

GOD FIRST

— 21 DAYS PRAYER & FASTING

DAY 1

SEEK GOD FIRST

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 6:33

Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, live righteously and he will give you everything you need.

DEVOTION:

Today we choose to seek God first in all things! As we begin a new year and this fast, we are deciding to make God the first thing we do. We are not putting God's will and His word an afterthought; we are making him our FIRST priority. We declare we will seek His Kingdom first and surrender our worries, needs, dreams and desires to Him. Matthew 6:33 says, "But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well." This verse is an invitation to a deeper knowledge of the Lord. As we stir our curiosity and passion for God's Kingdom by intentionally spending the next 21 days pursuing more of Him, He will take care of our needs. By surrendering our anxieties, distractions and desires, we put God in His rightful place on the throne of our hearts. In doing so, we find freedom in His presence and His provision. As we seek God first, we are reminded that our purpose, power and help comes from Him. He is our ultimate source. He is a good father, He loves us and wants to be in a relationship with us! When God is our priority, we can approach all other relationships, obligations and tasks in line with His will for our lives. As we seek God first in all areas, we will see our lives transformed!

REFLECTION:

- + What does it look like to seek God first in your life?
- + What areas of your life compete for your priority?
- + How can you seek a deeper relationship with God during this time of 21 days of prayer and fasting?

PRAYER:

God, today I am deciding to put you first. I surrender every distraction that has taken your place in my life and I repent for the times I have missed the mark. Right now, I choose to surrender and seek you. I thank you that as I seek you first, you are taking care of every detail of my life. I thank you that I can trust in you and find freedom in surrender. Today I choose to make room for your will in my life and that you use me to show your love to the world. Have your way in my life and let your will be done. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen!

DAY 2 SETTING THE TONE

SCRIPTURE: ROMANS 12:11

Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically.

DEVOTION:

As we gathered together on the first Sunday of the year the tone was set for living out our purpose this year. It was declared that 2023 will be the 'Year for me...to be'. While there are many things we could be our main tone for this year is enthusiasm.

Today we will make a decision to be enthusiastic in the midst of 'life', to be enthusiastic in the midst of illness, to be enthusiastic in the midst of uncertain circumstances. Focus on the things of God and "never be lacking in zeal, keep your spiritual fervour in serving the Lord." If we want to make an impact, if we want to see the lost saved, if we want to see multiplication not just addition we need to be enthusiastic.

Be a light on the hill and people will be drawn to our enthusiasm.

REFLECTION:

- + What areas this year are you going to serve God with enthusiasm?
- + What dampens your enthusiasm that this year you will trust God with?
- + Think about how you can draw people to Jesus with your enthusiasm.

PRAYER:

God, this year I declare that I will be more enthusiastic. I declare that I will not let the things of this world get on top of me. Lord help me to overcome the negative situations around me that try to steal my enthusiasm. Help me to overcome the areas in my life where I lack enthusiasm. I declare today I am the head and not the tail, I am above and not beneath in Jesus' name, I pray, Amen!

DAY 3

A LIFESTYLE OF PRAYER

SCRIPTURE: MARK 1:35 // PSALM 19:14

Before daybreak the next morning, Jesus got up and went out to an isolated place to pray.

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

DEVOTION:

Prayer is most effective when it isn't something we do every now and again, but when it's a lifestyle we develop. How do we develop this? Jesus gave us the example, he got up early in the morning to spend time with God. Make a daily appointment with God whether it's first thing in the morning, just after lunch, or later on in the evening – and stick to it. Jesus also had a specific place. Having a designated place to pray helps us remove distractions and lets us focus freely on spending time with God. The word of God is one of the most powerful tools we have to build a dynamic daily prayer life. It brings power, truth and encouragement to our daily prayer time. So find scriptures and pray the word.

REFLECTION:

- + During these 21 days what are some of the scriptures you will be applying to your lifestyle of prayer?
- + How will you follow Jesus' example to develop your lifestyle of prayer?
- + What time suits you better and where would your quiet place be?

PRAYER:

God, I commit this time to you today. Help me stay focused and not be distracted as I pray your word. I thank you that it never returns empty or void. Stir my heart afresh for your word. I pray for your guidance and wisdom. Speak to me today!

Lord teach me to pray: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread, Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever [Matthew 6:9-13].

