

40 DAYS OF prayer

WEEK 6 CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

Acts 1:8

As we focus on the life of Christ, this week's theme is *Christ and His Church*. In Matthew 16:18, Jesus stated, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The Church represents the collective Body of Believers unified by His love and empowered by His Spirit to witness for Him and execute the mission entrusted to us by Jesus. Recognizing the significance of this unity, adversaries attempt to undermine the mission through deception and conflict. Jesus calls for strength, courage, and unity to overcome these challenges. He has established a clear purpose for His Church, inviting believers to be the salt and light of the earth. It is essential that our actions shine before others, so they may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven. Let us persist in collaborating with our King as He builds His Church.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- *How are you serving in your local church, and where might God be calling you next?*
- *Have you invited your neighbors to church before?*
- *How do you plan to pray for your church this week?*

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THE BODY OF CHRIST UNITED IN LOVE

JOHN 17:23

In John 17:23, Jesus prayed, “That they may be brought to complete unity.” This means that the Church is not merely a gathering of people but has a role in showing the world the love of Jesus and the will of God the Father. Just as Jesus is one with the Father, believers should also love one another, be united, and become one.

When the Church is united, people in the world will recognize that God sent Jesus and that God’s love for Jesus is the same love He has for us. Therefore, the Church is not just a place where we gather to worship, but a community that reveals God’s love to the world.

Practically speaking, this means that church members should love and care for one another and make efforts to resolve conflicts. It is important to reduce disputes through forgiveness and reconciliation, to share each other’s burdens, pray together, and encourage one another. When the Church lives in this kind of unity, Jesus’ prayer will be fulfilled, and the world will experience God’s love through the Church. Therefore, we must strive to love one another and be united within the Church.

However, this cannot be achieved by our efforts alone. In fact, it is the Holy Spirit who makes all of this possible. Therefore, we must go deeper with the Holy Spirit, depend on Him more, and desire Him more earnestly. When we do so, the content of the Lord’s prayer will be fully accomplished.



REFLECTION PRAYER

Lord, guide the Church to be united so that we may reveal the love of Jesus and the will of the Father to the world. Melt away all division and conflict among us with forgiveness and reconciliation and help us become a community that loves and encourages one another. We confess that our own strength is not enough, so may the Holy Spirit bind our hearts together and fulfill the prayer that Jesus prayed. May the Holy Spirit, who powerfully came upon the Upper Room at Pentecost, come again upon all churches and believers today. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.

UNITY IN DIVERSITY THROUGH THE SPIRIT OF GOD

1 CORINTHIANS 12:13

Jesus prayed for it. The writers of the New Testament expressed the need for it. But this idea of developing unity is a lot harder than it seems. In many cultures, people cling to the idea of unity that includes self-preservation and independence in all relationships. We say we want unity, but do we understand what Jesus had in mind when He was praying for unity for His followers?

In John 17, Jesus gave the example of His relationship with the Father. In the Trinity, love, interdependence, and trust is perfected. Operating in the kind of unity demonstrated by the Trinity is easier said than done when we are placed in relationships where God has strategically surrounded us with people who look, think, act, and believe differently.

In any ecosystem, the greater the diversity, the greater the stability. This is why Paul describes the Church in 1 Corinthians 12 with a body illustration. There is great diversity in appearance, role, and function in our physical bodies, yet purpose and even life depends on the unity of those diverse parts.

The question is, how can significant diversity operate with increased unity? If the Holy Spirit doesn't shape us to look like the Son and His approach to relationships, we're lost. The kind of intimacy found in the Trinity is not produced without a continual increase in sacrifice, selflessness, vulnerability, and trust. If these are absent in our relationships, we will not experience the beauty of unity within our diversity.



REFLECTION PRAYER

Father, forgive me for the times when competition and comparison have defined my relationships with those who were "different" than me or who held a conflicting perspective. Pride creeps in, and I feel the need to be right. I desire to experience the kind of unity and intimacy that You desire for me; the kind that is found in the Trinity. I don't know how to get there. Please do the deep work that produces a humility that allows me the freedom to be who You created me to be and yet authentic and submissive in all my relationships. Amen.

THE BODY OF CHRIST UNITED IN FAITH

EPHESIANS 4:4-5

While driving home from work, I got stuck in the usual pocket of stop-and-go traffic. My typical 20-minute drive commute quickly stretched to 40. Through the lens of frustration, I looked at the variety of cars and drivers. How could there be so many humans driving on the same road at the very same time? Each of us headed to our individual homes yet forced to use the same roadway to reach our final destinations.

In an effort to diffuse my own road rage, my eyes wandered to the many different faces I was driving among. Such beautiful diversity! My moment of wonder quickly devolved into frustration as I was cut off by yet another car trying to speed around everyone.

