

# THE FLAME

Volume 51, Issue 7

July 2021

*Happy Independence Day*



I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE  
TO THE FLAG <sup>OF THE</sup> UNITED STATES  
OF AMERICA, ★ AND TO THE ★  
REPUBLIC FOR WHICH IT STANDS,  
ONE NATION UNDER GOD,  
INDIVISIBLE, WITH LIBERTY  
AND JUSTICE FOR ALL.



Pastor  
Don Griffin

Every year at Annual Conference we remember the lives of the clergy and clergy spouses, active and retired, who have died in the past year. Typically, the memorial service for these great leaders in the church is on the night before the first business session at Annual Conference. Their names are read in a beautiful ceremony. What a blessing to remember them and realize that I now stand where they stood and must provide the leadership that will move the church forward into the future.

Another moment at Annual Conference is equally solemn to me. This is when the names of the churches that have been discontinued are read and voted on by the delegates. The resolution includes the legal property description along with a brief history of the congregation. It is a legal action as well as a time of remembrance for a church that has ceased operation. We recently witnessed the closing of Asbury United Methodist Church in Ponca City. I know it was a heart wrenching decision for those who kept the church open for so many years. I am always thankful for

the ministry of the congregations and how their influence is still felt in the people who found Jesus there and continue to share him with the world. But I feel sadness that is much like that when I hear of the death of a friend. Though they are no longer physically present, their witness continues.

At First Church, we have been blessed by a great cloud of witnesses that has come before those of us who serve today. Many of you can identify important people who were instrumental in you becoming the follower of Jesus you are today. Perhaps it was a youth leader, a Sunday school teacher, a choir director, a saintly man or woman who just helped nurture your faith when it was new. All these great people who come together to perform their part of the ministry that we call the church. Many left financial funds for the church to utilize in the future to help it grow and move forward in the important kingdom work we do. You will be reading of one such gift that is funding a brand-new pavilion that will be constructed soon by the volleyball court. This will become an important tool for us to use to do ministry in the future, left by a saint of our past.

We are here at this point in history and the future of First United Methodist Church has been left in our hands. Often churches close because the community around them dies and this is sad. Even sadder is when the community around the congregation continues to thrive while the church dies. This happens when the church no longer connects with the culture that it exists in. The world around us is always changing and the church must adapt to reach new people for Jesus, or it will become a footnote in history. I believe the best is yet to come for our congrega-

tion but that places much faith in God and in each one of you. Are you willing to do your part for the kingdom of God and for First United Methodist Church?

We have come through a challenging time with Covid, but now we must come together for the future of ministry as a congregation. We are going to be blessed with a new pavilion to use for God's glory, but how are we going to use it? We have an open and safe sanctuary to use to worship God, but how often will we choose to be present? We will have book studies and Bible studies offered in the Fall that will give opportunity for personal growth, but how many will take advantage of the opportunity? We will begin our Wednesday night fellowship meal again in the fall, but how many will come and use that time to grow closer to each other? How many times will you and I have an opportunity to mentor or guide a new follower of Jesus, like those who nurtured you, and go out of our way to see to it they grow spiritually?

The future of our church is being written right now by each one of us. Together we can adapt and reach new people for Jesus. Together we can model His love and forgiveness for each other and for the community we are blessed to live in. Will our church thrive in the coming years or become a solemn moment at Annual Conference remembering what was? It is up to you and me now.

In Jesus' Love,  
Pastor Don





## Music Notes

by Joycelynn Davidson

I love that song and can hear Ella Fitzgerald singing it even now. The imagery jumps off the page and I can almost smell the things that make summer so special. It's my favorite season.

I missed summer last year as we recovered from Covid and now I'm missing it again as I deal with cancer although, it isn't summer yet. As I'm writing this on June 21st, it's 65 degrees outside. It has been the strangest spring I can remember. The trees, bushes and flowers are loving it. I hope we have a slow, cooler summer as we head into July and August. When I say I love summer I mean under 100 degrees. Otherwise, I'm watching from my living room win-

dow. Can you relate?

