

*“I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; **THAT** the world may believe that Thou didst send Me.” John 17:20-21)*

## PRAYER LINK

# PRAYER COORDINATORS GUIDE

*“...for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ...” Ephesians 4:12*

**Purpose:** To equip all Southern Baptists to be on mission with Christ to pray for and share Jesus with every person in their sphere of influence.

The Interagency Prayer Team of the Southern Baptist Convention recognizes the foundational importance of prayer and God’s direction, to effective missions. The strategic objectives, to kindle a personal passion for Jesus and unceasing prayer; to reclaim the church as a house of prayer for all the nations; and to respond to God’s call to unite in focused prayer for global evangelization and awakening, can best be met through cooperation of SBC entities, state conventions, associations and individual congregations. Working together we can develop transferable approaches for prayer mobilization through strategies, resources and networking. United we can be used mightily by God to fulfill His mission.

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## INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF PRAYER LINK GUIDE

This guide is intended to assist you as a prayer leader/coordinator to help others respond to God's current activity in Prayer. The Interagency Prayer Team is ready to assist you in this process in any way. As we have made the transition from Bold Mission Prayer Thrust Committee to the Interagency Prayer Team, our purpose for existence has not changed. We are still committed to the six guiding principles that undergird our cooperative existence: serving, facilitating, coordinating, networking, equipping, and visioning.

Our desire is that the SBC prayer front be seen as a united effort—one in which prayer that is focused toward the Great Commission is foundational to all we are about. (See John 17:20-21) Thus our overall vision is to be on mission with Christ through prayer.

This Prayer Link Guide is therefore designed to do three things.

**First**, the guide is compiled to encourage prayer coordinators toward a three part, Great-Commission-centered **prayer strategy** that is easily adapted to congregational, associational and statewide contexts. This is in response to the fact that many state conventions, associations, and congregations are seeking to develop and implement bible-based prayer strategies. Three articles in this guide present the three elements of the strategy. In the first article we are challenged to reclaim a **personal** passion to pray in an unceasing way (1 Thess. 5:17). In the second article we are challenged to take seriously God's instruction to make the **church** a house of prayer with a passion for lost people (Mark 11:17). In the third article we are challenged to lift our eyes to the **kingdom** purposes of prayer—to unite with believers in focused prayer for global evangelization and awakening (John 17:20-21). The fourth article is about mobilizing intercessors to encourage you as you enlist others.

**Second**, this guide will provide **valuable resource information and contacts** for you as a prayer mobilizer. Each element article has a resource page that will provide possible applications and some resources available to implement that particular component of the strategy. In the back of the guide, we have included helpful contact numbers, resources, and dates that can assist you in your work.

**Third**, this resource will hopefully be **an encouragement** to all prayer leaders/coordinators to continue in faithfulness and to not grow weary and lose heart (see Gal. 6:9).

## **The Vision for the Great Commission Prayer Strategy**

### **“God Must Give, We must Ask”**

by J. Chris Schofield, North American Mission Board

As Jeremiah Lamphier knelt alone in prayer shortly after the noon hour on September 23, 1857 I'm sure he wondered if he would be the only participant in the newly established prayer meeting at the Fulton Street Reformed Church. He had sought the Lord for direction as to how one might reach out to the lost in the community and this noon-hour prayer meeting was God's answer. Yet, where were the people? History records that Lamphier did hear a word from the Lord and God did bring folk to pray—six the first week, 20 the second week and 30-40 the third. Then the meetings moved to daily meetings with prayer meetings being established all over the city. In six months, 50,000 were praying in New York City. God was calling his people to pray. The lost were being saved and churches were renewed in their evangelistic mission. Thus, the Layman's Prayer Revival of 1857-58 was used by God to convert hundreds of thousands before the beginning of one of America's darkest and tragic times in its history.

Could God do it again? Of course He could. Will he or rather would He? Some might even be asking, is He ---going to? A couple of centuries ago Mathew Henry, pastor and Bible expositor penned the following words: “When God is about to pour out His unusual mercies upon His people He first sets them to prayer.” If what Matthew Henry said is true, could we be moving toward another move of God that is preceded by the heartfelt seeking of God in prayer by His people? I think it is a great possibility, if as God's people we respond to God's invitation to return to Him in genuine repentance and prayer.

