

Grounded in Prayer

It is unclear how much longer we will have to suspend meeting together in person for Sunday Worship. Even still, as believers and children of God, we can trust in God wholeheartedly. Indeed He remains sovereign, powerful and loving. Let us thank God that as we enter into a time of Family Worship together, that He has given to us His Word. Let us thank God that He has given to us also the means of prayer so that we can communicate with Him and grow deeper in our relationship with Him. Let us join together in worship!

Prayer – Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you that though we may be physically and geographically apart from our church family, we are connected by the salvation, which comes through the grace and love of Jesus Christ. Help us to be humble with open hearts and minds to receive Your truth and to be challenged to continue to live out our faith each day. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Worship through Praise – Please take time to sing songs of praise to the Lord!

Worship through the Word – Opening your Bibles, please read together: **Colossians 4:2-6**.

Pastor Josh's Commentary & Thoughts

The book of Colossians was written by the Apostle Paul to the believers of Colossae likely during a time of imprisonment in Rome. He was imprisoned for his faith in Jesus Christ. Paul writes to the believers in order to encourage them in their faith during uncertain times. He encourages them to be grounded in prayer.

2 Continue steadfastly in prayer, In order to “continue” something, it must first begin. Prayer is an essential part of the Christian's life, and we must make a commitment to be active in prayer. The word “steadfastly” calls believers to be consistent and constant in prayer.

2 being watchful in it with thanksgiving. We must be careful to check the motives of our hearts when we pray. Do we go to God with hearts full of selfish demands and complaints? Being watchful in thanksgiving means that we must always remember the purpose of our lives. We must remember that Jesus has secured our salvation by His grace through His death and resurrection. Remembering Christ and the Gospel leads us to humble thanksgiving, even in the midst of difficult and uncertain situations.

3 At the same time, pray for us This prayer request by Paul is a simple reminder that prayer is not all about ourselves and getting what we want. It is also an awesome means that God has given to us to encourage one another in the faith. We must learn how to pray lovingly for the Pastors and leaders of our church and for those in our congregation.

3-4 that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ...that I make it clear Paul, who is imprisoned for sharing the Gospel message of Jesus Christ gives his prayer request. However, it is not that he would be freed from his trouble and difficult circumstances of imprisonment. Instead, he asks for prayer to open opportunities to share the loving Truth of Jesus Christ even while he is in prison. His purpose is always Christ-centered. We should always be praying for and looking for opportunities to share the Gospel.

5 Walk in wisdom toward outsiders Be mindful that we represent Jesus in all that we say and do. Live as one who makes choices always according to and in line with God's Word. This is especially important in times like these.

6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt...[for] each person. Gracious speech means no judgment, condescension or condemnation. It means truthful yet encouraging and uplifting, pointing those who aren't saved toward Jesus Christ, the only one who can save. Every person in this world needs Jesus!

Reflection Questions (Discuss & Share)

1. Prayer is essential to growing in our faith in Jesus. What does your prayer life look like? Will you make the commitment to set aside time to pray daily? What makes it difficult to pray?
2. When you pray, what is your motive? What would it look like to pray while "being watchful in it with thanksgiving?"
3. Who do you pray for? (Parents, do you pray for your children? Children, do you pray for your parents? Do you pray for your pastors?) How can we commit to praying for others?
4. Has God given you opportunities (co-workers, classmates, friends, family, strangers) to share the Gospel? Think and share about a time you did (or did not) take the opportunity share your faith and the Gospel of Jesus. How can we prepare ourselves for the next opportunity? What are opportunities now during the COVID-19 pandemic?
5. Take some time to reflect and share something from today's passage / family worship that challenged you or encouraged you.

Response Prayer – Take time to reflect and pray to God. Repent if prayer has not been a regular consistent part of your life or if the motives of your prayers tend to be selfish or self-centered. Ask God to renew your heart and set your heart in prayer with thankfulness on Him and what He has done through the power of His death and resurrection. If you feel God's lead, commit yourself to set aside a daily time of prayer to grow in your faith and relationship with Jesus. Take time also to pray for our family, friends, church and all those who are in need.

Closing Prayer – Dear God, in the midst of this COVID-19 pandemic, may CCC shine as your light of love and truth. Please help us to be a church that is filled with thankfulness to you even in the midst of difficulty and uncertainty. Help us to be a church that is grounded in prayer, that we would seek You daily not only to be comforted ourselves but to also comfort and encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ and the world around us. Thank you for giving us prayer as a means to communicate with you and to grow in our understanding of your great love and purpose for our lives. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Worship through Giving – Even during our hiatus from gathering in person, please consider continuing to give to the Lord with hearts of thanksgiving.

- Checks can be sent in the mail to “Chinese Community Church, 500 I Street NW, Washington DC, 20001.”
- CCC can be added to your bill pay service directly from your bank.
- Offering can be sent through PayPal account.