spiritual formation. Our lives are pruned to glorify Jesus and to point others to him.

Ponder the words of Jesus:

*“Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Don’t let your heart be troubled or fearful. John 14:27*

*“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. Every branch in me that does not produce fruit he removes, and he prunes every branch that produces fruit so that it will produce more fruit. John 15:1-2*

*“I have told you these things so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.” John 15:11*

Jesus is speaking of and personally gave us the example of paradigm-disrupting joy and peace. Peace has already been accomplished through the death and resurrection of Jesus. What the world desired to display as the ultimate shame, God transformed into the ultimate gift of everlasting life. The upside-down reality of the kingdom truly transcends all understanding.

*Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 5:1*

We have been given the ministry of reconciliation described in 2 Corinthians 5:17-21:

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. 2 Corinthians 5:17-21*

Walking in the joy and peace of the Triune God allows us to have composure in the midst of trouble, to not be people of fear, to fully embrace daily bread and not be overcome by worry, and to pursue and maintain harmony with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

There isn’t a place on this planet that is not in need of greater peace and joy. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in a time of intercession. Pray for the peace and joy of your family.

- Pray for the peace and joy of your neighbors.
- Pray for the peace and joy of your coworkers.
- Pray for the peace and joy of Tucson, Pima County, Arizona, and our Nation.
- Pray for the peace and joy of specific global communities that come to your mind.

Chaos and unrest are everywhere. Don't allow the intensity of praying for peace and joy to move you into despair.

Remember the example of John the Baptist!

- Everything is given from God.
- I am not the Messiah.
- My joy is complete.
- He must increase, but I must decrease.

### Practice

Biblical community is a place of refuge, strength, comfort, and encouragement. Enjoy an evening with your brothers and sisters in Christ. Take time to eat together and encourage one another to hold fast to the values of God's kingdom. Ask one another genuine questions about peace and joy through the Holy Spirit.

Don't dismiss the goodness of togetherness. It will be very tempting to not take the initiative to make an evening of good food and conversation happen. We were created to depend on one another.

Questions for Dinner Discussion

- In what ways are you experiencing peace and joy through the Spirit? Encourage one another in the joys and sorrows each person carries.
- Read through the list of John the Baptist's Kingdom perspective together. What points stand out to you and why?
- Discuss ways you can be a joy-bringer and peacemaker to our church, neighbors, and city.

*And let us consider one another in order to provoke love and good works, not neglecting to gather together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25*

*Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple, and broke bread from house to house. They ate their food with joyful and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. Every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. Acts 2:46-47*

## Friday – Unity of the Spirit

*"I pray not only for these, but also for those who believe in me through their word. May they all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us, so that the world may believe you sent me. I have given them the glory you have given me, so that they may be one as we are one. I am in them and you are in me, so that they may be made completely one, that the world may know you have sent me and have loved them as you have loved me." John 17:20-23*

Jesus prays for us. He doesn't just pray for the disciples standing in front of him, but for all "those who believe in me through their word." His prayer is focused on oneness. May his people experience all of his wholeness. May we dwell in such harmony with God that the world would believe Jesus and come to understand that He loves them as the Father loves Jesus. Incomprehensibly good. All meant to encourage us and instill in us confidence that we are far more loved than we yet know.

As we walk alongside Jesus, the layers of why we do what we do start to unravel and come into focus. Fear and anticipation of judgement gives way to a growing realization that communion is too good to lose. We want to abide in God's presence because it's where the good life is. There's every gift and fruit of the Spirit, but there's also the steady awareness that all our work is in partnership with a God who delights in taking the seemingly insignificant and doing far more good than anyone expects. Don't you want to take this God's hand and say, "into your hands I commit my...well, everything?" Surrendering turns out to be fully living. Maybe that's where this day begins, by asking simple questions that lead us to honest heart cries to the only one who can transform our hearts and make us one. God wants us to talk with him even in the tension of saying, "My experience isn't yet what it 'should' be." Don't run. Don't hide. Draw near.

- Have you tasted God's goodness and do you want to experience more of God?
- Have you experienced daily living that feels like you're being led?
- Do you want to dwell with God?

If so, would you join Jesus in his prayer to our Father? "May they all be one." If not, would you pray to Jesus, who seeks to draw you into life, and ask him to show you his goodness?

### Pray

"The most valid witness is the testimony of God's people...Now we



display God's glory through unity." (Taken from the December 21, 2025 message, *Shared Eternity*, John 17:20-26)

Look around the world and the church within the world. All around us is fragmentation, polarization, disagreement and discord. "May they all be one" seems like an impossible pipe dream. God, help our unbelief at this point. God desires to "put on display the sharp contrast between the world as a place of beauty and the world as a place of tragedy."

- The world as a place of tragedy is characterized by disunity (John 7:43; 9:16; 10:19; 12:42-43).
- The world as a place of beauty is characterized by harmony (John 13:34-35; 17:21-23). (Taken from the December 21, 2025 message, *Shared Eternity*, John 17:20-26)

What must the disciples have felt overhearing these words or the instructions to love one another, like Jesus has loved them no less? (John 13:35) How do a corruption-prone Roman tax collector (Matthew 9:9; Luke 5:27-28) and a zealot (Matthew 10:4) who's ready to overthrow those foreign oppressors not only get along, but "be one"? If your nickname is "son of thunder," (Mark 3:17, Luke 9:54-56) do you think you're more inclined to be a force for unity? But this is what Jesus prayed for. Let us join him in seeking out this otherworldly oneness:

- Ask for God to help you see the beauty of unity. Ask God to instill in you a deep sense of the value of unity—that it is worth fighting for, worth sacrificing for.
- Consider the goodness of the Trinity, loving community since the beginning. God has welcomed us into his joy-filled life. Sit in that unfathomably good news for a few minutes today. In the midst of all the comparatively little things occupying our minds today, God, we believe. Help our unbelief!
- Confess the places in your heart that keep you from unity. Where does selfish ambition still remain (Philippians 2:2-5)? Where are you caught up in your own kingdom building (Matthew 6:9-10, 33)? Where is comparison and covetousness robbing you of joy and selfless zeal (1 Corinthians 13:4; Galatians 5:25-26)? Where does pride linger?
- Thank God for relationships in your life that aim your heart toward greater unity.
- Ask God for help to lift the blinders on our own shortcomings instead of focusing on the faults of others (Matthew 7:3-5). Ask God for help to see our need for mercy and grace so that we are not tempted to withhold it from others. Ask God for help as he advocates for us against a world that is actively working in opposition.

## Practice

*with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:2-3*

Today and/or tomorrow we invite you to fast as we "make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit." Through fasting we express our need for God by going without food in hope that we will be drawn by the Holy Spirit more deeply into dependence and satisfaction of Jesus. We'll break fast together on Sunday with communion.

