



FIRST Church Of Christ

June 2026 NEWSLETTER



From Bob Russell's Blog

A men's Bible study recently asked me to speak to them on the subject, "If God is sovereign, why bother to pray?" It's a legitimate question. If God's plan ultimately prevails, what's the value of prayer? If our Creator already knows what He's going to do, what benefit is there in bringing our individual requests to Him? What use is prayer if what's going to happen will happen regardless? Jesus instructed His disciples that they should always pray and not give up (Luke 18:1) because:

Prayer is innate

In every heart there is an inborn desire for fellowship with the Creator. That desire was inherent from the beginning. Genesis 4:26 relates "At that time people began to call on the name of the Lord." The Bible begins with prayer, is saturated with prayer, and ends with the prayer, "Come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20).

Evolutionists are hard-pressed to explain man's inclination to worship and pray to God. If an appendage is unnecessary, it's assumed it will disappear with the passing of time. Why do human beings still cry out to God in prayer? It's because, as Solomon said, "God has set eternity in the heart" (Ecclesiastes 3:11). Prayer is fellowship with our Heavenly Father.

Prayer is commanded by God, regardless of how it's answered

The Scripture instructs us to "humble ourselves and pray" (2 Chronicles 7:14), to "go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen" (Matthew 6:5-7), to "pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing" (1 Timothy 2:8), and "...in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Philippians 4:6). We're also commanded to "pray continually" (1 Thessalonians 5:16) and "...pray in the Spirit on all occasions" (Ephesians 6:18).

Even if prayer didn't accomplish a thing, we should pray because our Heavenly Father commands us to do so.

Prayer prepares us to receive God's will

King David fasted and prayed for a week that his infant son would live. When he learned his child didn't make it, he washed, changed his clothes, went into the house of the Lord and worshiped. Then he went to his own house and ate. David concluded there was nothing more he could do and graciously accepted his son's death as God's will. David's intense prayer prepared

him to receive God's will.

Paul prayed three times that his thorn in the flesh would be removed, but God explained his handicap was a permanent gift to keep him from becoming conceited. Paul concluded that God's grace was sufficient to sustain him through trials.

When we, like Jesus, pray, "Not my will but yours be done," our surrendered spirit helps prepare us to receive a disappointing "no" in answer to our prayers. But even when God answers exactly as requested, prayer helps us receive His blessings with a sense of gratitude, not a spirit of entitlement.

Our church once had a goal of raising 26 million dollars over a three-year period. That required more than doubling our budget! We prayed for weeks. An astute businessman took me aside and showed me the numbers — he didn't think it was humanly possible.

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Office Hours:

Monday—Thursday
8:00 AM-5:00 PM

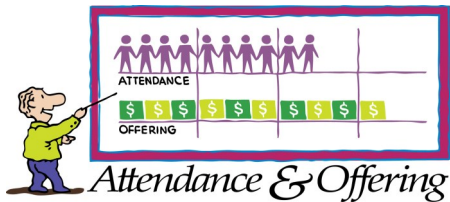
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May 3

Attendance 81/128
 Offering \$5,336.30

May 10

Attendance 48/81
 Offering \$4,299.34

May 17

Attendance 51/109
 Offering \$9,065.45

May 24

Attendance 52/75
 Offering \$2,814.74

Needed for Budget:

\$5,099.21



June Servers

Deaconesses:

Deb Rhodes & Diane Altman

Elder Schedule:

