

# 2024 PRAYER FOCUS: SALT & LIGHT

**But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. – LUKE 21:12**

From the first century to today, there have been Christ-followers who have endured all kinds of persecution. Today there are thousands who experience some form of persecution because they have chosen to follow Jesus.

## NOVEMBER PRAYER FOCUS — PERSECUTED CHURCH

We are so incredibly fortunate to live in a country that still enjoys freedom to worship where and how we choose. While we know of incidents where faith has been challenged and faith expressions in the workplace have been restricted, we are still able to worship freely. It may be easy for us to forget and certainly difficult to imagine the horrors that our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world face because they have chosen to follow Jesus.

November 3 is International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church. This is one day set aside to create awareness and to pray for those enduring persecution for their faith. Later this month many of us will gather with family and friends to celebrate Thanksgiving. There will be lots of food and fellowship and no fear of having our gathering interrupted by hostile government agents or by terrorists or religious radicals.

While we are feasting, others will be fasting. While we meet openly, others will be in hiding. While we share stories and laugh together around the table, others will be weeping because of the loss of a loved one, the destruction of their crops or home, or the impending threats.

Paul wrote to Timothy that everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted (2 Timothy 3:12). Our time of persecution may come. In the meantime, let's give ourselves to prayer for those who are already enduring persecution.

### WEEK #1

**PERSONAL REFLECTION - LOVE YOUR ENEMIES:** “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5:43-44).

- Pray for those being persecuted that God will enlarge their capacity to love those who persecute them and that He will give them the grace to pray for their persecutors.
- Pray their love for Jesus will be evident to their persecutors.
- Pray their love for their enemies will soften their hearts and cause them to seek Jesus.
- Pray that God will reveal Himself to those who are persecuting Christians.

## **BETHEL UNIVERSITY — LIBRARY**

- Pray that students who are using the library to research history will become aware of the history of religious persecution through the ages and that it will prompt them to pray.
- Pray that students will be diligent in research and not simply try to “get by.”
- Pray that students will have a hunger for knowledge.

## **CARIBBEAN REGION**

- Praise the Lord for the 33 churches and 40 pastors and their families who serve the Caribbean Region of the Missionary Church.
- Praise the Lord for the work they are doing in Florida and Puerto Rico
- Praise the Lord for the resilience and strength God has given them through storms that have devastated parts of Puerto Rico in recent years.

## **REGIONAL DIRECTOR: Victor Lopez**

- Pray for Victor Lopez who leads as a pastor to the pastors of Caribbean Region that He will lead with a sense of total dependence on the Lord.
- Pray that God will use him to equip churches to be disciple-making churches.
- Pray that God will use him to call the churches to be houses of prayer.

## **PRAYER FOR THE REGION**

- Pray for the pastors of this region, most of whom are bi-vocational.
- Pray for God’s blessing on them because of the sacrifices they make to support their families and serve the church.
- Pray that God will grant them favor in the communities so that they can make disciples of Jesus.

## **WEEK #2**

**PERSONAL REFLECTION — DO NOT FEAR:** “But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. ‘Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened’” (1 Peter 3:14).

- While we may not yet face persecution in this country, the political landscape and changing cultural values make leading the church challenging. Pray that our pastors will have the boldness to remain true to the Word.
- Pray for our ministry partners who are living in countries where they face the possibility of persecution daily, that they will remain faithful and that the Lord will give them peace.
- Pray that people in each of our churches will not live in fear but in confidence in the Lord. Pray for bold faith.

## **BETHEL UNIVERSITY — MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

- Pray that God will equip these staff members to present the University to the community and to our churches so that students consider Bethel first.
- Pray they will be clear in communicating the values that Bethel and the Missionary Church have embraced.
- Pray that God will grant them the creativity they need to reach this generation.

## **EASTERN REGION**

- Praise the Lord for the 51 churches and 80 ministers who serve in the Eastern Region of the Missionary Church.
- Praise the Lord for the work they are doing across nine states – Alabama, Connecticut, Florida, Massachusetts, Maryland, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania.
- Praise the Lord for the young leaders God is raising up in this region.

## **REGIONAL DIRECTOR: JEFF GETZ**

- Pray for Jeff as he gives leadership to the Eastern Region and serves as coach and pastor to pastors across the region.
- Pray for strength, stamina, and grace and a keen awareness of his dependence on Jesus.
- Pray that God will grant him special wisdom as he leads this multi-ethnic region.

