



# On Your Mark!

*Connecting in prayer at the AVC*

"Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us" (Hebrews 12:1)

February 2006

## Connect

1st & 3rd *Sundays*, 6:00–7:30pm—  
Unveiled (Auditorium)

2nd *Sundays*, 8:30–10:00am—  
Prophetic Roundtable (youth room)

Every *Sunday*, 9:30–10:15am—Pre-  
service prayer (Prayer Room)

Every *Monday*, 1:00–2:00pm—  
Prayer for the Atlanta Vineyard  
(Prayer Room) 770-925-8823

Every *Tuesday*, 7:00–8:00am—  
Father's Heart prayer (Café)

1st *Tuesdays*, 6:00–8:00pm— Pray  
with clients at Norcross Co-op (2275  
Mitchell Rd, Norcross), 770-274-  
1010 ext. 23

Every *Wednesday*, 6:30–6:50pm—  
Bless the Building (Café)

Every *Wednesday*, 7:00–8:30pm—  
Prayer classes (Jan 11th–Mar 1st)

Every *Wednesday*, 9:00pm—Pray  
with Frank & Sandra (Duluth), 770-  
935-8098

Every *Thursday*, 11:15am—Prayer  
for Families (Higher Ground Coffee  
House, Duluth) 770-886-5644

Every *Thursday*, 7:00–7:30pm—  
Prayer for re:vision (Prayer Room)  
404-275-0927

*Most days* (call for times)—Pray w/  
patients at Good Samaritan Health  
Center (Duluth) 404-512-4340

## Genuine faith

"For a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith . . . may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed." (1 Peter 1:6–7)

## Living From My Sermon Notes

### *Someone who might sit near you . . . Anonymous per author's request!*

This past Christmas, my family had one of those "Yuk!" experiences that Johnny's always preparing us for when the holiday season is coming upon us. We decided to venture out of our safe little home and travel to spend Christmas with family. I'm always a little hesitant when it comes to time around relatives, as growing-up in a family of divorce resulted in much family tension, especially around the holidays. But we enthusiastically hit the road, enjoying the diversion a little family adventure like that can provide.

All seemed to be going well the first couple of days . . . and then it all blew up. Literally. Late Christmas Eve I found myself watching the home of a family in the neighborhood where we were staying burn down. The prevailing thought was that their golf cart recharging in the garage had exploded. The entire house was engulfed in flames within minutes. Thankfully, all got out safely, but I felt compelled to stay with the family as they stood there watching their house burn down. I quickly became aware that they had no support network in the neighborhood as they had just moved in this past Fall. All in my family were either sleeping or on their way out for the evening, so I wasn't being pulled away from them. When I finally got in bed that night, my thoughts centered around what we could do the next day to support this family. Little did I know that a "fire" had been brewing that very night within one of my own family members.

Christmas day was like none other. The details of what happened don't really matter. It usually comes down to the same story: unspoken, unmet, unrealistic expectations → a raging verbal "fire". I was the recipient of another's pent up anger. That's not new in my family but, it had been years since I'd experienced anything similar and I had no indication the "fire" had even started. By the time I was exposed to it, it was already an "inferno." It took me a minute or two to see through the "smoke," and regretfully I said a couple of things I wished I hadn't. But, as the "fire" raged, something within me decided to stop trying to fight it and to just let it burn. I'm not saying it was easy. It wasn't. I'm still warding off my natural desire to "fight fire with fire," but when I purposefully made that mental shift, my sermon notes from the last several Sundays started popping into my head. I thought of all God said through Jack Frost re: Law vs. Grace (Galatians 5:16-26) and about Johnny's sermon on the book of Ruth. How he challenged us to obey God in spite of our feelings (Ruth 3:5). At that very moment, I was being given the opportunity to live by what God said through John Rowell, i.e., Fear not . . . don't be afraid of your own inadequacies in the face of whatever God has called you to do and be (Luke 1:30). God was right there with me, in the midst of the "raging fire," reminding me that His Son had already done the work on the cross for the sins of all mankind . . . past, present, and future. I didn't need to fight back. I didn't need vengeance. Instead, I was granted the privilege of being God's vessel, offering love instead of hate. For those few fleeting moments, I saw through God's eyes and what I saw had nothing to do with what was happening on the surface. It never really does, does it?

Frankly, what I did was incredible for me. I not only apologized for whatever my part was in the conflict (which I still really didn't understand at that point), but I also offered a heart of love both verbally and physically to the "firestarter", who by the way is not a Christian. It didn't stop the "fire" from hurting me but at least I wasn't "throwing fuel on the fire". That had to have been God working in me. It's only through His Holy Spirit that we can live on a "higher level", as Jack Frost called it. Only through His power can we step outside our own self-centeredness to see the brokenness that's all around us and offer comfort.

Oh, and just in case you're feeling any pity for how Christmas turned out for my family, no worry. Although we're not thrilled to be able to confirm that Asian restaurants are definitely the only ones open on Christmas day, we were very blessed by just being together, full of hope, health and great anticipation for the New Year ahead! Even better yet is that within a day of submitting this for editing, I received a letter from my family member asking for forgiveness. Very unusual indeed! I can't help but relate back to watching that house burn down. Sometimes you just have to let the "fire" burn and turn to the All Knowing One who can truly comfort.

## Prayer for Families

Every Thursday, 11:15am–12:15pm, Higher Grounds Coffee House, 10900 Medlock Bridge Rd, Duluth

The focus of this prayer gathering is to pray for families. We'll be using books by Stormie Omartian and Ted Haggard. All women are welcome!

Contact: Kathy Carnahan, 770-886-5644, [kathy@kyrosity.com](mailto:kathy@kyrosity.com)

## The body of Christ needs you!

Regardless of your:

- Gifts
- Talents
- Schedule
- Experience

there is a place for you to serve in the prayer & prophetic ministries of the Atlanta Vineyard.

Let me know if you're interested!

Contact: Karen Sculley, 404-388-0518, [karen.sculley@atlantavineyard.com](mailto:karen.sculley@atlantavineyard.com)

## Father's Heart (for men AND women)

Every Tuesday, 7:00am, Café Vineyard

The Father's Heart prayer group meets every Tuesday morning to lift up prayer needs of the AVC. Johnny Crist leads prayer for the Atlanta Vineyard and the city of Atlanta. Everyone is welcome!

Contact: [Johnny Crist](mailto:johnny.crist@atlantavineyard.com), 770-274-1010, [johnny.crist@atlantavineyard.com](mailto:johnny.crist@atlantavineyard.com)

### *Prayer classes – Wednesday nights, 7:00–8:30pm*

Please join us for some great teaching, discussion, and prayer time at our winter prayer classes.

**Feb 8th – “A River Runs Through Us--Praying Prophetically”** [Karen Sculley in panel discussion with David & Melanie Patton and David & Nancy Diggs]

**Feb 15th – “Living on the Razor's Edge--Praying for Leaders”** [Kathy Carnahan]

**Feb 22nd – “Once Upon a Time--Praying with Your Kids”** [Karen Sculley in panel discussion with Jim Roberson, Ginger Rowell, and Susan Derderian]

**Mar 1st – “Just Do It--Healing the Way Jesus Did It”** [Mike Shepherd]

## A Little Inspiration . . .

“Real prayer is  
life creating and  
life changing.”

**Richard Foster**  
*The Disciplines of Prayer*