Jesus, our older brother, set an example for us as to how to "make every effort to keep the unity of Spirit." Consider how he was (and is!) humble and gentle and patient toward you. Certainly he bears with us in love.

Once his example is firmly in mind, consider the people around you. Consider your brothers and sisters at Second Mile, both those close to you and those you hardly know. Consider your family.

- Where is there division? Where is there conflict?
- Where is there disharmony? Where is there misunderstanding?
- Where is there a lack of humility?
- Where is there a lack of gentleness?
- Where is there a lack of patience?
- Where is there a lack of love?

If we're honest, at every point of consideration we will be tempted to weigh up the others' deservedness, tempted to withhold love with a resolute "but they don't deserve it." Perhaps they don't. Likely they don't. May the louder "But God" towards us make us determined to live accordingly (Titus 3:4-6).

How can you diligently seek peacemaking, "making every effort" today? Don't delay. The unity of the Spirit is worth fighting for, worth dying for. And we are resurrected, Jesus people!

- We are a community of connective tissue.
- We are the family of God.
- We are the living temple of God's indwelling presence.
- We can actively love each other in a way that shows Tucson Jesus is better.

*But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love that he had for us, made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace! Ephesians 2:4-5*

## Saturday – Empowered by the Spirit

*And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever. John 14:16*

*When the Counselor comes, the one I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father—he will testify about me. John 15:26*

Jesus loved his disciples to the end (John 13:1). Even though he had much to concern himself with and much suffering ahead of him, he was never distracted from comforting and encouraging his disciples. He wanted them to know, as God has continually encouraged his children, that they were not alone. They were not going to be abandoned. The Counselor was coming to abide closer than Jesus physically could, to give them continual confidence of Jesus' presence, and to work within them in such ways that their witness was real, true, and as fresh as the continual reminders of Jesus' love.

- Is the gospel good news to you?
- Are you experiencing the hope of Jesus, the life of Jesus, the transformative power of Jesus, and the communion of Jesus with the Father through the Spirit? Really?

Before we move on, let's consider what's really going on in our own hearts here.

The good news is that if we started today feeling lack, then Jesus reminds us that the Father's heart is not to withhold from his children:

*If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him? Luke 11:13*

The disciples were promised empowerment through the Spirit, enabling them to speak truth, live truth, and bear witness to Jesus—the Truth. Truly. So they waited, “continually united in prayer.” (Acts 1:14)

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Acts 1:8*

### Pray

*And now, Lord, consider their threats, and grant that your servants may*

*speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand for healing, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” Acts 4:29-30*

Jesus told his disciples not to be surprised by the reception of their witness (John 15:18-19). There would be hatred. There would be opposition. When these responses came, the church asked for boldness, in the midst of the threats, to continue to bear witness to the Truth.

- Ask God to fill you with his fullness, established in his love (Ephesians 3:16-19).
- Ask God to help you expect suffering for identifying with his son and hold such losses as worthwhile and honorable (Matthew 5:10-12, Romans 8:17, Philippians 1:29, 2 Timothy 3:12, 1 Peter 4:1).
- Ask God to instill boldness and courage (2 Timothy 1:7-8) to live expectantly in all that he has promised.
- Ask God for courage to share your hope and your life in him with others.

In a world that is painfully wrong about sin, about justice, and about who to blame, be courageous! (Taken from the November 23, 2025 message, *The Greatest Advocate of All Time*, John 15:26-16:15)

*I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. You will have suffering in this world. Be courageous! I have conquered the world. John 16:33*

### Practice

- Who in your life needs to hear the good news of Jesus?
- Who are you loving in the way Jesus loves you?
- Who are you serving in the way Jesus serves you?
- Who are you forgiving in the way Jesus forgives you?

The moment we determine to love others the way Jesus loves us and determine to share with others the truth about Jesus, we discover how much we need to be empowered for this work.

As you go into your day or consider next week, determine to do one challenging thing that bears witness of Jesus. Maybe it's finally telling a co-worker that you follow Jesus and that he's changed your life. Maybe it's sacrificially giving to someone in need. Maybe it's inviting someone over to share a meal at your table. Don't just select a good thing to do. Prayerfully do something that makes you feel a little uncomfortable,



stretched, or perhaps even incapable. What is the little that you can offer, expecting God to multiply it? What is an activity that throws you right back into the prayers described above? We really do need to be empowered.

If you're looking for some contexts within which to be bold or the practice above is not yet clear and tangible, prayerfully consider these:

- Consider your workplaces. Are there brothers and sisters who you work with that you can join in prayer with? Are there brothers and sisters who work in similar fields with similar challenges who you can pray with? With whom can you pray, "God, grant that your servants may speak your word with all boldness (Acts 4:29-31)"? Reach out to them today and share your desire to boldly witness.
- Consider all the ministries of Second Mile that have already been mentioned. Is the Spirit nudging you towards one seemingly uncomfortable commitment?
- Consider our mission partners. Each of these individuals and organizations are involved in the work of extending the good news and kindness of Jesus to those who are not yet experiencing it fully. Pray for these partners and for those representing and advocating on their behalf (listed in parenthesis). Consider ways to encourage them and more actively join in their work. Reach out to one of the advocates and ask them how you might join them in encouraging these partners.

Garrett and Ally Hoanin, Thailand (Jenny and Tyler Campman)—Sent from Second Mile through Pioneers and working with their skills in physical therapy and speech pathology to share the good news among the Thai people, the Hoanins will be on "home assignment" back in Tucson from February through April this year, which means we can love them mightily, encourage them to rest, and also look forward to hearing more details about what God is doing among the Thai. Stay tuned!

Evan and Audrey Eusey, Japan (Philip and Andrea Brobeck)—The Eusey family, working with OMF, is in the middle of relocating from Sapporo to Tokyo. Please pray for them as they consider what ministry looks like in this new city, and ask God to give Second Mile discernment as we adjust with them and learn how to come alongside them as they move into new surroundings with new opportunities.

Tucson Refugee Ministry (Joleen Kuzdas) — Tucson Refugee Ministry works to develop a welcoming community that values the nations

in our city. TRM seeks to cultivate authentic, lasting relationships between the church and these newest of neighbors by developing opportunities for growth and empowerment, assisting them in life transitions, celebrating together through seasonal events, and offering support and care.

Seeds Community Center (Christe LePeau)—Seeds Community Center exists to ensure that families in the Tucson community have the resources to meet their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs so that they can heal, connect and find joy and purpose. They particularly find ways to support kinship caregivers. Reach out to Christe about opportunities "to equip our neighbors to flourish."