I want to take a minute to update you on my condition. Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma treatment has come a long way. I am on the way to recovery... not full recovery but maintenance, which is truly a blessing. Your prayers, cards, calls, meals and hugs have meant so much to me and Larry. I've kept all the cards and it has grown into a stack at least 5" tall. Wow! The love is overwhelming. *THANK YOU!* I found a shirt with the caption "powered by prayer" which really says it all. Without prayer, where would I be? I love you all and could not have made it this far without you.

*Summertime,  
And the livin' is easy  
Fish are jumpin'  
And the cotton is high  
Oh, your daddy's rich  
And your ma is good-lookin'  
So hush little baby,  
Don't you cry.*

George Gershwin



### Chancel Choir

It seems like we just got back after Covid and now we are taking time off. It has been such a blessing to have you back in the loft that you will be sorely missed over the next few weeks. We will not have rehearsals during July and the first half of August. Plan to be back in the loft August 15. Enjoy your summer, any time away with or without family.

### Handbells

We have an ensemble lined up to begin rehearsals July 13th at 10:00 am. I'm excited to work with this group. We plan to ring for worship a couple time during August prior to all rehearsals starting back in September.

As always, when we begin our fall rehearsals, there is room for more ringers. Let me know if you would like to join us!

### Looking ahead...

Planning for the future has been a real challenge over the past year. No need to go into details. If we had stuck to our schedule, our *Meet the Composer* series would be in 2022. However, I plan to take one more year to reestablish our choir and allow other churches in the area to get back to some semblance of normal. I will begin the search for a composer to visit in 2023.



Hey youth, last month went by incredibly fast! We were busy doing all kinds of activities.

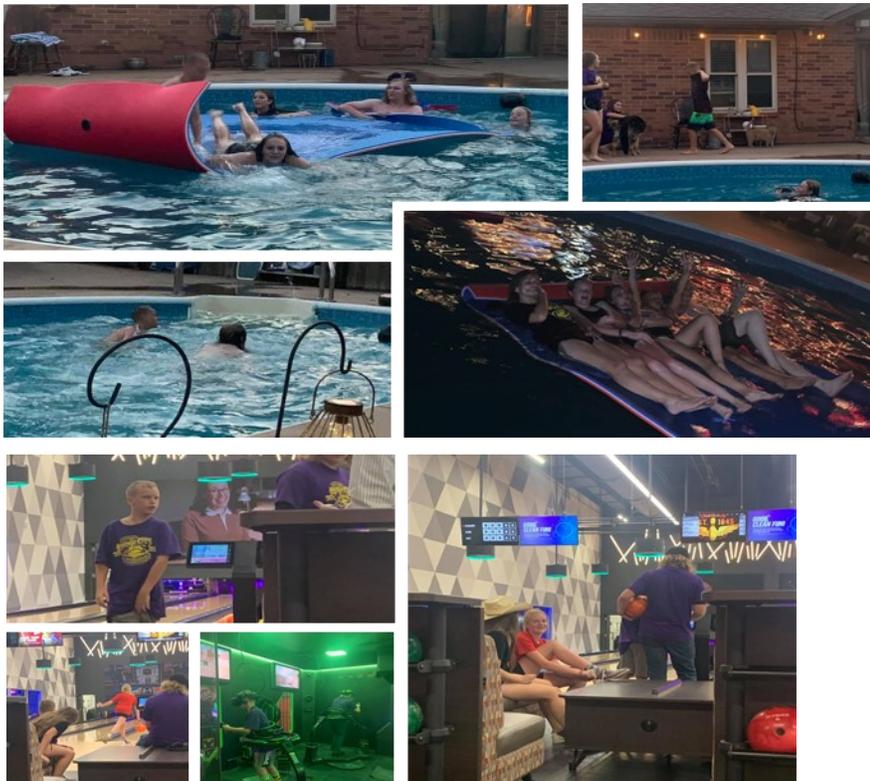
For the month of July we will not be as busy but we still have fun activities planned as well as work days, and Bible study. This month we are moving "Girl Talk Bible Study" to Sunday nights at 4 PM. Be sure to check out the dates and time of events in our calendar.

