

Hilltop Community Church of Christ
Small Groups News Letter
November 2009

Prayer of Thanksgiving & Praise

We begin the Prayer News Letter with praise and thanksgiving to our God! *We worship You Lord for who you are! May all the earth glorify Your name! Blessed be the name of the Lord! It is in knowing You and experiencing Your love that we learn how to truly love. We become whole, healthy and productive through You alone. You are the All in All! Praise and glory and honor be to You alone! Amen.*

When we take the time to realize who God is, to love and adore Him, then the Lord is able to increase our faith and perform miracles in our lives. The Father is always faithful. His love endures forever. *We miss the blessing and the miracle of having a relationship with the Lord if we are focused on ourselves, wanting more things, and complaining about our lives.*

Earlier this year I was encouraged to praise God right when I wake up in the morning; to let the first words that come across my lips be praise and thanksgiving to the Lord. I have been amazed at the difference thankfulness has made in my perspective and my feelings. Instead of making requests and desiring for the Father to do something, beginning with a thankful and, therefore, hopeful heart. Instead of wondering if the Lord will fulfill my desires, I know that the God of all hope is in charge and He is doing the very best thing for me.

In this holiday season let's make a conscious effort to become thankful people and to remain hopeful. God is good! He will never leave us or forsake us! Let's not walk away from Him but instead walk toward Him. As we love and trust Him, He will transform us!

. ¹⁵For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit² of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. ¹⁸I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, ²⁰which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

Ephesians 1:15-22

¹⁴For this reason I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵from whom his whole family² in heaven and on earth derives its name. ¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

²⁰Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Ephesians 3:14-21

Praying for Each Other

This page has several examples of Paul's prayers for other people. We can pray the same prayers for each other today. Paul helps us to be aware of our spiritual needs. He lifts up his friends and co-workers to the Lord knowing that the Lord will care for them!

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

Romans 15:13 (NKJV)

May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, (6) that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:5-6 (NKJV)

⁵⁻⁹Test yourselves to make sure you are solid in the faith. Don't drift along taking everything for granted. Give yourselves regular checkups. You need firsthand evidence, not mere hearsay, that Jesus Christ is in you. Test it out. If you fail the test, do something about it. I hope the test won't show that we have failed. But if it comes to that, we'd rather the test showed our failure than yours. We're rooting for the truth to win out in you. We couldn't possibly do otherwise.

*We don't just put up with our limitations; we celebrate them, and then go on to celebrate every strength, every triumph of the truth in you. **We pray hard that it will all come together in your lives.***

2 Corinthians 13:5-8 (The Message)

⁹ How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you? ¹⁰ Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith. ¹¹ Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you. ¹² May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. ¹³ May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 (NIV)

¹⁶ May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, ¹⁷ encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 (NIV)

And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, (10) so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, (11) filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Philippians 1:9-11 (NKJV)

¹⁸⁻²¹Pray for us. We have no doubts about what we're doing or why, but it's hard going and we need your prayers. All we care about is living well before God. Pray that we may be together soon. May God, who puts all things together, makes all things whole, Who made a lasting mark through the sacrifice of Jesus, the sacrifice of blood that sealed the eternal covenant, Who led Jesus, our Great Shepherd, up and alive from the dead, Now put you together, provide you with everything you need to please him, Make us into what gives him most pleasure, by means of the sacrifice of Jesus, the Messiah. All glory to Jesus forever and always!

Hebrews 13:20-21 (Message)

Prayer for Leaders

Lift up our Leaders

Hilltop has some amazing leaders. More and more people are raising up to lead every year. Our Shepherds and Staff covet the prayers of the church. The leadership also prays for the church and all of our leaders every time we are together. Small Group Leaders and Ministry Team Leaders are stepping up every week to serve in the Kingdom at Hilltop. Many of our members are managers and are in leadership at work. *The challenge is to consistently lean on and follow the Lord.* Psalm 32:6-9 gives us a promise for God's protection, instruction and counsel. As we pray to Him and ask for direction we become more and more aware of God's guidance. Let's pray for our leaders! Lord, help us all to be sensitive to Your leading and counsel.

⁶ Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found; surely when the mighty waters rise, they will not reach him. You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah ⁸ I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you. ⁹ Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you.

Psalm 32:6-9 (NIV)

¹I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone— ²for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. ³This is good, and pleases God our Savior, ⁴who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. ⁵For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.

