

PRAYING

BIG

PRAYERS

21 DAYS OF PRAYER



SE
CHRISTIAN

INTRO

This next month we begin an important conversation about our vision for the next mission season of connecting people to Jesus and one another at Southeast Christian Church. Where do we start? With 21 days of praying together. Patterned on Jesus' prayer in John 17, we will lay a foundation of prayer before forging ahead. We will pray for ourselves, our church body, and our leadership. We will praise God for who He is, thank Jesus for what He has done, and seek guidance from the Holy Spirit as we "listen for the wind."

As you get ready to join us on the journey, on the following page there are three tools we want to use to guide you. Remember, prayer is just talking to God, and He isn't expecting fancy words or perfection. God wants our real, honest selves to just talk to Him.

Our heart as a church is not to presume on the past work for our future work at Southeast. We want to raise the sails and catch the wind of the Holy Spirit as we prepare for the mission ahead!



INSTRUCTIONS

Here are some action steps that might help you get going each day.

Pause & Reflect - Find a way to pause whatever is happening so you can spend the next few minutes focused on the day's prayer focus. This might mean you change the station or turn off the music. It might mean stepping into a quiet room or going for a walk outside. Whatever it takes for you to pause the busy life around you, go for it. Take a deep breath and pause.

Read - Sometimes when we don't have a clue what to say to God, it helps to have a Scripture to prompt our words. Each day we have provided a verse and a small thought for you to pray. Take a moment to read them, and then put them in your own words when you pray.

Speak - Finally, when you're ready, speak your prayer out loud. There is power when we move beyond the thoughts in our heads and use our mouths for the glory of the Lord. This might be uncomfortable at first, but the more we speak out loud, it just becomes our new norm for prayer. Remember what we said at the start—prayer is just talking to God and He loves to hear His children speak.



DAY 1

Day 1 - Prayer Moves the Kingdom Forward

Pause & Reflect: The question we want to start with today is: what place does prayer have in your life as you start this journey? Is it a meal-time ritual or does it only happen when you need God most? Wherever you are in your prayer journey, there is an example we can follow to grow our prayer life. His name is Jesus. He believed prayer moved the Kingdom of God forward, and lived out His prayer life with that urgency. As we go through this journey, we will follow His example as recorded in John 17, which is Jesus' prayer during His final moments before the cross. For the next 21 days, we want to get bold with our prayers. We want to see God move His Kingdom forward through our church. The hour has come; will you join us in prayer for this journey?

Read Hebrews 5:7

“While Jesus was here on earth, he offered prayers and pleadings, with a loud cry and tears, to the one who could rescue him from death. And God heard his prayers because of his deep reverence for God.”
(NLT)

Speak a prayer that God would transform your prayer life over the next 21 days to look more like Jesus' — with desperation and honesty.



DAY 2

Day 2 - God Saved Us!

Pause & Reflect: God saw our mess and our problems, and He brought rescue to our lives through Jesus Christ. Then, if that wasn't enough, Jesus empowers transformation in us by giving us the guidance of the Holy Spirit - God's very Presence - to live in us. Jesus started His prayer by saying thank you to God, and that is where we want to start today.

Read John 17:1

“After saying all these things, Jesus looked up to heaven and said, ‘Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son so he can give glory back to you.’” (NLT)

Speak a prayer of thanksgiving today to God for sending Jesus to save us, and for allowing the same Spirit who lived in Jesus to live in us every day.



DAY 3

Day 3 - Give God Glory with Our Life

Pause & Reflect: Jesus lived His life in public and private all for God. The second half of His prayer in John 17:1 got right to the point. After thanking God, He remained on a mission to give God glory. How much of our life right now is dedicated to giving God glory? During this journey through prayer, we can follow the example of Jesus to move more of our lives—public and private—to glorify God.

Read John 17:1

“After saying all these things, Jesus looked up to heaven and said, ‘Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son so he can give glory back to you.’” (NLT)

Speak an honest prayer today that our lives—in public and in private, in work and worship—glorify God, especially as we approach this new season for our church.



DAY 4

Day 4 - One Authority Given by One God

Pause & Reflect: We live in a time where there are so many views on things eternal. As a church, the only eternal authority we can stand on is one true God. He is the Creator of the universe, the Mighty One, the King of Kings, and the Father. Jesus was the radiance of God's Glory, the exact representation of His being (Hebrews 1:3). Jesus was sent by the one true God and is empowered by His authority. Our church is led by that authority in Jesus, and our confidence rests in that truth.