In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen!

DAY 4

PASSION FOR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 4:4 // PSALM 119: 105 // HEBREWS 4:12

But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

Your word is a lamp to my feet and light to my path.

For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.

DEVOTION:

Jesus said - It is written 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God'. If you are feeling hungry, get into the word. We are not fasting as a new diet trend, we are fasting to see the broken made whole, the sick well. We are fasting to see the Kingdom of God move in miraculous ways in our church, our city and our lives. One of the only ways we will see breakthrough is by standing on the word and declaring the truth. Be equipped for what God is calling you to by knowing his word. A soldier called into battle knows his craft, knows how to wield his weapon and knows his orders. Get into the word and sharpen your weapon for his word is "sharper than any double-edged sword" Hebrews 4:12. If you are struggling start small with a Proverb and a Psalm then build daily and weekly into more in depth reading and study. There are many ways to get access to the Bible, as well as reading you can listen to an audio Bible. There really isn't a reason or excuse why you can't get a passion for God's word or have the time to read it.

REFLECTION:

- + What's your biggest obstacle to reading the word?
- + What things can you do to fall more in love with the word of God?

PRAYER:

God, today reignite my passion for your word. I thank you that I am feasting on your word. Help me to digest it and apply it to my everyday life. Help me to sharpen my sword and teach me to wield my weapon well. I thank you that Your word is a light to guide me in an increasingly dark world. I pray for revelation that will bring freedom to my life. I thank you Jesus is the "bread of life," and that as I come to Him I will never go hungry or thirsty. Thank you that You are meeting all of my needs. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.

DAY 5

DEVELOPING FAITH & TRUST

SCRIPTURE: HEBREWS 11:1

The fundamental fact of existence is that this trust in God, this faith, is the firm foundation under everything that makes life worth living. It's our handle on what we can't see. The act of faith is what distinguished our ancestors, set them above the crowd.

DEVOTION:

Faith is the foundation. The fundamental thing that we build our lives on is faith and our belief in God and His word. The biblical definition of faith requires "trust in", "a commitment to". We are going to need more faith to get to where we are going than where we have been. It's going to take another level of faith for multiplication not just addition. We have to trust God when it looks difficult, outrageous and impossible. An example of this is a trust fall - where you fall backwards and a group of people catch you. You may have faith that they will catch you, even though you can't see them and believe they will not let you hit the ground, but you don't have trust until you fall.

Where God wants to take us we are going to need to fall and trust Him completely. As we seek God first, we continue to develop our faith and trust in Him. Faith is the standard in our relationship with Jesus! We all have to put our hope or trust in something, but where we put our faith matters most. There is always room to grow in our faith and trust in the Lord. When we put our faith in Jesus, we partner with God in believing what we cannot see. As we grow in our faith and trust, we take a moment to remember all that God has done to get us here. Every day is a fresh opportunity to experience God's faithfulness and trust Him more.

REFLECTION:

- + In what areas of your life do you need God to increase your faith?
- + What are practical ways you can develop your faith and trust in God?
- + How has God been faithful in your life?

PRAYER:

God, I thank you for your Son, Jesus. Thank you that, through faith, I am saved. I thank you that I can pray for anything in faith, and I will receive it. I pray that you expand my trust of your power. Help me to not limit the ability of your power by my lack of understanding. Help me this year to walk in crazy faith and trust you for the impossible. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.

DAY 6

GOD FIRST

FAITH OVER FEAR

SCRIPTURE: ISAIAH 41:10 // 1 SAMUEL 17 [ENTIRE CHAPTER]

Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.

DEVOTION:

Contrary to popular belief and definitions, the opposite to fear in Christian life is not courage but faith. When Jesus calmed the sea, He questioned the disciples in the boat, "Why are you so fearful? How is it you have no faith?" Mark 4:39 – 40. Faith makes us confident that God is with us, that He is our God, that He will strengthen us over the stormy situations and giants in our lives. It was David's faith not his courage that landed him in the heroes wall of fame in Hebrews. Next time you are fearful pray for faith not courage.

Because we have the Holy Spirit inside of us, we are not only enabled but empowered to respond to God with prayer. As a church, we believe this is our first response. When we communicate with God, we are allowing Him into our hearts and minds. He's faithful and listens to our prayers. When we continually build up His presence in us, we can see situations through the eyes of faith. This means we can become confident in the face of hardships and adversity.

