

LIFE GROUP

Participant Guide

March 2024



BOLD PRAYERS

NAME _____



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LETTER FROM ALEX

Dear WCC Family,

My name is Alex Goff and I am the new Disciple Minister at Wentzville Christian Church! We are so excited for you to experience this Bold Prayers series. Our hope is that through the sermons and life group questions, you will grow in your relationship with God. Paul says in Colossians 4:2, “Devote yourselves to prayer.” Our prayer is that over the next four weeks you will take one step forward in your devotion to your Heavenly Father. Specifically though, we want that step to be one of boldness. Over the next month, as we examine this spiritual discipline, we want you to take hold of this practice with confidence and tenacity. Here’s what you can expect over the next four weeks in your life group.

1.) Boldly Approach | Week One

In this first week, we will discuss the Lord’s prayer while specifically examining Jesus’s words and posture. Starting with the phrase, “Our Father,” we learn the foundation for our prayer life. In Christ, God is our Heavenly Father. This familial title should shape our words and posture when we pray. We don’t have to be scared or timid to approach the Lord. Just as a child runs into his daddy’s arms when he comes home from work, we can approach God with that same boldness.

2) Boldly Ask | Week Two

Branching off of week one, a child shouldn’t fear bringing a request before their parents. Over this second week, we will learn how to boldly ask in our prayers. Your life group will look at stories in the Bible of God being moved by requests. The hope is that after week two, you would feel compelled to boldly go before your heavenly father with the requests in your heart.

3.) Boldly Persist | Week Three

God’s timing and will can be a mystery. It can be hard to pray when we feel like our words are falling on deaf ears. In this third week, you will be encouraged to boldly persist in your prayers. The questions this week will examine factors that can deter persistence as seen from stories in Scripture. At the end of week three, you will have an opportunity to share some of your prayers giving the group opportunities to encourage you in persistence.

4.) Boldly Unify | Week Four

In John 17, we see Jesus pray for unity among believers. Unfortunately throughout church history, we have seen God’s people choose division over unity. In this final week, your group will be charged with boldly coming together. Examining the “one another” passages, you will learn the habits needed to stay unified as a group and as a church.

I was blessed with the opportunity to write the questions for this life group booklet. You will discover that each week builds off of the previous week so please try to attend as many life group sessions as you can. We are boldly praying for you as you dive into this series. Let’s all grow together in our relationship with God!

Blessings,

Alex

MARCH 3 | WEEK 1 | THE LORD'S PRAYER [MATTHEW 6:5-13]

CONNECT QUESTION

1. Discuss a time when you learned a brand new skill. It could be a skill you learned as a child at home or as an adult at work. What were the joys and challenges of learning that new skill?
2. In Luke's account of the Lord's prayer, the disciples ask Jesus to teach them the skill of prayer. What training or teaching did you receive toward prayer, if any?

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. Read Matthew 6:9. Jesus starts his prayer by referring to God as Father. How does this title shape our words and our posture when we pray?
2. Read Matthew 6:10. Suppose you have someone who just treats prayer only as an opportunity to voice their personal demands before God. How does verse ten combat this faulty perspective on prayer?
3. This primary pursuit of God's will doesn't prohibit us from bringing our requests. Read Matthew 6:11. What words stick out to you from this verse? How does the word you picked inform your attitude toward prayer and God?
4. The word daily in verse eleven extends to verse twelve when Jesus talks about forgiveness. Read Matthew 6:12. Why is it important in our faith to pray daily asking for forgiveness?

5. **Read Matthew 6:13. This verse reveals that we have an enemy who is actively seeking to destroy us through temptations. How do the previous four verses of the Lord's prayer encourage us in the face of this enemy?**

6. **As a group, turn to Luke 22 and read verses 39-44. What elements of the Lord's prayer do we see in Jesus's prayer in the garden?**

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. **Is God a loving, present Father to you? What would it look like for you to fully believe this?**

2. **If you had to assign percentages in how often you pray for your will to be done versus God's will to be done, what would your numbers be? What are some practical ways you can seek God's will throughout your day?**

3. **We walked through the Lord's prayer verse by verse. Growing in the skill of prayer, what verse stuck out to you and how can you use that verse to grow your prayer life?**

PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER & THE MISSION OF THE WEEK

[Spend some time praying with your Life Group. When asking for requests, try to keep the focus on personal praises/requests that relate to people in the group.]

