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PRAYER GUIDE - April 2013

- 01 - Since Easter came in early spring this year, today, April Fool's Day is the only "holiday" this month. Maybe we should not be so quick to celebrate this day because Paul wrote to the Romans, "Although they (godless men) claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles", Romans 1:22. Author of Our Faith, may we put aside the foolishness of godless men and put our faith and trust in you, the concentration of wisdom and grace.
- 02 - We are writing this "Prayer Guide" in early March because we will be spending most of this month away from home in Florida. The main attraction there (besides warmer weather) is that we have two granddaughters playing in a college softball tournament in Clermont, Florida during their Spring Break. Will you join us in praise and thanksgiving for two beautiful, bright, talented, and precious young ladies? One is playing for Hope College in Michigan and the other is playing for SUNY at Geneseo in New York. They are cousins and the children of our two sons thus bearing the last name of Phillips (so we may be slightly prejudiced) and their teams have one game against each other which makes "cheering" a slight problem.
- 03 - I have been cleaning out my old files and came across the first "Prayer Guide" in March 2004. That means (if my math is correct) that we are starting our ninth year initiating this monthly epistle for FCFI. Thank you to each one as you have joined many others in faithfully

approaching the throne of heaven with our prayers and thank you for your many notes of encouragement. Though we don't have many specific answers to our prayers we have volumes of evidence that our God is faithful in hearing and responding to those prayers. Thank you, Heavenly Father, for the privilege and opportunity which allows us to communicate with you and thank you for all the answered prayer and for answers that are still forthcoming. You are an awesome God.

- 04 - In his book "A Brief History of Time", Steven Hawkins promises that science will eventually give us "a complete understanding of ... existence". I find it interesting that we already have a complete understanding of existence in a book called the "Bible". But, Mr. Hawkins and many others want desperately to prove that science, not God, is the ultimate answer for our existence. Let us pray today for Mr. Hawkins and his cohorts who will do cartwheels, flips, almost anything to avoid the possibility that there is a God. Raboni, these men and women are deluded by their own personal brilliance. Shine your light of truth on them, break down their stubbornness and surround them with your love through your Holy Spirit.
- 05 - I don't know about the rest of the country but here in Western New York it is time (weather permitting) to start field work. It is still early for corn but spring grains and hay crop seedings can be started any time now. Emmanuel, millions of dollars worth of crop seeds will be placed in the ground across North America during the spring planting season. We ask that you bless each seed so that it will multiply 30, 60, or even 100 times. We can place the seed in the ground but only you can germinate, water, and grow the seed to its full potential. Thank you for the privilege of planting your seed,
- 06 - "Anyone who says he is walking in the light of Christ but dislikes his fellow man is still in darkness", 1 John 1:9. Why? "Because God so loved the world that He gave his only son ..." John 3:16. It is easy to forget that God loves all of us, sinner and saint alike. He even tells us in Matthew 5:44, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you". Jesus, this is a command that I find hard to follow. It is hard to love your enemies. Can I just settle for praying for them? I know that is not enough. So, come Holy Spirit. Change me so that I can be all that I am called to be.
- 07 - "I can do everything God asks me to with the help of Christ who gives me the strength and power", Philippians 4:13. I love Paul's "can do" attitude. But, I am afraid I am not there yet. How about you? Master, I am glad that you are not done with me yet. I want to be like Paul and you. Do with me what needs to be done.