Like congested roads, church can feel crowded with competing personalities and agendas. Everyone is moving toward the same ultimate destination yet struggling to move forward together. God continuously calls for oneness among His Body of believers. The term “one body” should urge us toward unity, but it does not push us into uniformity. The Body of Christ is made up of individuals shaped by cultures and backgrounds who bring different perspectives. Yet what binds us together is far stronger than what separates us: our shared faith in Jesus Christ.

The diversity within the Church is a strength when it is surrendered to Christ. Satan is continuously working to divide us through fear, pride, and misunderstandings. The Church is strongest when we choose grace over grievance and mission over division.



REFLECTION PRAYER

Heavenly Father, protect my heart from division. Soften me where I have held too tightly to my own personal views. Teach me to value others as You do. Help me reflect You in word and action, choose grace over grievance, patience over irritation, and unity over personal comfort. Bring us together as Your Church in faith, mission, service, and love. Amen.

ONE BODY IN CHRIST, UNITED BY DIVINE PLAN

EPHESIANS 1:11-12

In working with the elderly and dying over the years, a conversation about inheritances occasionally takes place. Most often, the person anticipating the end of life shares their wish to leave something valuable to a family member whom they treasured and loved. The heartfelt desire is to leave loved ones something that will make a difference in their life after they are gone.

In Ephesians 1:10–11, Paul has just told believers how they became God’s people. Now the next question is why. Because “we have obtained an inheritance” (Eph. 1:11, NASB). We have gained an eternal inheritance because someone shared their faith in Christ with us while they were still living. Our inheritance received from Christ is meant to be shared now, in unity with the Body of Christ to a lost world. How are we passing on our spiritual inheritance today while we are living?

John R. W. Stott, a distinguished scholar, reminds us “to live to the praise of the glory of his grace is both to worship him by our words and deeds as the gracious God he is, and to cause others to see and praise Him too.” This can certainly come through the life of an individual; but much more so through the life and testimony of a whole community in relation with each other and with God as their focus, a community giving daily of the inheritance each of us have in Christ while we live to the praise of His glorious grace.



REFLECTION PRAYER

O God, let the joy of what I have inherited through faith in Your gracious salvation daily flow over into my words and actions. Let our hope in You as a Church bring love to a lost world, resulting in the beautiful song of praise to Your glorious grace. Let my spiritual inheritance be shared today to make an eternal difference. In the name of my Redeemer and Savior, Jesus Christ, amen.

ONE BODY IN CHRIST, PREDESTINED BY HIS GRACE

EPHESIANS 1:5-6

When Jesus spoke these words in Acts 1:8, He wasn't just giving a command—He was giving a promise. The Church would not be built by human strength or clever strategies but by the power of the Holy Spirit. This power would enable ordinary people to do extraordinary things: to witness, to serve, to love, and to build a community that reflects the heart of Christ.

Jesus also said in Matthew 16:18, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." This is a declaration of victory. The Church is not a fragile institution—it is a Spirit-empowered force, advancing the Kingdom of God in every generation.

You are not just a member of a church—you are a part of Christ's Body. You have been given gifts, a purpose, and the Spirit's power to make a difference. Whether you serve by teaching, encouraging, praying, or simply showing up with love, you are helping to build what Jesus started. What are your personal giftings of the Spirit? He has given them to you, on purpose . . . to be His witness!



REFLECTION PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank You for never leaving us on our own.

You have given us Your Spirit to empower and guide Your Church.

Thank You for the privilege of being part of Your Body—

whether our role feels big or small, You have asked us to be faithful to it.

We trust that Your plans will prevail,

for Your Holy Spirit has sealed them with power and purpose.

Yet we still ask: bring unity to our local church,

and let Your presence cause our communities to flourish.

In Jesus' powerful name, amen.

40 DAYS OF *prayer*

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

WOODLER ALEZY

Woodler is senior pastor of Bethesda Tabernacle in Florida, with decades of ministry and business leadership. Licensed in 1994, he also serves as a chaplain, professor, and president of the Haitian C&MA Association, and is a widely recognized preacher, teacher, and mentor.

CHARLES CHAPMAN

Charles serves as the candidate development specialist for Alliance Missions. In high school, Charles felt a call to ministry that led him to start a Christian ministry that served the homeless. After 20 years, Charles and his family moved to Columbus to help prepare the next generation of mission candidates.

CHRISTI CHRISTNER

Christi currently works as an events coordinator at the C&MA National Office.