Blessings to all,  
Lindsey

# July Calendar

Date	Event	Time
7/1/2021	Work Day	10:30 AM
7/7/2021	Boy Talk	4:00 PM
7/9/2021	Fun Friday	3:00 PM
7/11/2021	Girl Talk	4:00 PM
7/13/2021	Fat Tuesday	11:30 AM
7/14/2021	Boy Talk	4:00 PM
7/15/2021	Work Day	10:30 AM
7/18/2021	Girl Talk	4:00 PM
7/21/2021	Boy Talk	4:00 PM
7/23/2021	Fun Friday	1:00 PM
7/25/2021	Girl Talk	4:00 PM
7/27/2021	Fat Tuesday	11:30 AM
7/28/2021	Boy Talk	4:00 PM

Each night after Vacation Bible School the youth had an activity. They started on Monday with swimming and ended the week with a trip to the Hub. Bowling and the VR room were just a few of the things the youth enjoyed.



**Overcomers**  
**YOUTH GROUP**

# SUMMER ADVENTURE DAYS



# Lost Creek Safari

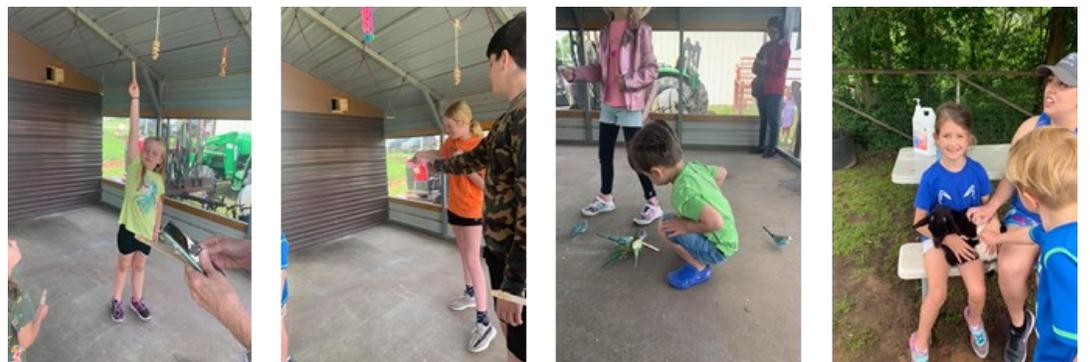
Stillwater, Ok.