- 08 - Are you busy getting your tax information together? We have just one more week to get our tax information to the IRS. Do you grumble because so much of what we earn seems to go to our governments? Jesus said, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and give to God what is God's", Matthew 22:21. Author of Our Faith, we pray that our business leaders, accountants, and tax payers are diligent and honest with tax reporting. We pray that those at IRS and state auditors are fair and honest as well. And, we pray that our leaders, those who decide where and how to spend that tax money, will be frugal and wise and bring honor to you both in thought and deed.
- 09 - The Great Bend Farm and Ranch Expo in Great Bend, Kansas begins tomorrow. Dennis Schlagel is the point man for the FCFI exhibit there. We pray that enough rain will fall on this state where draught has been on farmers' minds for way too long now and we pray that Dennis and his assistants can provide many with the Living Water of Jesus Christ to those who hunger and thirst for Him. Thank you, Jesus, for filling the needs of many at this Expo.
- 10 - "I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will last", John 15:16. Jesus does two things here: He chooses you and me and He appoints you and me and He tells us to do two things; to go and to bear fruit. Thank you, Lord, for giving us our "marching orders". But, we still need a little help. Thank you for your Holy Spirit as He guides us on our fruit bearing adventures.
- 11 - "Every branch that does not bear fruit, He prunes so that it will be even more fruitful", John 15:2. It is amazing to me that a grape vine (we live in a grape growing area) needs to be pruned every year to be most productive, Did God mess up when He designed the grape plant? I don't think so because the grape vine is like you and me. We need to be pruned continually to be most productive. True Vine, don't put away your pruning tools. While we may not like it, we need pruning. Ouch! Thank you.
- 12 - One of our Prayer Warrior's writes, "I pray for you every Monday. We saw your booth at the farm show. My brother has joined FCFI as a new Christian. Pray for my husband ... a good man but not a believer". DM writes, "Pray for my grandson's rehab for drugs and his new life walking with Jesus. He would like to counsel others ...". Wonderful Counselor, hear the pleas of these folks and hear our prayers as we join with them in petition. Thank you for the prayers of many faithful folks for the FCFI people and our ministries. You, Faithful One, are our strength and our hope.

- 13 - I have been remiss in not praying more often for our service men and women scattered around the world and for not praying more frequently for our returning service men and women who struggle with physical and emotional problems. Alpha and Omega, our troops are making and have made major sacrifices so that the rest of us can remain comfortable and free to live our lives as we choose. We thank you for them and pray that whatever the situation they find themselves in, they can rely on you and recognize that you too made a sacrifice for them.
- 14 - "Shout with joy to God all the earth. Sing the glory of His name, make His praise glorious. Say to God how awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies cringe before you. All the earth bows down to you; they sing praise to your name", Psalm 66 1:4. We praise you and thank you, Heavenly Father, for your Word that tells us how to express our feelings about you.
- 15 - Let us pray today for those in the field of education, especially Christian teachers and principals who often feel muzzled because of their faith and/or are required to teach theories, philosophies, or life styles that are contrary to their beliefs. Teacher, you often experienced opposition when you taught and lived out the principles you represent. Be the guiding and steadying hand that our teachers need as they teach our children how to live in a dangerous world.
- 16 - Another group of people who need our prayers and support are those in public information positions. We, the public, need to know what is going on, what our leaders are doing, who is for or against the principles we believe in. As voters we need to have as much pertinent information as possible so that we can make intelligent decisions concerning our community, state, and nation. King of Kings, much of our news today is either sensational, irrelevant, or biased. Restore honesty and integrity to every radio and TV station, newspaper, news magazine, and internet source and give us the discerning spirit we need to separate the wheat from the chaff.
- 17 - Tomorrow The Plains Farm Show starts in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. I am jealous of the folks from Oklahoma because the abbreviation for their state is OK. That abbreviation (why is the word for abbreviation so long?) fit's the FCFI tent also. It is OK to stop at the tent; it is OK to get the five beaded walking stick; it is OK to ask Jesus to cleanse you from your sins and give you eternal life. OK (Our King) fill the show with many carrying walking sticks and fill many hearts with a new found love and appreciation for your gift of forgiveness.

- 18 - "It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name, Most High God and to proclaim your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night", Psalm 92:12. Oh, sing out your praises to the God who lives in Jerusalem, tell the world about His unforgettable deeds", Psalm 8:11. "What a God He is! How perfect in every way! All His promises are true", Psalm 8:30. Precious Lord, we thank you for these words from your Word, the Holy Bible.
- 19 - April 19 and 20, 2013 are the dates for the South Dundee Trade Show in Morrisburg, Ontario, Canada. Wayne Clark will organize and lead the group as they share God's love and forgiveness to fellow Canadians at this event. Thank you, Father, for Wayne and Edith Clark who have poured themselves into serving you and their fellow man. Bless their efforts at this show and usher many into your kingdom.
- 20 - "I have calmed and quieted my soul", Psalm 131:2. If you are like me you have a hard time finding a really quiet time. Even when there are no outside distractions, my mind wants to run in several directions to silence what God wants me to say or hear. Advocate, I want to say, "I have calmed and quieted my soul". I want to hear your voice. May I yield to your Holy Spirit.
- 21 - "Some men came carrying a paralyzed man ... they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat ... right in front of Jesus", Luke 5:18,19. Can you imagine the determination and effort (let alone nerve) to climb up on a roof, make a hole large enough to let a person down through it, and present him to Jesus as He was teaching? Do you have friends like that? Are you a friend like that? Master, this is the ultimate in an act of friendship. I want to be like those friends of the paralytic and I want to bring many others to the feet of Jesus.
- 22 - "Go to the ant, you sluggard ... it has no commander ... yet it stores its provisions in summer ...", Proverbs 6:6-8. I am not sure I want to be viewed as an ant or a sluggard but the lesson given here is a good one. We should always do whatever task is before us to the best of our ability whether we have supervision or not. After all, our efforts should be "unto God". Carpenter, you worked hard with your hands before beginning your public ministry. You, rather than the ant, should always be our example. Lead on.
- 23 - "He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the Kingdom of the Son", Colossians 1:13. One of the hardest concepts to live and explain to others is the fact that when we acknowledge Jesus as our Savior we are saved now, not at some future time when we cease our mortal existence. Thank you, Messiah,

