

# PrayerCONNECT

Connecting to the Heart of Christ through Prayer

# TARGET PRAYERS

*Four Core Principles of Intercession for Believers*

Fathers *and* God-given Authority | *Launch of PrayerU*  
BIBLICAL PRAYERS of Hope

# A SIMPLE WAY TO SUPPORT A PASTOR!

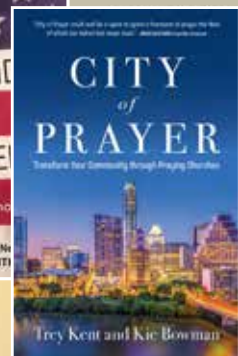
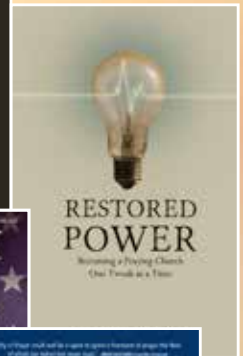
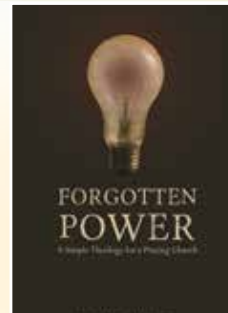
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The Church Prayer Leaders Network and PrayerShop Publishing have launched the Pastors Resource Project to do just that. We are raising funds to put a FREE prayer resource pack into the hands of pastors.

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### How Can You Support Pastors?

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Indicate that you desire your gift to go to the Pastors Resource Project



# PrayerCONNECT

JANUARY - MARCH 2021 VOL. 11, NO. 1

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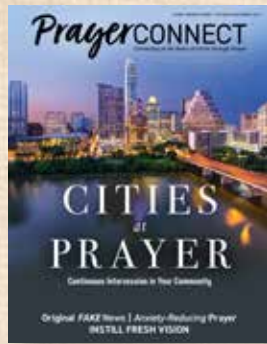


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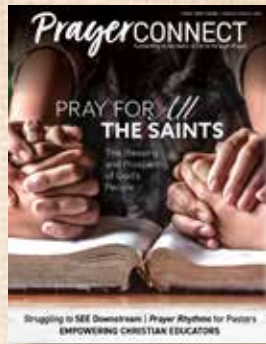
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### Article Submissions

We are looking for general articles, ideas, and news stories on what God is doing as a result of prayer. We are primarily looking for newly written pieces that have not appeared in other publications. Writer's guidelines are available by emailing Carol Madison at [editor@prayerconnect.net](mailto:editor@prayerconnect.net). For news stories, we recommend emailing first to see if we have an interest in reporting on the event or item you wish to write about. Send your submissions to:

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### Need a Speaker for Your Prayer Conference or Event?

There are a number of gifted speakers associated with PRAYER CONNECT. Jonathan Graf regularly ministers in churches of varying sizes. Carol Madison is also available to minister in the area of prayer for revival and community transformation, and mentoring the next generation in prayer. The Church Prayer Leaders Network also has many speakers associated with its ministries. You can find contact information at the respective emails or websites.

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The mission of **PRAYER CONNECT** is

1. To encourage and equip believers toward a deeper walk with Jesus Christ through prayer—our experiential connection to God.
2. To resource prayer leaders and pastors with tools to help them motivate, disciple, and mobilize believers in churches to be a part of an army that seeks to pray the purposes of God for churches, communities, and the nations.
3. To be a unifying force between prayer ministries, community transformation groups, and churches.

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## The End Results

For decades, I have participated in prayer events and gatherings. The majority of them referred to 2 Chronicles 7:14 as a promise from God to restore a nation—if certain criteria are met.

“Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land” (NLT).



In the past year, a new wave of ministries and events again held this verse up as a rallying cry to pray for our nation. I may get upset letters from readers, but I must admit that I've seen this verse used so many times to rally prayer for our nation that I sometimes grow weary of hearing it!

But that changed recently as I realized that if you look at the preceding verse, we may be closer to seeing the answer to our prayers than ever before! Verse 13 declares:

“At times I might shut up the heavens so that no rain falls, or command grasshoppers to devour your crops, or send plagues [pestilence, ESV] among you” (NLT).