Read John 17:2-3

“For you have given him authority over everyone. He gives eternal life to each one you have given him. And this is the way to have eternal life—to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth.” (NLT)

Speak a prayer for our church today that we will continue to stay strong the coming year and stand only on the authority of Jesus as given by the one true God.



DAY 5

Day 5 - Show Us the Work!

Pause & Reflect: Every night when I come home, a simple conversation happens with my kids, “What homework do you have to do?” Maybe yours starts every morning at your job as the work for the day gets laid out. Our “work” happens every day and can come from any direction—a boss, a teacher, or a parent. Have you ever paused to consider what is God’s work for His church? Jesus knew the answer was to get it straight from the authority of God. Have you asked God lately what our work should be about? Our church wants to go after the work God has for us in this next season and will need Him to do it!

Read John 17:4

“I brought glory to you here on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.” (NLT)

Speak a prayer for our church that just as Jesus Christ finished the work that God gave Him to do, God would show us the work He has for our church and allow us to do it.



DAY 6

Day 6 - Shining our Light

Pause & Reflect: At home, we have this screensaver for our TV that shows different images from space, and one of them always amazes me. It is a satellite view of the earth at night. On it, you can see thousands of tiny lights that make up the countries on display. It is crazy at that distance all of our different kinds of lights reveal the places we live in. The church was described as a city on a hill with a light that cannot be hidden (Matthew 5:14), and when we shine our light we reveal Jesus to a world that needs Him. Jesus prayed to reveal God to those around Him, and we want to do the same.

Read John 17:6

“I have revealed you to the ones you gave me from this world. They were always yours. You gave them to me, and they have kept your word.” (NLT)

Speak a prayer for our church that we will be a shining light that reveals God to our city.



DAY 7

Day 7 - Put People on Our Path

Pause & Reflect: Jesus walked everywhere while He was doing life on earth. Those walks took Him to markets, houses, fishing expeditions, and people. Jesus trusted God to put people on His path and God answered. God put fishermen, tax collectors, women no one else would speak to, lepers, and teachers of the law before Jesus. He met them and everything changed. Have you ever considered God has a desire to put people on our path who need the love of Jesus? What if a bold prayer today led you to look more like Jesus by looking for people on your path?

Read John 17:6

“I have revealed you to the ones you gave me from this world. They were always yours. You gave them to me, and they have kept your word.” (NLT)

Speak a prayer for our church that God would put people into our path, stir us up to invest in their lives, and reveal Himself to them, so He can transform their lives with His love.



DAY 8

Day 8 - Led by His Word

Pause & Reflect: What is leading you right now? Maybe right now Waze, Siri or Google is speaking directions to your next destination. Maybe you're being led by the words of an instruction manual trying to assemble that baby crib the furniture store employee said would be easy to build. (We know it's not!) Some of you are being led by words from a friend as you try to cope with whatever trouble has come your way. There are lots of words leading our lives, both in the simple and important parts.

For Jesus, there was only one message and one place for His Word—God. We want to be a church that is obedient and led by God's Word. What role does God's Word have in leading you today?

Read John 17:8

“For I have passed on to them the message you gave me. They accepted it and know that I came from you, and they believe you sent me.” (NLT)

Speak a prayer for our church and the church leadership to accept, believe, and be obedient to the Word of God.



DAY 9

Day 9 - We Belong to God

Pause & Reflect: Who do you belong to? It seems like an odd question to ask, but it might just be one of the most important in this prayer journey. We identify ourselves so many different ways—by family, by jobs, even by our interests. Who you belong to will say a lot about your full identity. Once in a toy store, I made that crucial error every parent dreads: I lost my kid. In a panic, we searched the store until we heard someone say, “Who does she belong to?” That moment led us and our daughter from panic to joy when she knew she belonged to us! Our ultimate identity lies in who we belong to, God. We are His children, and Jesus prayed about this truth. What mindsets need to change today knowing you are a child of God and belong to Him?

Read John 17:9

“My prayer is not for the world, but for those you have given me, because they belong to you.” (NLT)

Speak a prayer today getting personal with God about your belonging to Him. Confess what identities you need to drop so you can be identified as a child of God fully.



DAY 10

Day 10 - Protect Us from the Enemy

Pause & Reflect: Did you know there is an unseen battle going on right now? A battle that has two clear sides—good versus evil. Jesus spoke a little about this unseen battle when said the thief comes to kill steal and destroy, but He came to give you life to the full (John 10:10). God battles on our behalf with a full legion at His command. Every day we can wage war with God by praying against that enemy and his thievery ways. Take a look around—what is the thief taking that needs to be stopped? What would today look like if you considered your prayer as a battle cry for yourself or others? Our staff fights these battles Sunday to Sunday, and right now you can become their armor bearers by praying for protection from the enemy.