## **PRAYER FOR THE REGION**

- Pray that God will raise up pastors/church planters who can reach into the Northeast – Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, etc. where we have no Missionary Churches.
- Pray that God will continue to strengthen their next gen ministry.
- Pray for Christ for All Nations Church in Bristol Borough, NJ that is looking for a bivocational lead pastor. Pray for God’s leading and provision.

## **WEEK #3**

**PERSONAL REFLECTION — MORE THAN CONQUERORS:** “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: ‘For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.’ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us” (Romans 8:35-37).

- Pray for those who are being persecuted today that they will never lose sight of the love of Christ.
- Pray that pastors who may be discouraged will be reminded that they are more than conquerors.
- Pray for those who are facing death because of their faith that God will give them special grace that will be a witness to those who would do them harm.
- Pray for the persecutors that God will show them His greater power.

## **BETHEL UNIVERSITY — THE PRESIDENT’S OFFICE**

- Praise the Lord for Dr. Bellefeuille and the leadership she is giving to Bethel University.
- Pray that God will bless her and her cabinet, and pray He will grant them wisdom to lead at a time when private universities are facing so many challenges.
- Pray that the theme she introduced in chapel at the beginning of the year – “Speak Jesus” – will resound though the campus in classes and dorms.
- Pray the Lord will keep her and her staff encouraged as they listen for the Lord’s leading.

## **CENTRAL REGION**

- Praise the Lord for the 60 churches and 173 pastors who serve the Central Region.
- Praise the Lord for the work these pastors and churches are doing in Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin.
- Praise the Lord for the focus they have on helping students – young adults – explore a call to ministry.

## **REGIONAL DIRECTOR:** Ken Snyder

- Pray for Ken and his staff (Tim Johnson, Travis Geisel, Liz Villatoro) that God will continue to use them to expand the kingdom in this region.
- Pray the Lord will keep them encouraged and refreshed as they minister to pastors and churches.
- Pray for Ken as he provides coaching for churches in the region.

## **PRAYER THE REGION**

- Pray that God will give Ken and Tim wisdom as they help these Churches find staff:
  - First Missionary Church – Berne, Indiana – Pre-teen director or pastor
  - The Rock – Portland, Indiana – Worship and discipleship pastor
  - Rehoboth Community Missionary Church - Albion, Indiana – bi-vocational pastor

## **WEEK #4**

**PERSONAL REFLECTION — NEW STRENGTH:** “That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong” (2 Corinthians 12:10).

- Pray for those who feel weak or who are facing insults or other challenges that they will find strength in Jesus.
- Pray for pastors who may be facing challenges of needing more space or needing staff that God will give them grace and strength.
- Pray for partners serving in other parts of the world who are facing persecution that the Lord will give them strength when they feel the weakest.
- Pray that hardships and difficulties will simply lead all of us to a deeper walk with Jesus.

## **BETHEL UNIVERSITY — REGISTRAR**

- Pray for these staff members that even when enrollment is not as high as they would like that they will be able to focus on serving the students who have enrolled.
- Join with the staff in this department and the rest of the Bethel community in praying for an increase in enrollment.
- Pray that Missionary Church students will consider Bethel first.
- Pray that God will keep this department encouraged in spite of the lower than desired enrollment.

## **EAST CENTRAL REGION**

- Praise the Lord for the 29 churches and 59 pastors in the East Central Region serving the state of Ohio.
- Praise the Lord for a new opportunity for launching a Hispanic ministry in Columbus, Ohio.
- Praise the Lord for a potential ministry in West Virginia
- Praise the Lord for the 125 years of Ludlow Falls camp.

## **REGIONAL DIRECTOR: JEFF KEPHART**

- Pray for Jeff and his wife, Donna that the Lord will renew them day by day and that He will fill them with His joy and peace.
- Pray that God will use them to strengthen pastoral families in the East Central Region so that they might be used to multiply disciples.
- Pray that God will grant him wisdom, strength, and courage to follow His leading on behalf of the region.
- Pray for his staff – Jeff and Jean Gerig that the Lord will bless them and renew them daily.

## **PRAYER FOR THE REGION**

- Pray for God's continued leading in developing a Hispanic ministry in Columbus, Ohio.
- Pray the Lord will continue to open doors into West Virginia.
- Pray for our church in Springfield, Ohio that has a ministry with the Haitian immigrants.