A Guide for Gratitude, Prayer and Reflection
Mission Health’s Department of Spiritual Care strongly believes in the power of unity. It is inspiring to see team members and colleagues banding together amid the challenges and threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and we are grateful for the community’s support offered to members of our healthcare team.

Though social distancing and self-isolation may limit personal interactions, team member and community engagement are vital to the success of our mission to care for the health of the people and communities of western North Carolina. Unity of spirit equips us individually and collectively with resilience, perseverance and hope to overcome any challenge. In other words, we are stronger together.

Often, people ask how they can give gratitude and pray for members of our Mission Health team who are on the front lines of the pandemic. If you use social media, we encourage you to post a note of gratitude on your channels and use the hashtag #MissionUs and tag @MissionHealth in your post. Here are some thoughtful prayer and gratitude suggestions:
• Pray for and give thanks to any team member who is providing direct care for suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients. Pray that they have peace and infuse them with strength for this calling. Shower them with protection and gratitude as they fear for their own health and that of their families and grant them a calm and wise spirit. Pray they carry out their duties with great compassion and skill and that they are mightily used as the “hands and feet” of healing.

• Lift up first responders, EMS and Regional Transport personnel, the MAMA flight crews and MedCom teams as they facilitate and transport movement and treatment of the ill and injured throughout western North Carolina. May they travel safely, act skillfully and be kept healthy and safe from exposure to the virus and other dangers.
Pray for nurses, CNAs and medical assistants as they provide direct care to all patients. Pray for their own health and energy during tiring and demanding shifts. Pray that they work well together as a team and support each other, particularly as units combine or expand according to need. Keep their minds sharp, their bodies well and their hearts overflowing with empathy as they care for the sick. We are mindful that these nurses and caregivers are concerned about their own families and loved ones during the crisis. Give them peace and help remind us to give them thanks.

Remember physicians and mid-level providers who are tasked with attending to the care of many patients during long shifts. Pray for wisdom, insight and clarity of thought as they diagnose and treat so many different patients, each with individual needs. We are especially mindful of, and grateful for, the decisions they may have to make if healthcare resources are stretched thin due to this pandemic.
• Pray for **respiratory care professionals** who administer breathing treatments and who care for patients who are on ventilators during their hospital stays. Let us give thanks because their work requires close contact with patients who may be very sick or are medically fragile. Grant them protection, a sharp and discerning mind as they do this skilled work, and a calming, caring demeanor.

• Pray for **pharmacy personnel** who prepare and dispense medicines and chemotherapy agents to patients being treated for all kinds of illnesses. May they match precisely the medicines requested and available with the needs of each patient.

• Lift up **housekeepers and environmental services staff**. These “unsung heroes” are frontline team members working tirelessly to ensure our patient rooms, treatment areas and other hospital locations are properly cleaned to prevent spread of infection. Pray that they are mindful of the dangers, skilled in the work and well-recognized for the vital role they play on the team.

• Hold the **materials management personnel** in your thanks, thoughts and prayers. Their behind-the-scenes work is vital to accomplishing our mission. From toilet paper to the most delicate piece of technology, they provide the tools and supplies to provide care to patients across the organization. Pray that as they seek to secure supplies they are successful, as they receive and deliver supplies that they are swift and protected from the physical dangers of moving great volumes of materials, and as they assess the needs that they are discerning and wise.

• Remember **food and nutrition services** team members who are working constantly to provide nutritious and delicious food for patients and staff while managing hundreds of specific dietary needs.
• Pray for **laundry workers** who tackle mountains of sheets, blankets, pillowcases, gowns and scrubs daily. As their workload increases with the provision of scrubs to COVID-19 frontline staff, may they do their work with a joyful heart, knowing they are serving their teammates and their community well. We are grateful for their care.

• Remember **maintenance and facility services staff** who literally “keep the lights on” and all our systems running smoothly, no small task given the size of our facilities. Thank you for your service of protection.

• **Health Unit Coordinators (HUCs), administrative assistants, department secretaries, schedulers and coordinators** need our thoughts and thankful prayers, too. They are the “detail” people who do a thousand different things in a day, allowing departments and units to run smoothly and for patients, families and staff to receive the support they need. Pray these “superheroes” utilize their “superpowers” well as they multitask.

• **Monitor techs** are some of the first to notice if a patient is having difficulty. May their perceptions be sharp and their responses quick.

