



PRAYERS FOR OUR CITY

RAISE THE MARK PRAYER GUIDE

Pray for our church to be a light.

As our city sits in the midst of a war zone, pray that we would be diligent in helping people heal and pointing them to the hope that we have in Christ. Pray that we would have the words to winsomely engage confused coworkers and members of our community who are asking questions of God. Pray that Watermark would be a light to Dallas, Plano, Fort Worth and the world.

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden." (Matthew 5:14)

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:5)

"May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 15:5-6)

"Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity." (Colossians 3:13-14)

Pray for those who have lost loved ones.

To lose someone you love is very difficult. To lose them unexpectedly to gunfire of any kind is heartbreaking. Pray that we would respond to any death with compassion and love. Ask God to comfort those who mourn. Pray that His church would come around them and help in this time of hurt and sadness.

"The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." (Psalm 34:18)

"Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope." (1 Thessalonians 4:13)

"He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." (Revelation 21:4)

Pray for reconciliation of all people.

We know that all people are made in the image of God and given value by Him. His church is one of many colors and races. Pray that His Holy Spirit would rid our hearts of any and all racism, prejudices, or anything in us that is not like Christ. Pray that we would see all people as God sees them. Pray that we would not respond to the events presented by the media out of our own biases, but by earnestly seeking what the Lord would have us do.

"So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:27)

"From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands." (Acts 17:26)

"There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28)

"But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers." (James 2:9)

Pray for wisdom and safety for our law-enforcement and city leaders.

The men and women who watch over our cities risk their lives every day. Pray for our police officers, Mayor, and city leaders. Pray that they would know the Lord and operate in ways consistent with His character. Pray that they would know right from wrong, act accordingly, and be seen as men and women who do good. Pray that they would be safe as they fight on the frontlines against evil. Pray for their families to know and trust the Lord and have His peace.

"Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain." (Psalm 127:1)

"Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God." (Romans 13:1)

"For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer." (Romans 13:4)

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." (Matthew 5:9)

Pray for our church as we mourn the death of our friend.

We miss our friend and faithful servant, Officer Mike Smith. Even when serving here as part of his job, he understood loving people was the best way to protect and serve them. He along with the dozens of Dallas Police officers who are part of our Watermark family are humble, tender warriors who run to trouble and are a gift to our city. Pray for his wife, Hedi, and girls, Victoria and Caroline.

"So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy." (John 16:22)

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." (Matthew 5:4)

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." (2 Timothy 4:7)

MESSAGE FROM TODD

It is approaching midnight in Dallas but darkness fell hours ago in my city.

At least two snipers in elevated positions fired "ambush-style" on officers, killing five and wounding at least six others. At least one of them is a personal friend, brother in Christ, and member of Watermark. Videos are flying on social media that make downtown Dallas look like a war zone.

It is a war zone. It always has been.

Tonight, the war has become horribly visible, but every hour of every day an invisible war has long been ongoing for the souls of the citizens and therefore for the city and country that we as its citizens create.

As part of that war, darkness has been growing in our country because for some time leaders and citizens alike have mocked the light that God in His kindness *"has brought into this world, which alone enlightens every man"* (John 1:9).

While the sadness of these events will continue, surprise that they are happening should not.

We reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7). We have sown unwisely, and so now we weep bitterly. But we should not be shocked. Darkness breeds sadness. To paraphrase a wise man, "We have made men without chests and have still expected from them virtue and enterprise. We have laughed at honor and are shocked to find traitors in our midst." Peace is abolished because of the abolition of man.

We should not be shocked. And we, as God's people, should not despair.

This trouble is not surprising or overwhelming to the spiritually appraised. Jesus has told us that we would have trouble in this world, and He has reminded us that He has overcome it (John 16:33). Our privilege as His people is to be an expression of His light in this city, confident that the darkness ultimately will not overpower it (John 1:5).

Proof of that truth is manifesting itself even as shots continue to ring out a short distance from here where I write. The church is already coming together, leading, providing hope, and working to be God's light and reminder of God's way. This is how we will return to peace, begin to reconcile, and learn to love one another again.

It is in dark times like these that the light of God's love is most needed, and it is in dark times like these that it can most easily be seen. I am praying the increasingly constant darkness makes men long for the light.

A few short days ago, I posted this on my Twitter time line:

"Good and upright is the Lord. He instructs sinners in the way. He leads the humble in justice, and he teaches the humble His way." (Psalm 25:8-9)

Because that tweet was God's Word, it will not quickly fade away like some inane fact about some soon-to-be irrelevant Hollywood star on a constantly refreshing time line. Because it is constantly refreshing eternal Truth, it is as relevant today as when it was first written and when it was last tweeted.

The sun will soon rise in Dallas, and when it does I will rise with it and go to war again by walking in the light of God's Word and doing all I can to invite a startled city and nation to that eternal Truth, which is their only hope. I am not shaken. I am not shocked. I am saddened, and I am certain that the church is the hope of the world. If you are a part of it...rise with me and serve your risen King. The future of your country and the eternity of the citizens that comprise it are at stake.

Make war. *"Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord."* (1 Corinthians 15:58)

"Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love." (1 Corinthians 16:13-14)



Todd Wagner