### **Three Arenas God is Calling His People To Prayer**

As we move further into a new millennium, we find ourselves in the midst of a Divine call to a prayer-centered relationship with Christ. This call can be seen in at least three arenas: personal, corporate, and kingdom. First, God is renewing a personal passion for unceasing prayer (1 Thess. 5:17). Since God is not only the Giver of answered prayer, but also the Giver of prayer itself, it is easy to see that any desire toward unceasing prayer must begin with one's relationship to God (see John 15:16). People at grass root levels are seeking assistance in prayer training in unprecedented ways. Christians everywhere want to know how they can walk in continual fellowship through prayer.

Second, God is reclaiming His church as a house of prayer with a passion for lost persons (Mark 11:17 and Luke 19:10). Evangelistic prayer methods are rising in popularity among evangelical denominations. Churches are sensing the need to focus their prayer energies toward the fulfillment of the Great Commission. God is using a host of prayer approaches such as Lighthouses of Prayer, Prayer Journeys (walking), Church Prayer Room ministries, Prayer Chains, and Concerts of Prayer to reclaim prayer as a foundational element in churches.

Third, God is linking believers together in focused prayer for global evangelization and awakening (Acts 4:29-31; 2 Chr. 7:14). Through various associational, state, national and international prayer initiatives, (calls to prayer) denominational and inter-denominational cooperation and unity in prayer is at an all time high.

### **How Do We Respond?**

At the core of God's call to prayer is the challenge to respond biblically. The biblical response is to see prayer as foundational to our existence as Christians and as congregations. Paul said it well to young Timothy in 1 Timothy 2:1, "First of all I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made on behalf of all men." Jesus taught the disciples the same truth when he said that believers "ought to always pray and not lose heart" (see Luke 18:1).

Yet, despite this call to prayer it is estimated that most evangelical believers spend less than 5 minutes a day in prayer and pastors from 10-20 minutes. It doesn't look like we are there yet. Another gauge is the prayer life of the body of Christ. I was in a large church the other day and calculated the amount of time that was spent in prayer during the Sunday morning worship service—all of 10 minutes? Not even close. Try again--Less than 2 minutes. Yet, Jesus said that his church will be a house of prayer for all nations (see Mark 11:17).

How then shall we respond? First, we should respond with genuine repentance and obedience; "Repent and turn to God and do works that give evidence of repentance" (see Acts 26:20). We need to see our "prayerlessness" as sin and the only correct biblical response to sin is repentance (see 1 Sam. 12:23; 1 John 1:9). We also must respond with obedience. Our Father stands ready to forgive and restore—only if we meet Him on His terms. Just think of the spiritual blessings that would begin to flow as believers return to the Father in prayer! Psalm 37:4-6 gives us a glimpse, "Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart...trust also in Him, and He will do it. And he will bring forth your righteousness as the light..."

Second, we should respond with an attitude of gratitude and humility (1 Pet. 5:6). This Divine call to prayer is an act of God's loyal (hesed) love (see Psalm 107:1). It is also a gift of His mercy. Here's why--If it is necessary for our heavenly Father to issue a call to His people to come back to Him in prayer, and prayer is at the heart of a believers love relationship with the Father, then there is a problem. God does not have to call us to prayer, but out of His love and mercy, He is doing that very thing.

Third, as prayer leaders we should respond with a willingness to serve others (see Eph 5:21). Thus we must come alongside believers and congregations with the development and implementation of various avenues and ways for believers to respond to the call to obedience through prayer. This includes, among other things, being prepared to assist in prayer equipping and training, networking and mobilization, methodology, strategy development and recommending resources.

Fourth, we should respond by incorporating a three-part Great Commission prayer strategy with clear biblical goals into every Church prayer ministry. Events can then be created and directed to complete the goals, rather than as an end unto themselves. This strategy can help individuals hear and respond to the call of God to pray. It can help congregations permeate everything done in and through their ministries with prayer. It can then help bring believers together in specific focused prayer for lost people and another great awakening.