• Lift up in prayer and give thanks to **phlebotomists and lab technicians** who receive and process thousands of samples, specimens and diagnostic tests each day. Pray that reliable COVID-19 testing options become more readily available and that those processing these tests are protected from harm, skilled in performance and swift in duty.

• Remember **behavioral health staff**, whose work to care for persons with mental illness and addiction is complicated by the heightened level of anxiety throughout our community. Give thanks for their patience and resilience and pray protection over their physical being.
• Hold the **information technology staff** in your thoughts of gratitude and prayer as they manage computer and technology issues, protect electronic data and systems, and support telecommunications needs across the system. Nothing is more frustrating than technology not working properly. Pray that others will be patient and helpful, that the IT team will be able to respond quickly, provide resolution of issues and implement creative alternatives as we face challenges to the ways we usually do business and provide care. In the midst of multiple demands, help them prioritize appropriately and give strength to team members for the demands of this day.

• Pray for **administrators and executives** both locally and corporately, that they have the discernment to make wise strategic decisions on behalf of team members and for the health of all the people in western North Carolina.
• Remember the hospital security staff who are constantly working to provide a safe and secure environment and who readily step forward when challenges present. Pray for their protection as they work to keep the hospital and its staff and patients safe from threats known and unknown.

• Lift up and give thanks for new employees. Starting any new job is stressful, but being a new employee in a hospital in these days of crisis brings a whole new level of stress. Pray these courageous ones will learn quickly, be supported well and bring a spark of inspiration to their teams.

• Pray for and encourage the family members of patients who are currently unable to visit their loved ones due to COVID-19 restrictions. Pray they find solace in knowing that their patient’s caregivers – from the nurse, to the housekeeper, and food and nutrition staff – will do all they can to be a comfort and a supportive presence in their absence.
• **Care managers, social workers and discharge planners** work to assure continuity of care after patients leave Mission. As they face challenges with making appropriate placements, pray that barriers will be removed and that patients will have safe places to go to continue their recovery. Give thanks to this important resource.

• Remember our **finance, business services, coding and billing staff** too. Often a thankless job, these team members keep the hospital running by doing everything from paying the bills and filing insurance to collecting payments and ensuring our financial position is secure so that patients continue to have access to care, employees are paid and the doors remain open. Pray they will perform their duties with accuracy and skill as we recognize the important role they play.

• Lift up and give a smile to our **guest services and entrance screeners**. Pray that as these team members conduct temperature checks and ask questions of those seeking entry into the facilities, they will have good discernment and act with skill and kindness.

• The **office of decedent affairs** staff works to assist families following the death of a loved one. They provide information and assistance with regards to options concerning autopsy, anatomical donation and funeral home/crematory decisions. Pray that there will not be an increased need for their services. When they are needed, we ask that they act with great empathy, compassion and skill as they assist families and care for the deceased.

• **Educators and professional development staff** are working to ensure team members are equipped to embrace new or unfamiliar processes, coping mechanisms and changes to routine workflows. Ask that they impart knowledge so that team members are confident in their ability to perform duties safely.
• **Disease-specific teams (Heart Path, Diabetes, Wound Care, Genetics, Stroke, Cancer Services, Infusion, Sleep Lab, Weight Management and others)** help patients with the challenges of a new or existing diagnosis and the treatment, education and lifestyle changes required to heal or optimize their health. Pray they are creative in supporting these medically challenged patients during times when their usual means and methods are unavailable or limited.

• Lift up and give thanks to the **surgical services and procedure teams**. May they be focused and precise in their work. In these days when visitors are not allowed, pray that they impart comfort and reassurance to patients and families alike to calm fears and instill confidence.

• Give thanks to our **sterile processing team members** as they ensure our instruments are properly cleaned and repackaged for use. They are also the ones tasked with processing PPE for reuse should the need occur. Pray they will have access to and utilize best practices for doing so, as they work daily to ensure a safe environment for patients and team members.

• **Medical staff office employees** support the medical staff and ensure that providers are properly credentialed and have the required qualifications to practice. Pray that they will be mindful of and responsive to the needs of our physicians and other providers in these very challenging days.

• Our **health information management (medical records) team** works behind the scenes playing a vital role as they process thousands of records daily, preserving patient information to be retrieved as needed. Pray that they work efficiently and effectively should the patient surge come and that they will have renewed energy for the task.
• Our **human resources team** is tasked with recruiting and on-boarding new team members as well as supporting existing team members and leadership. During this time when staffing is greatly affected and many employee routines and benefits are impacted, pray that they are a voice of clarity and can process and relay information accurately.