*So much to see and do!*



*Those birds were well fed!*



# Splash Pads!

## Pizza & Movie!

### Pizza & Movie!

Ponca City



*So just how cold was that water?*



*In case you weren't thrilled with the water, there were other things to do.*



*Back to church for pizza and a movie.*

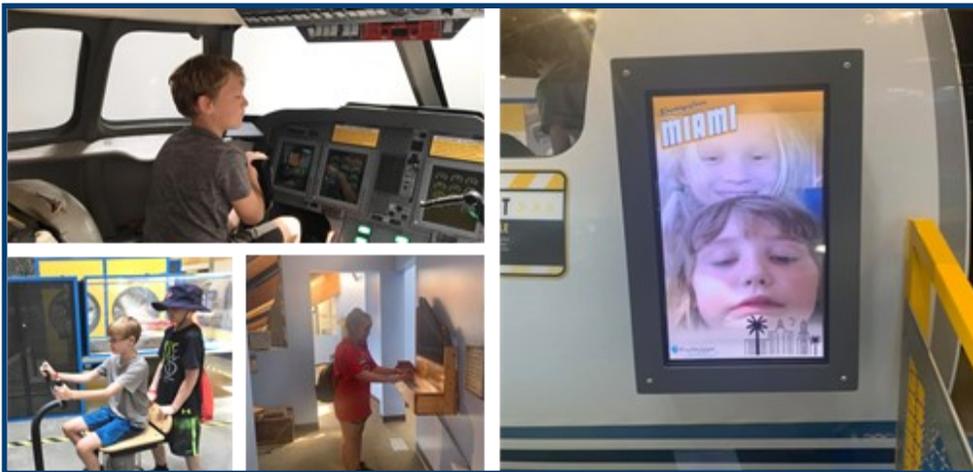


# Wichita, Kansas Exploration Place

**Exploration Place  
where science and fun  
come together!**



**Learn something  
new every day!**



**Aren't you glad  
there are no  
volcanos in  
Oklahoma?**



# Outdoor VBS



WOW! What a 'Cosmictastic' time we had at COSMIC CITY VBS this past week! We explored the awesome wonders of God! Thank you! Thank you! To the Fifty-one SPACE VOYAGERS who visited COSMIC CITY. They were led by twenty-seven COSMIC CREW MEMBERS. A big thank you goes out to all of our Cosmic Crew, as well as all of you back on earth who donated to our mission! If you see one of our crew members, remind them that they are OUT OF THIS WORLD!

Carol Boldin  
Betsy Carter  
Pam Elliot  
Coleen Fleming  
Damian Gardipe  
Makayla Gray

Don Griffin  
Seth Griffin  
Jeanette Harbeson  
Josh Harbeson  
Riley Harbeson  
Kathy Hughes

Jim Hughes  
Khrystal Humble  
Addie Kyler  
Haylee Kyler  
Kalyn Kyler  
Anisa Layton

Lindsey McGee  
Stacy McGee  
Conner McQueen  
Bonnie Otto  
Taylor Otto  
Colten Seidel

Doc Slater  
Lori Slater  
Gineta Swanson





Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Psalm 90:2



**CRAFTS,  
GAMES,  
SINGING,  
SPECIAL TREATS,  
AND A GOOD DOSE  
OF GOD!**

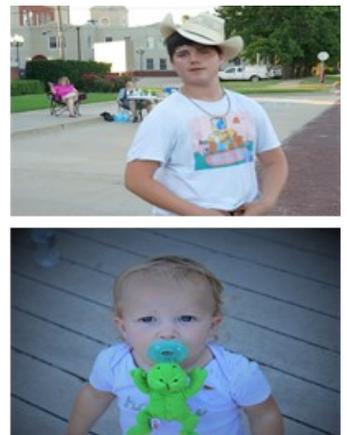




**Volunteers are  
WONDERFUL!!  
So are the people  
who donate supplies.  
Couldn't do it without you!**



**Looking forward to  
NEXT YEAR!**



# New Life Trails

Ponca City



## OKLAHOMA'S PREMIER CHILD EDUCATION OUTREACH AND NON-PROFIT PETTING FARM

*At New Life Trails we believe that animal interaction can have a profound and nourishing effect on people. Children can open up to animals in ways they often struggle to with people. Learning to care for animals seems to develop a sense of responsibility, empathy and caring among children who may not have experienced that themselves.*

*It is with these beliefs that we have chosen to share our farm, and the beautiful and gentle animals we care for.*





**PRAYER CORNER**

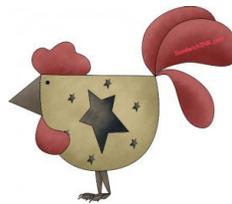
**Congressional Prayer for the Fourth of July**

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." (Psalms 33:12, ESV)

Eternal God, stir Thou our minds and stimulate our hearts with a high sense of patriotism as we approach the Fourth of July. May all that this day symbolizes renew our faith in freedom, our devotion to democracy, and redouble our efforts to keep a government of the people, by the people, and for the people truly alive in our world.

