



Prayers *of the* People

City Church of Richmond's
2023 Annual Report

As the members of the City Church Communications Team get ready each year to create the Annual Report, we consider two things:

1. How do we share the story of the City Church community over the last year?
2. What do we want our people to experience as they interact with that story?

For 2023's Annual Report, we decided to create a tangible keepsake—something we can hold in our hands to keep us connected to the events of the past year and to the people who were along for the ride.

We also decided to ground this effort in the familiar.

Those who worship with us regularly know that once a month or so we take time during our worship service for something we call the Prayers of the People. It's a chance for us to pray for the needs of our community, our church, and its people. And it's an opportunity to praise God for the work He has done and will do for us and through us. We do this, as our bulletin states, "knowing that God hears and answers us."

This report aims to do the same thing.

We are proud to present to you...

Prayers of the People: City Church of Richmond's 2023 Annual Report.

This Annual Report is comprised of prayer cards thoughtfully crafted by you: the people of City Church. These cards pair written prayers with original artwork, all created by members of our congregation. Each prayer and each piece of art responds to a particular theme of life at City Church in 2023: Family, Finances, Fellowship, Formation, Flourishing, and Faith. You'll also find links on each card to supplementary materials that offer a more comprehensive understanding of our shared journey in 2023.

Our hope is that as you read these prayers, admire this artwork, and soak up the information shared, that you won't stop there. We hope you'll find a connection that prompts your own reflection and prayer in response to our life together...our past, our present, and all that God holds for us in the future.

So. Let us pray.

A Prayer for Family

Heavenly Father, as a church who seeks to do your will, we are counted as your family. We are so incredibly blessed to bear witness to the growth of your family here in Richmond! In this past year you have shown us new ways to love and care for your bride, the visible and invisible church.

We have seen growth and for that we thank you. In the spiritually “sun-scorched” landscape of the modern city, we have seen you strengthening our frame. You have added members through membership and through the miracle of childbirth. Lord, thank you for this miracle, and for this sign of your favor and the execution of your good will.

As many have joined our fold, we pray for those who have left it. Please guide them in your word and your ways and help us to continue to love and serve them as they follow Your directive in faith.

Finally, help us to be a “well-watered garden” in that we grow in our knowledge of you and diligently engage in the work of sanctification. As a church, help those in our care to be loved well. As we come to you to be filled, help us to have more to pour out on our friends and neighbors as we seek to love and serve our friends and neighbors in Richmond. In short, help us to continue to stay well and do good.

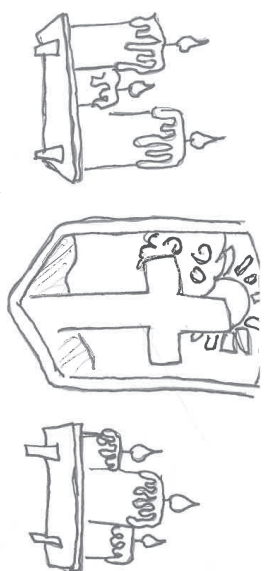
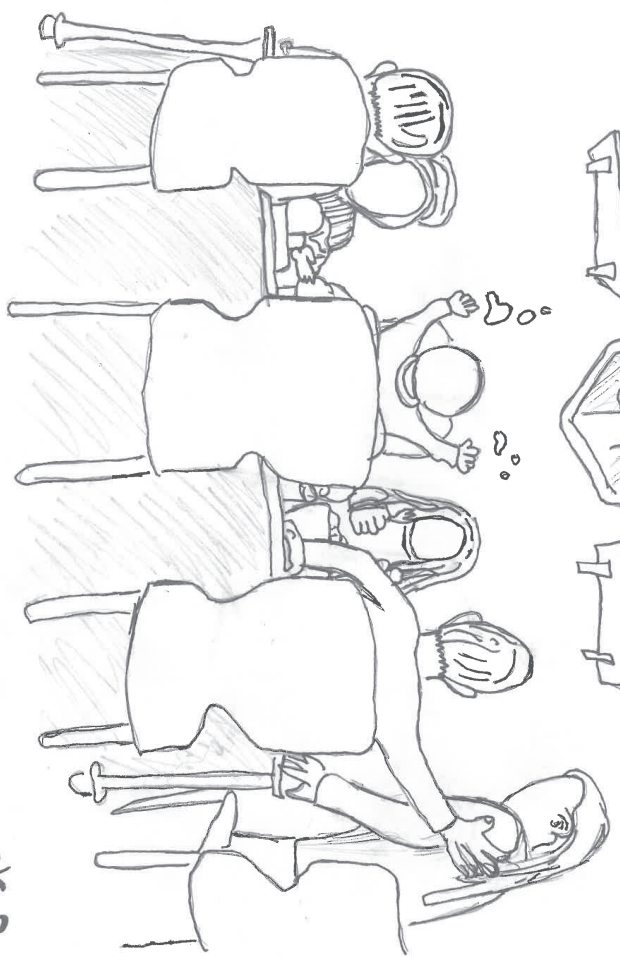
Amen.

