

# Motivating Prayer in the Local Church

## Theme Introduction

“This is the best day of my life!”

I laughed, hearing the young boy’s excitement as he walked past a prayer station at our family prayer night. Our prayer team had spent a lot of time putting together kid-friendly prayer activities—chalk art, bubbles, selfies, prayerwalking—all designed to encourage families to pray in unique ways. They could even take a quick “prayer run” around our church building. COVID restrictions forced us to create new ways to encourage prayer in an outdoor environment, but families responded with enthusiasm.

I suspect this little guy has had many “best days of his life.” But, as prayer leaders, we wish all our people would respond with such obvious joy to prayer-engagement opportunities!

## Breaking Down the Barriers

People often envision prayer gatherings as either intimidating or boring. Some resist corporate prayer settings because they imagine themselves awkwardly stumbling through a prayer in front of everyone. Or the only thing they remember from a previous prayer meeting is an impassioned intercessor who dominated the prayer time. It’s tough to assure people that prayer can be a refreshing, enriching, and inspiring time!

But there has never been a more crucial moment to call our congregations to prayer. We are bombarded with news of burning cities, numerous fears, devastating sickness, lingering hurts from unjust treatment, shouting matches between opposing

views, and anxiety about economic collapse. Add the polarization of elections, and you have cities and a nation in desperate need of the Church's faithful intercession.

Many barriers keep people from praying effectively for those who need Jesus' healing and restoring touch. As prayer leaders, we need to find ways to break down those barriers. Instead of simply issuing a call to prayer and expecting people to respond, we need creative ways to engage our churches in strategic and compelling intercession.

## **Now Is the Time**

Given all the discord in our nation, now is the time to capture the moment and engage people in prayer like never before! In this issue, you will learn some of the best prayer practices from pastors and other leaders known for effective prayer mobilization.

Veteran pastor Daniel Henderson, who has brought prayer-based revitalization to many churches, devotes himself to helping pastors become better leaders in prayer and the ministry of the Word. In his article, he writes about the key role pastors play in rallying prayer. With today's crises, we need a supernatural advancement of the gospel that "requires praying pastors who lead praying churches."

Pastor and film producer Michael Catt reminds us that desperate times often move people to pray more fervently for revival and spiritual awakening. He demonstrates ways prayer leaders can tap into that desperation—often accompanied by passion—to build stronger prayer foundations.

Prayer Connect publisher Jonathan Graf sent a questionnaire to pastors and prayer leaders, asking for tips on motivating prayer in the local church. He compiles some of the best ideas into an article that will help refresh your prayer ministry.

We may not hear people, young or old, saying that a prayer

experience we've orchestrated is "the best day of their lives." But, in this crucial moment in history, we can pray that each life will be continuously transformed with hopeful, strategic prayer.

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