



PRAYER ACTIVITIES FOR THE CONGREGATION

Prayer Calendars

Many people have a life that's so complex and busy that it is difficult to 'find' time to pray...especially for concerns beyond the immediate. A prayer calendar can be a useful tool for them. These can be included in the church newsletter, and/or handed out. On the prayer calendar, each day is designated for a specific prayer for a ministry, an outreach effort, needs, or people. LCMS World Missions has a wonderful prayer calendar for missionaries.

Create a Prayer Room

Locate a space in the congregation where a prayer room or prayer chapel can be set up. Let this space become that quiet place where people may gather at any time for prayer. Include prayer resources for people to borrow. Consider placing cards and a basket or a booklet where prayer requests may be recorded. (Prince of Peace, Springfield, VA has developed a special prayer room.)

Praying the Lord's Prayer

Use each petition of the Lord's Prayer as the prayer starter for the day. This means that it would take a week to pray completely the Lord's Prayer. This slower method allows the opportunity to focus on each section of the prayer. Use Luther's Catechism to help explain each petition, then let your mind focus and explore its meaning in your life. (John DeVries in his book "Why Pray" provides wonderful direction in using the Lord's Prayer in this way.)

Praying the Newspaper

This is an interesting way to pray for the needs of the community, nation, and world. Open the newspaper and begin praying for the people and concerns identified in the headlines. It is a way to bring focus to our prayers for others. And it invites us to pray for God's presence in the lives of those who are suffering, lost, celebrating, and serving.

Praying Over the Pews

Walk up and down the aisles, touching the pews, imaging those who will sit in the pews, praying that the message, the music, and all that will happen in worship that morning will "bear much fruit" in the lives of those who are gathered. Pray that the Holy Spirit who gathers us and who nurtures faith will provide for those who sit in the pews, that they will hear what they need even it is not spoken. Pray that the Spirit will comfort and challenge them. Visualize them moving out from the sanctuary into their homes, offices, and neighborhoods. Pray that the wind of the Spirit will breath life into them so that they can breathe it out on others.



Prayer Journal

Keep a prayer journal with both a prayer list and an answered prayer list. While we are best at identifying needs and people for prayer. We want to also give thanks when prayers are answered. Keeping a prayer journal is also a great way to involve children in developing a prayer life. As a family prayer journal is used, children (and adults) can see how God answers prayer.

Morning Prayer (Before Worship Services)

The intention of the Sunday morning prayer time (7-7:30am) is for the pastor, DCE, deacons, and others to gather in prayer for the worship services that day and for the “fields that are ripe unto harvest.” It is during that time that we begin with pray and the Lord’s Prayer. The pastor who is preaching shares the theme of the day/service and gives a very brief summary of what he is trying to relay to the people that day of biblical importance (using the outline in the worship folder). We then stand and encourage each person to pray from their heart at the same time...facing first the North, then the East, South and finally West. The movement from one direction to the next follows: “With one mind and heart, in the name of Jesus!” Then we turn and begin to pray again. Prayers are encouraged for those we think about individually as we face each direction. The prayers may be a church, person, circumstance, etc. We encourage prayer for those who in live in the direction we face who do not know Jesus; for those who have heard the Word, but have not yet responded; for those who have been witnessed to; those who have driven/walked by our facilities...to come. When all is completed, the Pastor(s), DCE sit or kneel, and the others place their hands on that person and pray for them...asking the Lord for whatever He puts on their mind and heart to say. *(Pastor Paul Liersemann shares this prayer practice that is used at First, Sunderland MD.)*

Prayer Services/Vigils

Special worship events focused on prayer and time for prayer. Two vigil services are included in this resource booklet. (Holy Cross, Clayton NC held 24-hour prayer vigils on the ministry property just after it was purchased, prior to breaking ground, and before it was dedicated.)

Prayer Breakfasts

It is always good to gather around food. Somehow the fellowship and the appreciation for God’s abundance overflows in these moments. Coming together in the morning hours before the day begins is one way to dedicate time and space for prayer. There is a sample prayer breakfast program for you in this resource.