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity of St. Charles County believes that everyone deserves to have a safe and affordable place to live and raise a family. To that end, we build more than homes, we build communities and provide educational programs and support to ensure homeownership sustainability. We partner with Habitat to help build homes in our communities. If you are interested in serving, please join us on **Saturday, March 23** for our first Serve Saturday of 2024. For more information, visit wentzvillecc.org/serveday.

MARCH 10 | WEEK 2 | ASK, SEEK, KNOCK [MATTHEW 7:7-12]

CONNECT QUESTION

1. If you met a genie who would give you one wish, what would you ask for?
2. The sermon this week encouraged us to boldly ask God. Do you have a hard time asking God for things? Why or why not?

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

Today's discussion time is going to look a little different. We're going to start by painting a scene in which we want you to place yourself. In this scene, you will be having a conversation with a Christian friend that is struggling. Through this discussion time, we will consult the Scriptures. At the end of the discussion, our life group is tasked with writing a paragraph response (4-7 sentences) that is informed by the Scriptures we just read. Let's set the scene.

Your friend Sarah has an elderly father whose health has been recently declining. When asking Sarah if she's prayed, her face sinks and her eyes move the floor. "No, not really," she says. "God's going to do what God's going to do. Nothing I can say or pray will really change that. And besides, I've prayed before asking God for healing and I didn't really see a response. So, no, I haven't prayed about it." End scene.

1. Our goal is to come up with a response informed by Scripture. Let's start by assigning texts. Read John 14:13, John 16:24, and Matthew 21:22. What are the common themes and repeated words within these three verses?
2. In the Old Testament, we see God unhappy with the Israelites after they choose to worship a false god. Read Exodus 32:12-14. What is the ask within this verse and how do we see God respond?
3. The verses we've read may bring up some questions. Why does God answer some prayers and not others? Why was He moved in their situation and not mine? There's some mystery here. Read 1 John 5:14-15. How do these verses help us make sense of this tension between God answering some prayers and not others?

4. Read Romans 8:28 and Romans 12:2. What do we learn about the will of God in these verses? How can this bring comfort to someone in a season like Sarah?
5. Based on the verses we read, write a one-paragraph response to Sarah who is struggling to pray boldly for her elderly father.

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. Can you think of a moment when you boldly asked God for something and He answered your prayer in the way you hoped? Share that moment with the group.
2. Can you think of a time when God didn't answer your specific ask the way you hoped and yet provided a different answer still displaying His good will? Share that moment with the group.
3. What is something you can boldly ask God for this week?

PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER & THE MISSION OF THE WEEK

[Spend some time praying with your Life Group. When asking for requests, try to keep the focus on personal praises/requests that relate to people in the group.]

Outreach International - Mexico | Josh & Susan Sanchez

This mission, called Me & My House Ministries, is a church plant in Colima City. Their goal is to begin a church planting movement within the region.

MARCH 17 | WEEK 3 | THE PERSISTENT WIDOW [LUKE 18:1-8]

CONNECT QUESTION

1. What's the longest you've worked at something before giving up?
2. Do you describe yourself as a persistent person or would you describe yourself as someone quick to move on?

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. Today we're going to be talking about persistence but specifically persistence in prayer. On Sunday, the message covered a story of persistence in Luke 18:1-8. Read over these verses and share what sticks out to you from this story.
2. The majority of our discussion time today will be spent reviewing stories in the Bible of people that struggled and succeeded with persistence in prayer. Our job as a group is to review these stories and identify what factors were helping or hurting their persistence. Let's start by reading Genesis 16:1-6. Abram and Sarai (Later renamed Abraham and Sarah) had been praying for a child. How do we see these two walking away from prayer? What factors are getting in the way of their persistence?
3. How can impatience rob us of persistence? Can you share a moment in your life when you struggled with God's timing?
4. Read Luke 1:5-20. Who are the ones praying in these verses and what is their response to the answered prayer?