Read John 17:11

“Now I am departing from the world; they are staying in this world, but I am coming to you. Holy Father, you have given me your name; now protect them by the power of your name so that they will be united just as we are.” (NLT)

Speak a prayer boldly today for God to protect us all—especially the church staff—from the traps of the enemy, by the power of His Son Jesus.



DAY 11

Day 11 - Experiencing Full Joy

Pause & Reflect: Did you know that Jesus prayed for you to experience full joy today? Joy is so much stronger than a temporal happiness we seek so often. Galatians 5:22 lets us know that unlike happiness, joy comes as fruit or work of the Holy Spirit in us. Joy is a sustained triumph and Godly perspective that is greater than any one high or low we have in life. Jesus had joy and wanted to share that with all who followed Him. Where do you need to experience joy? Do you believe it's possible even with your current circumstances?

Read John 17:13

“Now I am coming to you. I told them many things while I was with them in this world so they would be filled with my joy.” (NLT)

Speak a prayer boldly today for God to allow you to experience the full measure of joy Jesus prayed for in John 17. Don't hold back on any of the challenges or obstacles that seem to crowd out His joy from you.



DAY 12

Day 12 - Responding to Hate with Love

Pause & Reflect: Hate is a powerful word. I remember using it for the first time as a young boy against my sister saying “I hate you!” It was the first time in our sibling battles that I saw a dramatic change in her against me. I knew the word carried weight. Today, hate has become a mantra for so many in their response to opposing viewpoints, race, or disagreement. Jesus called this out in this prayer to let us know there will be strong opposition: the world will hate us. So what will be our response be when we experience hate? What would it look like to respond out of the love Jesus modeled for us?

Read John 17:14

“I have given them your word. And the world hates them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world.” (NLT)

Speak a prayer for our church family that when the world opposes us or rejects the Gospel message, that we will respond by showing love and kindness.



DAY 13

Day 13 - Opposing the Evil One

Pause & Reflect: All evil has a leader. Every enemy has a general. Jesus got ultra-specific again about the forces at work against us in His prayer by calling out the “evil one.” Jesus knew something we didn’t: there is an agenda. Ephesians 6:12 says, “For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and evil spirits in the heavenly places.” (NLT)

Today, would you consider the agenda of the leader of evil? As we enter a new season ready to go after our mission with the full force of the church, our leadership needs your prayers to keep them safe from his tactics and agendas.

Read John 17:15

“I’m not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one.” (NLT)

Speak a prayer boldly on behalf of our church’s leadership that God would keep them safe from the evil one’s agenda and tactics.



DAY 14

Day 14 - An Eternal Perspective

Pause & Reflect: Have you ever been somewhere and thought to yourself, “I don’t belong here.” Once, when going to the parking lot to get in my car, I hopped in what I thought was our vehicle and started unpacking everything. When I went to put my key in the ignition, I realized it wasn’t my van! I didn’t belong there.

It is easy to get comfortable in this life at times, thinking this is it for us. It may look like our home, but when we get an eternal perspective, we realize that just like Jesus said, we don’t belong to this world. How can you change your perspective today to be eternal?

Read John 17:16

“They do not belong to this world any more than I do.” (NLT)

Speak a prayer asking God to remind us that we are not of this world; we have an eternal home in Heaven with Him.



DAY 15

Day 15 - Set Apart

Pause & Reflect: Sometimes photos just say everything that needs to be said. Such is the case of a photo I ran across that was taken from Fenway Park where the Red Sox play baseball. Fenway has all these green chairs, and then there is this one red chair. This oddly placed chair was set apart so fans would know about the historical moment of Ted Williams hitting one of the longest home runs in the stadium's history. This picture also serves as a great visual for God's design on our lives. We were not created to just blend in, but instead to be set apart. Jesus used the word "holy" in His prayer for us, and that word means to be set apart. Where are you blending in instead of allowing God to help you become holy and set apart?

Read John 17:17

"Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth." (NLT)

Speak a prayer for God to make you holy or set apart for His purpose by His truth.



DAY 16

Day 16 - Sent on a Mission

Pause & Reflect: It is easy to see that we have a ton of people attending services every week, challenging our seating capacity at many of our campuses. This leads to an even larger question that needs to be asked of us as a church: what is our sending capacity? Let that sink in for a moment. How many of our people are leaving Sunday, heading into Monday sent on a mission? Jesus raised the bar on following Him through this prayer by reminding us that just as He was sent on a mission, so are we. What would it look like to see an awakening of sending from our church in this next season of our mission? What if our sending capacity matched our seating capacity?

