

## Intercession Guide for a Victorious Finish to the Interim Process

It is our hope that as we move forward in our pastoral search, many at Oakwood will unite together through earnest prayer. Below are several prayer tools designed to help us pray more effectively. The first section contains specific requests that were used on March 15<sup>th</sup> as we fasted and prayed for our leadership, church family, and next lead pastor. The second is a guide to be used every day of the week to help strengthen the body of Oakwood in preparation for our next servant leader's arrival. The third is a prayer for our next lead pastor that was prayed during our February 12<sup>th</sup> church service.

### I. Requests for Oakwood's Leadership, Church Family, and Next Lead Pastor:

#### ❖ Pray that the Elder and Search Teams:

- Will be given wisdom, very great insight and a measureless breadth of understanding (1 Kings 4:29)
- Will be encouraged and strengthened as they persevere through this final phase of the IPM process (2 Thessalonians 2:16-17)
- Will seek counsel from each other as they continue to make plans for our church family (Proverbs 12:22)
- Will speak the truth in love to each other (Ephesians 4:15)
- Will have discerning hearts to distinguish between right and wrong (1 Kings 3:9)
- Will be filled with joy, peace and hope as they trust in the LORD (Romans 15:13)

#### ❖ Pray that the Oakwood Church family:

- Will rely on God to be one in spirit and in purpose (Philippians 2:2)
- Will be faithful to pray for our leaders (1 Samuel 12:23)
- Will be favored by God so we can be used by Him (Psalm 90:17)
- Will have discernment and pray against any schemes of the enemy (Ephesians 6:11,16)
- Will trust and submit to our leadership (Hebrews 13:17)
- Will be patient to wait on God's perfect plan (Psalm 18:30 and 46:10)

#### ❖ Pray for our next Lead Pastor:

- That the relocation process will not be too much stress on him and his family (Philippians 4:6-7)
- That God's peace will calm their hearts as they say goodbye to family, friends, and church family (John 14:27)
- That we as a church family would give them space and time to adjust to a new life and ministry (1 Thessalonians 5:12)
- That our imperfections will not be a discouragement to him, but will be viewed as an opportunity to help us grow (Ephesians 4:11-13)

## II. Weekly Prayer Guide to Strengthen Oakwood in Preparation for our Next Lead Pastor:

**Sunday:** Pray that God's mission for Oakwood of transforming ordinary people into fully devoted followers of Christ would be accomplished through our vision of *Love, Grow, Serve*. *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* Matthew 28:19-20

**Monday:** Pray that we, as a congregation and as individuals, would be continually growing in Christlikeness – putting off the old self, putting on the new self, as we reach for God's word. *"You were taught with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds, and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."* Ephesians 4:22-24

**Tuesday:** Pray that each of us would be actively engaged in conversations with the far-from-God, pointing them to Christ and inviting them to church, and that God would use Oakwood's ministries to effectively reach out to those in our community with the Good News. Pray that God would add to our numbers those who are being saved. *"Come, follow me", Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."* Matthew 4:19

**Wednesday:** Pray that we would be suitably arrayed for spiritual battle in the armor God provides. Pray that we would stand firm and not be discouraged or defeated by attacks from the enemy. *"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes."* Ephesians 6:10-11

**Thursday:** Pray that our leadership, in cooperation with the congregation, can successfully implement the proposed strategies to strengthen identified areas of weakness (effective structures, empowering leadership, and inspiring worship). *"It was he who gave . . . some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature."* Ephesians 4:11-13

**Friday:** Pray for unity and discernment for members of the Pastoral Search Team as they work together to identify God's choice for Oakwood's next servant leader. *"And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best."* Philippians 1:9-10

**Saturday:** Pray that God would work through the placement tools used by the search team to select the best candidates. Pray that God would confirm His choice through various means (Scripture, answered prayer, timing, gifts and abilities, wise counsel, circumstances, etc.). *"Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails."* Proverbs 19:21

### III. Prayer for Our Next Servant Leader:

Lord we praise you as our faithful God. Thank you for the ways you have walked with us through the good times as well as the difficulties. As we look ahead to our future here at Oakwood, we want to pray for our next servant leader.

Lord, we pray for his heart, his relationship with you – that seeking your face would be his top priority – We ask that your Spirit strengthen him in his inner being so that Christ may dwell in his heart by faith. Speak to him with clarity through his times of bible study and prayer. Give him a longing to talk with you and to hear Your voice. Help him to be sensitive to your Spirit's leading. May he live by your Spirit, keep in step with your Spirit, and exhibit the fruit of your Spirit in his life. Help him to resist the temptation to rely on his own strength, his own understanding, and instead acknowledge you in all he does, trusting you to make his path straight.

Lord, we believe that you have already been at work in his heart and life up until this point, preparing him to serve here. Continue to give him a vision for his future. Help him to know that Your plans for him are plans for good and not for harm – to give him a future and a hope. Enable him to clearly hear your call on his life. Enable him to walk worthy of that calling – putting off the old self, putting on the new – continuing to grow in Christlikeness each day. Give him confidence in the gifts and abilities you have given him. Help him to see that Oakwood and living in the Tampa Bay area would be just the right fit for him and his family. Assure him that he is your workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which you have prepared in advance for him to do.

Lord, we pray for his relationships – especially those with his immediate family, and also with his extended family, friends, and church. Give him unity with those that he loves. Use them to encourage, guide and comfort him during this time of transition.

Protect our future pastor Lord. Protect his heart, mind, soul, and body. Strike down any discouragement that might threaten to defeat him. Help him to keep his focus on you – taking every thought captive and making it obedient to Christ. Give him wisdom that will help him to walk securely. Be his fortress, his shield, his stronghold. Save him from any plans of the enemy that might hinder your work in his life. Preserve him at all times. May he look to you in faith to overcome any obstacles that he faces. We look forward to meeting him and rejoicing with him over the ways you have cared for him during these months prior to his arrival. Father bless and keep him; make your face shine upon him and be gracious to him; turn your face toward him and give him peace. We agree together as a congregation asking these things in the name of Jesus our Savior.