Being fuelled with the Spirit of God, instead of fear, we are armed with the strength to uplift, encourage, and support one another.

REFLECTION:

- + What winds and waves in your life threaten to drown you or capsize your faith?
- + Encourage someone today that is struggling to overcome fearful situations in their life.

PRAYER:

God, today I pray for the faith to stand against giants in my life. Give me the same confidence that David had when he stood before Goliath. Thank you that it is the Holy Spirit who gives me the strength to see things I face through the eyes of faith and not fear. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen!

DAY 7

WISDOM & DISCERNMENT

SCRIPTURE: JAMES 1:5 // 1 CORINTHIANS 2:14 // GALATIANS 5:22-23

If you need wisdom, ask our generous God and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.

The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

DEVOTION:

If you lack wisdom the Bible says to ask for it, so today we're asking God for more wisdom in our lives. Through intentional prayer and fasting, we seek God first, by asking for an increase in our spiritual discernment. We all have desires, dreams, and wishes. God divinely inspires some and some are our own will. How do we decipher what our will versus God's will is? We discern by leaning into the Holy Spirit and asking for more spiritual discernment. We ask the Holy Spirit to help identify our will and be honest with ourselves (and God) when we struggle to release an outcome to Him. We are created to live life in community. We sharpen our discernment within the council of community. We can build our discernment by considering whether a decision or situation brings us closer to God. Is the outcome creating character in you that is a reflection of Christ? As you open your heart to the will of God and spend time quieting yourself in His presence, He will meet you amid any decision you face. God teaches us to seek, understand and rely on the Spirit of God. We must meditate on scripture and intentionally become familiar with His voice. Today, as we acknowledge God as the ultimate source of wisdom, truth, and light, we pray that our spiritual wisdom and discernment increases.

REFLECTION:

- + Where do you need an increase of spiritual discernment in your life?
- + What decisions or plans are you finding hard to release to the will of God?

PRAYER:

God, you are the source of all wisdom and truth. I thank you for your Word, which I can stand on as I face the situations surrounding me. I thank you that in this time of prayer and fasting, as I seek you first I ask you to sharpen my wisdom and discernment and mature me in my faith and understanding of the Holy Spirit. I pray that as I rely on you, you transform my heart, thoughts and the lives of those around me for your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen!

DAY 8

GOD FIRST

POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 24:49
ROMANS 8:26
1 CORINTHIANS 2:13

And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven.

And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.

When we tell you these things, we do not use words that come from human wisdom. Instead, we speak words given to us by the Spirit, using the Spirit's words to explain spiritual truths.

DEVOTION:

The Holy Spirit is our source of power and guidance in our day-to-day life and is the driving force behind the Christian life. The Holy Spirit is a person we are building relationship with daily. Jesus promises the Holy Spirit as our helper, He is essential. It is also essential that we learn to listen to and follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Jesus promises that we are never alone when He departs from the Earth and sends the Holy Spirit as our teacher, assurance and comforter. There is a supernatural advantage when the power of the Holy Spirit is released in your life because God is with you. Are there any areas of your life that you need help with? Maybe you need help in your marriage, family, or business. Ask the Holy Spirit! Releasing the power of the Holy Spirit in your life is inviting Him to come and make a difference. As we seek God First, we need the guidance and help of the Holy Spirit to lead us.

REFLECTION:

- + What is a specific area in your life that you need the help of the Holy Spirit?
- + In what ways is the Holy Spirit speaking to you?

PRAYER:

God, thank you for sending your Holy Spirit to comfort me in my weaknesses. You give me strength when I cannot take another step. Guide me into all truth and remind me of your ways. I pray You shape and mold me into a reflection of your Son. May you guide my steps, my thoughts, my attitudes and my actions as I partner with you in faith, in obedience and in submission. You are faithful, trustworthy and I praise You that You have ignited the passion of faith in my life again. Pour out your Spirit on me so that I might testify about You to those who need your transforming power in their lives. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DAY 9

HEALING & WHOLENESS

SCRIPTURE:

JEREMIAH 30:17 // PSALM 147:3 // JAMES 5:14 // ISAIAH 53:4-5

"I will give you back your health and heal your wounds," says the Lord.

He heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds.

Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord.

Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

DEVOTION:

God is our healer. In Him, we can find comfort and He will restore our physical, emotional and spiritual health. We all have an area in our life that needs God's healing. During this time of prayer and fasting, we also have the opportunity to intercede and pray on someone else's behalf for healing. Today, whether there is a specific need for healing or you are standing in the gap believing in healing for someone else, we join our faith to seek God our healer. God wants us to be well and has made provision for healing through the Atonement of Jesus. In Isaiah 53, the prophet has a vision of the Messiah, Jesus and His suffering for us, seeing Him bearing sickness, weakness and pain in addition to our sin and judgement. The Hebrew word for 'griefs' is correctly translated 'sicknesses' or 'weaknesses' and the word 'sorrows' is literally 'pains'. The Amplified version of verse 4 reads 'Surely He has borne our griefs (sicknesses, weaknesses and distresses) and verse 5 reads 'With the stripes (that wounded) Him we are healed and made whole'. Jesus took upon Himself our sickness in the same way that He took our sin. Jesus is Jehovah Rapha—the God who heals, the word, rapha, can also mean, "to restore," or "to mend." Jehovah Rapha means "the God who restores," and "the God who fixes broken things." Wholeness is found in Him; He is the source of goodness, comfort, and restoration. In our weakness, we find His strength.

REFLECTION:

- + Who are you standing in the gap for and interceding for?
- + What areas of your life are you believing God for healing?

PRAYER:

God, Today I thank you that you are my healer and that I can stand on the promise of your word. I thank you that You are with me in the midst of my healing. You have never left nor forsaken me and I can find restoration in You. I pray that you expand my understanding of you as a healer. I believe in the miraculous physical, mental and spiritual healing in my life. Today I lift up _____ before You and thank you that You heal their body and restore them to wholeness. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen!

DAY 10

GOD FIRST

STEWARDSHIP & PROVISION

SCRIPTURE: PHILIPPIANS 4:19
MATTHEW 6:25-26
2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-8

And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

DEVOTION:

As we seek God first we acknowledge that God is the source of everything that we have. He is all powerful and generous. The Bible said that God will provide for all of our needs and He has unlimited resources; He is the source. God operates out of abundance! It would be easy to fall into fear or worry about the resources and provisions we need in our lives due to the ever changing economic climate. He teaches us when we fix our eyes on God and His Kingdom, He will provide for us out of his abundance. As we seek God first all these things will be added to us. Matthew 6:33 teaches us to fix our eyes on God and he will provide for us. We believe in being the best steward of our finances and returning 10% in tithe to him. We return our first because God first gave to us. Through our generous giving we open the windows of heaven over our lives.

REFLECTION:

- + How can you be better stewards of the resource God has given you?
- + Where do you need to trust God more to provide?

PRAYER:

God, thank you for being my source and abundance. Today I choose to put You first in my finances. Help me better steward the resource you have placed in my hands. Help me chose to trust you more. Thank you that You are my provider, You are all-powerful and You are my generous Father. Today I choose to trust in your abundance rather than the lack I see. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.

DAY 11

VISION

SCRIPTURE: PROVERBS 29:18 // HABAKKUK 2:2

If people can't see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves; But when they attend to what he reveals, they are most blessed.

Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it.

DEVOTION:

Vision is important as without it we perish! As we seek God first, we will begin to see vision and direction for our own lives. A vision brings your world into focus and chaos into order, enables you to see everything differently, allows you to pay a price now for a future reward and enables you to say yes to what really matters and no to what doesn't. Vision helps us to unite and stay on track in one clear direction. At Citifaith our vision is simple: to bring those far from God to know him. To bring the gospel and hope to the people of Swindon. A home for every generation, nationality and background to believe, belong and become. A church full of the Holy Spirit, believing miracles still happen and empowered by God to see the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

Imagine if during these 21 days everyone in our church got a refreshed vision, a stirring, a prompting and a revelation from God. Imagine how that would change our lives and church forever. As we lean into God over these 21 days allow God to stir your heart for the vision of Citifaith and for the vision of your own life.

REFLECTION:

- + Do you have a vision for your own life?
- + How can you best serve the vision of Citifaith?

PRAYER:

God, I thank you that you bring vision and direction in my life, that as I focus on you, you bring my chaos into order. I thank you that you know the promises and plans you have for my life and Citifaith church. Stir my heart for the vision of Citifaith and help me find my place to serve it best. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.