Read John 17:18

“Just as you sent me into the world, I am sending them into the world.” (NLT)

Speak a prayer that we would be more than just passive church members; that we would be sent into the world to show and share the love of Jesus.



DAY 17

Day 17 - Covered by Jesus' Prayers

Pause & Reflect: Think about this—you have been covered in prayer by Jesus today. Jesus took time during prayer to think about all of those who one day would find and follow Him. Being supported in prayer by Jesus means our entire walk is held up by His powerful name. This challenges us in the same way to consider the many believers who are waking up today around the world to follow the message of Christ. Take a moment to consider all of the different situations believers might be waking up today. Some are struggling to believe, some are not able to be public with their faith, and others are showing up at a school desiring to be a light to their friends. Will you join the prayer of Jesus today by praying for all of our brothers and sisters who follow Him?

Read John 17:20

“I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me through their message.” (NLT)

Speak a prayer today for all people who follow Jesus, that they will be strengthened in their faith.



DAY 18

Day 18 - United as One Leadership

Pause & Reflect: Being united as one allows us the ability to move forward effectively. Even in the simple things—like my family trying to choose a place to eat, or coming around a huge group of fans who all support the same team—unity creates something special. When the importance of the work rises, so does the importance of being united as one. Jesus prayed that very prayer so that He and the Father would reflect that ideal. Now, I want you to consider the leadership of our church. God has appointed them to guide us through the Holy Spirit into a new season of ministry and mission. We need them to be one—not just with one another, but with Jesus and the Father—so we can catch the wind of the Holy Spirit. Let’s not forget to pray for our leadership. May they be united as one!

Read John 17:21

“I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you....”
(NLT)

Speak a prayer today that God would allow our church leadership to be one, just as Jesus and the Father are one.



DAY 19

Day 19 - United as One Church

Pause & Reflect: Keeping with our unity thought from yesterday, we want to shift the conversation from leadership to the whole church. Today more than ever, we have to ask the question, what is our church known for in our community? If we were to be gone tomorrow, would we be missed? Jesus described the church as a force of good when He said the gates of hell would not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18). We also know the church is one body made up of many parts (1 Corinthians 12:12-14). What a unique position the church has today. We can come together with different backgrounds and skills and be people united by Jesus for a greater good. Today, our prayer matters for the whole church—to be united as one, so that our community would know the love of Jesus and have His presence felt.

Read John 17:23

“I am in them and you are in me. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me.” (NLT)

Speak a prayer today that God will grant our church complete unity and peace, so that the community we live in will believe in Jesus and know His love.



DAY 20

Day 20 - Being in the Presence of the Father

Pause & Reflect: There is something powerful about being in the presence of someone we feel is important. Once, I was in line at an airport behind a cast member from Saturday Night Live, and I just geeked out. Something about being around someone semi-famous made it special. Whomever you assign importance to in life, from a father to a famous person, being in their presence is an experience that leaves us different. As people who follow Jesus, we can be in the presence of someone of great importance daily: God the Father. Jesus made that possible through the cross, and now what was only possible for a few is available for the many. Being with the Father doesn't require our perfection, just our presence. It is there we can find comfort, security, identity, and so much more. Will you take the time to sit in His presence today?

Read John 17:24

“Father, I want these whom you have given me to be with me where I am. Then they can see all the glory you gave me because you loved me even before the world began!” (NLT)

Speak a prayer today that the Father will let us see His glory and let us feel His presence!



DAY 21

Day 21 - Radical Revelers of His Love

Pause & Reflect: The journey of our church has been happening for more than 60 years. God has used us to impact the city of Louisville, surrounding areas, and the world with the love of Jesus. We have been a church that partners with the local school and the local food pantry. We have been a church that has planted churches all over the country and around the world. We have been a church that sends people on a mission to support God's movement in other countries. We have responded to hurricane-torn areas with sacrificial gifts and sacrificial time. As we get ready for the next 60 years, we want to be the same church that radically reveals God's love for people locally and beyond. On this last day, will you pray as Jesus prayed that we will continue to radically reveal God's love?

Read John 17:26

"I have revealed you to them, and I will continue to do so. Then your love for me will be in them, and I will be in them." (NLT)

Speak a prayer today that we would be a church comprised of radical revelers of God's love all around us for the next 60 years, leaving an impact that could only be possible through the Holy Spirit.