Verse 14 appears somewhat conditional to verse 13. I have always believed verse 14 is a true principle of God, and no ministry that used it prior to 2020 was wrong to do so. But few would argue that we experienced the plague or pestilence truth of verse 13 so severely in the U.S. prior to 2020. We were praying with a faith based on the verse 14 promise because we knew we need spiritual revival! But we were not really experiencing the conditions of verse 13. Yet . . .

### The Pestilence Descends

The year 2020 certainly ushered in what many people would call pestilence, plagues, unusual weather issues, and crop devourment. A mysterious and fierce virus attacked millions of people. People stayed away from public places. Many lost their jobs. Countless businesses closed. Our economy was destroyed. In addition, hurricanes, tornados, and fires destroyed crops and property. Even more destruction came through riots and violence in cities across the nation. It was quite a year.

Has it been God's judgment upon us? Quite possibly.

But even if God did not deliberately send all the pestilence as a punishment, He allowed it. And I believe He intends to display His glory and power through it all.

I take great hope that soon the promise of verse 14 will be answered! I pray we will experience, as a nation, the results of repentance, forgiveness, and the restoration of our land.

Of course, it's also possible we are only a few years away from the tribulation and the ultimate answer to prayer we seek: Christ's return.

I'll take that result, too. Maranatha!

—Jonathan Graf

## Previously in



Learn some of the best and most-motivating prayer practices from pastors and other leaders known for effective prayer mobilization. Order “Motivating Prayer in the Local Church” and other back issues from [prayershop.org](http://prayershop.org).



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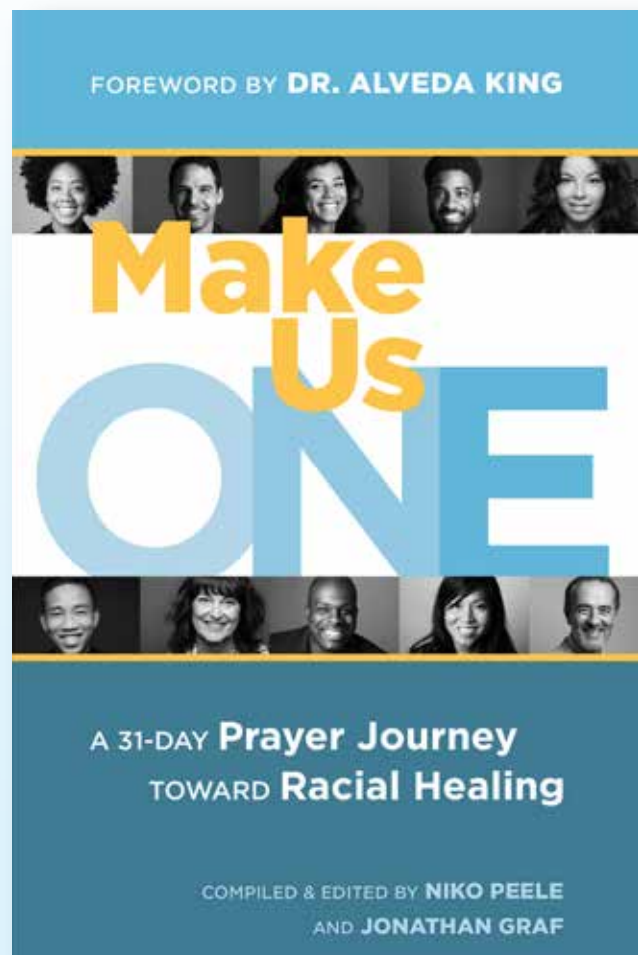
## of Jesus' Heart in John 17

*Make Us One* is a compilation prayer guide that offers a Christian, biblical response to the racial division in our nation.

Each of the powerful, insightful, Scripture-based prayers is written by a national prayer leader or pastor of multiple ethnicities. It has a hard-hitting, clear, prophetic voice for our times, and a message to the Church that it cannot turn a blind eye to this issue any longer, but needs to live out Jesus' prayer in John 17—that we would be one.

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We encourage and challenge you and your church to pray through *Make Us One*. Be part of seeing Jesus' prayer to make us one answered!



