

## MY 2020 COMMITMENT

1. Pray at least twice a week using the Life Support Prayer Calendar. We encourage at least once in the hearing of other Christians.
2. Encourage other individuals in your congregation to join in the Life Support Prayer ministry. Notify us of those who are interested in making the commitment.
3. Encourage public prayers by the church for the efforts to protect preborn children and for the care of their mothers and families.
4. As you are led, renew your commitment yearly.



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## LIFE SUPPORT

### PRAYER CALENDAR

SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC

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### Psalms 139:13-14

For you created my  
inmost being; you  
knit me together in  
my mother's womb. I  
praise you because I  
am fearfully and  
wonderfully made;  
your works are  
wonderful, I know  
that full well."

### Nahum 1:67

The Lord is good,  
a refuge in  
times of trouble.  
He cares for those  
who trust in him.

## CALL TO PRAYER

More and more each day we are bombarded with "identity politics," the system that labels people and forces them into artificial homogenous groups. Once identified with a certain group, assumptions are without regard to individual truth, followed by rigid rules and protocols for dealing with members of the group. Most often the labels affixed are pejorative adjectives-turned-nouns: *Bigot, Racist, White Supremacist, Leftist, Deplorable, Pro-birther*. Once the label is attached, the individual is typically subjected to unfair *ad hominem* attacks: slurs and criticism aimed at a person's appearance, ethnicity or character, (based on emotions and not logic), instead of that person's position or arguments on issues. Such labeling invites wicked discrimination in many arenas of work and social order, and often escalates to physical harm, as we have seen in the streets of our nation's cities in recent months.

This kind of thing isn't new. People have labeled, disrespected and ostracized others since the beginning of time. In the Bible we read of the shunning of lepers, as though their disease rendered them less than suffering human beings with human needs. Still, today, we speak of "social lepers." Observant Jews would give a wide birth to the heretical Samaritans. When Paul counseled Titus regarding his ministry in Crete (Titus 1:12), he quoted the Cretan writer Epimenides, who wrote, "*Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons.*" Jesus was criticized for his interactions with "Tax collectors and sinners." Women were considered to be generally "less than" men. In world history, the most egregious examples of labeling people for wicked ends were the Nazi campaign against the Jews, and the African slave trade, both of which promoted the lie that Jews and slaves were sub-human.

Today it is the elderly and infirm who are pushed to the social margins, and often warehoused in substandard conditions that put them in harm's way, as was recently experienced when Covid-19 roared through nursing homes. The pro-abortion lobby continues to deny science by labeling the developing pre-born "non-human," "clump of cells," "parasite," and "not a person." This labeling encourages the decades-long relentless assault on the unborn, scapegoating them to avoid the consequences of sex and the responsibilities of parenthood.

Everyone is in danger of being the next outcast, the next "less than," the next sub-human. Today's oppressors will be tomorrow's victims. It is an inevitable, vicious cycle.

But Jesus – the One mockingly labeled, "King of the Jews," accused of being a lawless drunkard (Matt. 11:29), in league with Satan (Matt. 12:23) and cursed (Gal. 3:13) – who bears the only label that matters: Savior of the world. Created in the image of God, we find our true worth in the sacrificial incarnation of God in human flesh and the ultimate price that Jesus paid for our lives. We are not defined by who the world says we are. We are defined by who Christ says we are. We are developed through the Holy Spirit's sanctifying work, into the people God wants us to be. It is in Christ where our true identity lies.

– Rev. Deborah Hollifield, Executive Director

## SEP

### SEP 6-12

#### **Genesis 1:25-28, Acts 14:15 (ESV)**

1. Confess the sin of labeling others in ways meant to demean and devalue.
2. Ask God to give his people eyes to see His image in others and understand we all belong to God and have no sufficiency or worth in ourselves. Pray to value others more highly than self.
3. Pray for God's wisdom and presence in the online PPL board meeting Sep 10.

### SEP 13-19

#### **Nehemiah 9:6, Acts 17:24-25 (NASB)**

1. Repent of viewing others through a lens of political identity; responding emotionally not hearing the *person*.
2. Worship God the Creator of all things and the Giver of Life. Pray that Presbyterians will regard God as Sovereign Creator and Sustainer of human life and breath.

### SEP 20-26

#### **Psalms 95:6-7a, Ephesians 1:3-6 (NRSV)**

1. Pray for God's forgiveness for the church's rigid rules and protocols that *exclude or unduly exalt* individuals because of age, wealth, intelligence, health, position, gender, race, position.
2. Pray that as congregations and champions of life we will discern and call leaders that are humble before God and serve gratefully as his adopted children by the grace of Jesus Christ.