DAY 12

PASTORS & LEADERS

SCRIPTURE: COLOSSIANS 1:9-11 // DEUTERONOMY 28:8

So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better. We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. May you be filled with joy.

The Lord will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand and He will bless you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

DEVOTION:

The Pastors and Leaders of Citifaith cannot move forward without a vision of where God is taking the church in the next months and years. This is going to require unity, wisdom and provision. Please take time to pray for our Pastors and Leaders as they lead Citifaith forward in 2023. Take time to pray over their ministries, their families and their relationship with God. The enemys strategy will always be to target those in leadership positions. Jesus himself recognised this, as was said in Zechariah 13:7. Our prayers should stand guard over our shepherds. Involvement in ministry can be stressful, particularly for those fully committed to the role. Leaders are human, are not infallible but are faced with higher expectations and additional scrutiny. They often carry the burden of the problems and challenges faced by their people. It's not an easy task. As members of the body of Christ, we are responsible for supporting each other in prayer. If you call Citifaith home you have a responsibility to pray for the Pastors and Leaders of the church.

REFLECTION:

- + Be specific when praying by calling each Pastor and Leader by name.
- + If you feel called to leadership, how will you commit yourself to develop that this year?

PRAYER:

God, today I lift up the Pastors and Leaders of Citifaith Church. I ask you to give them a spirit of wisdom and revelation in their relationship with You. God awaken them in their daily devotion with You and that Your word would speak to them in a new and relevant way. I'm declaring that their prayer life will be renewed with passion, God's presence and a fresh revelation of Jesus. I pray that Citifaith Pastors and Leaders are growing in their knowledge and relationship with You. I pray for God's blessing to be flowing in their lives. God bless that which they put their hands to. Bless their marriage and family. Provide for all of their needs, spiritually, emotionally and practically. Today I pray protection over them and their families that 'no weapon formed against them shall prosper' In Jesus' name, Amen!

DAY 13

THE **NEXT** GENERATION**SCRIPTURE:** LUKE 18:16 // 1 TIMOTHY 4:12

Then Jesus called for the children and said to the disciples, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children".

Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity.

He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless. Even youths will become weak and tired, and young men will fall in exhaustion. But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar on wings like eagles.

DEVOTION:

At Citifaith we champion the next generation. We consider it an honour and privilege to impart the word of God through our children and youth ministries. We believe God has a plan and a purpose for each one of them and we do everything in our power to enable them to reach their potential. We value and appreciate all that our younger generations do to serve the life of Citifaith church. The enemy wants nothing more than to distract our young people from fulfilling the call of God on their life and destroy them. As a church we recognise that the battle around them rages more fiercely than ever, there are so many loud voices speaking and we will speak truth and provide opportunities for our children and young people to discover who God is and who they are in Him. We commit to stand and fight for our children and young people that this is a battle the enemy will lose, that they would love and serve God all the days of their lives fulfilling His purpose.

REFLECTION:

- + Pray specifically for each area of ministry: Little Fishes under 4's / Citikidz Yr1-Yr6 / CitiYth Yr7-Yr 11
- + Pray for the leaders of each department who faithfully serve our children and young people.

PRAYER:

God, today I declare that our children and young people are destined for greatness and that they will live for a cause far greater than themselves. I bind every temptation that the enemy is seeking to destroy their character and lead them away from You. Give them knowledge of the truth of God and spiritual eyes to see so the enemy won't be able to deceive them. God grant them an anointing of power by the Holy Spirit and that their desire for obedience will supersede any other human desire they have. I pray You fill them with the hope of Jesus' resurrection. Protect their minds and hearts from hopelessness and help them cling to Jesus during discouragement and lean on His strength. In Jesus' name Amen!

DAY 14

CONNECT GRPS & COMMUNITY

SCRIPTURE: ACTS 2:42-47

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper) and to prayer.