Grant that we may highly resolve on this great day to dedicate ourselves anew to the task of ushering in an era when good will shall live in the hearts of a free people, justice shall be the light to guide their feet, and peace shall be the goal of humankind: to the glory of Thy holy name and the good of our Nation and of all mankind. Amen.

(Congressional Prayer offered by Chaplain, Reverend Edward G. Latch on Wednesday, July 3, 1974.)



**ITEMS FOR THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

The Child Development Center is in need of several things. Bring your donations to the church and they will be taken to the center.

**SNACKS:**

- Goldfish
- Teddy Grahams
- animal crackers

**OTHER ITEMS:**

- Play Dough
- large crayons
- Washable markers
- baby wipes
- underwear size 3 and 4 for girls and boys

**Haiku for July**

Independence Day;  
Glorious flag waves on high,  
we stand awed again.  
Fiercely proud we are;  
We love our God and country,  
How our hearts rejoice!

Wayne Moore



**Building Project**

Hopefully by now you are aware that we are getting a pavilion added to our facilities. It will be located east on the playground and north of the bus barn. Now that Bible School is over, we hope to see construction start Wednesday, June 30th.

We are very excited about the opportunities this will open up for us as we use the facility for outreach to our community. Our first event will probably be an old fashion dinner on the grounds to celebrate.

This fall we hope to have a series of events called "Saturday in the Park with Jesus" that will draw in the community as well as new members for our church.

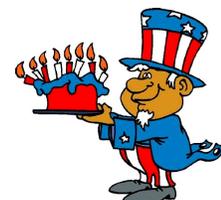
We will rent the pavilion out to non-members for weddings, etc.

If you have ideas for pavilion use, we would love to hear them.



**JULY BIRTHDAYS**

Joycelynn Davidson	07/04	DeEtte Moon	07/20	Andy Tubbs	07/28
Arleen Jacobson	07/05	Judy Million	07/21	Geoffrey Cowan	07/29
Aaron Millemon	07/07	Dixie Kuehny	07/22	Jan Matheson	07/30
Deanna Cohenour	07/08	Trent Fry	07/23		
Ty Otto	07/09	Bernice Whitfill	07/23		
John Davis	07/11	Linda Jantz	07/24		
Marvin Krepps	07/14	Susan Blake	07/25		
Darlene Petty	07/17	Wayne Moore	07/26		
Nate Harbeson	07/19	Gregg Grubbs	07/28		
Reed Jackson	07/20	Dee Kutz	07/28		





2021

SUN

MON

TUES

WED

THUR

FRI

SAT

				1 10:30 Youth Work Day	2	3
4 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Communion Food Sack Sun- day	5 <b>OFFICE CLOSED FOR HOLIDAY</b>  HAPPY 4TH OF JULY! 	6 9:00 Intercesso- ry Prayer	7 4:00 Boy Talk	8 10:30 Youth Work Day	9 3:00 Youth Fun Day	10
11 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship 4:00 Girl Talk	12 6:30 Bill's Bible Study	13 9:00 Intercesso- ry Prayer 11:30 Fat Tues- day 6:00 Trustees	14 4:00 Boy Talk	15 10:30 Youth Work Day	16	17
18 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship 4:00 Girl Talk 5:00 Youth at Water Park	19 9:00 Staff Meeting 6:30 Bill's Bible Study	20 9:00 Intercesso- ry Prayer	21 4:00 Boy Talk	22 2:00 Marty Stokke Memorial Service	23 1:00 Youth Fun - Day	24
25 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship 4:00 Girl Talk	26 9:00 PM Patches 5:30 Friendship Feast 6:30 Bill's Bible Study	27 9:00 Intercesso- ry Prayer 11:30 Fat Tues- day	28 4:00 Boy Talk	29	30	31



“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”

2 Corinthians 3:17

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[PoncaCityFirstUnitedMethodistChurch](https://www.facebook.com/PoncaCityFirstUnitedMethodistChurch)



### Meet Jordan Meador

Jordan is our new Director for Mother's Day Out. She has worked in the program for several years, so the transition to director has been seamless. Ruth continues with the program as a teacher.