### SEP 27 – OCT 3

#### **Psalms 139:13-14, Rom. 9:20-21 (NASB)**

1. Confess national biases that have led to expressions of hatred & acts of violence that cause physical harm, even death. Ask God to forgive & remove all prejudice from the hearts of his people.
2. Pray for God's protection of persons who are: in minority communities, unborn, sick, disabled, poor, or who have genetic anomalies, dementia, or mental health diseases. May the church be known for our love to all of these that society sets aside or actively hates.

## OCT

### OCT 4-10

#### **Zephaniah 3:19, Matthew 8:2-3 (ESV)**

1. Repent for shunning individuals or groups as outcast because of infirmity or disability, beliefs or other reason.
2. Ask God to help you see suffering human beings behind real or socially imposed masks, to help you respond as a champion protecting their lives.
3. Pray for Deborah & Marie as they plan for the annual PPL Board Meeting.

### OCT 11-17

#### **Titus 1:12 (MSG)**

1. Confess our national biases that categorize people and respond with judgment and hatred. Pray to discern the heart beyond the rhetoric and respond with winsome wisdom.
2. Ask God to give you a new heart to love others as reflections of His image—even muddled reflections.
3. Ask God to protect the travel & health of the PPL Board members as they meet in Springfield, MO this week.

### OCT 18-24

#### **John 4:7-10 (NRSV)**

1. Ask God to examine your heart for any traces of "less than" judgments based on gender, race, physique, intellect, or economic or social position.
2. Pray for Christians who cause women & men making decisions of life and death to turn away from the church for fear of being judged. Pray for our hearts to be broken by the things that break God's heart.

### OCT 25-31

#### **Genesis 16:5-10**

1. Confess our nation's part in slavery and lingering racial prejudice. Confess that de-valuing a group of people informs our national slaughter of the unborn through abortion.
2. Pray for a spiritual awakening in our nation & churches so that we will turn to God with weeping for our disregard of lives we have called sub-human.

## NOV

### Nov 1-7 (NRSV)

#### **Isaiah 46:3-4,**

1. Repent of the ways we sideline the elderly and infirm, housing them in substandard nursing homes & leaving them without comfort of family & friends to suffer & die alone.
2. Pray for your own heart to be softened and willing to serve and "carry" those who are aging & ill. Pray for churches to show loving and sacrificial care to God's glory.

### Nov 8-14

#### **Isaiah 49:1b, 15-16 (NASB)**

1. Confess our nation's sin in labeling unborn children as "non-human", "clump of cells", "parasite" and "not a person." Ask God to forgive this hatred toward the unborn that has led to the murder of millions by abortion.
2. Pray God will call champions of life who will "inscribe" the unborn on their hearts & spend their lives serving these precious ones that God remembers, along with their mothers & fathers in need of provision & God's grace.
3. Pray for God's presence & guidance in the PPL online board meeting.

### Nov 15-21

#### **Isaiah 43:7, I John 4:20-21 (MSG)**

1. Confess the ways we have put our "rights" to gather or to be in public places without a mask above the health and well-being of the most vulnerable.
2. Pray that God will cause his people to see the suffering & need of the weak & poor, the aging & sick, the helpless & dependent and move us to help.

### Nov 22-28

#### **Psalms 145:10-18 (NASB) Excerpts**

1. Give thanks to God for your own life and the lives of those in your family, faith community, and others.
2. Spend time in thanksgiving for God's provision, his care for the weak, poor, vulnerable, outcast, infirm, and aging. Pray to be godly in your relationships.

## DEC

### Nov 29 – DEC 5

#### **Philippians 2:4-8 (ESV)**

1. Ask God to reveal any thought of others as sub-human. Confess this sin against Jesus who, though truly, wholly God, humbly became human.
2. Pray that those who practice sex and reject the responsibility of parenting their conceived children will repent & God will forgive & transform their lives.

### DEC 6-12

#### **Isaiah 53:4-6, John 1: 10-11 (NRSV)**

1. Repent for our nation's rejection of Christ's sacrifice for our salvation, for believing we are sufficient in ourselves & don't need a Savior.
2. Pray we will know God's amazing grace in Jesus, who took on human image to restore God's image in us.
3. Pray as the PPL Board meets Thurs.

### DEC 13-19

#### **Ephesians 2:4-8 (MSG)**

1. Ask God to forgive us for defining ourselves by what the world says of us rather than our identity in Christ Jesus.
2. Pray for pastors to preach of Jesus who came to redeem human life from conception through natural death; who humbly entered our human suffering.

### DEC 20-26

#### **Galatians 4:4-5 (NASB)**

1. Worship Christ the King, who entered vulnerably into the womb of a woman, to redeem & restore God's image in humankind.
2. Pray for God's Holy Spirit to move in churches, showing God's great love, moving us to protect human life.

### DEC 27 – JAN 2

#### **Luke 2:29-32**

1. Pray, gratefully reflecting on all the ways God has sustained you, provided for you, and shown the Light of Jesus.
2. Ask God to equip his people to be champions of human life in 2021, to regard each as stamped: 'God's image'.