



March 2025

MVCF

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Worship Schedule

- ◆ 8:30 a.m. Sunday Adult Sunday School
- ◆ 9:30 a.m. Sunday Worship Service
- ◆ 10:00 a.m. Sunday Children's Bible Adventure

Pastor's pen

The Super Bowl was last month, and while I love watching football, I am reminded this time of year how almost everyone comes away from a football season sad. Only one team wins the championship, and only one fan base gets to celebrate. For every other team, the standard line is something like this: "We'll be back next year. We'll work harder and we'll be better."

For professional athletes getting paid a lot of money, I hope they work harder next year! I want to see my team win next year! But I also see that many Christians adopt the same mindset in their walk with Jesus. I have to try harder. I need to be more committed. I need to change these bad habits. I have to experience Jesus more. These sentiments may sound right and even aspirational. However the problem is that such a mindset places the burden of change squarely on ourselves. We're trying to do what only the Holy Spirit can do in us. That is not going to lead to spiritual success!

For the first few months of this year in my newsletter article I have suggested that the biblical pathway to change is not trying harder, but putting ourselves in the way of God's grace so that he can change us to make us more like Jesus.

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Small Groups:

Monday

1:00 p.m. Afternoon
Bible Study at MVCF

6:30 p.m. Women's
Bible Study at MVCF

Tuesday

9:30 a.m. Bible Study at
MVCF

6:30 p.m. Prayer Meeting
Online

Wednesday

6:30 p.m. Youth Group at
MVCF

Church Work Party
Every Fourth Saturday
of the month
8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
refreshment will be
provided.
For more contact:
Frank Romeo

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The steps we take to put ourselves in the way of God's grace are what theologians call "means of grace." And so I am using these first few months of 2025 to explore various means of grace, so that we can get in the way and stay in the way of God's transforming grace throughout 2025. Last month we looked at one of the most important means of grace, the Word of God. This month we will look at an equally important means of grace: Prayer.

It has often been said that God's Word is the way God primarily speaks to us, and prayer is the way we speak to him. I believe that is true, which means that the bible and prayer are critical aspects of how we communicate with God and stay in the way of God's loving, transforming grace. And yet prayer for many Christians is a struggle. We forget to pray during our day, we don't know what to say, or we get intimidated by other people praying. And when we do pray, we often simply pray about our needs and the needs around us. And while praying for our needs is certainly an important part of our prayers to God (see below), it is far from the only way we can pray. Imagine if my only communication with Joanna was about what I needed and wanted. Trust me, we would not have a very deep relationship!

Below is a prayer model that I have found to be quite helpful in my walk with Jesus. It is called the ACTS prayer. It is not a prayer itself, but highlights four different kinds of prayers we can pray to God. This is not an exhaustive list of prayers; the book of Psalms offers many more kinds of prayers than what is listed here. But it is a helpful tool to help us pray, especially when we find that we are struggling to know what to pray or finding that we only pray for our needs. Each letter of the ACTS acronym stands for a different kind of prayer:

Adoration

Revelation 4:8—Holy, holy, holy is The Lord God Almighty, Who was, and is, and is to come.

Adoration is simply declaring who God is and praising him for who he is. Try not to confuse this with thanksgiving (see below). Part of how we express our love for God is adoring him for who he is. I have found prayers of adoration helpful both in times of worship and praise as well as in times of struggle and hardship. When facing an uncertain future it is beautiful to pray to God that he is sovereign over this uncertain situation, and what seems scary to us is not scary to God. If you are not used to praying such prayers of adoration, a great way to start is to write down every attribute of God you can think of, and then pray those attributes to God, praising him for who he is.

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Confession

Psalm 51:10-13—Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.

We are all sinners, and while the blood of Jesus covers our sin, we will still struggle with sin on this side of heaven. Confession is simply coming to God, as King David did in Psalm 51, confessing our sin, and asking God to work in our heart so that we don't continue in that sin. Confessional prayers are beautiful in that they not only help us to turn away from sin, but they cultivate in us a dependency on God to do in us what we cannot do ourselves. It is helpful when confessing sin to God to be as specific as possible, as that specificity helps us open our hearts to the Holy Spirit to work in that specific area of our lives.

Thanksgiving

I Chronicles 16:34—Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!