I close with a challenge. Andrew Murray, South African pastor and theologian once said, “God must Give, We must ask.” If as Southern Baptists, we are going to be faithful to take the Gospel to the world, we must be people of prayer. We must be faithful to ask, and then trust God to do the giving! Oh—by the way—when God gives in answer to prayer it is usually as Paul says in Ephesians 3:20 –“exceedingly abundantly above all that we could ever ask or think.” Thus, the question remains—Will we ask?

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## **RENEWING A PERSONAL PASSION TO PRAY**

by John Franklin, LifeWay Christian Resources, Inc.

As a church prayer coordinator, you can help members of your congregation renew a personal passion to pray. One thing that can help individuals in their prayer life is to look into the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John to see how Jesus responded when His disciples asked Him questions. This has tremendously helped my prayer life. More than anything else this one insight has guided me in knowing what God will do when I pray.

I came to this conclusion when I was meditating on two basic fundamental truths of Christianity. 1) Prayer is communicating with God. 2) Jesus is God.

Of course, these truths aren't news to anyone, but suddenly their implication dawned on me in a way that caused me to look at Scripture in a fresh way. For the first time in my life I realized that if prayer is communicating with God, and Jesus is God, then every time I read a conversation between Him and someone in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, I am seeing a recorded picture of exactly what will happen when I get on my knees and pray to Him. For example, when James and John asked Jesus if they could sit on His right and left hand, that would be no different from the times that I asked Him to do things for my own glory. Since Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever, I realized that I could know exactly how God would respond to me by watching how He responded to them. The simplicity of it was so obvious in hindsight, but I had never thought of it before as a clue to help my prayer life.

Perhaps it was because prayer is something I do with someone who is unseen and who does not communicate audibly, whereas the people of Jesus' day would have experienced God in exactly the opposite way. Whatever the case, I began discovering many new truths for my prayer life. Some key observations were

1. Jesus rarely answered with a simple "yes" or "no." He answered in such a way that helped them understand Him better. For example when the disciples wanted to call fire down out of heaven, Jesus didn't say "no"; instead He said, "You don't understand what kind of spirit you are of, for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." His answer enlightened them to a new understanding of Him.
2. A prerequisite for a favorable answer to prayer is faith. For example in Mark 9, Jesus waited to cast out a demon from a boy until He had first cast out unbelief from his father. Without faith it is impossible to please God. It was one of the main lessons He tried to teach His disciples.
3. None of Jesus' actions ever discouraged His disciples from coming to Him with confidence – even if they should have been ashamed about what they were asking. In the examples of calling fire down out of heaven and sitting on the right and left hand – doesn't it strike you as odd that they could ask for such things so boldly? Shouldn't the self-centeredness of those requests have intimidated them? How embarrassing to seek their own benefit, especially in light of Jesus having just taught on his crucifixion! Yet

all throughout the gospels they continued to confidently ask. Admittedly Jesus corrected them, but He did it in such a way that their boldness remained intact. They displayed no signs of inferiority complex, guilt, or sense of unworthiness – even if they probably should have. God must want us to come boldly to Him no matter what the request.

So, what can you do practically? Well, next time you or one of your intercessors want something from God – finances, wisdom, a relationship, etc... - ask God about it and then take out your Bible and begin to look for how Jesus answered people with a similar request. Sometimes you will see yourself exactly in the Scriptures. When it's not so obvious, look for people where similar principles could apply to their situation and yours. Then simply respond to God based on the insight He gives you.

I pray this insight blesses you and those within your influence as much as it has blessed me. May God continue to increase your faith and boldness in beseeching Him, and may you especially come to know Him in ways you never have before.

## RESOURCES AND APPLICATION FOR PERSONAL PRAYER

*Renew a personal passion to “pray unceasingly” (1 Thess. 5:17).*

The Prayer Coordinator can be instrumental in mobilizing people to pray, recommending prayer resources, helping church members see the connection between prayer and evangelism, and mentoring new prayer leaders. The following are some ideas to help you be creative in providing opportunities for this spiritual growth to take place.