International Justice Mission (Christe LePeau)—International Justice Mission is a global organization that protects people in poverty from violence. They partner with local authorities in 33 programs offices in 18 countries to combat trafficking and slavery, violence against women and children and police abuse of power.

Young Life (Lauren Araiza)—Coming alongside high school students in Tucson to introduce them to Jesus and helping them grow in their faith. Lauren and Angel Araiza have plans to move to Guam and continue working with students there through Young Life. Please pray for them and ask them how you can help. You'll be hearing lots more this year as we prepare to send them out well.

Bonillas Elementary School—Our local elementary school down the road from El Centro headed by Principal Frankie Schiavone and his wonderful staff. We're looking for a new advocate and point person for this partnership. Let one of the pastors know if you're interested.

Haven Community Church, formerly First Brethren Church—This is a church revitalization effort being led by Josh Buck. We're sharing resources in various ways and are continuing to look for meaningful ways to help them. Please pray for wisdom and encouragement.

## Answered Prayer

God's faithfulness continues to be evident in our church. He hears our prayers and answers – yes, no, and/or wait. We continue to ask him what he would have us do next and he continues to show us and direct our steps.

As you read through these answers, engage in the practice of gratitude. He has done great things (Psalm 126:3).

*Truly I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do. And he will do even greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. John 14:12-14*

*If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you want and it will be done for you. John 15:7*

*In that day you will not ask me anything. Truly I tell you, anything you ask the Father in my name, he will give you. Until now you have asked for nothing in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete. John 16:23-24*

Second Mile's new organizational structure was shared in February. Matt Schmidgall led the pastors (David, Nate, Chad, and Angel) into building a working organizational structure for our church. They all commented often how good it was to be led by him. There is more work to do, but Matt helped lay vital groundwork for next steps in our structure.

Nate Edwards served as an elder in our church for 15+ years. In 2025 he stepped down to focus on his family, engage in a career change, and to ask God for rest, replenishment, and vision for the future. We thank God for Nate's faith and faithful service and friendship.

Kristen Stoner stepped into her deacon role to lead the hospitality team. People continue to join the team to help people feel seen and cared for on Sunday. She leads with compassion and joy.

Erin Anderelli leading the women's ministry team as a deacon is a beautiful display of God's kindness to our church family. The team was also formed in 2025: Nicky Wingate, Corrie Smith, Emily Weatherford, Julianne Cole, Erin Phillips. They are praying and planning ways to help Second Mile women be strong-willed followers of Jesus.

The Moxie retreat was shifted to a local retreat at our church facility and Mt. Lemmon. Eighty women came and learned more about what it means to cultivate awareness of God in our lives. The change was good and the Moxie team is trusting God's direction for future retreats.

Twenty people became Second Mile covenant members this year. God is faithful to grow our church in his way and in his time.

Bathroom renovations were a huge undertaking for 2025. People were patient throughout the summer and also laughed at plenty of jokes about porta-potties. Around \$30,000 has been given and/or pledged to help supplement the cost. This was a needed and beneficial upgrade to our facility. Thanks to Tyler LaBelle, Charlie Waldburger, Stuart Cameron, Bobby Suba, and Chad Haynes for all the hands-on work to make the renovations happen.

After a two year deficit in our budget, in 2025 we met our budget. This enables us to support various local and global ministries, pay our staff, take care of our facility, and engage financially in love with needs that arise throughout the year. Pooling our resources in our budget is a good way to practice taking care of one another's needs within our church and outside of our church. Thanks for sacrificially giving!

We continue to develop more robust missional partnerships. Jolene Kuzdas served Tucson Refugee Ministry for years and now many more Second Milers have joined her. Bonillas Elementary continues to reach out when they are in need. We gave money and food to the Community Food Bank and a team of people, led by Mitch Gallaher, helped pack food boxes. These are only a few examples of God growing our missional serving. What mission opportunities have you seen and been part of this year?

The Hoanins were visited by the Gallahers, the LePeaus, and the Gouges this year. They feel connected to and supported by Second Mile. Fun news is they will be in Tucson to visit all of us this spring!

The Gouges hosted friends and workers in Georgia (the country) who shared their work and vision with a small group of Second Milers. God continues to show us what he is doing in the world.

God formed a children's ministry leadership team to help Cara DeSmidt who works so hard to serve our kids and their families. Thanks to Melissa Buss, Tia Edwards, and Andrea Brobeck for your servant leadership. You are helping our church reach the next generation. Also, many volunteers teach and love the kids of Second Mile week after

week. Often Cara wonders if she will have enough volunteers to pull off Sunday classes. God is faithful and continually works through Cara's diligent work.

Many volunteers help John Weatherford lead Second Mile's youth ministry. God continues to give John vision for the teens and he continues to provide workers to implement the vision and love the students.

God protected Angela DeSoto when she was in a car accident. However, because of her injuries she had to step back from leading for more than two months. God provided rest for her brain, enabled her to continue in school, and brought her back to lead our church before the end of the year. Throughout that time, God equipped and grew Carah Thompson's leadership ability to lead our church to worship him. God loves to be worshiped by his children and he made a way for us to continue through gifted leaders.

Angel Haynes finished her seminary master's degree. She is thankful for the financial and emotional support she received from Second Mile throughout her program.

Many people continue to join various ministry teams in Second Mile. We need all hands to continue to accomplish the work God has asked us to do. Thanks for using your time, talents, money, and gifts to serve God in and through Second Mile.

### **What is an answer to prayer you received? How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?**

The following answers were submitted by individuals within our church. As you read how God moved in people's lives, ask God to continue to pour out his kindness to each of them. At the end, please add your own answers to how you've seen God work in your own life and in Second Mile. Be encouraged to read around six per day in your gratitude practice.

**Dan Stoner - What is an answer to prayer you received?** Continued support from everyone this last year. **How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** To continually come alongside my family during the good and challenging times of this year.

**Austin Lillestol - What is an answer to prayer you received?** This has been a year of changes and transitions yet again. At the start of the

year I wrestled with much discontent, discouragement, and a feeling of wandering without purpose. I started asking God "What would you have me do if not this?" During those times of prayer God began to remind me of a long-held passion and a path towards making it a career. He showed me that he had been preparing me for this in ways I hadn't seen but were always there. Many things started to line up and it became clear that God wanted me to change careers, so in October I left the Fire Service after almost 9 years and started my training to become a Pilot. The feelings of wandering, trudging through the days, and feeling persistent discouragement have been stripped away and I walk excitedly towards this future that God has planned for Tamara and I.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** This year God has used the Second Mile family as a source of wisdom, caution, and encouragement. When I first thought of changing careers I met with some friends to discuss the reasons and the logistics. Those conversations quickly led me to process why I wanted a change, what that would practically look like, and if it would even be possible. As a dreamer who often overlooks the process it was good to be grounded. As it became evident this was the right path, those conversations became ones of excitement and hope. God continues to use the body to direct me when I am directionless and lift me up when I'm down.