1 Timothy 2:1-3 (NIV)

¹⁵Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that confess his name. ¹⁶And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. ¹⁷Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. ¹⁸Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way. ¹⁹I particularly urge you to pray so that I may be restored to you soon. ²⁰May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, ²¹equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Hebrews 13:15-20 (NIV)

God Answers Prayer

“Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” Hebrews 4:16 NIV

Nothing can keep us from being directly connected to God if we want to be.

Last Sunday, we had the pleasure of meeting Ilse Gutsche, a missionary to the Guyami Indians in Panama. She shared with us about the people and work she has been doing in Panama for the past 20 years. It is a very simple life for the Guyami Indians...no electricity, no watches and no cell phones. Ilse travels on foot to several different villages on a regular basis to bring food and supplies to the people in the village and meet with preachers of the gospel in these villages. She told of occasions when there may be an emergency and the preacher needs her right away, but with no phones he has no way to get in touch with her and tell her to come to his village. So what does the preacher do? He prays! Ilse can tell of many accounts of meeting a preacher along the road who needed her help and prayed to God to show him the way to find her. This is a reminder to me of the power of prayer. God listens to us. He will answer us! Are we listening?



*“O earth, earth, earth,
hear the word of the
Lord!”*

Jeremiah 22:29 NKJV

Quiet Time with God

Prayer goes hand in hand with our daily Bible reading. God wants us to study His Word, approaching our Bible attentively – actively listening, seeking God’s words for us. Here we find the topic of our day’s conversations with Him.

This is called our “quiet time” for a good reason. “Quiet,” because the noisy world we live in drowns out the Spirit’s promptings and the Savior’s call. We must learn to slow down, to settle ourselves so we can hear. And “time” because study, prayer and worship all take time. Too often we exchange our daily bread for a daily crouton when it comes to Bible reading. Don’t rush through a chapter and verse so you can check it off your list and move on to the next thing. Don’t hurry past the words you know to be “living and powerful” and able to change you. Spend time with the Word. Steep in it. Soak in it. Tell Him what you see. Ask Him how it pertains to your situation. Listen for God’s leading.

*From the Women of Faith Study Guide Series,
Adventurous Prayer*

*“Call to me, and I
will answer you, and
tell you great and un-
searchable things you
do not know”*

Jeremiah 33:3 NIV

But Jesus often with-
drew to lonely places
and prayed.

Luke 5:16 NIV

Very early in the morn-
ing, while it was still
dark, Jesus got up, left
the house and went off
to a solitary place, where
he prayed.

Mark 1:35 NIV

Prayer Discipline

"All who have walked with God have viewed prayer as the main business of their lives. The words of the gospel of Mark, "And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose and went out to a lonely place, and there he prayed," stand as a commentary on the life-style of Jesus (Mark 1:35). David's desire for God broke the self-indulgent chains of sleep: "Early will I seek Thee" (Ps 63:1, KJV). When the apostles were tempted to invest their energies in other important and necessary tasks, they determined to give themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word (Acts 6:4)."

Richard J. Foster, Celebration of Discipline

"Prayer is something we learn. The disciples asked Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1)...prayer involved a learning process. As I was learning I sought out persons who seemed to experience greater power and effectiveness in prayer than I and asked them to teach me everything they knew...I began studying the prayers of the Old Testament – Moses and Elijah and Hannah and Daniel."

Richard J. Foster, Celebration of Discipline

... "remember that God always meets us where we are and slowly moves us along into deeper things. Occasional joggers do not suddenly enter an Olympic marathon. They prepare and train themselves over a period of time, and so should we."

Richard J. Foster, Celebration of Discipline

The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.
Psalms 145:18

December Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Ignite (Youth) 6pm Small Group Ladies 6:30pm	2	3 Ladies Study 9am Prayer Group 12pm Full Throttle 7pm	4	5 Hilltop Christmas Party 6pm
6 Evening Worship 5pm Hilltop Flicks (Youth) - 6:30pm	7 Small Group Wyant & Riley 7pm	8	9	10 Ladies Study 9am Prayer Group 12pm Full Throttle 7pm	11	12 Youth Christmas Party – Details to come
13 Christmas Caroling–Hayride Noon Christmas Open House at the Lamberts -2pm Evening Worship 5pm Hilltop Flicks (Youth) - 6:30pm	14 Small Group Wyant & Riley 7pm	15 Ignite (Youth) 6pm	16	17 Ladies Study 9am Prayer Group 12pm Full Throttle 7pm	18	19
20 Children’s Ministry Holiday Party -Noon Evening Worship 5pm	21 Small Group Wyant & Riley 7pm	22	23	24	25	26
27 Evening Worship 5pm	28 Small Group Wyant & Riley 7pm	29 Small Group Ladies 6:30pm	30	31		