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## Thousands of Christians Intercede in Nation's Capital

Two prayer and worship events emphasizing repentance and intercession for the nation brought tens of thousands to Washington, D.C., on Saturday, September 26, to cry out to God for divine intervention. Under mostly cloudy skies, both The Return (led by Jonathan Cahn) and the Washington Prayer March (led by Franklin Graham) gathered Christians from every part of the country to pray amid a tumultuous political season.

Many who showed up for The Return, which took place on the National Mall between the Washington Monument and the U.S. Capitol, migrated to the Lincoln Memorial, where Franklin Graham began the 1.8-mile trek from the memorial to the Capitol building. Stops along the way included the World War II Memorial, the Washington Monument, the White House, the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, the National Archives, and the U.S. Capitol.

Jonathan Cahn framed the day by saying, "You have come because you feel called to be here at the most critical hour when the time is late and our nation is hanging in the balance. We've witnessed the darkest year in modern times. The threats upon our nation may rip it apart."

He noted that most people were



probably warned not to come because of the dangers of COVID and unrest. But he said that the tens of thousands present were compelled to attend because of the state of the nation.

President Donald Trump took part in The Return by sending a message to be read to the crowd: "On this inaugural National Day of Prayer and Return, the First Lady and I join millions of Christians here in the United States and around the world in prayer, as we turn our hearts to our Lord and Savior."

The president also highlighted the nation's Christian heritage, quoting a phrase from the Declaration of Independence: "Following in our ancestors' footsteps we continue the 'firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence' that provides us enduring strength and reassurance in our times of need."

At noon, Franklin Graham began leading the prayer march. At least

50,000 prayer warriors assembled before the march began, packing every inch around the Lincoln Memorial and down each side of the Reflecting Pool. Vice President Mike Pence, a surprise participant, thanked the massive crowd for doing the best thing they can for their country: lifting it up to God. Then he prayed and blessed the efforts of all there.

Carol Madison, editor of *Prayer Connect*, attended both events, starting at The Return in the morning. "At first I wondered why the two events were scheduled for the same time. It seemed like a conflict," she says. "But as I first stood with perhaps 50,000 people at The Return, I was overwhelmed by the size of the crowd, even as we got on our knees in repentance. Then as I headed toward the Lincoln Memorial for the prayer march, I was again shocked at the size of the crowd there—another maybe 50,000. I recognized that God brought different streams of the Church together on the same day, and then merged them by the unity of His Spirit. We all prayed in agreement and in one accord."

The two events were broadcast in more than 100 nations, with millions of viewers tuning in through livestream and social media.

—Adapted from International Prayer Connections ([ipcprayer.org](http://ipcprayer.org)) and Billy Graham Evangelistic Association ([bgea.org](http://bgea.org)).

## Anne Graham Lotz Issues Urgent Call to Repentance

Evangelist Anne Graham Lotz is issuing an urgent call to repentance, warning that America has a "small window of opportunity" to return to God, which, if not taken, will incite severe judgment. The founder and president of AnGeL Ministries says the United

States has repeatedly "shaken its fist" in God's face, removing His name everywhere, from schools to the government.

"If we're not careful, we're going to totally lose our way," she stresses. "America will become unrecognizable. The world is a very dangerous place right

now. We desperately need God."

Lotz participated in The Return led by Jonathan Cahn and a prayer march led by her brother Franklin Graham on September 26 in Washington, D.C., to pray for the U.S. and its citizens.

She admits that Cahn asked her to

participate in events for years, “but I always declined,” she says. “I just didn’t feel like revival would come until we were desperate for it.”

As a child, Lotz recalls asking her mother, Ruth Graham, “With all of father’s meetings and events that have taken place, why haven’t we had a revival?”

“My mother said, ‘It’s because we’re not desperate enough,’” Lotz recalls. “So I always felt like something needed to trigger it.” But Jonathan Cahn kept

telling her that the Lord had strongly impressed upon him the need for a call to revival in September of 2020. “Based on his strong conviction and my belief that we need to return to the Lord,” Lotz says, “I agreed [back in January] to participate in The Return.” Then COVID-19 broke out, the economic recession hit, and anarchy swept the streets.

“It’s more than unrest,” she says. “It feels like we’re being attacked invisibly. My prayer is that this is the trigger. If

this doesn’t make us desperate for revival, if this doesn’t make us return to the Lord and beg for His mercy, then I’m not sure anything will. We’re in a freefall.”