A deep sense of awe came over them all and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They worshipped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper and shared their meals with great joy and generosity — all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

DEVOTION:

God didn't design us to live alone. He designed community where there is power when we worship together, share a meal and our generosity. Statistically community is on the decline. We are more connected digitally than any moment in history however we are more disconnected than ever. The most healthy version of the church is when we experience only what we can do together on Sundays AND when we experience what can only be experienced in connect groups. Citifaith church is so much bigger than a Sunday morning. In 2023 we are implementing new strategies to build community. We want to see connect groups and community right across our city and the people of Citifaith connected in community. As a church, we must become bigger and smaller at the same time. True transformation is done better in circles not rows because that is God's design.

REFLECTION:

- + What things hinder you from joining a connect group or connecting in community?
- + If you are not connected yet, where this year can you find community?

PRAYER:

God today we thank you for our committed connect groups and those that lead them. We pray that they are places where people can grow spiritually and that true life transformation happens. We pray that you will increase our capacity across our city. We pray that more people at Citifaith will connect and find community. Thank you that as we get bigger we also become smaller. In Jesus Name, Amen!

DAY 15

GOD FIRST

CITIFAITH TEAMS

SCRIPTURE: 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12 // MARK 10:45

The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ.

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.

DEVOTION:

We are called to serve like Jesus did and it is an honour to be a part of the story he is telling throughout history. As we fix our eyes on Jesus even the most ordinary tasks become worship to God! We have incredible people who serve faithfully. Sunday services and church life wouldn't be what they are without them. We serve because Christ first served us. It isn't something we have to do, it's something we get to do, it's an honour and joy to serve. As we serve we are not just serving those around but we are showing God's heart. In 2023 we are implementing new strategies to build our teams. What we have done before won't take us to where we are going. We are beginning to do some things we have never done and we are stepping into a new season where it will require a new focus on teams. We can't fulfil our purpose without an army of people dedicated to the mission of bringing people far from God close to him. If you're too big to serve then you are too small to lead. We believe the greatest leadership is service to others. Every leader is a servant first. From the front door to the pulpit, everyone serves. Every role is different but they are all important and there is a place for you to serve at Citifaith. Be part of one of our incredible teams powered by faithful people serving God and His Kingdom and creating the way for people to encounter Jesus. We can't do this without you!

REFLECTION:

- + What do you consider to be your God given gifts and talents?
- + How can you use your gifts and talents to serve in a Citifaith team?

PRAYER:

God, thank you for all the incredible people who faithfully serve and who have committed their time and talents to make Citifaith the great church it is. Today help me to recognize my gifts and talents You have given me and show me a team I can serve on. I repent for being complacent and being a spectator. Today I choose to follow Jesus' example and serve. I thank you it is an honour and a joy to serve You, Your church and the Kingdom. I thank you we are better together. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.

DAY 16

WHERE MIRACLES HAPPEN

SCRIPTURE: JOHN 14:12-13 // MARK 16-20

I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. You can ask for anything in my name and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!

And the disciples went everywhere and preached and the Lord worked through them, confirming what they said by many miraculous signs.

DEVOTION:

We have faith to believe God can do the impossible. We have seen and will continue to see God do miraculous things in people's lives. He performed miracles, signs and wonders to demonstrate his love and compassion. Jesus healed the sick, raised the dead, cast out demons and walked on water amongst many more. We believe that if He did it then He can do it now. God is the same yesterday, today and forever. As we pray for God to move in our lives where it seems impossible, we ask God to open our eyes to see His power at work. There is power in collective prayer and belief and as a church we stand together and believe with one another that God will move in impossible situations. Through the miracles that take place in our lives we will glorify the name of Jesus and people will be drawn to salvation. Today we stand and believe, expecting God to move in our lives for His glory.

REFLECTION:

- + How can you increase your faith to believe that God will show up miraculously in your life?
- + In what ways have you seen God work miraculously before?
- + Who can you pray for today who needs a miracle and for God to work in an impossible situation?

PRAYER:

God, I thank you for Your love and faithfulness in my life. I pray for you to enlarge my faith for signs, wonders and miracles. Stretch my faith to believe that You can turn any impossible situation around. I declare You are well able! I thank you that if You did it before You can do it again. Renew my heart today and transform me for Your glory. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.

DAY 17

GOD FIRST

NEW CHURCH HOME

SCRIPTURE: ISAIAH 54:2 // NEHEMIAH 2:20

Enlarge your house; build an addition. Spread out your home, and spare no expense!

The God of heaven Himself will help us succeed.

