

Where do you pray?

*I woke up today and the world felt heavy
So I grabbed my keys and I went for a drive
Followed some country road wherever it led me
Passed a fellow on the porch and a Texaco sign
Crossed the bridge running over a creek
Miles of fields, far as I could see
And there wasn't no steeple, wasn't no people, wasn't no pews
But right there at a little past two
I went to church in a Chevy*



Crystal Cecil
Record-Herald Staff

back to my driveway. I was nearing the 3.5 mile mark, when I came upon a building, surrounded by trees, sun pouring atop, with the painted scrawled words, "Trust God."

*Sun coming up cutting through the live oaks
Wind through the windows like a whisper on a breeze*

Out there in the quiet heard Him talking to me

Amazing grace came flooding through the windshield

Felt some broken parts of me start to heal

My lost getting found, no one else around

Middle of nowhere dirt

I went to church in a Chevy

I remember just standing in the road, in a shady curve, gasping for breath (cause running is torture).

I cried. I prayed. I prayed harder. I stood there.

So I soaked it up and lost track of time

Started laying all my worries down

There was just some pavement and some faded white lines

But that highway felt like holy ground

And there wasn't no preacher, wasn't no choir, wasn't no words

But it was the best sermon I've ever heard

And it truly was the best sermon. It was a beautiful day and one that I will never forget. Churches were shut down, restaurants, everything— closed. I was not in a good place and wasn't sure where to turn... definitely a low point in my 34 years.

I don't drive a Chevy, but this song came on my air pods last spring while out for a run, when the world was extra heavy. Since then, it's been one of my favorite songs to run to.

I go through spurts of running. I'm in a "spurt" right now, and have been for about 2 months.

It was around this time last year I was in a running mindset as well. That one lasted several months... and I truly believe it kept me [mostly] sane.

It was that day in the spring, sometime in April, maybe May, when my life was possibly more upside down than I'd ever known.

I felt utterly lost.

I was stressed.

I needed to get out of my own head. I needed to figure out my heart.

I needed to pray.

So I went for a run.

Running is a big stress reliever... and it's when I pray my most earnest prayers.

This song played at the exact right time. Not one I would normally listen to on a run, (I'm more of a upbeat, don't-let-my-kids-hear-the-lyrics type listener), it's surprising I even let the song get started... or how it got onto that Apple Music playlist to begin with.

My road, if the right turns are taken, makes one big, hilly circle— a 5-mile loop



Not all my prayers are deep; sometimes, usually around the area of "Steep Holler," I pray I make it up the other side... alive.

*And I thought a little
And I prayed a little
And I left there, and
I changed a little*

In that moment, sweat pouring, heart rate slowed, I felt a peace come over me—a peace that only He can give.

"Trust God."

That morning, right there on a little country Green County back road, life went from chaotic to calm.

Out there in the quiet heard Him talking to me

... my favorite verse.

Many people pray their most earnest prayers in church, or in their home, their bed, in the car, wherever a prayer is needed.

I pray my most heartfelt prayers when I run; whether it's in the beautiful outdoors, or on the treadmill... it doesn't matter to me, or to Him. I'm sure of that.

I asked friends on social media where their most earnest prayers are said. I received over 100 responses. I'd love to hear from some readers also— email to news2@record-herald.com. I'll share some of those in a future column.



Photos by Crystal Cecil

This structure, standing a few miles and several turns from my home, is one of my favorite sites on any given day. "Trust God,"— a simple, yet powerful directive. While I haven't seen it for a bit, I think of it daily. I can't wait for this upcoming spring-like weather to venture that way.

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Winter

From page 2A

4) Change in sleep; usually sleeping too much, 5) Feelings of worthlessness or guilt, 6) Difficulty thinking, concentrating, or making decisions and most serious of all, 7) Thoughts of death or suicide. If thinking thoughts of suicide, ask for help. You can start by calling the National Suicide Prevention Line: 1-800-273-8255 (TALK). The good news is Spring is only a month away. The days are getting longer and, hopefully warmer. When possible, get out into the sunlight. Take care of yourself during this next month. Know this

winter will soon be over. The Pandemic will wane because we have been forced to be snow quarantined. Take the vaccine as soon as possible. So, we can get back to the business of life.

Remember, John 16:33, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Seeking Hope for 2021 in Faith and Love. Love God and All People. Amen.

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