Lotz sounds a warning: “We’ve left our foundation of faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” she says. “Until we come back to the Lord through repentance and prayer, then I don’t think there’s any hope for America.”

—Adapted from The Christian Post ([christianpost.com](http://christianpost.com)).

## Construction of Massive Prayer Landmark in England

A new national Christian landmark that aims to profile a million answered prayers has been given the go-ahead to be built on a site near Coleshill on the outskirts of Birmingham, England. Completion of construction is expected in the fall of 2022.

Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer ([eternalwall.org.uk](http://eternalwall.org.uk)) will stand at 169 feet and is expected to attract 300,000 visitors each year, contributing £9.3 million to the local economy.

The iconic “eternal” arch structure will be constructed using one million bricks, each representing individual prayers that have been answered for people

across the country. In addition, using interactive technology, visitors will be able to use their smart device, holding it against any brick to read the individual answered prayers and the personal stories.

Richard Gamble, CEO of the Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer, says, “We are building a very special landmark and it is an amazing opportunity for the British people to leave a legacy of hope for future generations.”

Gamble continues, “We want to celebrate and remember all the prayers that God has answered for individuals throughout our nation’s history. Each answered prayer could provide hope to



those who visit. Our desire is to create thought-provoking public art and offer a space for recreation and reflection for everyone. Our hope is that those who visit will see how God can bring peace in life’s storms.” He hopes the site will encourage people “to reflect on the power and relevance of prayer.”

—Taken from Assist News Service ([assistnews.net](http://assistnews.net)).

## Prayer Rises for 400th Anniversary

Four hundred years ago, the Pilgrims made a sacred covenant with God that this nation would love Him and follow His ways.

Carter Conlon, of New York City’s Times Square Church, hosted a prayer gathering on October 6 in Plymouth, MA, on the very plot of land where the Pilgrims began to build and pray.

Conlon led the October prayer from the house built in 1790 that sits on the portion of ground where the first house in America was built by the Plymouth

settlers in 1620. That first winter, Conlon says, the Pilgrims were freezing, starving, and deathly ill, but full of faith.

“It was in that house, that in a position of weakness, with half of them having given their lives the first year for the cause of freedom and religious freedom, they prayed,” Conlon says.

Conlon’s prayer was to ask God’s forgiveness for what “we as a nation did with the freedom God gave us.”

—Adapted from CBN News ([cbn.com](http://cbn.com)).

**Prayer Calendar**

**Weekend of Prayer to End Slavery and Trafficking**  
**January 9–10, 2021**  
[facebook.com/weekendofprayer](http://facebook.com/weekendofprayer)

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**Collegiate Day of Prayer**  
**February 25, 2021**  
[collegiatedayofprayer.org](http://collegiatedayofprayer.org)

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**Seek God for the City**  
**February 17–March 28, 2021**  
[waymakers.org](http://waymakers.org)





# TARGET PRAYERS

## *Four Core Principles of Intercession for Believers*



**A** FEW YEARS AGO, my brother took me to a rural spot in the middle of South Dakota to teach me to shoot a pistol. I think he believed it was his brotherly duty to usher me into the next level of adult responsibility.

I had never used a firearm before, so he first made sure I handled it carefully. Then he set up four water bottles on a fence a reasonable distance away.

I aimed, pulled the trigger, and nailed a water bottle with my first shot.

“Wow, you hit it!” he exclaimed with obvious shock. I think in that moment he was as proud of his younger sister as he had ever been.

“Yeah,” I replied. “But that wasn’t the bottle I was aiming for.”

### ***On Target***

I don’t think I knocked off any more water bottles that day. We all know it takes patience, intentionality, and practice to hit the right target.

Sometimes our prayer lives can seem random, aimless, and off target. So we need a consistent strategy that addresses the most crucial areas of prayer—those

that will bring transformation to our families, churches, nation, and world. James 5:16 tells us that righteous people—and all believers are righteous in Christ—have the great advantage of praying prayers that are “powerful and effective.” In other words, right on target. If we desire to grow and mature as intercessors—and take perfect aim with strategic prayer—some core principles can better equip us.