Day & Time	Name	Telephone & Address
Sun - 5:00pm	Hilltop , Hudsons & Edwards	310.322.4898 (Hudsons) debhudson@hotmail.com 717 E Grand Ave, El Segundo, CA 90245
Sun - 5:00pm	Smith, Fred & Linda	310.641.8495 linda.k.smith3@boeing.com 8312 Creighton Ave., Los Angeles, 90045
Sun - 5:00pm	Dimick, Jeff	310.227.3822 jeffery.dimick@juno.com 8300 Gonzaga, Los Angeles, CA 90045
Sun - 5:30pm	Burkes & Rays	310.216.9187 allynburkeproperties@sbcglobal.net 7803 Naylor, Los Angeles, CA 90045
Sun - 5:30pm	Collins, Charly & Debbie Heather Peterson	310.809.6174 (Collins) debibagby@hotmail.com 5021 Atlantic Ave #24, Long Beach 90805
Mon - 8:00am	Fresh Brewed Girls	310.322-3271 (Sherry Reed) rsreed844@yahoo.com 844 Virginia St., El Segundo, CA 90245
Mon - 7:00pm	Hilltop , Riley & Wyant	310.640.9575 (Mike Wyant) hmwesca@aol.com 717 East Grand Ave, El Segundo, CA 90245
Tues - 9:30am	Albright, Carol	310.546.5479 (Carol) cgalbright@verizon.net Various locations
Tue - 6:30pm	Geber, Jason & Aybar, Cindy Rose Waddle	310.291.8659 (Jason) sparky21063@yahoo.com
Tue - 7:00pm	Devlin, Savita & Sweet, Re- becca Moreland, Monica	310.322.5757 (Monica) monica@gotohilltop.com 730 West Sycamore Ave, El Segundo, CA 90245
Tue - 8:30pm	Men - Dimick, Jeff	310.227.3822 jeffery.dimick@juno.com 8300 Gonzaga, Los Angeles, CA 90045
Wed - 6:30pm	Reed, Jon & Burke, Allyn & Kathleen	310.216.9187 (Allyn) allynburkeproperties@sbcglobal.net 7803 Naylor, Los Angeles, CA 90045
Wed - 8:00pm	Hopkins, Ben & Sienna & Marty & Debbie Hudson	310.576.0481 (Hopkins) bhopkins@ea.com 2622 W. 145th St, Gardena, CA 90249
Wed - 7:00pm	Masten, Mike & Love, Jared	310.855.4171 (Mike) mike.masten@gmail.com Various locations
Wed - 7:00pm	Albrights & Hostenstein	310.546.5479 (Russ Albright) consultrga@verizon.net 922 10th St, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266
Wed. - 7:00pm	Buttles, Steve & Linda	310.306.5282 lindabuttles2002@yahoo.com 12620 Rosy Circle, Los Angeles, CA 90066
Thu - 10:00am	Hilltop , Ladies - Marriott & Moreland	310.322.5757 monica@gotohilltop.com 717 E Grand Ave, El Segundo, CA 90245
Thu - 11:00am	Shields, Millie (Women)	310.643.5775 5360 W. 124th Place, Hawthorne, CA 90250
Thu - 12:00pm	Hilltop , Lunch Time Prayer Group	310.322.5757 717 E Grand Ave, El Segundo, CA 90245
Thu -7:00pm	Clark, David & Kerrie	571.236.6704 kclark.home@gmail.com 646 Bungalow Drive El Segundo, CA 90245
Thu - 7:00pm	Ng, John & Vivian	310.541.6717 jcnspecv@gmail.com 28524 Cedarbluff Dr Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275
Thurs - 7:00pm	Full Throttle, Youth Group Jor- dan Watson	310.322-5757 jordan@gotohilltop.com 717 E Grand Ave, El Segundo, CA 90245
TBD	Young Couples Mitchell, Nick & Nataliya	310.864-6818 unlocknick@hotmail.com 9797 National Blvd., #23, LA, CA 90034