- If you do a welcome letter to new members, you could include avenues of prayer that are open to them to join, and offer help with beginning or developing a quiet time.
- Suggest to the church members, especially the intercessors involved in the prayer ministry that they keep a journal of their prayer requests, how God answers, and things God reveals through His Word.
- Continually share with the congregation how God has answered prayer. Talk with your pastor and follow his lead on how your church will encourage people to give God the glory for all He is doing. For example, you could use individuals’ testimonies in written form in newsletters or verbally during worship services.

Offer or suggest to the minister in charge of discipleship studies to offer some of the following prayer studies:

- ***Disciple’s Prayer Life*** is a thirteen-week, small group Bible study on what the Bible says about prayer. An emphasis is given to praying in the group each time it meets, and the last lesson is about starting a church prayer ministry.
- ***In His Presence*** is a six-week version of the above study.
- ***Taking Prayer to the Streets Resource Kit*** has twelve sessions on becoming like Christ in prayer, how to prayer walk using specific prayer, and beginning a Great Commission Prayer Ministry.
- ***Experiencing God***: This 12-week Bible study has swept the Christian world and helped many individuals renew their passion for prayer.
- ***When God Speaks*** is a six-week version of the above study.
- ***PrayTimer software and outreach Bible Study***: This software provides tools for managing time to pray effectively and presents a six-lesson group Bible study. For more information visit [www.namb.net/praytimer](http://www.namb.net/praytimer)
- ***Spiritual Warfare: Biblical Truth for Victory***. This new Bible study will help believers understand and practice spiritual warfare.

(box the quiet time guide) Prayer coordinators may duplicate this guide to give to those who desire to grow in their personal prayer time. It would be good to type out the scripture references following each point prior to reproducing it.

## Quiet Time Guide

1. **Schedule a regular time and place.** Give it priority and consistency. (See Psalm 17:15 and 119:62)
2. **Prepare your place for personal worship** with a Bible, pen and paper, resource books like a concordance and a hymnal. Don't waste precious time gathering supplies every day. (See Psalm 5:3)
3. **Allow your experience with God to be natural.** Helpful patterns for prayer include some acrostics like PRAY and ACTS as well as our Lord's pattern in the disciple's prayer. It's all right to talk to your Father out of the order of these acrostics, as they are only guides to help you develop meaningful prayer. (See Psalm 6:9 and Proverbs 15:8b)
4. **If there is a limit to your time, set an alarm** for when you must move on. You won't have to be concerned about the time. Remember God is concerned with your desire to be with Him not how long you stay. Receive His grace and don't be too hard on yourself. (Psalm 31:15a)
5. **Spend time reading the Bible.** You may use a devotional book to help you get started, or a plan for reading through the Bible. Meditate on His word. Ask questions like who is speaking? What is happening? Is there an example to follow? Sin to forsake? Promise to claim? (Psalm 119:105)
6. **Keep a journal** for thoughts each day. Write what you said to God and what God said to you, along with new insights and commitments. Keeping a log of prayer requests, and their answers when they come, will encourage your trust in the faithfulness of God. You can praise Him all over again too when you reread it. (Psalm 77:11)
7. **Memorize scripture.** It will be available for the Holy Spirit to prompt you to use in resisting temptation, as well as in situations of sharing your faith. Writing out scripture can help to retain it. Leave out some key words to see if you can fill them in. If you spend much time in the Word, you may be surprised at how much is in your memory. (Psalm 119:11)

(Adapted from *Praying with a Childlike Faith* by Elaine Helms)

## CORPORATE PRAYER

### RECLAIMING THE CHURCH AS A HOUSE OF PRAYER

By Elaine Helms, North American Mission Board

*“...My house shall be a house of prayer...” Luke 19:45-46*

Jesus said, *“My house shall be a house of prayer.”* It is exciting to see a new trend with more and more churches wanting to establish prayer ministries. This does not take away from the whole church being a praying church, but rather it reinforces that vision and goal. The prayer ministry should undergird-with-prayer everything that happens in the church, so that the church can fulfill its purpose in the Great Commission. God loves to help a church that recognizes its dependence on Him. Certainly a church can be a praying church without having a prayer ministry, but let me give you a few reasons why I think having one is valuable.