The *Prayer Connect* staff prayed and debated about the four most important prayer principles that we, as believers, can add to our “prayer arsenal.”

Although our prayer lives can take many different directions, we narrowed our focus to these core elements:

1. The salvation of others
2. The revival of the Church
3. The spiritual awakening of a nation
4. The spread of the gospel in the world.

If every believer and every church incorporated these target prayers into their habitual, consistent repertoire, we believe we would witness the swift advancement of the Kingdom of God and the quickening of the coming of Christ.

### ***In this Issue***

We asked four writers with expertise in each of these areas to share their best prayer practices. Ebony Small is vice president in an evangelistic organization directed toward reaching the next generation. She writes about scriptural ways she prays for the salvation of others. Jamie Morgan is a pastor whose podcast *Fire Starter* is designed to ignite passion for revival. She describes a beleaguered bride of Christ that is not ready for His return—and needs reviving.

Bob Bakke has done extensive research and writing on Great Awakenings in our nation. He casts a vision for the spiritual awakening of the lost. And Solomon Lujan is passionate about praying for Scripture to be translated into every language so the gospel can reach the one-third of our world’s population who have no knowledge of Jesus.

My brother has not taken me target-shooting a second time. I might have made him a little nervous. But I know he is greatly encouraged that God has honed my prayer skills over the years—and that’s a target he prefers I hit every time! **PC**

**CAROL MADISON** is editor of *Prayer Connect* magazine and author of *Prayer That’s Caught and Taught: Mentoring the Next Generation* ([prayershop.org](http://prayershop.org)).



*Best Prayer Practices for Revival*



# When the Church Needs to Come

# ALIVE

**T**he wedding guests stand to their feet as the double doors swing open and the cellist plays the processional. Some people crane their necks with eager anticipation, while others impatiently tap their feet. However, all are aghast when they catch a glimpse of the bride starting down the aisle. She appears to be dying.

The bride's wavy hair hangs matted to her shoulders. She has dark circles under her eyes, pale skin, and sunken cheekbones. Her bridal gown is soiled and torn. Every few steps, she holds onto the end of a pew to catch her breath. The worst part of this horrific scene is the groom's reaction. Overcome by grief, he sobs uncontrollably.

This shocking portrait illustrates the bride of Christ in the twenty-first century and the anguish of Almighty God over the spiritual condition of His people. The American Church desperately needs revival. Although we see glimpses of gospel impact in some communities, spiritual revival remains the only hope for the lukewarm, worldly, and powerless bride of Christ.

## *Fully Alive*

The term *revival* means to live again. Spiritual revival begins with the people of God coming back to life through an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. When revival bursts forth, sleepy and apathetic Christians wake up and live as if the Bible is true. The church in Ephesus illustrates a church *in the throes* of revival, *and* in desperate *need* of revival.

All the essential ingredients for revival occurred in Ephesus (Acts 19): the gospel preached, people saved, missionaries sent forth, churches planted, miracles performed, and hearts gripped by the fear of the Lord. In addition, the Ephesian Christians repented of their sins, even burning expensive magic arts paraphernalia in a common bonfire. To show their love for Jesus, no price was too great. What a picture of a fully alive church!

Decades later, as Revelation chapters 2–3 relate, five churches became the epitome of churches needing revival—the church in Ephesus among them. The Ephesians had lost their first

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BY JAMIE MORGAN



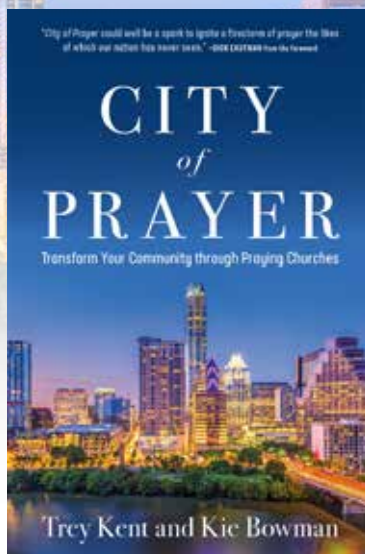
# Imagine a Move of God in Your City!

*City of Prayer* shares such a story and shows in a clear, simple way, how this can happen in any city. In your city!

