

Start with Stones (SWS)
Together, We're Building a
Strong Foundation

SWS Capital Campaign
December 2024 Prayer Calendar

Each of you take up a stone on your shoulder so
that this may be a sign among you.

Joshua 4:5-6



4159 W. Girard Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19104
www.newriverphilly.org // 215-477-3100
Rev. Eustacia Moffett Marshall, Pastor

Introduction

The Generosity Prayer team is pleased to present to members and friends of New River Presbyterian Church this 2024 “Start with Stones” Prayer Calendar for the month of December.

Steps for Daily Prayer:

Step One: Read the reflection for the month. Be sure to get paper or purchase a notebook or journal to keep your written answers to the question you will be asked to answer regarding the reflection. You will also need a bible and an appointed “quiet time” when you will not be interrupted. We suggest a minimum of 15 minutes per day.

Step Two: Read the scripture indicated for the week, daily. Move through the passage slowly. Try to imagine the place, the sounds, the smells the emotions that are expressed.

Step Three: Keeping in mind the scripture you have read, write down the answer to the reflection questions. These same questions should be asked and answered daily utilizing the same scripture reference for the week. Don’t over analyze your answer, simply list thoughts that come to you.

Step Four: Please end your time of reflection in prayer for yourself, the members and friends of New River Presbyterian Church and other prayer concerns you may have.

Step Five: At the end of the week read the answers to your questions. Can you see any pattern in your answers? What is God saying to you?

December Theme: Generosity Matters

During the month of December we enter the season of Advent. The word “advent” means “change,” “hope,” or “coming.” During Advent, not only do we recognize God’s generosity towards us in sending Jesus into the world, we also look forward with expectant hearts, to the Second Coming of Jesus when *the dwelling of God will be with the dwelling of people and God shall wipe away all tears and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow or crying, neither shall there be any more pain (Revelation 21:1 -4)*. During December our “Start with Stones” prayer calendar will explore the theme, “generosity matters.” This theme is especially relevant, given the season of Advent and the celebration of Christmas.

One of the first scriptures I was asked to memorize as a child was John 3:16, “For God so loved the world, that God gave God’s only begotten Son that whosoever would believe in him, would not perish, but have everlasting life.” As I grow older, this scripture is like a seed that continues to germinate and grow within the soil of my soul. I am absolutely amazed with the generosity of God.

I have shared with many that my maternal grandmother was my spiritual mentor. I saw the generosity of God in the gift of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit bestowed upon her and those who believe. My grandmother’s faith was contagious and attractive. I wanted to believe. I wanted to know this Jesus that brought so much joy and strength to my grandmother and other members of the church who inspired me.

I remember fasting and praying for more intimacy with God when I was about 16 years old. During that time, I experienced something special. One night, as I was in prayer, God spoke to me—not in audible tones, but within my mind. Up until that

moment I viewed God as being outside of me—someone I needed to reach who was beyond me. During prayer that night, God said in essence, “Diane, I am not just outside of you. I am in you.” Though I may have heard it before, the understanding of God within me was fresh and new. It ran over my being like power driven water beads flowing from a hot shower faucet. What a generous God to share God’s self with me and those who believe!

I have discovered in the decades of following Jesus that He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords who holds all things together. He is the glue that keeps us functioning. He is the magnet that makes us whole. He’s the anchor in the storm. He is the hope in the horror. He is the power for our problems and the prescription for our plaques. He is the soothing for our sorrow. He sympathizes and He saves. He comforts and he corrects. His word is secure. His promises are sure. His message is miraculous. His Gospel is good news! reign over us. He created the world and gives us life! We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us!

My response to the God who gives so much, is to give what I can as a sign of gratitude. I give, not because I must, but because I may. It is a privilege to share in the wonderful things God is doing on earth, including bearing witness to Jesus Christ through the vision of New River Presbyterian Church to make your church facilities a sacred space, a community hub of joyful worship, fellowship, education and service for children, seniors and people of every age. The “Start with Stones” Campaign is an opportunity for everyone to pledge and give in response to God’s generosity, and great gift to the world—Jesus Christ! What will you give? What stone will you bear upon your shoulder?

In gratitude,

Reverend Dr. Diane Givens Moffett

Weekly Scripture Readings:

December 1st - Week 1: John 3:1-16

December 8th - Week 2: Colossians 1:1-4

December 15th - Week 3: Luke 1:46b-55

December 22nd Week 4: Luke 1:26-38

December 29th Week 5: Isaiah 9:2-7

Daily Reflection Questions:

What resonates most with you about God's generosity as you read the scripture for today?

How is God's generosity showing up in your life now?

What is your response to God's generosity and how are you sharing God's generosity with others?