**Tamara Lillestol - What is an answer to prayer you received?** God has answered my prayers of not leaving or forsaking me (Hebrews 13:5) in the hard times and for continuing to work in me and provide growth and learning opportunities. I have been struggling with severe depression this year and it got to a point where I felt like I couldn't function anymore. I am so thankful to my friends and family who were so understanding, supportive and encouraging which helped me keep going. After starting on medication and being in intensive therapy since April, I have been able to find some healing and I am on a long road to recovery and finding joy in living again. Every prayer, desperate cry, and angry question has been met with God's abundant love and grace whether that has been through Scripture, encouraging words from friends or my therapist, or my husband's unconditional love and support. God has been present and Has not left me and I am so thankful for that. I am thankful for God's patience with us and that we don't need to produce fruit in every season. Sometimes, we are in a season of fall where our leaves are falling off, we are experiencing so much loss and all we can see is the winter ahead. But God will not leave us and He is keeping us alive. I have faith that the snow will melt, spring will come again and abundant fruit will be produced in its time (Psalm 1).

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** What a blessing this booklet is that we are able to look back on the year and reflect on the work God has been doing in each of our lives. And also

to be able to look back at previous years and the wisdom that God has taught us. It is such a gift to be able to see that we are not alone in our struggles and that we are all in this together (and it shows when we stand hand in hand, make our dreams come true!). I am so thankful for Second Mile and the faithfulness of our Elders and leadership and how hard they work to keep our church healthy, functioning, and welcoming. I am so grateful for our Elders that pray for us, continue their education so that they can teach us/lead us better (YAY ANGEL!), and don't give up even when things feel hard and difficult in life. I am thankful for our leadership and deacons that work tirelessly to provide beautiful musical worship, slides/videos/beautiful website for those who are new or unable to come to the gatherings, a welcoming and clean church for all to enjoy, the teaching and investment in the children of our church, and men/women's ministry events to connect our body. None of these things happen on their own and I am so grateful for all of the people who work so very hard to make Second Mile the best church that we can be, thank you!

**Erin Anderelli - What is an answer to prayer you received?** I dreamed of going to seminary for a LONG time but I struggled to believe it would ever be an option for me. Since I started in January, I have experienced God's generosity, gentleness, and abundance in ways that I couldn't have anticipated. God chose to meet my worries and doubts with an overflow of affirmation and support. As God has shaped me deeply this year through greater awareness of his presence and deeper understanding of his gentleness, he then invited me into a new ministry opportunity with Moxie. Both opportunities have been very humbling and have led me to a deeper reliance on the Holy Spirit. They have also been immensely gratifying and joyous opportunities.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** Even with the immense joy that I've experienced in seminary and leading in Moxie, I have also struggled with intense self-doubt. It is disorienting to simultaneously feel like something is so right and so good while wrestling against a looming uncertainty about whether or not I belong. As I surrendered this to Jesus over and over again, many of you in Second Mile have come to me unprompted to share how you are experiencing God in order to encourage me and affirm that I do belong. My core group has also tirelessly supported me and continues to be a steadying presence through the beautiful yet chaotic changes this year.

**Ainsley Malis - What is an answer to prayer you received?** Church community and friendship in Tucson (!!!)

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** My core group's love, embrace, and friendship helped me through a really hard season of grief, healing, and transition. They loved me and entered

into hard spaces with me, and even in the midst of depths I never once felt alone.

**Meredith Amadee - What is an answer to prayer you received?** God showed us his faithfulness and abundance this year by providing a house that we were able to buy.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?**

God continues to show me the beauty of community and the beauty of opening your lives to others. Community and deep friendships within the church have ministered to me this year in many big and small ways. It is such a grace to have people to text for prayer, people to celebrate and mourn with, people to seek guidance from, and people to worship with and cry with. It's also been such a joy to volunteer with Second Mile youth and get to know the teens that come and witness how God is working in them and growing them to be such cool, unique humans. It's also been a pleasure to serve with John Weatherford and witness his passion for sharing Jesus with the youth. He treats them with respect and loves them well which is inspiring to see.

**Corrie Smith - What is an answer to prayer you received?** I have been praying for a woman who is further along in life than me to walk alongside me, ask questions, and have accountability with teeth. I have been praying for this for many years, and God gave me someone who not only has walked through many of the things I am currently walking through, but is also wise, funny, real, and loves Jesus passionately.

**John Houchin - What is an answer to prayer you received?** Starting our family. **How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** As we became parents in September, Chelsea and I have felt incredibly blessed by our Second Mile family. We were not sure how we were going to manage in the beginning without paternity leave. Jesus' deep love for us was shown in the support and giving we received. Whether it was a pillow, a prayer, a box of diapers or simply checking in with us, we are so grateful for this body who links arms and tightens grips in a very real way. We are so stoked to be parents to little Hazel!!! Also, it's crazy scary sometimes and I have a lot of questions so we continue to lean into a relationship with a good Father so his perfect love will be reflected in our family as we continue to grow together.

**Sarah Cameron - What is an answer to prayer you received?** God has continued to bring healing and restoration to our family after years of hard circumstances. He continues to provide gentle kindness, wisdom, doctors, therapists, and people who surround us to bring healing in so many ways.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** Our



second Mile family has been our lifeline and a safe refuge for us. This year specifically having Hazel Rana Houchin join the family (both chosen and Second Mile) has been a gift and a deep source of joy for our family. After losing our beloved Rana, loving this new life (and name sake) has been healing and a reminder that in the midst of the dark night of the soul Jesus is still at work and in the business of making all things new. She's also a reminder that joy can burst forth even in the midst of joy.

**Christe LePeau - What is an answer to prayer you received?**

Seeds Community Center relaunched over seven years ago. In that time, we've cared for many Tucson-area kinship families (grandparents/known adults who care for a foster child). As a staff we've specifically been praying that our reach would increase and we would be able to meet more families. Over this last year, we've seen both new families join us and past families come back for support. The community that is forming during our monthly Kinship Dinners is so beautiful and we are grateful for the way the Holy Spirit is using this specific ministry.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** We continue to be grateful for the ways the Second Mile family supports the work of Seeds Community Center. Whether you serve as a volunteer, pray for our team, or support financially, none of this work would be possible without Second Mile's long-standing contributions. Thank you for allowing us to be the hands & feet of Jesus to the kinship families we know and love.