There is always something to be thankful for. We tend to first give thanks for things that are going well in our lives and in the lives of people around us. But in the verse above, notice that the biblical author first and foremost gives thanks not for good circumstances, but for a good God, and thanks God for his never-ending steadfast love. Offering prayers of thanksgiving will not only help you fall more in love with God, but will also make you a more thankful person in general.

Supplication

Philippians 4:6—Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Here is where we bring our requests to God. The bible tells us that we can bring all of our needs before God in prayer. But I want to suggest two practices that will help you grow in your walk with Jesus as you pray prayers of supplication. First, pray prayers of adoration, confession, and thanksgiving before you ask God for anything. That way we are not simply coming to God as a divine vending machine. And second, when you share prayer requests in a small group or a bible study, in addition to asking for the needs of friends and family members, first and foremost ask for prayer for your heart. If you are struggling with patience, ask for patience. If you are lacking in hope, ask for hope. While it is wonderful to pray for the needs of others, it is easy to *only pray for the needs of others, and in so doing not be honest about your own heart before God.*

I hope that this ACTS prayer can help you grow you as a pray-er. And the great thing about this model is that you can pray these different prayers any time. You can pray before you eat breakfast, as you eat breakfast, and as you drive in your car (eyes open please!). You can even silently pray as you talk to someone, thanking God for the opportunity to talk to that person and asking for wisdom on how to bless that person. The more we pray, the more we place ourselves before God's transforming grace, and that is where real change takes place in our lives.



MARCH 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 8:30am Adult Sunday School 9:30am Worship Service	3 7:00pm Women's Bible Study	4 9:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Zoom Prayer Meeting	5 10am-1:00pm SM Food Pantry 6:30pm Youth Group Ash Wednesday	6	7	8
9 8:30am Adult Sunday School 9:30am Worship Service Daylight Saving	10 7:00pm Women's Bible Study 1:00pm Bible Study	11 9:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Zoom Prayer Meeting	12 10am-1:00pm SM Food Pantry 6:30pm Youth Group	13	14	15
16 8:30am Adult Sunday School 9:30am Worship Service	17 7:00pm Women's Bible Study 1:00pm Bible Study	18 9:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Zoom Prayer Meeting	19 10am-1:00pm SM Food Pantry 6:30pm Youth Group	20	21	22 All Church Work Party
23 8:30am Adult Sunday School 9:30am Worship Service	24 7:00pm Women's Bible Study 1:00pm Bible Study	25 9:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Zoom Prayer Meeting	26 10am-1:00pm SM Food Pantry 6:30pm Youth Group	27	28	29
30 8:30am Adult Sunday School 9:30am Worship Service	31 7:00pm Women's Bible Study 1:00pm Bible Study					

Bible Verses for Lent

Matthew 6:16-18: “And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

Joel 2:12-13: “Yet even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments.” Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.

1 Peter 5:6: Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you.

Isaiah 58:6: Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?

John 16:33: In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

Matthew 6:33: But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

MARCH CELEBRATIONS



Jean & Michele Fortanas 03/05
Michele & Tony Quion 03/05

Darryl Angus 03/04
Tony Quion 03/04
Tony DaVee 03/05
Andrew de Vos 03/07
Van Thibodeaux 03/07
Admasu Agiro 03/16
Frank Romeo 03/24
Jayson Stone Jr. 03/25
Mike Loren 03/27



Happy Birthday



Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Col. 3:12

Mission Village Christian Fellowship

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Email: missionvillage1@sbcglobal.net

Council Members

Pastor	Steve de Vos
Moderator	Ronda Adams
Clerk	Joanna de Vos
Financial Secretary	Tony DaVee
Treasurer	June McCollough
Children's Ministry	Open
Youth Ministry	Terri Carver
Adult Ministry	Open
Stewardship	Frank Romeo
Fellowship	Jenny Fiori
Service	Open
Missions / Evangelism	Matt & Ellen Davis
Finance Ministry	Open
Worship	Hannah French

Sunday Schedule

Worship & Children's Sunday School.....9:30 a.m.

Nursery & Toddler Care is Available During Worship Service

Service will be live on YouTube or Facebook

Elders

Pastor /Elder.....Steve de Vos
Administrative ElderTony DaVee
Elder..... Carl Jensen

Staff

Administrative Assistant.....Judy Jacob
Nursery Attendant.....Hannah French