Now that Covid restrictions have been lifted by the Annual Conference, if you would like Pastor Don to come visit you, please contact the Church office and let Dianne know (580)762-1681. Pastor Don will then follow up and schedule a convenient time.



Have you ever considered serving communion? We would like to hear from you if you are willing to serve twice a year, or as a substitute as needed. Let us know in the office (580)762-1681.



### PPP Coming Soon (Pizza, Plarn and Pfun)

Wednesday, July 21<sup>st</sup>, if you like pizza, "pfellowship" and "pfun" you are invited to bring your scissors to Colleen Flemings, 8 Pecan Place at 12:00 pm to enjoy cutting plarn for crocheted mats for the homeless. If you love listening to the Golden Oldies you might have twice the "pfun". Come enjoy a little "work" and lots of "pfun" while helping others in the Ponca City area. Hope to see you on the 21<sup>st</sup>!!!



### "We the People"

Get to worship neath the steeple,  
 because we have a Country,  
 that lets all be free.  
 Our forefathers gave us the best,  
 this Country has stood the test.  
 Laying all our troubles aside,  
 this Country still stirs my pride.  
 Problems, yes, we have a few,  
 but, we still have a great red,  
 white and blue.  
 On our Constitution our forefa-  
 thers did toil,  
 as they so diligently burned the  
 midnight oil.  
 They worked late into the night,  
 trying to get everything just right.  
 Then, by God's great Grace,  
 it finally all fell into place.  
 We get to enjoy the fruits of their  
 labor,  
 while this Country's greatness, we  
 get to savor!

~Joy Rainey King



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# July 2021 Daily Prayers



## for our YOUTH

- Our Sons/Daughters, Grandsons/Granddaughters  
& all the ones we love.

1

He has saved us and called us to a holy life-not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. ~2 Timothy 1:9

Savior Jesus, may XXX believe You chose to save him, and call him to a holy life, not because he deserves it but for Your own purpose and grace for his life.

2

And the LORD came and called as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel replied, "Speak, your servant is listening." ~ 1 Samuel 3:10

Awesome God, thank You for pursuing XXX. I pray her ears be tuned to the frequency of Your voice. May she eagerly respond to Your instructions.

3

I cry out to God Most High, to God, who vindicates me. ~ Psalms 57:2

Dear Father, please stir XXX to turn to You for the confidence and courage to fulfill all You planned for him to accomplish today.

4

You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do. ~ Psalms 139:3

 **HAPPY 4TH OF JULY!**



Everlasting Lord,  
I pray You fill XXX with Your joy as she goes about her daily tasks today.

5

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ~Matthew 11:29

Sovereign God, whenever XXX is distressed, may turning to You for counsel and rest be his first response.

6

And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace. Your suffering is over." ~Mark 5:34

Abba Father, may XXX's faith be root deep. May she go through life in peace; made whole physically, emotionally and mentally.

7

... 'I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.' ~Acts 13:22

Gracious Lord, may XXX be a man after Your own heart, whose thoughts, words and actions are pleasing to You as he does Your will.

8

God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. ~Hebrew 6:10

King of Kings, please open XXX's eyes to see the many opportunities when she is to love and serve You obediently by serving others.

9

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. ~Psalms 147:3

Holy Father, please heal all the hurt and broken pieces of my child's heart and soul. Make this child whole.

10

... whatever is true, ... noble, ... right, ... pure, ... lovely, ... admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things. ~Philippians 4:8

Blessed Lord, please transform XXX's mind so he only focuses on things that are true, pure, right, holy, friendly, and pleasing to You.