**Cara DeSmidt - What is an answer to prayer you received?**

This year has been fraught with self doubt, hard relationships, and a family illness. There were times I was certain that I could not go on. And yet through it all, God was so gracious. He met me through prayer and I learned to lean into breath prayers and scripture meditation. "It is well. It is well. All manner of things shall be well." I've memorized scripture and cried over its beauty. I prayed, He heard, and He answered.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** I was encouraged to invite a team to participate in Second Mile Kids leadership alongside me and their insight, prayers, and encouragement have been invaluable. I've prayed that God would show me ways to lead better, to disciple better, and be positioned for longevity in ministry. Andrea, Melissa, and Tia are direct answers to those prayers. I am so grateful that God brought these ladies (and so many other volunteers!) to serve alongside me. I thank God for the ways kids sing joyfully, eagerly look up scripture, ask hard questions, and pray earnestly.

**Angela DeSoto - What is an answer to prayer you received?** I have two I would like to share. First, I am finishing up my first year of nursing school. Last year I celebrated in thankfulness that I was accepted into

nursing school. This year I am so thankful that I get to reflect on my first year being complete and celebrating all that God has done in my life through this process. I have had to cling to Jesus to help me to balance all aspects of life: family, ministry, studying, finances, and staying tethered to community. I have felt so immensely supported by my Second Mile family who has rallied behind me in ways I couldn't have imagined. The second answered prayer is continuing to come as I lean into Jesus for full healing post-brain injury from a car accident. I have said it before, but I'll say it again, I absolutely would not have been able to stay in school for the fall semester had it not been for the prayers, generosity, and tangible support my family received from Second Mile during this time. So many people brought us dinners, sent DoorDash gift cards, some of you went to Costco for me, brought me coffee and sat with me when I was sad and frustrated, and many of you sent texts of encouragement and prayers that the Lord used to encourage me deep in my soul. Above all that, knowing you were rallying for my healing through constant prayer was the biggest gift of all. This community is an answer to prayer!

**David Gouge - What is an answer to prayer you received?** Looking back at shared prayers this year, the word "discernment" continually appears. God has answered that beyond my asking. I've had a front row seat identifying advocates for our mission partners, waiting for God to identify various volunteers and team members for good work like Equip and Book Groups and Iron & Iron. But the bigger answer, which honestly I wasn't explicitly asking for, was a general growth in discerning how God is at work around us in small and significant ways. Had I thought to ask for "discernment" in this way I would have because it's been so joy-giving! I'm more aware than ever of how we, brothers and sisters, are truly partnering with God and we don't know the half of it. From small spills of coffee cups that have translated to healing, to simple sharing of meals that have emphasized God's calling on our lives, annoying incidents that have completely disrupted the day and then led to heaven-on-earth encounters—God's been opening my eyes further to see the much that he is doing through our little. I'm genuinely excited about what I get to see next through this family's everyday activity and Jesus' loaves and fishes multiplication.

**John DeSoto - What is an answer to prayer you received?** In the Spring of this year my Dad underwent a heart procedure from which he developed complications that led to a brain bleed and required brain surgery. After a couple of rounds in the ICU, he spent two very rough months of recovery in the hospital and there were a couple of times where I had to say my "goodbyes". BUT GOD... faithfully brought healing to my Dad's mind and body through persistent prayer. I'm happy

to say, he has continued on a path to recovery throughout this year and I am blessed to still have him here with us.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** Since Angela's car accident, the DeSoto family has been extremely blessed by the support of our Second Mile family. From praying, to providing meals, to the grace in giving her time to recover from her concussion, it has been a true blessing to her and our family. As the healing process has been slow, we are hopeful that her full recovery will come soon. We can't thank you enough for the tangible support you have provided us in this season.

**Anonymous - What is an answer to prayer you received?** We prayed for our dear friends to find faith in Jesus. They are now followers of Christ. We couldn't be more joyful that they are our brother and sister in God's beautiful family!

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** Going through John this year has been so encouraging and a perfect book of the bible to share with our dear friends.

**Lauren Araiza - What is an answer to prayer you received?**

Community & deep friendship **How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** Last year I prayed that God would give me friends that not only encouraged me in my faith, but friends that I can also learn and grow with. Through my Core Community I've never felt more loved and seen, and I am so amazed and thankful for the way they have loved me and my family, even Lani adores everyone and is genuinely sad when we don't hangout with them. Thank you Jesus for showing me what a safe and healthy friendship looks like and for giving me a family here in Tucson to do life with. They have truly inspired me in so many ways.

**John Weatherford - What is an answer to prayer you received?** At the end of last year I wasn't sure how we were going to continue to be able to have a Second Mile Youth Worship Team. Because of many extenuating circumstances the system we had built was no longer going to work with myself in charge. I prayed for a solution and felt like I was being prompted to ask Carah and Nathan Thompson to consider taking over leadership of the team. We didn't know if they were going to be in town, or what their lives would look like but once we knew they would be in town they prayed about it and decided they would take the lead. It has breathed new life into our worship team, and they have invested deeply into the girls over this year. God took a thing that was good and made it more meaningful, more focused on the spirit's role in worship, and more excellent.

**Caleb Jackson - What is an answer to prayer you received?**

I have always struggled with paying attention to the messages, and feeling like I want more depth in my knowledge and connection to scripture. I started bringing my Bible with me, and keeping it open throughout the gathering. It simply helps me to feel less distracted, and I can always look down and reconnect with the text. I do believe this was an answer to prayer, and a memorable point in my spiritual walk. I have been dealing with depression for a couple years, and I have really struggled with the notion that it will not go away. However, I do feel that this year my prayer was answered, and had two major shifts in the amount of depression I was experiencing, thanks to a new medicine, and a few choices I made that help me feel more in control of my mental health. THANK YOU JESUS!

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** When we moved, it was awesome to have our core group and friends show up for us in full force. Nobody wants to load a truck on a weekend, but our Second Mile family put our needs above their comfort, and got us moved in very quickly.

**Gaby Flores - What is an answer to prayer you received?**

During last year's Second Mile 20 year anniversary dinner, the stone I received on my placemat was John 15. I have, like many others, heard and read this verse before, but during this year, God faithfully answered me and allowed me to better understand the significance of this verse in my life. Earlier this year, my home had undergone a plumbing project and the plumber was attempting to price gouge a previously agreed to price. My neighbor, who is a lawyer, helped mediate a compromise with the plumber. During the summer, when traveling overseas, my passport was stolen and in God's providence, I was able to travel abroad after all and was able to obtain an expedited passport in 48 hours. During the fall, I was able to further continue the process of reconciliation of my sister after a challenging year for us both. Through these situations and many others throughout the year, I see the importance of abiding in God as John 15 says and trusting in him and as he says, "apart from him, I can do nothing."