7—Mark Rhodes
 14—Larry Snavelly
 21—Dave Beerbower
 28—Doug Haase

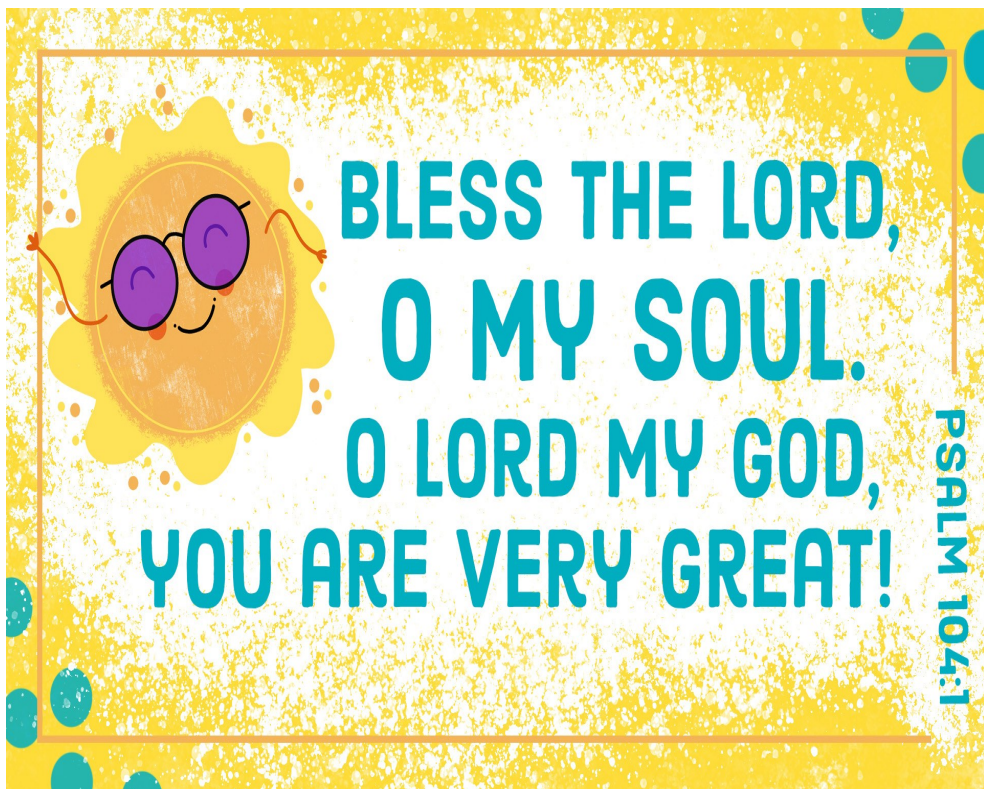


Nursery:

7—SS—Kim Snavelly; 2nd—Kim Snavelly
 14—SS—NEED VOLUNTEER; 2nd—Janet McCarthy & Deb Rhodes
 21—SS—NEED VOLUNTEER; 2nd—Sharon Blinzler
 28—SS—NEED VOLUNTEER; 2nd—NEED VOLUNTEER

Greeters

1st—TBD; 2nd—TBD





- 1 Lee Stemen
- 6 Cheryl Karnes
- 10 Deb Nixon
- 13 Dick Blinzler
- 14 Peyton Von Deylen
- 15 Tatym Beck, Rachele Levya
- 19 Leah Miller
- 23 Raace Haynes, Ruth Ordway
- 24 Jessica Arend, Harmon Hetrick III
- 29 Nathan Grimm



- 6 John & Linda Hill (56)
- 7 Ronnie & Mary Pinckley (63)
- 12 Brian & Ashley Nelson (5)
- 19 Garry & Sandy Oberlin
- 22 Cody & Ashley Grimm (7)
- 26 Adam & Kortney Subasic
- 27 Greg & Traci Hartman (34)
- 29 Ryan & Amanda Beck (15)



The church family extends her sympathy to Bill Brewer and family on the death of his wife, Sharon. Also to Dan & Margie Olds and family on the passing of Dan's father, Charles Olds.



