**Prayer Focus:**

*Exodus 8:1-4*

*Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘This is what the Lord says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. If you refuse to let them go, I will send a plague of frogs on your whole country. The Nile will teem with frogs. They will come up into your palace and your bedroom and onto your bed, into the houses of your officials and on your people, and into your ovens and kneading troughs. The frogs will come up on you and your people and all your officials.’”*

**Prelude to Prayer:**

"Eat a live frog the first thing in the morning and nothing worse will happen to you the rest of the day." ~ Mark Twain

* Lord, You’re the only God who sets His people free, going to extreme and strange lengths to do so. Thank You for weird and utterly complete Love.

* You’re the only God with a plan that runs from the Beginning to the End of time, and of me. You’re there when the starting pistol sounds, and You’re there cheering my finish at the end of the race.

* You’re never late, never busy, never absent, never indifferent. Thank You for showing up for me Every Single Time.

* Thank You for showing up for me this week when…

* I confess I sometimes get nervous that You won’t show up. Dumb, I know. You are faithful. It’s Your whole deal. Forgive my short-sightedness, my broken belief that my circumstances will somehow escape Your notice.

* Forgive me for thinking You didn’t notice when...

* Sometimes I think You aren’t showing up because I have a frog or two on my plate. I just have a gross and hard thing I have to do, and I don’t want to do it, so I blame You for it.

* Forgive my squeamishness and my faint heart. Restore to me the joy of my salvation and create a right spirit within me that trusts You to show up and help me through the frogs.

* I also get angry because I have frogs on my plate that I feel shouldn’t be mine to eat. They’re the result of someone else’s pride or error, and I resist just doing the hard thing because I didn’t cause it.

* Help me remember that sin isn’t an individual tab at a restaurant, but a global condition. We’re all in the muck together, so sometimes my frog gets on his plate, and her frog gets on mine. Help me forgive and ask forgiveness when that happens.

* Help me choose to respond in righteousness and mercy instead of petty accounting. Jesus took what wasn’t his to bear. I can do a hard thing now and then to lift a burden for someone else You love. Help me count that a blessing.

* It might even be that my frog isn’t about *me*, but part of a plan to bless people 2500 years in the future. Help me let go, believe Your sovereignty and goodness, and do what love requires right now, however bizarre that looks.

* And when my neighbors are at the end of their ropes, sick and tired of the frogs in their beds and ovens, give me the courage and wisdom to sit down with them, cry with them, and point to You.

* For our friends who have hard frogs right now, be present and real as You comfort and guide. Help Kathy P’s family in Michigan through their grief over her sister-in-law’s death. Help Laura Mercer’s family (Kathy’s host) through their grief over her sister Rhonda’s death.

* Hilary’s dad and Scott’s dad have hard frogs right now. Be strength and hope for those men and their families as they pursue cancer treatments and reckon with the nearness of endings.

* Be hope and delight for all of us as we number our days. You are always what comes after the frogs. In glory with You, no more hard things. There, a frog-free hallelujah.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.