Scripture to prompt your own prayers:

Isaiah 58:11, Mark 3:31-35

Scan to
learn more:





PARKER

A Prayer for Finances

Heavenly Father, each year, we are humbled by your provision for City Church through its people. We praise you for stirring up generosity in the hearts of so many to make the work of this church possible—in our day-to-day operations and in our wider mission of making your love known beyond the walls of this building.

Thinking back over last year, the word abundance stands out. Thank you for the individuals and households in this church family who gave so abundantly—thousands of dollars more than expected—which allowed City Church to give abundantly in turn. We were able to maintain and grow financial partnerships with people and organizations working to share Jesus's Gospel in Richmond and all over the world. We were also able to be the hands and feet of Jesus for our neighbors by tending to emergent needs in our community through our Mercy Fund. To support and care for our fellow image-bearers is a gift, and we are grateful.

God, we pray boldly for your continued provision in 2024. May more and more members of our church family see giving as a part of worship and as a way to partner tangibly with all you are doing in and through this church. May we give freely—not out of compulsion but out of recognition that all we have is yours. And may we steward these gifts with wisdom, creativity, and faith, remembering always that these material sacrifices are echoes of the infinite sacrifice you made for us.

Amen.

Scripture to prompt your own prayers:

2 Corinthians 9:6-11, Acts 4:32-35

Scan to
learn more:



"Now the full number
of those who believed
were of one heart
and soul, and no one
said that any of the
things that belonged
to him was his
own, but they had
everything in common."

ACTS 9:32

A Prayer for Fellowship

God, we thank you for the fact that we need people. We thank you that so many of those needs are met through the community that is City Church.

We ask for a flood of new relationships in 2024. We pray for eyes that are opened to the differences in each of us. May we see those differences as opportunities to learn more about you, Lord. We pray for opportunities to meet people who are younger than us, older than us, and in a different stage of life. We pray that we approach these opportunities with curiosity, with open hands, with hearts that genuinely want friendships and fellowship in City Church to blossom in a new way.

God, as we start out on this journey of forging new relationships, will you help us treasure our old friendships like never before? May we remember that we can't make old friends. So we pray over these friendships too, Lord. We pray that the feeling of being known so well in these relationships reminds us of the way you know us. May we honor and embrace our longtime friends, stay committed, and have the discipline to maintain these friendships well.

Lord, we pray over our friendship with you. May we know that we will never have a friend like the friend we have in Jesus. May that security, that love, that comfort push out into the world. May that be the fountain in which all—new, old, tiring, familiar, challenging, comfortable, and long-standing—friendships are sustained.

Amen.

Scripture to prompt your own prayers:

John 15:12-13, Philippians 1:3-6

Scan to
learn more:





A Prayer for Formation

Lord, I thank you for being our Father. I thank you for being our King. You are our Creator, our Savior. There will be a day in which “death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things will have passed away.”

As we wait for this time, we’ve seen much growth this past year, and this is good. What joy we have in worshiping together in a full sanctuary. What comfort we have in the care we give and receive within our City Groups. How we learn to love your Word in our Sunday Formation classes. We’ve seen our covenant childrens’ faith grow in our Youth and Children’s Ministries because of your faithfulness. Your presence is with this Church.

For this year, may your Spirit grow us in your Word. May we be protected against the evil that seeks to divide and destroy your people; it is devoid of your Spirit. Let us not let down our guard. Instead, may we build ourselves up in the most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keeping ourselves in the Love of God, as we wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

Let the times we come together be times in which we celebrate the Joy of Victory over evil. Of Light conquering darkness. Of Hope to be fulfilled.

Amen.

Scripture to prompt your own prayers:

Jude 1:17-23, Revelation 21:3-8

Scan to
learn more:





A Prayer for Flourishing

Dear Jesus, thank you for the ways that we have seen flourishing in your Kingdom this year through our ministry partnerships. Thank you for our partners who act as the hands and feet of Jesus in our city, country and the world. Thank you for the ways that City Church has been able to come alongside them this year—financially, prayerfully, through volunteering, and more. Thank you that it is your design that we can go further together than we can alone.

Jesus, we thank you for the work of our partners in Richmond, who are working to meet both the physical and spiritual needs of our city. Thank you for the ways that they support our most vulnerable neighbors, invest in the education of our young people, and share your love with those who do not know you. Thank you for our partners around our country, who are planting churches, making governing decisions in our denomination and, reaching students of all ages with your hope. We praise you for our partners around the world, who are reaching out to cities deemed “unreached” and building communities of faith. Thank you that in their work your Kingdom is being brought to earth.

Lord, be near to our partners. When they are discouraged, show them that their labor is not in vain. As they step into dark places, fill them with the light of your Spirit. We pray that you prompt us to know how we might better serve alongside them, using our own unique gifts to glorify you.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to be a part of your holy body, working together for your praise and glory.