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** God used the Second Mile family to be a greater place of connection and belonging for me this year. I was able to join a core community this year and it has been a weekly form of encouragement for me, sharing life's joys and burdens with each other, all while pointing each other to Jesus. Moxie retreat and the Psalms of Ascent bible study were additional ways for me to connect to the body of Second Mile. Lastly, being mentored by Moxie women has been a continued source of encouragement and accountability for me and has allowed me to feel even more grafted into the body of Second Mile. God has been faithful to me and kind to me

with the blessing of the Second Mile family. My prayer for this coming year is to continue bringing others outside the Second Mile family and allowing Second Mile to continue to be a place of connection, community and belonging.

**Stephanie Hansen - What is an answer to prayer you received**

**this year?** Healing for my dad. He had a bad set of falls in May due to his Parkinson's and needed lots of intensive inpatient and outpatient therapies for a long time. He is doing so much better now and steadier on his feet which we did not think was possible even a couple months ago.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** First, getting to be a part of the Moxie leadership team. It is so encouraging to be surrounded on that team by such strong and faithful women. It is so nice to be around these women who love Jesus and love the women of Moxie so much. Second, I was surprised by how much this has been an answer to prayer but my core community. We got together while we were doing the book clubs and it has been so great for me. I love getting to grow in understanding of the Bible with them and creating such great friendships with them all.

**Angel Haynes - What is an answer to prayer you received?**

Over the last three years, getting to be a student at Wheaton College was a gift I didn't know I needed. My first class was in the summer of 2022 — between the spring when we shared Second Mile's new doctrinal position of women serving in all capacities in the church and the fall when I was commissioned as a pastor. It was an important time in the life of our church. However, most people do not know that the process left me very spiritually and emotionally bruised and battered. Wheaton was a balm to my weary self where I was surrounded by brilliant scholars who didn't have to make a doctrine shift to see me as a pastor; they simply did because of their deep understanding of Scripture. Through my seminary experience, God breathed deep healing into my life as his daughter, as a woman, and as a pastor. I can say full-throated that I know who God made me to be, that he is my portion, he holds my future, and that his boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places (Psalm 16). Thank you to all of you who have supported and encouraged me from the beginning of the process for me to become an ordained pastor in our church, to those of you who were so confused and challenged yet still did the study and work to understand, and to those of you who are still working to understand and are supporting me and encouraging me even if you aren't quite there (yet). And if you still have questions, reach out to David, Chad, or me and we will be glad to help you process. Through God's kindness and restoration I'm now taking time to enjoy a glad heart and let my body

rest securely in Jesus and in the ministry the Holy Spirit has empowered me to do (Ps 16:9).

**Emily Weatherford - What is an answer to prayer you received?**

I often pray for the body of Second Mile concerning the area of prayer, that we would be a people that values speaking with God and listening to him. He has encouraged me in this area in several ways this year. Firstly, concerning the Sunday morning prayer team. I am consistently blessed by this gathering, but in the middle of this year, that team was down to two of us. I prayed that it would not dwindle out, but that God would move some new people to want to join us. Since then, he has brought several new people that come on a consistent basis and it has been so life-giving and motivating. Secondly, the prayer table at Fall Family Fun had many people from the community come to receive prayer during the night. It was the most encouraging year yet since setting up a table like this. Thirdly, God has gifted me a new friendship with a woman fairly new to Second Mile to intentionally meet and pray together and dream about what prayer could look like in the future in our own lives and in the church as a whole. He is so kind to answer my prayers in ways better than I can even think to ask!

**Rebecca Garcia - What is an answer to prayer you received?** The ability to allow myself to feel God's love and receive his message in many different ways.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** I returned to worship regularly at Second Mile

**Juliane Cole - What is an answer to prayer you received?** I started a new job this semester teaching elementary school, and it has been very challenging. I have prayed for continued joy in my circumstances, and the Lord has answered over and over again.

I have been feeling pulled towards helping to cultivate a mentoring program at church with Second Mile women. I've been asking the Lord for guidance and for women to mentor and be mentored. Many women have been eager to get started and learn more, and I can't wait to see what He does in 2026.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** I have been so encouraged and blessed to be a part of the Moxie Leadership Team and to be around women who uplift each other and point one another to Christ. The women in this church and on this team are willing and able to walk through hard things, carry burdens, and have strengthened my faith. They really underscore the importance of biblical community.

**Alex Farmer - What is an answer to prayer you received?** God

answered a huge prayer request this year by unifying Derek Farmer and I in joy-filled marriage bliss. God has shown me his faithfulness in the waiting, in our dating, and now in our marriage. This first year of marriage has been filled with challenges due to health concerns and mental health struggles, but God has used the suffering for good, strengthening us together and fortifying this marriage in strength for the glory of the kingdom. We have been able to see wonderful glimmers of joy despite the difficulties.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** We have been able to serve on the youth team together and have seen God bring youth into His fold. It is so wonderful to witness what God is doing in our body. We are also integrated in a wonderful core community group that is incredibly life-giving. Through this little family we have the privilege of watching God work in the lives of those we love. We have seen God answer specific prayer requests for meeting the needs like childcare, mental health struggles, friendship, work opportunities, and relationship challenges. God has shown his faithfulness and his steadfast love to His children despite the challenges, the brokenness, the pain, and the sorrow. I am forever grateful for this community at Second Mile and the ability to be known and seen by you all and to know you and to see you.

**Kelly Hubbard- What is an answer to prayer you received?**

December of 2024, Andrew and I were at a post Christmas getaway in Prescott and had just received word that we had been selected as a placement for a child who was looking for a forever family. We had only a few days to read through hundreds of pages of information and decide if we wanted to give a final “yes.” We spent a good portion of that weekend reading and praying over whether this was what God had for him and for us. We gave that yes and the adoption of our son was finalized December 11, 2025!

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** Our core group has been so supportive and stepped up in very practical ways when things have gotten stressful or difficult. And we have leaned on the wisdom of many other parents at Second Mile who have been through similar seasons

**Anonymous - What is an answer to prayer you received?** I feel spiritually safe more often than not. I feel less angry. God has delivered me from an abusive work environment and provided me with work I enjoy. I am learning I have value in the body even though I am different.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** God has used old friendships to carry me. I am thankful to reap the fruit of relationships we have spent years cultivating in this busy season of life.

