

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Which Size Church Has the Most Prayer Advantage?

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Over the past 22 years I have been watching churches of varying sizes “do prayer.” Through my informal research, I have reached a few conclusions about which size church has the easiest path to becoming a praying church.

The truth is that there are different advantages with each, and a church of any size can become a strong praying church if it has the determination—with the Lord’s help—to do so. But let me highlight at least one advantage for small, medium, and large churches.

Corporate prayer is probably the most important area that churches need to work on as they seek to become a praying church. Few churches in the U.S. can claim strong experiences of congregants praying together. I love a midweek prayer meeting if done effectively, but some churches have meaningful corporate prayer without a weekly dedicated night. In these churches, corporate prayer usually takes place in the Sunday morning worship service.

The church that has the most potential to grow in this area is a “one-worship-service church.” A small- or medium-size church with one service has an advantage. Why? Churches with multiple services are usually bound to the clock. Their services need to be tightly planned to get people in and out within a short amount of time.

However, restricting prayer to fit into a 2.5-minute timeframe is difficult. Churches that can allow Spirit-led spontaneity in prayer have the best potential to see corporate prayer thrive. Those not bound by an exact closing time can experiment more and offer varied prayer opportunities each week.

The megachurch's advantage in growing prayer comes from the sheer numbers it can draw when rallying prayer for an initiative. When a megachurch pushes a special prayer event—with leadership support—it can draw a larger number of participants. Such churches likely have dedicated design and marketing teams that can promote the event with multiple, well-designed ads. Such promotion provides an advantage at a time in our society when everyone needs to see something eight times or so to respond. Consequently, they can host prayer events with a few hundred people.

Is there an advantage for the medium-size church? Yes. Discipleship. This size church likely has a better understanding and deeper relationship with their members than is possible for a megachurch. The medium-size church also has more funds for resources than a smaller church. The combination of relationships and funds greatly benefits the medium-size church. In a more personal way, they can better encourage, prod, and teach people to grow in various areas of prayer.

Whichever size church you are a part of, think about areas of strength that come with your church size. Focus on the aspects and methods of prayer that can thrive within those areas. Growing prayer in any size church can be done with determination and the empowerment and leading of the Holy Spirit.

—Jonathan Graf is the publisher of Prayer Connect and the author of *Restored Power: Becoming a Praying Church One Tweak at a Time*.