

# Be Strong and Courageous in Prayer



4 Weeks of Prayer & Spiritual Growth

**Week 1**

Corona United Methodist Church

Adapted from  
South Bay Community Church - Fremont

**Dear Corona United Methodist Church Family,**

As we begin these days of prayer and Spiritual Growth, we come to God in various seasons. Some sense God is doing something new, and some are seeking God's guidance. Others simply want to draw closer and hear God's voice.

Whatever season you're in, we cannot follow God's leading if we have not learned to listen and recognize God's voice in our daily lives.

This week, we will prepare through simple practices—Scripture reading, prayer, reflection, and awareness. These practices help us become attentive so that we are ready to recognize God's voice more clearly.

As we prepare together, may God form in us a listening heart—one ready to receive, respond, and follow.

Peace and blessings,  
Pastor Susan

## **Week 1 — Preparing to Listen**

**Be Strong and Courageous in Prayer**

*Strength and courage in prayer begin with:  
ATTENTIVENESS*

## DAY 1 — Choosing Availability

### Morning Devotional

#### Scripture (NLT)

“This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid...” — Joshua 1:9

#### Reflection

Strength and courage in prayer do not begin with action. They begin with availability.

Before we ask God for direction, we learn to show up. Before we seek clarity, we practice presence.

Availability is a courageous posture. It says, “Here I am, even before I know what comes next.”

Today, simply begin—present to God as you are.

#### Breath Prayer

Inhale: Here I am

Exhale: I am with You

#### Closing Invitation

Today’s practice is availability.

This is the first strength required for courageous prayer - staying present with God..

## Midday Embodied Prayer: Upright Spine

### Posture

Sit or stand upright—alert but not tense.

This posture reflects quiet strength.

### Practice

Notice resistance without engaging it.

Let God remain the center of your attention.

### Evening Examen

- Where did I notice resistance today?
- How did I respond?
- Where did I sense God’s steadiness?

Rest in God’s presence.

## DAY 2 — Training Attention

### Morning Devotional

#### Scripture (NLT)

“Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.”

- 1 Samuel 3:9

#### Reflection

Listening is not passive.

It is a courageous choice to pay attention.

Much of prayer is not about hearing something new, but about noticing what is stirring within us - our thoughts, emotions, distractions and our longings.

Attention is a spiritual muscle.

It grows through practice.

Today, the invitation is simple: NOTICE

#### Breath Prayer

Inhale: Speak, Lord

Exhale: I am listening

#### Closing Invitation

Today, practice attention.

This strengthens your ability to remain courageous in prayer throughout the day.

## Midday Embodied Prayer: Seated Stillness

### Posture

Sit comfortably with your spine upright.

Let your hands rest easily.

### Notice

- What emotions surface?
- What thoughts repeat themselves?

Allow them to pass without engagement, just notice.

### Evening Examen

- Where did I notice God’s nearness today?
- Where did I feel unsettled or distant?
- What might God be inviting me to notice?

Entrust these reflections to God.

## DAY 3 — Holding the Questions

### Morning Devotional

#### Scripture (NLT)

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding.”

- Proverbs 3:5

#### Reflection

Strong and courageous prayer does not rush clarity.

As we enter this season, you are invited to hold deeper questions - questions about direction, calling, purpose and how God goes with you.

They help us resist narrowing prayer to a single outcome or a wish list, but instead invite us to remain open to God’s larger work.

#### Breath Prayer

Inhale: I trust You

Exhale: I will wait

#### Closing Invitation

Today, practice patience. Move slowly through the day. Engage in an experience that requires waiting.

This is courage - remaining faithful without forcing answers.

## Midday Embodied Prayer: Hands at the Heart

### Posture

Place one or both hands gently over your heart and hold it there a few minutes longer than feels comfortable.

This posture reflects attentiveness, listening from the center and waiting on the Lord.

### Practice

Bring to mind one of the questions you are carrying.

Hold it quietly before God.

### Evening Examen

- What questions stayed with me today?
- Did I notice God meeting me in the waiting?
- What invitation feels present, even if unclear?

Rest in God’s timing.

## DAY 4 — Noticing Interior Movements

### Morning Devotional

#### Scripture (NLT)

“Search me, O God, and know my heart.”

- Psalm 139:23

#### Reflection

Prayer often reveals movement before it reveals direction.

Some moments draw us toward peace, trust and love. Others leave us unsettled, heavy or distracted.

Strength and courage in prayer include learning to notice these movements - without fear.

Awareness helps us recognize what is shaping us.

#### Breath Prayer

Inhale: Light of God

Exhale: Guide me

#### Closing Invitation

Today, practice awareness of movements toward God or away from God.

This strengthens your ability to pray with honesty and courage.

## Midday Embodied Prayer: Grounded Stance

### Posture

Stand or sit with both feet planted firmly on the floor.

Feel the support beneath you. Think about God as your firm and solid foundation.

This posture reflects steadiness - being present without rushing.

### Notice

- Where does your attention go easily?
- Where does it drift?

Gently return your attention back to God.

## Evening Examen

- Where did I notice God today?
- When did I feel especially attentive - or distracted?
- What helped me return?

Offer these moments to God.

## DAY 5 — Remaining Steady in Resistance

### Morning Devotional

#### Scripture (NLT)

“Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.” - 1 Peter 5:8

#### Reflection

When prayer deepens, resistance often appears.

Distraction, discouragement or self-criticism do not necessarily mean something is wrong. They often surface when we are paying attention.

Courage in prayer includes learning not to give every inner voice authority.

#### Breath Prayer

Inhale: You are with me

Exhale: I remain in You

#### Closing Invitation

Today, practice steadiness in God’s peace and promises. This is how courage is formed when prayer feels contested.

## Midday Embodied Prayer: Open Hands

### Posture

Stand or sit comfortably.

If it feels accessible, open your hands with palms facing upward.

This posture has long been associated with receptivity in prayer - not striving or grasping, but an openness to receive what God has for you.

### Notice

- What does it feel like to hold your hands open?
- Where do you sense ease? Where do you sense resistance?

Let your body participate in prayer.

## Evening Examen

- In what ways were you available today?
- Where did you notice God today?
- Was there a moment that felt like a “*God moment*” - small or subtle?
- What are you carrying into tomorrow?

Rest in God’s presence.

## DAY 6 — Integrating the Week

### Reflection

Take time to look back over the week.

- Where did you notice God most clearly?
- Which prayer posture helped you pray and resonated most honestly?
- What questions or themes are emerging for you?
- What are you carrying into tomorrow?

**Notes/Noticings from this week:**

## DAY 7 — Sabbath Rest

### Scripture (NLT)

“In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.” — Isaiah 30:15

### Reflection

Today: Rest. Worship. Receive.

Strength and courage in prayer are sustained by Sabbath rest.

### Optional:

Write a prayer letter to God as you close this week and prepare for the week to come.