*City of Prayer* needs to be in the hands of every pastor, prayer leader, and believer who desire to see their city transformed.



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love and needed to repent (Rev. 2:2–5). In this passage, the Lord severely rebuked them. Dire consequences would ensue, He warned, if the church in Ephesus failed to heed His warning.

## Urgent Need

While flickers of revival fire can be identified in certain regions of our nation—churches, leaders, houses of prayer, and worship movements are rising up right in the middle of chaos to permeate the spiritual atmosphere with the presence of God—today’s Church has also fallen into spiritual decline and urgently needs revival. Every 60 seconds in America, abortion kills two unborn babies. Yet most Christians seem unmoved. Entire denominations have modified their definition of marriage to include homosexuality. Yet most pastors and church leaders stay silent about this sin. Racism remains in the land, yet many Christians seem indifferent.

Countless American churches boast the finest facilities, technology, and seating capacity, yet our country is self-destructing. A multitude of spiritually lost people are in the “valley of decision” (Joel 3:14), but most believers regard evangelism with apathy—or someone else’s job. Christians around the world are dying martyrs’ deaths, yet many in the American Church possess a love grown cold toward their persecuted brothers and sisters.

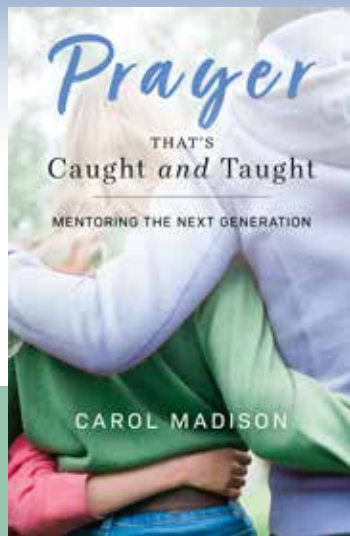
But here’s the good news: God longs to send revival much more than the Church wants to receive it. Historically, from the fall of humankind in Genesis to the letters penned to the sin-filled churches in Revelation, God’s people have cyclically needed reviving, and God has faithfully answered their revival cries. The people of God must, once again, cry out for God to pour His Spirit upon the Church to bring her back to life.

The great hunger and thirst for God boils down to one word: *prayer*. Prayer precedes revival. In Acts 2:1–4, the disciples longed for the presence of their

# WANTED:

## Intercessors to Mentor the Next Generation in Prayer!

Here is a new dynamic tool to help you mentor others. *Prayer That’s Caught and Taught* by Carol Madison, the editor of *Prayer Connect*, provides Scriptures and information on 9 key aspects of prayer that need to be taught. She offers a format to easily teach each aspect, but also allows you to insert your own prayer experience stories into the informal lessons. Those you are mentoring both learn about prayer principles and how to practice prayer.



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beloved Jesus, who had just ascended to heaven. So, they gathered together, constant in prayer. As instructed, they waited. In answer, the Holy Spirit filled both the place and the people of prayer, igniting the greatest recorded revival in history—Pentecost.

### ***Crying Out***

As in the Book of Acts, through the ages God’s people have inescapably cried out in prayer for revival. And God has faithfully answered their heartfelt pleas. But how do we effectively pray for the Church’s revival?

Here are ten prayer points to pray for the Church—for *your* church! Include them in your daily prayer repertoire. Use them as launching pads to additional Spirit-led prayer for revival:

- Lord, send revival and let it begin with me.

- Lord, give Your bride a holy desperation for revival.
- Lord, send a prayer awakening to the Church.
- Lord, pour a spirit of repentance upon the people of God.
- Lord, restore the fear of the Lord to the Church.
- Lord, give Your children hearts that burn with passion for Jesus.
- Lord, rekindle the Church’s love for the Truth of God’s Word.
- Lord, restore Your people’s passion for the lost.
- Lord, fill the Church with Your tangible presence.
- Lord, give Your Church both prayer and action strategies to combat the prevalent societal ills in our world today.

Picture a bride dressed in sparkling white, zealously in love with her future

groom. Her burning heart beats wildly with every thought of him. She loves him not for what he can do for her but simply . . . for him. She has kept herself pure and chaste, without blemish or wrinkle. Her eyes remain fixed on him alone. The world has completely lost its appeal.