Having a prayer ministry allows a church to experience “total prayer saturation.” It covers the personal, corporate, and kingdom elements of prayer. It encourages church members to focus their efforts on praying for and sharing Christ with people in their sphere of influence. Prayer requests for a specific ministry can be organized in a systematic way so that the most effective prayer support is given, to seek God’s provision to accomplish what He has called the church to do. God answers specific prayer with specific answers and the church begins to see that it is God and God alone who is leading and providing for the ministry that bears fruit. Seeing that our prayers and dependence on God make a difference draws us to pray more. *“I am the vine, you are the branches; ...apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5,7)*. Churches can minister with a degree of success and begin to feel self-sufficient. Unintentionally, God can be left out and trust put in methods. However, there is no lasting fruit for the kingdom when we work in the flesh. Having a ministry that helps to keep the church focused on God through believing prayer can prevent that slippery slide into leaning on our own understanding (see Prov. 3:5-6, Zech. 4:6b)

A primary reason for having a prayer ministry is to involve each member in a meaningful individual prayer life. The prayer life of the church is dependent upon the individuals who make up the congregation. Newborn babies do not have meaningful conversations with their parents until they learn to talk like them. Likewise, new Christians do not automatically have meaningful conversations with their heavenly Father until they get to know Him through His word and talk like Him. Knowing God’s word and praying in the character of Jesus, are important parts of the prayer ministry.

When the disciples walked with Jesus, they noticed His consistent prayer life with His Father and figured out that prayer was a key to being a follower of Jesus. They asked Him to teach them to pray. (Luke 11:1) Jesus began with *“when you pray”* to indicate that prayer would be a normal part of the Christian life. This passage also points to the truth that prayer is something you can learn to do. We learn to pray by praying. By offering avenues for people in the church to get involved in praying for something that is

an interest or sometimes a passion, the prayer ministry can help transition Christians from a dry or non-existent prayer life to a healthy, active and growing prayer life.

Corporate prayer is also important in the life of a healthy, growing church. Jesus taught the disciples how to pray by beginning with “**Our** Father.” We are to pray together. The phrase, “*Give **us** our daily bread*” shows that we are to not only pray together but we are to include others in our prayers. There is power in the prayer of agreement. Jesus said in Matt. 18:19, “*Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven.*” The early church, as described in many passages in Acts, was continually meeting together for prayer and God was adding to their numbers (see Acts 2:42, 46-47). We don’t need to worry about church growth, we just need to stay close to the Father and obey Him. He is ready to show Himself powerful on behalf of those whose heart is completely His (see 2 Chron. 16:9)

Often avenues of prayer link a church with other congregations in city, state, national and international prayer initiatives such as “National Day of Prayer,” “Day of Prayer and Fasting for World Evangelization,” “See You at the Pole,” for greater kingdom impact. It’s true that “together we **can** do what we could never do alone.” Our collective assignment is to reach the whole world for Christ.

A prayer ministry is not limited to one kind of praying. God will lead each church to fashion its prayer ministry according to His design and the interests of the people. They just need to obey Him.

*(adapted from If My People...Pray, Steps to Effective Church Prayer Ministry.)*

## RESOURCES AND APPLICATION FOR CORPORATE PRAYER

*Reclaim the church as "a house of prayer" with a passion for the lost (see Matt. 21:13, Luke 19:10).*

Consider these resources as you lead your church to reclaim the church as a house of prayer.