JAE CHUNG

Jae is the district superintendent of the Korean District.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

JORGE CUEVAS

Jorge has served as an Alliance pastor for over 27 years and has been married to Ana for 33. A former district superintendent, he now serves as associate director for Church Multiplication and grants. He is part of a team planting a new church in Pickerington, OH. He is one of the core team members of the new church plant—Conexion Alliance church in Pickerington, OH

SUSAN DAVIS

Susan is the director for annual giving at the C&MA National Office. She has been blessed to be a part of the Alliance National Office for four years, supporting generous donors who support The Alliance's mission to bring all of Jesus to all the world.

MANDY DEAN

Mandy has been serving at the National Office since graduating from Taylor University three years ago. She works with Alliance Benefits in member care, where she supports and serves those who serve others.

YORDANOS DESSALEGN

Yordanos serves as an administrative assistant for Church Ministries at the National Office, supporting both Church Advance and Multicultural Ministries. She is married and blessed with three wonderful children.

SARKIS DIARBI

Sarkis is a composer and music writer, president of the Arabic Association of the C&MA, and pastor of New Life Church in Brooklyn, NY.

TOM FLANDERS

Tom serves as district superintendent in Florida and the Bahamas. He and Chris, graduates of Nyack College, have been married for nearly 40 years, are parents to three children, and have three grandchildren.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

PAUL GARCIA

Paul is a Navy chaplain who is serving onboard the USS BOXER (LHD 4). He has been in the C&MA for 16 years—serving from Nyack, New York, to Quantico, Virginia, to San Diego, California. He has been married to Heather for 23 years, and they have four sons.

DAVID GILMORE

David has been a pastor since 1985. He is married to Tami, has three adult kids, two daughters-in-law, and three grandkids, and has pastored churches in Minnesota, Texas, Wisconsin, Nebraska, and California. David currently serves as the South Pacific Alliance District superintendent.

DAVID GOMEZ

David, born in Texas, has been married to his wife, Irma, for 29 years. They have three adult children and one son-in-law. He is the district superintendent of the Alliance South Central District, a Christ-centered Acts 1:8 family of churches in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana.

JAVIER GOMEZ

Javier serves as superintendent for the Puerto Rico District, teaches at the Seminario Teológico Puerto Rico, and is a member of our Board of Directors. He lives in Guaynabo with his wife, Evelyn, and has four children, two daughters-in-law, and two grandchildren. Javier enjoys being with his family, reading, and playing basketball.

NATE HOWARD

Nate has served as the Eastern PA District superintendent since 2018. His pastor's heart and love for Christ's church drives his vision to spearhead a movement of gospel transformation and multiplication throughout Eastern PA. Nate and his wife, Sharon, love time with family and long walks in nature.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

DAVE JANSSEN

Dave was born in New York City and currently serves with The Alliance as the Northeast Regional Church Advance coordinator. He also serves as associate pastor of Grace Chapel in Bedminster, NJ. Dave and his wife, Jeannine, served for many years the Alliance Church in State College, PA.

TONY JONES

Tony is the district superintendent of the Alliance South District. He and his wife, Kristi, have served in The Alliance for 30 years.

SANDY KANG

Sandy, founding director of Nexus Mentoring, equips Christian marketplace leaders to invest in young adults. Alongside her husband, Ted, she has been pastoring at San Jose Christian Alliance Church since 2002. She serves on the Empower staff, equipping women worldwide. She is a proud mother to four daughters.

JESSICA KOCH

Jessica is the mother of two active kids who keep her and her husband moving and involved. She and her husband have been lay leaders at Hope Church in Westerville, OH, for over six years. Currently, she works part time at the Alliance National Office.

KERRY LAMBERT

Kerry has been a licensed Alliance worker since 1998. In the last 27 years, God has given him priceless fulfillment as a chaplain ministering to hospital and hospice patients. He lives in Murray, KY, with his wife, Mary.

JOSHUA LILLIE

Joshua currently serves with Envision, The Alliance's sending structure focused on short-term opportunities to join long-term cross-cultural work. Joshua began following Jesus in high school, graduated from Toccoa Falls College in northern Georgia, and has served with house churches and megachurches. He and his wife, Erin, live in Reynoldsburg, OH.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

DAVID LINN

David has been a pastor in the Northeast District for 43 years. He has, for 11 of those years, been the district superintendent of the Northeastern District. He loves to run, read, bike, play tennis, and play the guitar. David takes great joy in his family—his wife, Barb, two sons and daughters-in-law, and four grandchildren.

DAVID LONG

David is an associate pastor at The CrossWalk Church in Columbus, OH. He got pulled out of Christian radio to join church ministry, and Columbus drivers are grateful for the change. He resides in Central Ohio with his wife and son.

