
Touch Points for Evangel's Prayer Vigil team

For the week of February 23, 2014

This series is aimed to support our "Stepping Out in Faith—for the Sake of the Gospel" initiative. It is based on *The One Year Book of Praying Through the Bible* by Cheri Fuller (Tyndale House, 2003). We will focus on specific topics that relate to faith, witness, prayer and outreach. "The driving force behind this proposal is to increase our evangelistic witness and the impact on our neighborhood and community." (From the overview document, available at www.evbapt.org/docs/steppingOut.pdf)

Tender Mercies

Lord, don't hold back your tender mercies from me. My only hope is in your unfailing love and faithfulness. For troubles surround me—too many to count! They pile up so high I can't see my way out. They are more numerous than the hairs on my head. I have lost all my courage. Please, Lord, rescue me! Come quickly, Lord, and help me.

Psalm 40:11-13

Prayer for the Week

Lord, today as troubles surround me, I turn my focus to you. Come quickly, Lord, and help and rescue me. Don't hold back your tender mercies in my life—release them, I pray! May showers of mercy and blessing come down from you. My only hope is in your unfailing love and faithfulness. You are my helper and my savior.

Notable Quote

God hath two wings, which he doth
ever move,
The one is mercy, and the next is love,
Under the first the sinners ever trust,
and with the last He still directs the just.
Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

Reflection

Like the psalmist, each of us encounters seasons when we face not just one problem but waves of troubles that crash into our lives like breakers incessantly battering the shore. If we are not experiencing that now, we surely will somewhere down the road: Perhaps a child becomes chronically ill, or a teenage rebels and breaks our hearts. Our mother may be diagnosed with Alzheimer's and move in with us so we're providing care 24/7, juggling a stressful job, and finding ourselves assailed by financial difficulties. Our troubles pile up so high that we can't see our way out, and we understand what the psalmist was feeling when he said that they are more numerous than the hairs on our heads. Life seems to unravel, we are weary, and courage drains away as we wonder. *Can I handle all of this? What if something else happens?* This is the time to lift up our heads to heaven, to cry out, as the psalmist did, for God's tender mercies," to say, "Come quickly, Lord, and help me" (v. 13), and to put our hope in his unfailing love and faithfulness.

PRAYER PROMPTS

- Who do you know who is in the situation described this week, desperately in need of God's tender mercies? Ask God to direct you to encourage and pray for such a person in the coming week, whether they already know Christ as Savior, or ever more so, if they need to know and follow him.
- Continue to remember one family from your circle of influence for intercession. They could be a neighbor, coworker or relative. Pray for their struggles to be resolved, their health improved and their relationships strengthened. Ask the Lord to bring them to a fuller, closer relationship with Himself in faith and obedience.
- Continue to pray for opportunities to invite people to our services. Ask the Lord to open doors of conversation, connection or compassion with others to enable an offer of attendance.
- Prayerfully reflect on the lessons from Sunday's worship service, the music, Scripture, and Pastor Dave's message from his series on Exodus, "Let My People Go: Before You Murder More" (Exodus 1:15-22)*. Pray for opportunities to apply these lessons throughout the week, within your own circle of influence and beyond.
- Continue to pray for our "Stepping Out in Faith" initiative: for the identification of a church planter, for unity and commitment as we seek to bring success to this evangelistic effort by growing ourselves. Pray for Mark Albrecht of Converge Mid-America as he seeks the Lord's direction to find the best person for the Wheaton area—and for the contact Pastor Dave had with one potential planter in the area. In the meantime, renew your dedication to meet Bill France's challenge to pray that God will lead 25 adults and 50 children to Evangel—a seemingly impossible task! But not impossible for God! Pray persistently that God will bring a great harvest in 2014!

*A podcast of the sermon, plus pdf documents of the sermon outline and PowerPoint notes are posted on the website, normally by Monday.

Touch Points is e-mailed every Friday and normally posted on the website (www.evbapt.org) by Saturday.

Printed copies are available in the lobby on Sunday.