- ***Disciple's Prayer Life:*** This 13-week Bible study on prayer can be the basis for building a prayer team in the church prior to beginning a formal prayer ministry.
- ***If My People...Pray, Steps to Effective Church Prayer Ministry:*** This very practical book was written by a veteran prayer coordinator. It provides many tips for starting or strengthening a great commission prayer ministry.
- ***A Prayer Guide for Associations and Churches Resource Kit:*** This comprehensive and practical guide is based on Scripture and illustrated by many examples. It is particularly helpful for associational and state prayer leaders.
- ***Lighthouses of Prayer starter kit:*** This helpful kit can be obtained for the church with a promotional video or without the video for individuals. It helps people pray and care for their neighbors then share Jesus as God opens a door.
- ***Praying Your Friends to Christ:*** This guidebook provides everything you need to teach people how to pray for lost people in the community and the world.
- ***A House Of Prayer:*** This resource compiles the experiences and guidance of prayer leaders from across the country. Covers basics of prayer, starting a prayer ministry, prayer rooms, corporate prayer, creative ideas, SBC connections, resources and networks.

### Avenues of Prayer

Discuss the following list with your prayer team and decide what you will offer to your congregation. As individuals have opportunity to participate in corporate prayer times and avenues of prayer that interest them, not only will the prayer ministry of the church grow, but also their personal prayer lives will benefit as well. Do not be limited to this list, nor feel required to do them all. Seek God and be creative. Stay open to ideas from people in your congregation too.

### Opportunities could include:

Prayer journey/walk	Prayer vigil for a specific purpose
Prayer Chains	Moms in Touch groups
Bible study/prayer groups	International Mission prayer focus

National Day of Prayer  
Evangelistic Prayer Room  
Lighthouses of Prayer  
Mid-week prayer service  
Concerts of Prayer

Shield a Badge/police officer or fireman  
Adopt a Leader/elected official  
Outreach prayer survey efforts  
Cottage prayer meeting prior to revival  
North American Mission prayer focus

Begin a “prayer station” or “prayer booth” ministry in the inner city,  
at yard sales, carnivals, craft shows, flea markets, and during county and state fairs  
Develop men’s, women’s, senior adults, youth, and children’s evangelistic prayer cell  
groups.

## **KINGDOM PRAYER**

### **RESPONDING TO GOD'S CALL TO UNITE IN FOCUSED PRAYER FOR GLOBAL EVANGELIZATION AND AWAKENING**

by Randy Sprinkle, International Mission Board

#### **BEING WHO WE ARE**

An Egyptian woman, upon hearing the Gospel for the first time, said, "It is a wonderful story! Do the women in your country believe it? I don't think they can believe it or they would not have been so long in coming to us."

At the heart of the Christian life is honesty: honesty before God and honesty with ourselves. Countless times I have asked believers, "What is the first verse of scripture that most of us learned?" Without fail, their answer has always been John 3:16.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (NKJV)

Preeminent in God's giving of the great Gift, the Savior, His precious only Son, Jesus, was that it was a gift for all peoples. God loved, and still loves, the whole world. Jesus' sacrificial death was once, for all. And subsequent to each individual receiving the Gift is the privilege: having reconciled us to Himself through Christ, He then "gave us the ministry of reconciliation." The good news of this gift having come to us through someone, we now have the privilege (and responsibility) of taking it to others.

As Jesus departed this earth to return to the Father, His last words were words divinely powerful for all generations of the church. They are clear, concise and comprehensive. No believer can miss their intent or scope.

*"You shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." Acts 1:8b (NASB)*

And yet throughout history and across Christian life today, excuses for not embracing the privilege still proliferate. Without authority, local is substituted for global.

Why is this able to exist and persist? Honesty strikes at the heart of the answer. Jesus said, "It's who you are, not what you say and do, that counts." (Luke 6:45 TM) We are not to act Christian or even try to sound Christian, we are to be Christian. The Christian life is always characterized by obedience to the Christ of life. We must insure that we are who we are. Nothing less and nothing else.

In a Muslim village in Africa, the people are dying. Some are dying of AIDS but more tragically, all are dying in sin. A missionary couple lives there and they have been

praying for and befriending the people of that village. One day a friend brought two others to meet them. As the conversation developed the guests began to sense that these foreigners were somehow spiritually special. Questions and answers flowed and the conversation led to testimony of the nearness of God to those who seek and respond to Him. Then one of the visitors asked, “Are you a Muslim?”