5. The factor that got in the way of Zechariah's persistent prayer was *defeat*. Internally, he had given up hope on this prayer ever getting answered. Why is hope important when it comes to persistent prayers?
6. On that note, let's now look at someone who succeeded in persistence. Read Luke 2:36-38. What was the prophet Anna praying for and what words in these verses reveal her persistence?

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. When looking at these obstacles of impatience or defeat, what tends to rob you of persistence in your prayers?
2. Share with the group something that you have been praying for over a long period of time. Hold each other accountable to continue in that persistence!
3. Is there someone in your life that you know has been praying for something specific over a long period of time? How can you tangibly partner with them in their prayers?

PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER & THE MISSION OF THE WEEK

[Spend some time praying with your Life Group. When asking for requests, try to keep the focus on personal praises/requests that relate to people in the group.]

LINC - Love in the Name of Christ

LINC's mission is to provide support and direction for disadvantaged families and individuals in the community, helping them to set goals and objectives that will empower them to become productive citizens within the community. On Saturday, April 6, join other volunteers from WCC for a Serve Saturday as LINC will need all hands on deck to help get the garden planted for the pantry and community and also deal with the on-going project of "weeds." For more information, visit wentzvillecc.org/serveday.

MARCH 24 | WEEK 4 | JESUS PRAYS [JOHN 17:1-26]

CONNECT QUESTION

1. What jobs or professions can you think of where unity among the team is essential to accomplishing the task?
2. Using the jobs and professions you just shared, what would happen if unity was not present among those teams?

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. This past Sunday, we wrapped up our Bold Prayers series by talking about unity. Let's start by reviewing the sermon text. We're going to break into three groups. Each group is going to get a section of Jesus's prayer for unity. You're going to read the text among your group, summarize your section in a few sentences and then discuss how your text relates to the theme of unity. After about five minutes, we're going to gather back together to discuss your answers with the whole group.
 - a. Group One: John 17:1-5
 - b. Group Two: John 17:6-19
 - c. Group Three: John 17:20-26
2. Jesus's prayer is for unity among His followers. Looking at the full scope of church history, how do you feel the body of Christ has done in remaining unified? What led you to your conclusion?

3. Break into your groups of three again. Each group will be assigned a few “one another” passages to read and discuss. Similar to what we did earlier, you will answer questions about your texts and then present your answers to the whole group once we regather. Here are the questions we want you to answer with each passage: 1. How does embracing this verse create a greater sense of unity among the congregation? 2. What does it tangibly look like for a church to inject this verse into its culture? 3. If a church were to move in the opposite direction of this verse, what would it look like?
- a. Group One: James 5:16 (Confess and Pray), Galatians 6:2 (Bear with One Another)
 - b. Group Two: Colossians 3:16 (Teach and Admonish), Ephesians 4:32 (Forgive)
 - c. Group Three: Hebrews 3:13 (Encourage), Romans 15:7 (Accept)

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. Listening to the various “one another” passages, what passage has been hardest for you to embrace?
2. What can you do individually and what can we do as a church to grow in unity?
3. I want us to sit and think on this question for a few seconds. Is there someone within the church you need to apologize to?... *If someone is coming to your mind right now, we’re not asking you to share the person or give the details. If someone is coming to mind, all we ask is that this week you make it a priority to seek them out and apologize. By doing so, you will accomplish Jesus’s prayer in John 17.*

PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER & THE MISSION OF THE WEEK

[Spend some time praying with your Life Group. When asking for requests, try to keep the focus on personal praises/requests that relate to people in the group.]

Jireh India Missions

This ministry in India shares the good news of Jesus with those who have never heard His name. They provide homes and education for orphans at House of Peace, teach widows to sew so they can provide for their children, provide bread for much of their community through Five Loaves Bakery, and work with a leper colony. They strive to fulfill Psalm 82:3 — *Defend the poor and orphans; do justice to the afflicted and needy.*

EASTER

SERVICE TIMES

SATURDAY

March 30

5:00PM

6:30PM

SUNDAY

March 31

7:00AM 8:30AM

9:45AM 11:00AM



Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" "Yes, Lord, she replied, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

DETAILS

WENTZVILLEKIDZ
Programming

ALL SERVICES EXCEPT 7:00AM

STUDENT MINISTRY
Programming

JOIN US AT 9:45AM SERVICE



WEBSITE

wentzvillecc.org / easter