• Remember our **child development center staff** who care for our employees’ most precious little ones. Amid the concerns of COVID-19, may they provide a haven of safety and security for these children as they play, learn and grow. We are grateful for their presence.

• Staff in **quality, safety, infection prevention, risk management and patient experience** are tasked with working alongside team members to ensure the environment is safe, our protocols are best practice and patient experience is exceptional. In this time when there is an avalanche of information to process and challenges to meet, pray they will have wisdom and strength for the task.
• Our **telehealth team** offers continued medical care when in-person visits are not possible or advised. Pray for any technology and access challenges as they seek to meet the increased demand for this service. Ask that providers and patients use this method well and appropriately and give thanks for their extra effort in these challenging days.

• The work of our **radiology team** offers vital information to assist with diagnosis and treatment of patients. Pray they will perform their duties with skill and compassion.

• Remember our **staff health team members**. WorkWell is our go-to department for team members who have possible exposure or symptoms. Pray for wisdom and good critical thinking skills as they make assessments and that they are able to provide compassionate care and lessen stress for affected team members.

• Lift up our **palliative care team** as they help patients and families with goals of care to ensure the provision of treatment is consistent with the patient’s desires. Pray they have insight into how to best present options with great compassion and clarity.
• Lift up our **women’s and children’s teams** as they support expectant and new moms and babies, children and our most fragile little ones. For these teams and their patients, the COVID-19 presents unanticipated hardships and compounded concerns. Pray that these team members are able to reassure and comfort patients and their families who may or may not be present and foster an exceptional experience despite the challenges.

• **Transfer Center, Mission Care Coordination Center and patient access** are the “air traffic controllers,” “ticketing agents” and “gate attendants” who ensure patients are appropriately registered and are able to access the care they need at Mission. Pray that they have clarity of thought, utilize best practice and skill in decision making and have renewed strength to negotiate this time of crisis well.

• **Access control** literally opens the doors to Mission daily. Their work ensures team members, contractors, vendors and others are properly identified and have access to the places and supplies they need. Pray that as employees float to other units and are redeployed, they will work efficiently and skillfully to grant access appropriately.

• **Physical, occupational and speech therapists** help patients regain skills for independent living. May they be encouraged in their work by the gratitude of others and may they draw forth the best from their patients.

• **Couriers, patient transporters and shuttle van drivers** ensure people and equipment get where they need to go quickly and safely. Pray for them during this busy time.
• Remember family members of our hospital staff who are often of two minds: concerned about the active part their loved one is playing on the front lines of the battle against sickness, and also proud of their unwavering dedication in the face of this challenging and frightening pandemic. Many are taking care of the “home front” while their loved one steps into battle. Pray for peace and provision for their needs, known and unknown.

• Advanced care planners assist patients with access to and preparation of advanced directive documents to ensure their wishes for care are known. Pray that this team partners well with nurses, patients and families to accomplish their mission.

• Our gift and bean shop teams provide that “pick-me-up” we all need from time to time. Whether it is our morning coffee, a bit of chocolate or a gift for self or friend, they are always right on time with just the perfect thing! We pray that they may be swift to serve as they help team members and others be resilient.

• Volunteer engagement manages our nonpaid volunteer service team. During this time, when volunteers are unable to be on-site, this team is focusing on initiatives to support volunteers at home and team members on campus. Pray this is done well and effectively.

• Chaplains provide spiritual support and help for patients, families and staff members in difficult situations. Cover this team with your prayers for energy, insight and wisdom as they seek to embody the peace and presence of the Holy throughout the medical center.

• The emergency operations center serves as the central hub for addressing plans and operations during this time of crisis. Lift up team members who serve here for renewed strength, wisdom, good critical thinking skills and an ability to communicate effectively during these long, stressful days.
• We lift up our CarePartners Rehab Hospital, Asheville Specialty Hospital, home health, PACE Program, Hospice Programs and all others who provide specialized care to assist patients and families with medical and care challenges outside the acute care setting. Help these team members see and respond to the unique needs of those with whom they work, and may their compassion and effectiveness not be hindered by the additional challenges they face.

• All others not specifically listed are no less important as we all strive, together, to accomplish our mission to improve the health of the people of western North Carolina. Above all else, we are committed to the care and improvement of human life. Pray for peace of mind, clarity of thought, protection from harm, wisdom and renewed strength as we are undeterred in accomplishing this mission.