that the salvation you provide is available right now. We are humbled that we are "King's Kids" right now.

- 24 - Have you ever considered that you are like the moon? The moon has no light of its own but reflects the light of the sun. We have no light by ourselves but should reflect the light of the Son. "... let your light so shine before men that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in Heaven", Matthew 5:16. Jesus, this is what I want to do: do good works which will reflect your honor and glory to all who choose to see.
- 25 - "He (Daniel) knelt down ... three times that day and prayed before his God ...", Daniel 6:10. I am afraid Daniel would put us to shame with his three times each day prayers to God and we don't have to fear being thrown into the lion's den. The Resurrection and The Life, we, your people give thanks that we have the privilege and the honor to pray to you where and whenever we choose and as often as we choose (except in school or at football games) without fear of the lion's den or other deadly consequences.
- 26 - "Bless the Lord, Oh my soul, and forget not all His benefits", Psalm 103:2. I would guess that most of us seldom think of God's mercy as a benefit. Yet, I would also guess that if we look back at our past, we will see a huge number of benefits that only our Lord can provide. Here is a little poem taken from 'Our Daily Bread'. "He knoweth best! His will for me is better than my plans. Do not all good and perfect gifts come from my Father's hand?" Thank you, Lord. We need all the reminders we can get.
- 27 - Today is the date for the Festival of Maples in Perth, Ontario, Canada. I have heard it said that much of that famous Vermont Maple Syrup comes from New York, New Hampshire, Quebec and Ontario, Canada. But, regardless of what area it comes from, it still comes from maple trees and it sure tastes good. And no matter where the Festival of Maples is held, FCF wants to be there too, to tell folks the sweetest story there is. Master, help our FCF workers to show festival goers how to tap into the eternal life giving grace that you freely give to all mankind.
- 28 - "The body is not one member but many", 1Corinthians 12:14. When I look at modern society, I realize that our community is dependent on a variety of different skills. We can't all be truck drivers or plumbers or doctors or teachers. We are all interdependent, different but essential. So is the body of Christ. We must recognize the variety of skills and inputs that help our church function. Praise you, Father, for

assembling such a variety of people who pool their talents to make our church a church.

- 29 - "She (Martha) had a sister called Mary who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word", Luke 10:39. Martha loved Jesus and desperately wanted to serve Him and his followers, so much so, that she became upset when Mary did not help her with meal preparation for Jesus and their other guests. Many of us are like Martha. We want to serve Jesus but we are so into serving that we never take the time or effort to just spend time with Jesus himself. I am suggesting that you take time off right now to clear your mind of distractions and listen for and to Jesus. He wants to talk to each one of us.
- 30 - As we close out this month, let us give thanks for all that has happened in our lives during it. We take so much for granted, even the gift of life. The gift of breath, gravity, rest, food, family and friends, the church, a home, a beautiful sunset, laughter, nice clothing, paved roads, music, sight, smell, touch, the list is endless. Thank you, Lord, for taking care of all the details that are so routine we fail to even think about them.

Share Your Prayer Items with Others

Continue to send in specific prayer requests either to the FCFI office or to Clark Phillips (email: CSPcows@aol.com) by the 13th or 14th of the month so they can be included in the Prayer Guide for the following month.

Urgent Prayer Requests

Can be placed on the website prayer list page at any time, forward urgent, immediate attention prayer needs to Dennis Schlagel (email: fellowship@fcfi.org) at the FCFI office.

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