On the surface this would not seem to be an unusual question but the way this question is worded in the language there is unique. To ask if someone is a Muslim, you literally say, “Do you pray?” To be Muslim is to pray: faithfully five times every day and once each year for an entire month with daily fasting. To be Muslim is to pray.

We can learn a great deal from the Muslims of the world at just this point. Since we as Christians are powerless people apart from our moment by moment dependence upon Christ, our obeying must always be preceded by praying. And we will only care enough to share when it’s borne as fruit of our prayer.

Paul said, “Devote yourselves to prayer.” (Col 4:2a NIV) Let’s get honest. Do we? Does my life and the life of my church reflect obedience to Christ’s command, “Pray, then, in this way...Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth...”? And do they exhibit the balanced witness of Acts 1:8? Not just here where we are but there where the people of the earth wait without hope.

When they do, there will be no need to inquire if I am or my church is Christian. There will be no reason for a Muslim woman to conclude that we don’t believe the glorious good news because we drag our feet in taking it to the world. Our praying and obeying lives will be the obvious answer. Truly we will be who we are – Kingdom Christians.

*“Thy Kingdom come...on earth as it is in heaven.”*

## **RESOURCES AND APPLICATION FOR KINGDOM PRAYER**

Link congregations in focused prayer for evangelization and awakening (see Matt. 18:18-20, 2 Chron. 7:14).

- Encourage congregational participation in the National Day of Prayer prayer focus.
- Provide ways for youth to unite with other youth for the See You at The Pole prayer effort.
- Mobilize families to participate in a Campus Prayer Journey event (the night before SYATP).
- Participate in various Sunday worship prayer focuses, e.g., Prayer for the Persecuted Church, Prayer for World Evangelization Sunday, and so on.
- Lead churches to join Southern Baptist International mission prayer efforts for specific people groups (presently there are four focus groups - Jews, Muslims, Hindu, and Buddhists).
- Sponsor interdenominational pastors prayer groups and concerts of prayer meetings.
- Encourage longer and more frequent times for corporate prayer that focuses on specific prayer needs.

# NETWORKING TO MOBILIZE INTERCESSORS

## MOBILIZING INTERCESSORS ARTICLE

by Andrea Mullins, WMU

### A Passion for Intercession

I had gone to sing for a revival in South Dakota where I stayed in the home of the minister of music and his wife. Every morning following breakfast the couple opened their Bibles and their hearts to intercede for peoples of the world, volunteers, and missionaries. I was moved by their knowledge of world needs and of the persons for whom they prayed. Intercession had so saturated their lives that they had traveled extensively to use their gifts to join with others in taking the message of salvation to a lost world.

On the flight home from the revival, I found my heart and mind returning to those morning prayers. In fact, I was so stirred that I longed to join them in this world-changing experience that I could do right at my kitchen table. Because this couple had modeled commitment to the ministry of intercession, my personal intercessory prayer journey experienced a great leap of faith.

Some years later I traveled to Russia after the fall of communism. One Sunday I stood in a Russian church and listened to the Russian women praying. In a moment of recognition I realized that these women had prayed in this new era of hope. Although we had never met, my prayers, along with theirs, had released their nation from bondage, a miracle of God's divine intervention. I was so grateful that I had learned to intercede years before so that I, too, could celebrate in having joined God to bring freedom and justice to a hurting people.

Persons who love God sometimes only need a nudge to be awakened to the possibilities and power that are theirs in Christ. Until my experience in South Dakota, I did not realize that my intercession could touch lives not only next door, but also on the other side of the world. Others may need more consistent messages, repeated over and over again through the lives of those who take the lead and model what it means to be an intercessor.

The prophet Isaiah recorded the Lord's heartbreak when He saw that the world lacked intercessors. *The Lord saw it, and it displeased Him that there was no justice. He saw that there was no one, and was appalled that there was no one to intervene.* Isaiah (59:15-16) "Isaiah recorded this observation hundreds of years ago, but I wonder how many intercessors He sees today. Am I one of them? Can the Lord depend on me to stand in the gap for those who have no freedom, no justice, no hope?"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Extraordinary Living, What Happens When God Works Through You* by Andrea Jones Mullins, New Hope, 2001, p. 212.