Love All

Our Service Personnel: Zachary Perkins (IN), Jordan Thornburg (NE), Katie Sparks (PA). **Cancer:** Gwen Acker-Dickinson, Nathan Bailey, Marcia Baumgartner, Tim Bight, Brent, Mark & Carrie Campo, Andrew Dell, Adam Farger, Carrie H, Brienne Hetrick, Molly Johnston, Kent, Chuck Lees, Tim McKown, Lora Manon, Chloe Merrilet, Crystal Miller, Ruth Ordway, Mary Pinckley, Elaine Purdue, Mike Roose, Sue Secoy, Terry Shinaberry, Stu Short, Annette Snavely, Holly Sprow, Kortney Subasic, Amy Tobin, Shelby Vanderpool, Kathy Walton, Drew Wayman; **Other Concerns:** Jennifer Mavis, Trevor Bailey, Neighborhood, Danielle Strouse, Brenda Ridgway, Cindy Wolf, Zach Swisher, Cheryl Towers, Kim Beek, Joshua Taylor, children's ministry, Danny Hull, Cindy Webber, Kevin Ayre, Kathy Moog, Marty, John Fry, Jackson Wolph, Fran Mavis, Nathan Ray, Nehemiah Haase, Randy Fisher, Jason Gregg, Martha Hardy, Ellen Walker, Ronnie Pinckley, Tommy Morr, Pat Northcut, Nikki Taylor, Tim Gordon. Shawn Gambler, Kerry Phillips, Tootie Bowman, Maverick Fields, Greg Rhodes, Garry Oberlin, Sharon Beerbower, Deb Taylor, Mary Barton, Dave Beerbower, Nancy Myers, Merrick House; **Shut Ins: Fountain Park:** Chuck & Madelon Salisbury; **Hillside:** Charlene Gambler; **Home:** Charlene Dean, Linda Lewis, Norma Lorentz, Garry Oberlin, Leona Puff, Nola Girardot.



Upcoming EVENTS

Vacation Bible
School
5/31-6/4
6:15-8:15 PM

Fathers Day
6/21/1016

Lunch Bunch
6/23/2026
11:45 AM @
Edon Dairy Treat



Follow us on Facebook

Website:

www.bryanfcc.org

YouTube—[bryanfcc](https://www.youtube.com/bryanfcc)

SENIORS MINISTRY

We will do Lunch Bunch on Tuesday, 6/23 at 11:45 AM at Edon Dairy Treat. Please meet there.

Answers VBS
KEEPERS OF THE KINGDOM
Standing Strong in Today's Battle for Truth

!Student Registration Is Here!

**Hear Ye
Parents/Caregivers**

- Ages 3-12
- Toilet Trained
- Turn 3 by September 2025
- Register under what grade student had completed this year





June

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 10:00 Ladies Bible Study	4	5	6
7 Graduation Sunday 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	8	9	10 10:00 Ladies Bible Study	11	12	13
14 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship 	15	16	17 10:00 Ladies Bible Study	18	19	20
21 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship 	22	23 11:45 Lunch Bunch @ Edon Dairy Treat	24 10:00 Ladies Bible Study	25	26	27
28 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	29	30				

We prayed harder. When the total pledge was announced at more than 31 million, our first reaction was not, “*We ran a flawless campaign!*” No, our first reaction was to fall on our knees and thank God that He did immeasurably more than we could ask or imagine. Prayer prepares us to receive God’s will with humility and gratitude.

Prayer changes things

Prayer is effective because God often answers prayer affirmatively. God is certainly Ruler over all, but that does not mean that every detail of life is pre-programmed. English minister Leslie Weatherhead once pointed out there were three areas to God’s will: His intended will (at creation), His permissive will (after Adam’s fall), and God’s ultimate will (when perfection is restored in heaven). God’s ultimate will is always accomplished, but in this present era the Lord grants us considerable freedom. Our choices have consequences, and our prayers can temporarily alter the course of our lives.

The Lord informed King Hezekiah he was going to die. God said, “*Set your house in order because you will not recover.*” Hezekiah wept, turned his face to the wall, and prayed to the Lord for mercy. After his prayer, the word of the Lord came to Hezekiah: “*I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will heal you...I will add fifteen years to your life.*” Hezekiah’s prayer didn’t just prepare him to receive what God was going to do anyway. His prayer dramatically altered his future!

Prayer changes things! Why else would Jesus say, “*If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you*” ([John 15:7](#))?

Over twenty years ago, distraught parents brought their five-year-old son to the elders of our church. They explained their child was having multiple, terrifying seizures every day and physicians could not determine the source. The parents asked the church elders to anoint with oil and pray for the boy because [James 5:14-15](#) promises, “*Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well.*”

We each prayed for the child, and his seizures stopped immediately. He has not had another to this day. Admittedly, there were other times we followed that procedure and did not experience such positive results. But on that occasion, we witnessed God answer prayer immediately and dramatically.

