

**February 1, 2024 Allegheny West Letter to Prayer Point People**



Recently my husband and I attended a prayer summit in Columbus, Ohio. Our speaker Reverend Doctor Madeline Carrasco Henners from United Theological Seminary was used mightily by the Lord to truly pierce my heart!

In a passage I'm sure we are all familiar with, Madeline shared about that amazing moment when Christ "gave up His Spirit" on the cross:

Matthew 27:50-52

<sup>50</sup> And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.

<sup>51</sup> At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split <sup>52</sup> and the tombs broke open."

I've always read that passage, touched by the fact that the curtain was ripped from top to bottom (from heaven to earth), by the Father's hand, allowing entrance to the Holy of Holies. What I have not thought about before was the position we often choose to maintain, even though that curtain has been torn. Sometimes, I find myself happily smiling at the entrance of the threshold, so grateful that the Father has torn the curtain, admiring the beauty of the Holy of Holies...but NOT entering in. Aughh! He's gone to all that trouble, and I am content to comfortably sit in the waiting room, appreciating the open door, marveling at the beauty of His Majesty, awed by His glory, but NOT entering into His Presence, into the Holy of Holies, into the daily intimacy with my Lord that He so desires.

I would like to challenge each of us this month to enter the Holy of Holies, not presumptuously, but humbly, gratefully, with a posture of submission and obedience.

For those of you who have a face-to-face prayer time, please pray about using this passage to ask your prayer team to reflect on these verses and consider what it means for them to enter the Holy of Holies. You might have them pair-share after reading and reflecting or share in small groups before the time of prayer.

In addition to the Wesleyan Covenant Prayer Guide attached, below are some ways to pray this month for your particular church family:

1. Pray for your pastor! (Pray for protection, for his/her walk with the Lord to go higher and deeper daily, for vision for the future of your congregation).
2. Pray the Lord would raise up encouragers who would use their spiritual gifts in leadership within your congregation.
3. Pray for young people to be welcomed and invited in creative ways to enter your church doors and participate in the Body of Christ.
4. Pray the Word of God would be shared in and out of the service in your church family by your Pastor(s), Sunday School Teachers, Youth Leaders, and the Priesthood of all believers!