You are a catalyst for mobilizing God's people to intercession. Think for a moment about some simple steps that can create a passion in God's people for intercession.

- Become a model of intercession. Invite friends to join you in intercession. Develop the habit of praying immediately with any person who comes to you with a need.
- Provide resources that encourage and equip persons for intercession, such as *The Ministry of Intercession* by Andrew Murray.
- Provide an inviting prayer room with current prayer needs. Materials that tell of church and associational ministry needs, national and international crises, missionaries and people groups, and church member needs are good resources. Include information for persons in the room that helps them to know how to use the materials.
- Develop intercessory email and telephone networks.
- Provide phone numbers for the IMB and NAMB prayer lines to church members, putting them in the church bulletin on a regular basis.
- Feature testimonies of intercessors and of those whose lives have been touched by intercessory prayer in the worship services and in Sunday School classes.
- Dedicate a worship service to intercessory prayer.
- Send monthly intercessory newsletters with stories of answered prayer.
- Adopt a people group and/or missionaries and enlist persons to pray at specific times for their needs.
- Plan for prayer walking around schools, through high violence and poverty areas, places of ministry, and your own church.
- Plan prayer walking mission trips to other cities, states, and countries.
- Begin Women on Mission and Adults on Mission prayer groups that meet before work, or at other available times.
- Equip persons to become Lighthouses of Prayer and form prayer triplet groups for evangelistic prayer.

Remember that “you will be blessed as you become an intercessor; intercession is rewarding. Through prayer, you join God in healing, restoring, redeeming, and freeing persons you know as well as people who live at the ends of the earth.”<sup>2</sup> You are joining God and His people in one of the greatest blessings and activities known to mankind.

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<sup>2</sup> Mullins, p. 213.

## PRAYER MINISTRY COODINATOR'S JOB DISCRPTION

The prayer ministry coordinator should be called by God and be committed to serve, have the ability to get along with people and to love them. The prayer ministry coordinator is responsible for the following:

1. See that the prayer ministry undergirds all other ministries of the church.
  - A. Attend staff meetings to be informed of needs and activities, as well as to share information and updates about the prayer ministry.
  - B. Check with ministers of the different areas to receive prayer requests. Don't wait for them to tell you, ask for requests.
  - C. Channel needs to the appropriate staff person for visits, counseling or any emergency need.
2. Be responsible for providing support to whatever ministry you begin.
  - A. Locate space for whatever type of ministry is established. That may be a meeting space for a prayer group or setting up a prayer room, etc.
  - B. Prepare or customize records and forms necessary for the prayer ministry.
  - C. Oversee the lay out, design and furnishings for a prayer room.
  - D. Establish a system for updating prayer requests, mailings, telephone messages and maintaining supplies necessary for ongoing ministry.
3. Promote the prayer ministry to the congregation. If a prayer line is established, promote that number to the community.
  - A. Incorporate already existing prayer groups to be a part of the prayer ministry, such as prayer through men's or women's groups already established. This is a cooperative venture and one that undergirds everything in the church.
  - B. Encourage members to participate in whatever type of prayer ministry you establish. Maintain sign-up charts, prayer request cards in the pews and prayer request boxes.
  - C. Provide training for each type of ministry established.
    1. Initial orientation and training can be open to all members who may be interested.
    2. Offer enriching seminars on prayer for the whole congregation.
  - D. Host an annual **prayer banquet** or similar function to expose members to the prayer ministry and to show appreciation for the intercessors.
4. Plan the calendar of events and prepare a budget for each year. Oversee the expenses each month within the budgetary constraints.
  - A. Meet with the prayer committee on a regular basis.
  - B. Be flexible as God directs changes within the ministry.

Determine if the coordinator position will be volunteer or staff. The amount of time involved is great. Whether or not the position is volunteer, many other volunteers will be needed to divide the responsibility and not overload any one person.

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