

# *The Prayer Letter*

## ***New Horizon United Methodist Church***

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### **Running on Prayer: Part Four (Enjoying the Adventure)**

I have stopped running. Here I am writing the fourth and final installment of “Running on Prayer” and I have not run in a month! My plan throughout this four part series of articles was to show similarities between running and praying and I had done a good job of it up to this point, thank you. But now, for some reason, I have stopped running with no idea when I will start back again. I stopped right after the Quest 5k run the first part of September. I think me not running has something to do with the fact that I reached a couple of “goals” during the Quest run. First, I ran the race twenty seconds faster than I had run in over a decade. Secondly, I finally placed in my age division! (Of course there may have only been three in my age division and I got third, but don’t tell me if that’s really the case).

Perhaps achieving two goals at the same time was enough for me to say to myself, “Take some time off.” Or maybe I haven’t been running because I think I am too busy to exercise. What ever the reason, the motivation is not there right now. That kind of thing can happen in prayer as well.

This fourth installment of “Running on Prayer” is entitled, “Enjoying the Adventure.” But how can someone enjoy the adventure if they are not on the adventure? Good question. The prayer adventure can be neglected or even stopped all together unless we remain intentional about what we are doing. Even a busy schedule of doing “church work” is not really drawing us closer to God. It just keeping us busy doing good things. That is the danger of replacing a God-centered relationship with doing stuff—even taking care of a church.

Maybe your prayer life has been going good and you have gotten to a place where you never thought you would be. Since you made it to that point, something inside you eases up because you don’t think it will ever be that good again. But the truth is, it’s only a beginning.

Some things to remember about enjoying the adventure in prayer are second wind, euphoria, and an adventure run.

**Second Wind-** There comes a point in running when you have stayed with it long enough that your body no longer hurts the way it did. Your legs feel stronger and you can run with more ease. The similar thing happens in prayer when we are willing to center in and not allow distractions to bother us. We can focus more on the time spent with God. When we get to that point, it seems easier and less “painful.”

**Euphoria-** Occasionally there is a moment in running when you breakthrough into a state of euphoria where you feel like you could run all day long. “Euphoria” is a Greek word that means “the power to endure easily.” There are also times in prayer when the connection is so strong with God that you feel that you could stay there all day or all night in prayer.

**Adventure Run-** The adventure run is when you chart a course and run, possibly for days, over a challenging course—maybe from one mountain top to another. You can take adventure runs in prayer as well by starting at one point and praying until you reach another point. It may be a 12 or 24 hour prayer vigil or it may be to simply to continue praying for something until you get the answer from God. Either way it is quite an adventure.

I hope that you are challenged to seriously begin Running on Prayer. Remember, the first part is the “Preparation” or how to get ready for a serious attempt at the spiritual discipline of prayer. This second part is “Getting Started” or how do you actually begin praying in an intentional way. The third part is about “Avoiding Injuries and Other Pitfalls” that can happen while we move through prayer. All to this leads up to “Enjoying the Adventure” of prayer. So, don’t stop. Keep on “Running on Prayer!”

I love you and continue to pray for you,



*“God does nothing but in answer to prayer; and even they who have been converted to God without praying for it themselves, (which is exceeding rare,) were not without the prayers of others. Every new victory which a soul gains is the effect of a new prayer.”*

**John Wesley** in Vol. XI, p. 437 (5).

