



The Shield

January 2025 edition
Praying for the
Canadian Military Community



Happy New Year

“First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 1 Timothy 2:1-4 (ESV)

Every month, we offer prayer suggestions linked to our military and the world around it. Our mission at the MCF is to bring the gospel to our military community and those who support them. We will continue to do that, but we want to adjust our focus on the world and ourselves this month.

Let’s start the New Year by praying for our leaders. The following prayer is borrowed from the Presbyterian Church of Canada.

Pray: Almighty God, creator, governor, and guide. You are the source of all wisdom and justice. You call us to set our minds on the politics of your kingdom and on justice before all things. Give us courage and energy at this time to think for ourselves and to search for truth.

Guide us with your Spirit as we discern how to support our political leaders as part of our responsibility to build your kingdom. Give us the grace to disagree in love with neighbours whose views differ from ours so that without anger or ridicule, we may find common ground on those issues that threaten to divide us.

Give those elected leaders the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the courage to form laws that are just and life-giving, the strength to serve diligently and with honesty, and the desire to govern for the common good through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

(Taken from <https://presbyterian.ca/worship/occasional-prayers/>)

FRESH START

As we pray for the various ministries, we want to ensure we are in the right mind set to see the world as God does. The evil one likes to poke and remind us of how human we are and will point out past failures to pressure us into thinking we are not worthy of being loved by God, let alone praying for others. The notes below are intended to help us have a fresh start in our relationship with God, giving us a fresh perspective on why we are praying.

*“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!
Isaiah 43:18-19a (NIV)*

Some of us have made many mistakes in our lives as Christians. We have experienced many setbacks and failures throughout our lives. So, a new year is a good time to put the past behind us and set our eyes on new things. We should never allow these mistakes, setbacks, and failures to enslave us to the point that we are captive to the past.

In **John 10:10**, Jesus shares, *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.”*

He says that there is an adversary, the Devil, which seeks to kill and destroy that life. The Devil will continuously remind us of our past to keep us from enjoying the life that God gave us to live. The Devil does not want us to have a fresh start in life; he wants to keep us captive to our old life.

The good news is God wants us to have a new beginning. He wants us to do something new in our lives. God wants us to have a new start in life. We want to enter 2025 with a renewed mindset to truly embrace the need to join us on the mission as we pray and reach out to our military community.

May we make these suggestions as to how to START fresh for 2025.

S - Stop making excuses.

Regardless of your failures this past year, you can start new this year. If you want a fresh start, you must stop making excuses for your failures. You have to stop blaming other people. You have to stop seeing yourself as the victim of your circumstances.

Other people can hurt us and do us harm. But the only person that can ruin our life is ourselves. Nobody can destroy your life without your permission. You have a choice; that is how you will respond to those hurts. The Bible says that the starting point is to be honest and accept responsibility for your problem.

T - Take An Inventory Of Your Life

This means you must evaluate your assets, abilities, and experiences. Take an inventory of your life's achievements regarding your life with God.

Have you experienced so much in vain—if it was in vain? Galatians 3:4

Let's learn from your mistakes. Failure can be your friend or your foe. You determine if failure will be your friend or foe by how you react to it. You can choose to learn from it and move on or choose to repeat it.

A - Act in faith

We need to look up and look out. We need to launch out into new territory. We get stagnant and mouldy if we don't grow and move ahead. The Bible says that the key to changing anything is faith. If we want to change our circumstances, it will take faith. If we want to change who we are, it takes faith.

Jesus says in Matthew 9:29b. *“According to your faith, it will be done to you.”* That means we tend to get out of life what we expect. What are you expecting in your walk with our Lord? Will you grow in your relationship with Him, or will it be the same or worse?

To start acting in faith, you have to stop having a pity party. You’ve got to stop feeling sorry for yourself. Of course, life is unfair. Whoever said it was fair? God never said that. This is a world filled with sin, and because of that, life is unfair. But you have to go on with life anyway.

You need God for guidance. Learn from the past, leave it behind, and act in faith for the future.

R - Refocus

You need to refocus your thoughts if you want to change your life.

Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it. Proverbs 4:23 (NIV)

The reality is that how you think determines how you feel. And the way you feel determines the way you act. If you want to change your actions, change how you think, which will inevitably change how you act. If you are depressed, discouraged and distressed, it may be because you’ve been thinking depressed, disheartened and distressing thoughts. That’s a choice that we have. You don’t have to think those thoughts.

T – Trust

Trust God to help you succeed. Depend on Him. We don’t need to depend on ourselves. We’ve already proven that we can’t do it on our own. That’s why we’ve failed. Some people just don’t get it. They stumble and fall, then get up and say, “I’ll just try harder!” It’s like you go up to a wall and bang your head against it, and the wall doesn’t fall. You try it again, and Bang! Again. You keep doing it thinking, “Maybe it will fall over this time.” That’s the definition of insanity – doing the same thing repeatedly and expecting different results. If we keep doing the same thing, we will get the same result.

We can’t change who we are; only God can do that. We are not speaking about the outward person but the inner person. The real person is the hidden person of the heart. Success in the Christian life is not trying harder but living more thoughtfully and giving God control of your life. Psalm 1 tells us that we do not succeed by our strength or power but by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Through Christ, we become brand-new people. We are not the same anymore. We are a new life, daily! Not just once, but daily! A new life has begun! God specializes in new beginnings. Jesus Christ has the power to do that. We are born again. We have the chance to start over. We can start fresh with a new life as we begin this New Year. God doesn’t want us to turn over a new leaf; He wants us to have a whole new life.