Amen.

Scripture to prompt your own prayers:

1 Corinthians 12:12–27, Hebrews 12:1

Scan to
learn more:





A Prayer for Faith

Almighty God and Faithful Father, this year at City Church we pray for faith. We acknowledge our weariness—we're worn-out and worn-down. Life has drained our faith.

So, God of the dry bones, help us believe that through your vivifying Spirit even that which appears dead will yet live.

God of Jacob, whose life was a wrestling match, help us know that faith doesn't mean the absence of doubt, but trust in a strength greater than our questions.

God of Abraham, may we, like him, hope against hope, never wavering, but believing that you will surely do all you've promised.

God of the unseen and eternal, steady us and strengthen us through this valley of tears—until that day when our faith shall be sight.

God who remains faithful even when we are faithless, fill us with the gift of faith accompanied by faithfulness. Though we're saved by faith alone, may our faith never remain alone, but spill over with all the good works you produce in us.

Remind us that it has never been about the size of our faith, but about the love and grace of the object of our faith, that is, Jesus Christ. Give us this year a mustard-seed faith that can move mountains, a yeast-sized faith that leavens the whole lump, a sometimes-faltering faith that cries out—however faintly—"I believe; help my unbelief."

You are able to do this as our almighty God; you desire to do this as our faithful Father.

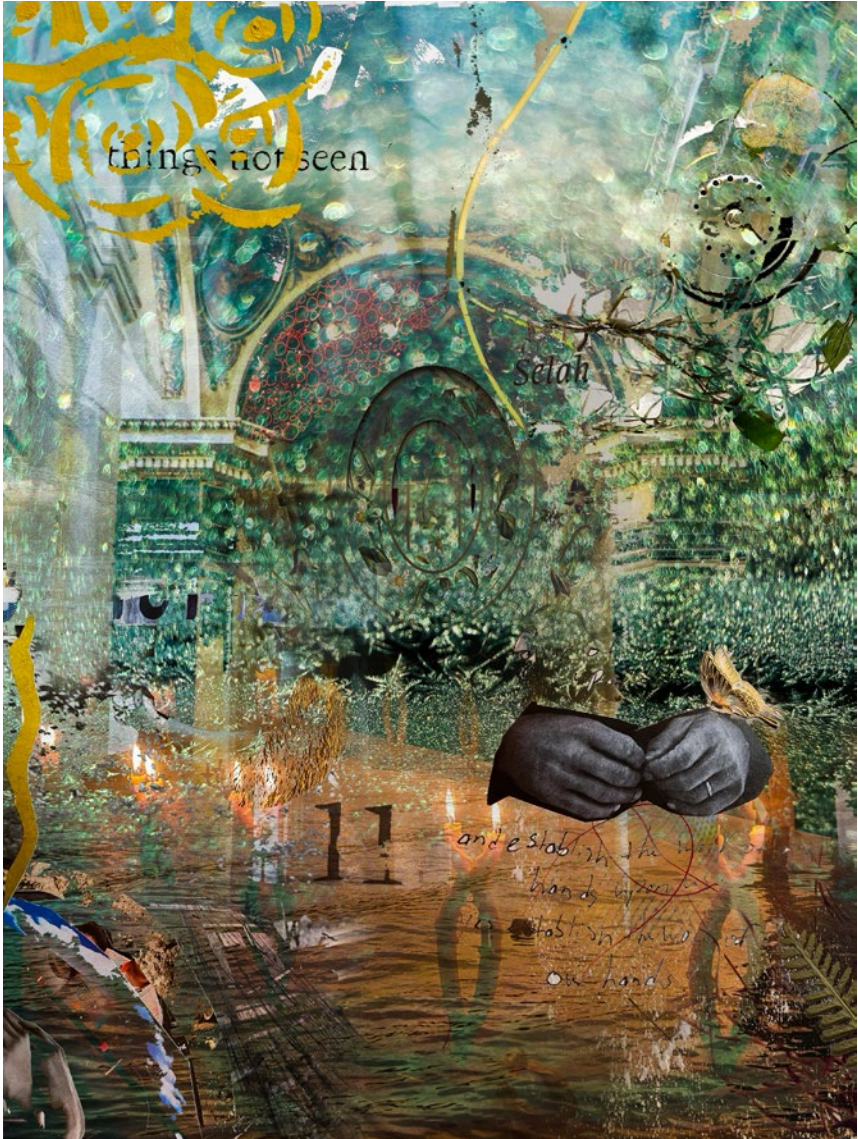
Amen.

Scripture to prompt your own prayers:

Ezekiel 37:14, Genesis 32:22-32, Romans 4:18-25,
2 Corinthians 4:18, 2 Timothy 2:13, Matthew 13:31-33,
Mark 9:23

Scan to
learn more:





things not seen

Selah

and establish in the world
hands by sea
the establishment of
our hands