DEVOTION:

Citifaith has been blessed for the past 22 years with an incredible building to call home. We understand the church is more than the building, it's actually it's people and for a while now we have reached capacity and our ability to grow. God wants to bring increase to our numbers, our finances and our building. He has told us to enlarge our house "we are going to need a bigger place; don't underestimate the amount of room you'll need. So Build, Build, Build!" Isaiah 54:2. We believe that God has a new building so that we can better equip, resource and impact our city. Today we want to stand together and pray into our new church home. We know that God is "able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think." Ephesians 3:20 NKJ and "He will supply all of our needs according to his riches in Glory in Christ Jesus". He has the right building, in the right location, in the right time and today we are thanking Him for that. He will enable this to succeed therefore, we will arise and build! We will trust His Word and believe in our God who always keeps His promises.

REFLECTION:

- + Pray for the transition team as God gives them wisdom in finding a new building.
- + How can you partner with us in building the vision for a new home?

PRAYER:

God, I thank you that you have been so faithful to us over the last 22 years. I thank you that You have the perfect building for Citifaith's new home, in the right location and with the right facilities. I thank you that the building will be as unique as Citifaith and that it will enable us to have a greater impact on our city. God give us wisdom and direction with the next stages. I thank you for that supernatural abundant favour and open doors, that you will make it clear and prepare the way for us. Holy Spirit we look to You to lead the way and declare nothing is impossible. I command that God's Kingdom come and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven for our new church home. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.

DAY 18

MISSIONS: LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL

SCRIPTURE: 1 CHRONICLES 16:24 // MATTHEW 25:40 // MATTHEW 24:14

Publish his glory among the godless nations, his wonders to all races and religions.

'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!'

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations and then the end will come.

DEVOTION:

Today we are focusing on missions as we are passionate about showing who Jesus is whether it is in our own city and neighbourhood or across the world. Our local mission field is propelled by Love Swindon, a ministry with a vision to have an even greater impact on our city by partnering with great organisations to make Swindon a better place. It is our privilege and our responsibility to serve our city, our local community and bring hope to the broken. The need is great and the need is all around us.

Our international mission field for well over 15 years has been Thailand and during that time our teams have seen God do incredible things in the lives of broken and hurting people. We are looking to develop our partnerships with other organisations and extend our teams into other nations.

Being part of a team whether local or international is a life changing experience. It is our honour to be able to share the love of God in practical ways and see the power of God change lives.

REFLECTION:

- + Pray for our missionary Becky Hewett who has been living and serving God in Thailand for the past 9yrs.
- + Pray for our friends and ministry partners in Chiang Mai & Maesot, Thailand.
- + Pray for new and exciting partnerships to help serve our local community.
- + Where can you commit to make an impact in your local community?

PRAYER:

God, today I pray for those serving on the mission field globally. I pray Your protection and provision around them and their families. I pray for favour and open doors into unreached people groups. I pray that lives would forever be changed by the gospel as it is preached among the nations. Thank you that lives are restored, healed and saved. God give me a heart for the broken and needy in my local community. Open my eyes to the needs on my doorstep and I ask you to move my heart for what breaks Yours. Help me and Citifaith to have a greater impact in our community and the world. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.

DAY 19

GOD FIRST

SALVATION & SOULS

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 28:19-20 // MATTHEW 4:19

Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: "I am with you always, even to the end of the age".

Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men".

DEVOTION:

At Citifaith our vision is simple: to bring those far from God to know him. The Bible says that Jesus came to find and save the lost. As followers of Christ we are called to spread the gospel's good news leading others to salvation. We are called to testify of God's goodness and share our transformation in Christ with others, as William J Toms said "You may be the only Bible some person ever reads." As we partner with God, we build His kingdom with eternal impact in mind. Jesus said "Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." It's not our job to catch, it's our job to fish. God does the catching all we have to do is fish! Found people find people! As we live authentically for Christ, we invite others to do the same by receiving salvation and experiencing God's grace and love in their own lives. Remember, we are engaged in a spiritual battle (Ephesians 6:12-20), and one of our greatest weapons is prayer. God is in the business of doing the impossible and He can change even the hardest of hearts. So don't give up praying and believing for unsaved friends, family members and work colleagues.

REFLECTION:

- + Write down and pray for those in your life who are lost and far from Christ.
- + How can you share your story and the gospel to your sphere of influence?