**Kristen Stoner - What is an answer to prayer you received?** Not long ago, I realized that I often live out of a scarcity mindset, holding tightly to the illusion of control. I began to pray that the Lord would increase my understanding of how big He is and show me that, in Him, scarcity does not exist. This year, He has answered that prayer in so many ways. I’ve experienced moments that normally would have caused me to hold on tighter and double down on what I thought I could control, but instead experienced peace and provision—situations unfolding in ways that exceeded anything I could have expected. Looking back over this year, I am overwhelmed by how abundantly He has shown me that in Him, scarcity truly does not exist.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?**

Shortly before the start of 2025, I was humbled and, honestly, floored when I was asked to be the hospitality team lead. I was excited, because I love hospitality and because this role taps into gifts that God has given me that have been dormant for far too long. And yet, despite my excitement and trust that this is where the Lord had called me, my scarcity mindset started to creep in with voices saying I hadn’t been at the church long enough, or I wasn’t equipped enough to serve in such a way, or I simply wasn’t enough. Still, this was one of the ways I knew the Lord was answering my prayer to increase my understanding of how big He is and to trust Him. Each week, I have the privilege of watching the team invite people into what God is doing at Second Mile through hospitality, whether by way of greeting, making coffee and cleaning up. He has allowed me to get to know the amazing people who serve each week and to hear more about their hearts and what He is doing in their lives. When we experienced a loss in our family this fall, these teammates showed up for me with grace and care by checking in and praying for us. Finally, when we needed more people to join the team, the Lord answered by bringing them. Now, as 2025 comes to a close, my cup runs over not because I am enough, but because Christ is. I’m thankful for how He has used Second Mile, especially the hospitality team, to continue to work this truth out in my life.

**Danielle & Josh Carlton - What is an answer to prayer you received?**

After two losses and a long season of waiting, we were so excited about the news of a baby girl arriving in Spring 2025, but at my 20 week anatomy scan, our worlds were turned upside down as a doctor sat us down and told us our baby girl had a rare congenital anomaly. Before we could process the diagnosis, I was suddenly thrust into high-risk clinics and more medical appointments than I can count. I was seen weekly for most of my pregnancy so they could monitor her growth and make sure she wasn’t going into heart failure. Any sign of distress would mean prepping for delivery, no matter how far along I was. Every bit of good news came with the caveat of, “but prepare yourself because things can



change so quickly.” We lived our lives week to week for nearly 4 months. We were in a constant state of unknown, leaning into total surrender. God met me in parking garages, waiting rooms, ultrasound rooms, and everywhere in between. God’s hand was over every detail, including the formation of our medical team. Just 2 years prior, and this diagnosis would have required us to temporarily relocate to another state for care, but our surgeon, who was one of the most experienced surgeons with this specific rare diagnosis, happened to be launching a fetal surgery center right here in Tucson. On New Year’s Eve last year, we had a concerning scan that resulted in discussions regarding potential need to deliver at 29 weeks, pending the following week’s scan. We all leaned in with prayer that God would continue to sustain her. At that next scan, they were surprised to find no such concerns and chalked up the previous week’s concerning findings to an “error.” But we knew different; we knew it was God’s hand. His presence was palpable to us every step of the way. He met me in prayer in a way I’ve never experienced before. He put songs on my heart and clearly woke me up with a verse one night (Psalms 139)- all experiences I never had previously. We ultimately made it to term and made it through a shorter than expected and fairly uneventful NICU stay. Noah is now a thriving, healthy 9 month old! We thank God every single day for her and for how he sustained her and us during that time. Noah was prayed for before she was formed, prayed over the moment we found out about her, and prayed for by so many before she took her first breath. For us, she is a testament to God’s goodness and faithfulness in our lives.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** It was extremely difficult to open up about this as it was happening. It was painful to start from the beginning and explain the situation without feeling anxiety rise. We had a small community of people we chose to share every detail with and those people loved us so well through it all. They spoke truth over us when I felt fear creeping in, they fed us when we couldn’t think about eating, they cleaned our house without hesitation, and they prayed and prayed and prayed for us. There were even people in the Second Mile community who we had never met before who blessed us with gift cards for meals while we were in the NICU. God truly blessed us with the gift of community in one of our most difficult seasons. We are so thankful for each member of the Second Mile family.

**Julie Wesley - What is an answer to prayer you received?** Sometimes God answers a prayer before we’ve even prayed it or we knew our heart needed it. When Jeff retired in December 2024, we knew that God was leading us into a new season. We didn’t have any idea that would also include us joining the Second Mile family. Deep study of the book of John, a fresh refocus on spiritual formation, and finding our place here

with all of you is renewal I didn’t know I needed. Walking with God as this year has unfolded has reminded me that he knows our hearts and his plans, and is working before we are even aware of it.

**Nicky Wingate - What is an answer to prayer you received?** It is so difficult to narrow down answers to prayers this year. Also, I am challenged to write them down more because I believe God answers way more prayers than my heart and mind can remember. Our youngest daughter has pediatric asthma and one prayer this year was that she would stay out of the hospital till Christmas break. God faithfully answered this prayer and we were able to control her breathing at home. Another answered prayer is that my husband retired from TPD a couple years ago and we have been praying for a job that meets the financial needs of our family. My husband has applied for several jobs and interviewed and gotten denied each time. Three months ago my husband applied for another job and was given the job. God provided him a job he didn’t know he wanted and it has been a perfect fit for him. God’s timing while hard was perfect and good. We have waited a couple years for this job and God has faithfully provided. Our oldest daughter has cognitive disabilities. This year we made a hard decision to keep her at her current school until Christmas Break to see if her needs could be met. God has abundantly provided us with an amazing teacher and special education team and she will be able to continue at her current school through the end of the school year. This year I have struggled with loneliness. As our children have aged and our lives have changed and I have found a shift in relationships as I have big kids and a job. This year God has spoken gently to my soul in this season of transition reminding me of the blessings of my children, husband and the blessings of community despite changes. As I continue to pray God is continuing to minister very gently in this season of relational transition.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** This year God used the Second Mile family to bolster and support me. This last year was hard. We had to make decisions in our family that no one ever has to make but it was necessary for healing and growth. The decision sent us into chaos as we had to get affairs in order immediately. Our Second Mile family supported us financially by paying for food, rental cars and plane tickets and other things I can’t think of. They also abundantly covered us in prayer. We had so many people in the body praying for us even those who did not know details prayed. This season of life was devastating to me personally and there were days where I felt isolated and alone and felt like nobody cared. I was also so sad and unsure of what was next that at times I just felt overwhelmed. Every time I would pray and tell Jesus how lonely I was or how sad I was or tell my husband or sister or friend, within the day or the next day someone from Second Mile would text me to follow up or say they are praying for me.