Five years ago, my grandson Charlie was deathly ill with COVID. He was in I.C.U. in a Nashville hospital and intubated for 77 days. For over two months, Charlie was on a ventilator, an ECMO machine, and a dialysis machine. One doctor told me, “*We are down to divine intervention.*” Our family prayed. Thousands of Christian people across the country heard about Charlie and prayed. A.J. Lall, an Asian minister, told me, “*We were fasting and praying for Charlie in India.*”

God heard our cry and graciously answered our prayer. Charlie recovered and today is 100% well and serving on staff at New Day Church in Port Charlotte, Florida. We know that wasn’t a coincidence — it was providence. God answered prayer dramatically, and we are all eternally grateful, especially his wife and now three children. Why pray? Because prayer changes things. Sometimes it changes our hearts to receive what God already plans to do. Sometimes God grants our plea as requested and circumstances are changed. There is a well-known poem that expresses my sentiments well:

*I’ve dreamed many dreams
that never came true.
I’ve seen them vanish at dawn.
But I’ve realized enough of my dreams
to make me want to dream on.
I’ve prayed many prayers
and no answer came,
though I waited patient and long.
But God has answered enough of my prayers
to keep me praying on.
I’ve drained the cup of disappointment and pain.
I’ve gone many a day without a song.
But I have sipped enough nectar from the roses of life
to make me want to live on.*



— author unknown

“*This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.*” ([1 John 5:14](#))

Destined to Win, Larry

It was a Wednesday,
A few weeks before Christmas in 2024.
And I was drowning quietly.
Smiling when I had to,
Breaking where no one could see,
Carrying pain too heavy for words.

Life felt dark then—
Like I was standing in the middle of a storm
With no way out,
Praying for something,
Anything,
To remind me I was still there.

Right across the street from my house
Stood First Church of Christ.
I had passed it so many times,
But that night, something pulled me there.
Maybe it was God.
Maybe it was desperation.
Maybe they were the same thing.

I walked through those doors nervous,
Unsure if I belonged,
Unsure if anyone would notice me at all.
At the front office sat a woman
With kindness in her voice
And peace in her presence.

I asked her if there was a Wednesday night class,
And she smiled and told me yes,
Gave me the time,
And somehow made me feel welcome
Before I had even stayed.

She spoke to me with such simple grace,
But sometimes it only takes a few words
To pull someone back from the edge.

She saved my life like that—
Not with some grand moment,
But with kindness,
With warmth,
With the kind of love people carry
When God is living in them.

She taught me lessons
I didn't even realize I needed—
About faith,
About healing,
About choosing peace,
And learning that broken seasons
Do not mean a broken life.

I walked downstairs to the kitchen
Where food was being prepared,
And that's where I met him.
A man half-bald,
Wearing a long-sleeved red Ohio State shirt,
Who looked at me and simply asked,
"How are you?"

Such a small question
But when you've been hurting long enough,
Even being asked feels like hope.

I didn't tell him everything,
Not all the pain,
Not all the darkness,
But in that moment,
I knew I had found a place
Where people truly cared.

That night changed me.
Not because everything was suddenly fixed,
But because for the first time in a long time,
I felt seen.

So I kept going back.
Week after week.
Prayer after prayer.
Little by little,
God met me there.

The people became family.
They loved me when I forgot how.
They stood beside me
When I thought I had to stand alone.

They reminded me that healing was possible,
That faith could still grow
Even in broken soil.

And in February,
I stepped into those baptism waters
With tears in my eyes
And peace in my soul.

I left the old pain there.
I left the fear there,
I left the person I used to be there.

And I came up new.

People say church is just a place.
But they're wrong.

Because that church saved my life.
It gave me hope when I had none,
Faith when I was empty,
And light when all I could see was darkness.

Across the street from my house
Was never just a church.
It was where God found me
When I thought I was too far gone.

---Jasmine Harrison