

How to Get People Praying

Prayer leaders and pastors often ask me, “What one prayer idea seems to be the most effective at getting the most people in a church praying?” There are a lot of effective prayer ideas these days—but each seems to bring a different result.

If the question was “which prayer idea was most effective at seeing God’s transforming, life-giving power active in a church,” I’d say developing a team to pray for the pastor or during services. If the question was, “what idea was most effective at seeing more answers to prayer across the spectrum of church life,” I would say developing a strong corporate prayer meeting.

But when the question is “which idea is most effective at getting the most people praying,” the answer is easy: doing an all-church prayer initiative. In a prayer initiative, everyone prays on the same theme over a set period of time—often a week, month or 40 days. Since it is only for a manageable time period, if promoted properly within a church, a prayer initiative often inspires even those who don’t regularly pray into the life of a church to do so.

Besides having a season of powerful corporate prayer, other benefits results. The main one: a number of people will get so excited by what God did to them spiritually, that they will continue to pray for and with the church afterwards. Churches that provide and promote additional times of prayer following an initiative will see a raise in participation.

But prayer initiatives do powerful things in the heavenlies as well. I know of a church that saw God move in powerful ways while participating in the prayer initiative Seek God for the City. A small-town church of 30, saw their attendance double in a few months as people got right with God and were revived spiritually.

There are currently some great one available:

Seek God for the City (held each year 40 days prior to Palm Sunday—Feb. 21 to April 1, 2007. You can get materials at www.waymakers.org. In my opinion, this one has the best scripture-based prayers to pray.

40 Days of Prayer/Love to Pray! This one produced by our parent organization, Harvest Prayer Ministries, by far has the most complete package to make an initiative successful. It offers a resource kit with suggestions for running an all-church initiative. There is also a teaching dvd and study guides for small groups/Sunday school classes.

Ready for Revival and The Jabez Prayer Guide are two stand-alone initiatives developed by Pray! Books and Pray! magazine. Both, written by prayer leader Jacquie Tyre, are solid, scripture-based guides that move people toward deeper relationships with Christ.

I firmly believe that an initiative can revolutionize your church!

--Jonathan Graf is the president of the Church Prayer Leaders Network