God faithfully answered my prayers of deep loneliness, sorrow, regret, confusion, pleading what to do next, and some of the deepest sadness I have felt with community praying for us, asking us how we are doing, providing meals and so much more. Stephanie Hansen filled my freezer overnight with meals from so many. Andrea Brobeck met me at the gate of my children's school with everything they needed for lunches for the week and I sat in my car and wept with gratitude. Kristen Stoner booked us flight tickets with less than 48 hours notice as I cried on the phone with her asking for help and overwhelmed with deep gratitude. The Smith family checked in with us daily making sure we were seen, needs were met and we were doing ok and tended to our hearts while making sure unspoken needs were met. Esther Haynes hugged me with such intentionality and care that I felt safe in a hard season. Cara DeSmidt checked in and smiled at me every week just being a joyful light every week in a long season. The leadership of Second Mile (Chad, Angel, David, John, and Erin Anderelli) faithfully prayed and interceded on behalf of our family. Tia Edwards has faithfully and consistently checked in with me during our lunch break and has prayed for us regularly. Sarah Cameron has covered me with rich, intentional and deep prayers in this season. Melissa and Becky prayed regularly for me and also brought joy and laughter to me. The Lillestol's have provided rich encouragement to Carter and I as parents in this season encouraging us in our hard decisions. There are so many more people who have deeply loved us, prayed for us and served us in this season, I am sure I have missed many. We have been and are currently in a season that we could not endure without our Second Mile family. Second Mile has absolutely walked the 2nd and 3rd and 4th and so many miles over the years and this family continues to show up in our lives.

**Stuart & Ericka Cameron - What is an answer to prayer you received?** My (Ericka) word for 2025 was RESTORE. After losing Jeff in 2023, I could sense God's nudging toward restoration at the onset of 2025. At the beginning of the new year, I prayed for restoration of my joy, hope, health, energy, laughter, vitality, priorities, time, and my heart. I've repeated that prayer over and over throughout the year. I will tell you what WASN'T on my bingo card or prayer list for 2025...opening my heart to a relationship, meeting someone and falling in love again. But God. I kept feeling like a shift was happening but I had no idea what was coming. Then so many changes occurred in my life in a short amount of time but could only point to the One who restores. God made a way each and every single time. We can't quite put into words how incredible it feels to truly experience extraordinary joy and laughter once again. Stuart and I both went through deep loss (he lost his beautiful Rana a year after I lost my Jeff) and through that common thread of grief, we developed something that only God could do. Stuart and I are blown

away by the kindness of Jesus, to intersect our paths with another person who is so like-minded as the other. We keep repeating to God (and really anyone who listens) that He is sooooo good and so kind to allow us to experience love and restoration after deep sorrow and pain. We are filled with overwhelming gratitude at the love and mercy Jesus has shown us both. We haven't moved on. We aren't forgetting who we loved before. We have moved through, head first, into grief and allowed God to do what only He could do. Restore. And, as it always is with Jesus, it's really good.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?** Not only in 2025, but the past years have brought community from Second Mile to pray for us, talk with us, meet our physical needs, and support us both as we headed toward marriage in October of this year. We are so grateful!

**Anonymous - What is an answer to prayer you received?** The Lord worked in miraculous ways in our marriage this year. He has revived our relationship and my heart overflows with joy at His faithfulness and goodness. Truly, a cord of three strands is not easily broken. Ecc. 4:12

**Becky Schmidgall - What is an answer to prayer you received?** 2025 was extremely challenging for me as I struggled significantly with my mental health. Throughout the year I prayed for healing, and I reached out to community to ask for prayer. In August my mental health reached its lowest point and it was really scary for me and my family. The Lord made a way, logistically, financially, and otherwise for me to engage in an intensive treatment program this fall. He took away barriers and made it a relatively seamless process for me to engage in treatment as I needed to. Being transparent with my Second Mile family and asking for prayer and practical support led me to swift, miraculous healing that I could never have anticipated. I am so, so grateful to my good good Father and my Christian brothers and sisters who have supported me through this dark period. I am grateful that Second Mile is a church that encourages its members in their struggles and allows those of us with mental health issues to walk in freedom, not in darkness.

**Erin Phillips - What is an answer to prayer you received?** This year has been a parenting transition year for me. While continuing to parent littles, I have had to shift my parenting focus with a child growing older, experiencing more complex emotions, and growing into her own personality. I have been humbled many, many times this year with a full frontal picture of my own sin and weaknesses while seeing how they directly impact my children and the truths or lies they are learning to believe because of my response to them. My ongoing prayer this year has been that I would be centered on God as I construct and support

my children. I have prayed that I could embody His characteristics to be slow to anger, an active listener, be more selfless, and create a safe space for my children to feel. It has been a challenging learning process for me, but I have seen God's unending faithfulness to build and strengthen relationships with my kids. God has catapulted my heart to experience a paradigm shift, break bonds of generational sin, and learn to love my kids deeper. With God's guidance, I have worked toward becoming a more encouraging parent and embracing my kids' unique personalities. It is a continual learning process, but I can still emphatically declare at the end of this year that God is so so good.

**How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?**

My church family has been a huge encouragement to me through this growing process in parenting by asking good questions and being a sounding board for me as I share my heart and allow God to transform it. I am encouraged by their parenting and appreciate the comfort we have in linking arms together in humility while we are all figuring it out.

**Britt Gouge - How did God use the Second Mile family in your life this year?**

At the start of 2025 God provided significant changes in my life: some I had prayed specifically for, others I had no idea would meet many needs and bring unexpected growth. From 2016, I had the privilege of leading the hospitality team at Second Mile. I loved it. This took different forms and changed over the years. For the past few years, I had prayed for someone to take over leading the Sunday morning team. Leading the team was still enjoyable and rewarding, but I was quietly looking for who might lead it to new places and bring fresh energy to the role. I found myself thriving when leading in special events and projects, and desired to continue with that, but hoped to find a way to split the role I had been serving into two. In 2024 I approached Kristen Stoner who had enthusiastically and faithfully served in our hospitality team to feel out whether she might be interested in taking this on. She had been praying for such an opportunity to serve and it was a great fit. Very soon after, and very unexpectedly, God also brought along a full-time job for me, and simultaneously provided someone in our community to manage my business to make it possible to say yes to the opportunity. In a very short period of time, there was clarity and freedom to hand-off the role of hospitality team lead to someone who would joyfully serve, partner with another friend to continue my business without being as hands-on, and take on a completely new career that I had not been looking for. It has been a stretching year full of new challenges and God has increased my capacities in new ways. He has provided for me through my family and community to meet needs and enable me to step into a new role.

## Reflection Questions for Sunday Lunch

- What did you find yourself praying about the most this week, personally and for Second Mile?
- How did you encounter the Holy Spirit in familiar or new ways?
- What are you planning to carry with you throughout 2026? Is there a specific day in the prayer guide you want to dive more into? What ways do you want to grow in prayer this year?
- How was this week encouraging and challenging for you?