Now imagine the bride running passionately down the aisle, full of life, to meet her groom. Revived, the bride of Christ is now ready for His Second Coming.

Lord Jesus, send revival, and let it begin with me! 🙏



**DR. JAMIE MORGAN** is lead pastor of Life Church in Williamstown, NJ. She is a member of America’s National Prayer Committee and the Assemblies of God Prayer Committee. Jamie is also the author of *A Journey to Ministry: Discover Your Calling, Purpose and Destiny*. Her website is [jamiemorgan.com](http://jamiemorgan.com).

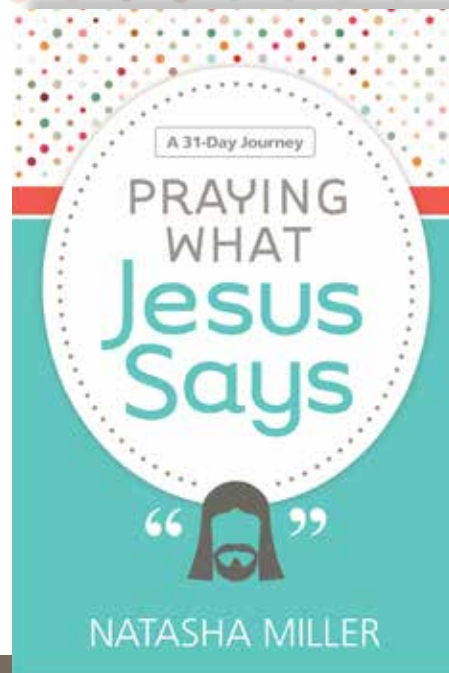
# DO YOU VALUE THE WORDS OF JESUS?

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It provides helpful insights into what Jesus said, and how it should apply in our own lives.

Each day provides a few devotional thoughts, the parallel passages in each of the three gospels, and a sample prayer showing how the author would pray the Scripture’s truths into her own life.



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# Pray them to



## *When Those Closest to You Need Christ*



**I** DIDN'T KNOW I WAS an intercessor. But I knew I loved talking to God. After I recommitted my life as a disciple of Christ, I underwent a radical transformation. The world around me started to change because the “inner me” was changing. Jesus became the source of my strength. He gave me a new paradigm through prayer and the study of His Word.

During a Sunday morning worship service, my pastor called upon me to pray for those who were responding to an altar call for salvation. Although I was a new believer and a recent member of the church, my pastor saw something in me I could not yet see in myself. He told the congregation that I was someone who had an anointing for prayer.

That was the first I'd heard anyone say this about me.

But it was the first of many times I would sense the burdens of people and cry out to God on their behalf.

Intercessory prayer has been a great gift. I count it a privilege to sense and empathize with others' needs—to bear a burden for someone's life or spiritual condition and talk directly to God on his or her behalf.

### *Reasons for Confident Prayer*

I believe James 5:16 with my whole heart: “Confess your sins to each

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BY EBONY S. SMALL



# ESUS

other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results” (NLT).

When we pray, we possess power and our prayers will yield results!

Because I believe in transformational prayer, I approach God’s throne with boldness and confidence, knowing that no principality, power, stronghold, or demonic force can withstand the power of God’s Word.

Do you have family members or friends who need Christ? You’re not alone. We all do! Here’s how we can pray:

## 1. Believe God (Hebrews 11:6)

First, settle the question in your heart of whether or not you believe God exists and will answer when you seek Him. Confess your faith—without doubt—when you pray.

## 2. Pray the Word (2 Timothy 3:16–17, 2:26; 2 Peter 3:9)

God’s inspired Word is powerful and brings correction. I pray the Word over a person by inserting his or her name into the Scriptures. For example, I pray something like this: “Jesus, please allow Johnny to ‘escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken [him] captive to do his will.’ God, You say that it’s not Your will that Johnny would perish, but that he might come into the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Lord,

please empower him to do this by Your Spirit!”

## 3. Pray Fervently (Daniel 10; 2 Corinthians 10:4–5)

Sometimes, because of the spiritual forces at work to keep a person in bondage, we must persevere in prayer for that person’s soul to be freed.