BRUCE LYMAN

Bruce has been married for 39 years and has three children and four grandchildren. He has been a pastor in The Alliance for 40 years and is now at the National Office as the director for Alliance ESL. Teaching English and equipping churches to do the same has been the joy of his life.

RACHEL MEIER

Rachel has a heart for missions and discipling the younger generations. Her desire is to be the love of Jesus wherever God leads her. She has served in multiple capacities within the Alliance family for the last 20 years. She and her husband, Tim, have two boys, a dog, and a cat.

PAM MILLER

Pam is a beloved daughter of the King, grateful to have been raised in The Alliance. Pam is married to Jeff, a pastor and district superintendent, lives in Kentucky, and serves in the Ohio Valley District. Pam desires to help others discover freedom in Christ and live fully seen and known by their Creator.

VICTOR MONROIG

Victor serves as superintendent of the Eastern Hispanic District, having pastored La Alianza Oasis, P.R., for 24 years. In the Puerto Rico District, he held roles in youth ministry, treasury, and multiplication. He was a university professor and is now pursuing a doctorate in ministries.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

RON MORRISON

Ron is the founding and senior pastor of Hope Alliance Bible Church in Maple Heights, OH. He has been married to Anita for 45 years and has served on the C&MA Board of Directors for 16 years. Ron is currently the president of the African American Pastors Association. He enjoys serving as a mentor and coach of urban leaders.

SONATA POMLES

Sonata is CAMA Services' marketing and communication specialist. An Ohioan who graduated from Capital University with a double major in creative writing and professional writing, her heart is to come alongside others with authentic community, intentional communication, and creative connectivity so they may experience dignity, restoration, and transformation through Christ.

DAVE REYNOLDS

Dave and Elena, married 38 years, serve together in Temecula, CA. They have planted three churches and several church-planting ministries. Dave is multiplication director for the South Pacific Alliance, serves on the National Church Multiplication Team, and coaches denominational leaders while pastoring Faith Community. They have three adult children.

KATHY SAPPIA

Kathy has served with The Alliance since 2001, including 20 years as an international worker with her husband, Jim. Now director for Alliance Peacemaking, she equips churches and leaders to navigate conflict with humility and grace, reflecting Christ's heart and creating space for His transformational work in their lives.

BRIAN SCOTT

Brian was born in Marion, OH, and was raised in the C&MA. He is married to Susan, and they have three children and one son-in-law. He and Susan are currently serving the amazing people in the Great Lakes District.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

MONU SHINCHOURY

Monu is a dedicated wife and masters of divinity student at Crown College, currently serving as kid's ministry pastor at First Alliance Church, Columbus, OH. Additionally, she serves as a chaplain candidate in the Air Force. Monu is committed to serving both her community and the military.

CANDACE SILVEY

Candace is wife to her best friend, Army Chaplain John, who is currently stationed in Fort Knox, KY. She is also a homeschool mother to six amazing sons, two awesome daughters, and one fantastic daughter-in-love. She is passionate about marriages, parenting, and mental health. She enjoys writing, quilting, crafting, and thrifting.

HENDI SIU

Hendi was raised in a Christian family in the C&MA, saved when she was 11 years old, and baptized at the age of 16. She was healed from a brain tumor by the Lord at 21 years old, was ordained when she was 33 years old, and presently serves God.

EMILY SMITH

Emily is an editor and copywriter for the C&MA National Office. She earned her bachelor of arts from Iowa State University in 2021 and moved to the Columbus, OH, area after graduation as part of a church-planting team ministering to the city of Columbus and campus of Ohio State.

TODD SOVINE

Todd, as a follower of the King, a husband of one, a father of five, and a grandfather of eight, has had the privilege of serving the Master in the C&MA for 35 years in the local church and as a director for church planting in the Central District.

CAROLA THOMPSON

Carola lives in Columbus, OH, with her husband and children. Originally from Germany, she is passionate about missions, theology, and languages—both living and dead. She enjoys preaching and teaching to all ages, from preschool to adults. Carola has been serving as part of the National Office team since 2021.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

JONATHAN WIGGINS

Jonathan has served in The Alliance for 41 years. Together with his wife, Lori, they have served in Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin, and for the last 13.5 years, has been district superintendent of the Rocky Mountain District. The Wiggins's have three adult children and seven grandchildren and live in Billings, MT.

MONTY WRIGHT

Monty is the district superintendent for the Alliance Northwest District where he empowers 110+ churches across four states. A seasoned leader and strategist, he champions church planting, leadership development, and mission-focused transformation. With deep pastoral roots and visionary oversight, he guides teams and churches toward healthy multiplication, cultural renewal, and Spirit-empowered Kingdom impact.