11

...I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ~Ephesians 4:1-2

My God, my Lord, may XXX live in a manner worthy of Your calling; in humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with others in love.

12

... open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins ... ~Acts 26:18

Gracious Father, please open XXX's eyes and heart to see the light that comes from You God, so that he may receive forgiveness of sins and have everlasting life.

13

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. ~Isaiah 41:10

Glorious Lord, may XXX have the courage to face down her fears and slay them, knowing You are always with her.

14

Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ~Hebrews 10:23.

Adonai, please deepen XXX's faith. May he hold fast to the knowledge You are ever-faithful; Your promises never fail.

15

Whoever heeds discipline shows the way to life, but whoever ignores correction leads others astray. ~Proverbs 10:17

Blessed Father, I pray that XXX will not ignore or resent correction. May she accept discipline and learn from it.

**16**

If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ~Romans 10:9

Awesome Lord, may XXX declare with his mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe wholeheartedly that God raised Him from the dead, and he is saved!

**17**

I will refresh the weary and satisfy the faint."  
~Jeremiah 31:25

Today Omniscient God, I pray XXX will feel Your presence today. Please refresh her body and restore her soul.

**18**

Anyone who wants to serve me must follow me because my servants must be where I am. And the Father will honor anyone who serves me.  
~John 12:26

Savior Father, I pray that it would be my child's heartfelt desire to serve You, follow You and be where You are - no where else.

**19**

"O Sovereign LORD! You made the heavens and earth by your strong hand and powerful arm. Nothing is too hard for you! ~Jeremiah 32:17

Omnipotent Lord, please give XXX the unshakeable confidence that You prevail in all situations as nothing is too difficult for You.

**20**

... 'I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.'  
~Acts 13:22

Gracious God, may XXX be one after Your own heart, whose thoughts, words and actions are pleasing to You as she does Your will.

**21**

The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still." ~Exodus 14:14

Righteous Father, may XXX learn to walk in faith. May his soul be calm and his spirit strong as he rests assured You Lord fight for him.

**22**

Therefore, let us offer through Jesus a continual sacrifice of praise to God, proclaiming our allegiance to His name. ~Hebrews 13:15

Almighty King, please open XXX's eyes to see Your hand at work in her life. Stir her heart to offer You an unceasing and joyful sacrifice of praise.

**23**

And so the Lord says, "These people say they are Mine. They honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. ~Isaiah 29:13

God of All Hope, may XXX honor You with all his heart, and not just his lips. May his worship be heartfelt, not simply a pretense to conform with society.

**24**

No weapon that is formed against you will prosper; And every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. ~Isaiah 54:17

Dear Father, please protect XXX. May no weapon formed against her prosper. May every tongue that accuses her in judgment receive Your condemnation.

**25**

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." ~John 16:33

Eternal Lord, please fill XXX with Your peace. May he take heart, assured You are in control of all that concerns him.

**26**

I will not look with approval on anything that is vile. I hate what faithless people do; I will have no part in it. ~Psalm 101:3

Jehovah God, please strengthen XXX to resist the temptation to set anything vile before her eyes. Grant her a strong resolve to look away from sinful images.

**27**

And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace. Your suffering is over." ~Mark 5:34

Sovereign Father, may my child's faith be root deep. May this child go through life in peace; made whole physically, mentally, and emotionally.

**28**

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ~Ephesians 3:20

Everlasting Lord, may XXX trust You wholeheartedly, having the faith that You can do more than he can ask or imagine.

**29**

... let us run with endurance the race that is set before us. Let us look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, ... ~Hebrews 12:1-2

Father God, may XXX run with endurance the race that is set before her, looking to You, the author and finisher of her faith.

**30**

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. ~Mark 12:30

Abba Father, may XXX love You, the Lord our God, with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his mind and his strength.

**31**

He replied, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it." ~Luke 11:28

Gracious Lord, please sensitize XXX's ears to Your Word, and may she strive each day to keep it!