The Weekly Prayer List - An Overview

Having a weekly prayer list that is current and inclusive of all who need prayers is a necessity for the life of any congregation and is an integral part of the weekly service at St. John. In recent years we have transitioned from short yet impersonal statements during the prayers of "and those on our prayer list" to a list that includes both the immediate (e.g., people entering the hospital or dealing with the loss of a loved one) and folks who need prayers on an ongoing basis. We have also adopted the custom of reading aloud the first name of all those on our prayer list, which is a thoughtful, reverent way for us together to deliberately offer our prayers to each individual.

Behind the weekly prayer list in the bulletin is a spreadsheet maintained by the office that contains the date when someone's name was first added, who requested the name, and (when provided) the details of why the person is on the prayer list. The office in concert with Pastor Richard periodically reviews the list and when questions arise, reach out to the person who requested the name be added to ensure the person being prayed for should in fact remain on the list.

Because we have both immediate and longer-term individuals listed, our prayer list can appear to be long - some folks have commented that it is even too long and contributes to the services running longer than planned. The thing is, a prayer list is never too short or too long; it is the length it needs to be to serve its purpose - to pray for individuals in need of our prayers. If there are two individuals who need the prayers of the congregation, then we offer up their names in prayer. If there are twenty-two individuals who need the prayers of the congregation, then we offer up their names in prayer! Even with the names being read thoughtfully and deliberately, it takes less than a minute to pray for the folks on our prayer list. We strongly believe this is a critical aspect of the prayer life of our congregation and feel it helps distinguish us as a community of faith.

We wanted to provide some background and context on the **what and why behind our current practice of the prayer list** and hope this helps answer any questions you may have regarding the prayer list. **We welcome *all* requests** to add someone to the list and are happy to accommodate requests for privacy (hence the use of first names only in some cases) as well as the length someone remains on the list.

If you have any further questions or comments, please feel free to reach out to Pastor Richard or Mike Ripley.