PRAYER:

God, thank you for the gift of salvation through your Son, Jesus Christ. I thank you for saving me by grace. I pray you give me boldness to share my story with those around me and that people will find salvation. Today I stand in the gap and pray for _____ that they would come to know you. Give me opportunities to share the Gospel and soften peoples hearts to hear and receive the word. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.

DAY 20

GOD FIRST

OUR CITY SWINDON

SCRIPTURE: JEREMIAH 29:4-7 // 2 CHRONICLES 7:14 // PSALM 65:9-11

This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies, the God of Israel, says to all the captives he has exiled to Babylon from Jerusalem: "Build homes, and plan to stay. Plant gardens, and eat the food they produce. Marry and have children. Then find spouses for them so that you may have many grandchildren. Multiply! Do not dwindle away! And work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare." [because if it prospers, you too will prosper.]

Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land.

"You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain, for so you have ordained it. You drench its furrows and level its ridges; you soften it with showers and bless its crops. You crown the year with your bounty and your carts overflow with abundance."

DEVOTION:

God has called you to this place for His plan, His purpose and for such a time as this. Swindon can often be seen as a transient place, a place on the road to somewhere bigger and better but He has called you while you are here to "Build houses and settle down" Jerimiah 29:5. That simply means while you're here, however long the season, you plan to stay, get planted and give God your all. The visible environment of Swindon may discourage you but "pray to the Lord for it because if it prospers, you too will prosper" [Jerimiah 29:7]. Citifaith Church got it's very name because there was the vision of a City. It was a prophetic declaration and the potential that not only we see but also what God sees. We need to choose to see what He sees for our city. We need to choose to speak life over our city. We are as a church committed to our city. We are hopeful for our city, we love our city, we believe the best for our city and we believe as our city prospers so will we. Today as we humble ourselves before God, we believe He will restore our city with abundance.

REFLECTION:

- + Choose to speak life and not death,
- + God has planted you in Swindon for this season what are you thankful for?

PRAYER:

God, today we lift Swindon before you. We bind every negative word that have been spoken over our City. We choose today to declare what You see: a City that is thriving, prosperous and full of life. Help us to see the positives and potential that lies within Swindon. We pray You raise up strong churches across Swindon and that we can work together for the good of our city and glorify your Name. Give us your humility God and let all barriers, walls, strongholds and divisions that keep us separated from you and one another come down. May you revive our city with new life. May every person, marriage, family, school, and business in our community enjoy the blessings of God. In Jesus' Name, Amen!

DAY 21

YOUR WILL BE DONE

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 6:10 // ROMANS 14:17-19 // JOHN 3:30

May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of rules about food and drink, but is in the realm of the Holy Spirit, filled with righteousness, peace and joy. Serving the Anointed One by walking in these Kingdom realities pleases God and earns the respect of others. So then, make it your top priority to live a life of peace with harmony in your relationships, eagerly seeking to strengthen and encourage one another.

He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.

DEVOTION:

Congratulations on making it to day 21! We hope that the last 20 days as you sought God first have been encouraging, challenging, inspiring and life changing. It's said that it takes on average 21 days to form a habit and we hope that you will continue to lean in to all that God has for you, to set aside time each day to read the bible and pray.

As we conclude our time of Prayer and Fasting, we are asking God for His will to be done in our lives, our church and our city. We need more of God for the days ahead so today we commit to make room in our lives and say 'God less of us, more of You.'

Our desire is to see His will done in your life, our church and our city in 2023. As we keep God first imagine the limitless possibilities, endless opportunities and miraculous ways God will work. Today we pray that God's Kingdom would invade our lives and that His will would be done on earth as it already is in Heaven.

REFLECTION:

- + Look back at the past 20 days – how has God moved in your life and what are you thanking Him for?
- + What areas would you still like to see His will done in your life?

PRAYER:

God, I declare today that your will be done in my life, in Citifaith church and in Swindon. I pray I continue to seek you first in every aspect and area of my life and as I do, I would grow in my knowledge and wisdom of you. I pray You bend my desires to that of You and I'm asking You to do what is necessary to make Your will prevail in my life. As I commit the rest of 2023 into Your hands I thank you that my best days are ahead and not behind. Help me keep my eyes fixed on You, the author and finisher of my faith. I pray for less of me and more of you. Let Your will be done, In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.