Don’t tire of praying for your loved ones. Your prayers actually become a buffer and a covering for them. View your prayers as weapons in a spiritual battle, and view your fervor as your declaration to those forces that you will not relent until you see victory.

## 4. Renew Your Strength (Isaiah 40:31; Psalm 18)

As you await God’s victory, you may get tired, discouraged, even weary. It happens to us all! This is when we need to encourage ourselves in the Lord as David did in the Psalms. Read or quote from memory your favorite Scripture to grant you a daily source of renewed strength. Recall verses that remind you who you are and to whom you belong. And remind yourself that the God of heaven’s armies is fighting for you and your loved ones.


These simple steps have yielded fruit among my friends and family—repaired relationships, salvation testimonies, discoveries of God’s calling on loved ones’

lives, and surrender of those once-religious to a devoted relationship with Jesus.

## Rewards for Secret Prayers

I don’t often announce to someone, “I am praying for you!” If I do, I intend it as a demonstration of my love for him or her.

But one day, I received encouragement that will fuel me for years to come. Every day for quite some time, I had fervently prayed for a certain friend. I prayed that he would find salvation, peace, healing, and direction for his life. In God’s time, He answered those prayers. Unprompted, my friend said, “Ebony, I know that I have attained all that I have in this season of my life because you pray for me.” He continued, “I can feel your prayers.”

Tears welled in my eyes. Those were the sweetest words I’d ever heard. In that moment, the agonizing prayers and tears I had cried for him in secret yielded a very public reward. Our God truly is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him! 



**EBONY SMALL** serves as vice president of multiplication at Pulse ([pulsemovement.com](http://pulsemovement.com)), and as associate pastor at Bethel Gospel Assembly, Inc., in New York City. She is the author of *The Leader in You: Discovering Your Unexpected Path to Influence*.





# When a Nation Awakens to CHRIST

**T**ROUBLES ARE BUFFETING our nation. There's no need to recount them. Respected voices say that our nation, as it was conceived, is lost, and the American Church forever diminished.

In spite of these voices—and without being pollyannaish—I count myself among those who see the U.S. as ripe for revival and spiritual awakening. I've studied the often-grizzly stories of Church history. I personally experienced the riots, the burned-out cities, the assassinations, the threat of nuclear war, and massive political upheavals of the 1960s. Yet, in the midst of tragic times throughout history, we have had many awakenings in our land—both in the colonial period and since our nation's founding.

God's people are being rattled from their small, distracted, complacent, and lackadaisical faith. They are being confronted in their sin, perhaps as a separating of the wheat from the chaff (Matt. 3:11–12). At the same time, millions of nonbelievers are afraid—hungry for hope and meaning. Some are running away from events

while others resort to angry, delusional, or violent ideas. We see scores of people acting out their inner fear of meaninglessness.

While God's people need a fresh wind of the Spirit to enliven, embolden, and refine their faith (revival), an unbelieving world is realizing they need God (spiritual awakening). This sounds like a confluence ripe for God's intervention, and I think we are seeing evidences of such.

## *Qualities of the Spirit's Work*

A spiritual awakening in a nonbelieving world hinges on a couple of assumptions:

1. that a revived Church will embrace the challenges of our day. God works in partnership with His people. Augustine wrote: "Without God, we cannot. Without us, God will not."
2. that the Church gets to work with the grace and the power of the Spirit for the glory of Christ.

If the Church rises to the challenge of these

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BY BOB BAKKE



assumptions, then what might spiritual awakening look like in our day?

Let's keep it simple. Act 1–2 reveals the qualities present whenever the Spirit revives His people and awakens the lost. In Jerusalem, Pentecost's transforming power of the Spirit on His people arose out of sustained and earnest prayer. The transformation produced powerful preaching. That preaching resulted in profound repentance and faith. And that profound faith launched and sustained a radical way of life that impacted every facet of the city:

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet

together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved (Acts 2:42–47).

The sweeping of the Spirit penetrated households, shops, vineyards, farms, and places of worship in Jerusalem.

One of the clearest U.S. examples of this sweeping change resulted from a move of God in Rochester, NY, between September 1830 and March 1831. Rochester was a young city, dominated by mills and shipping along the newly constructed Erie canal. The population was between 10,000–20,000, yet more than 100,000 conversions were recorded in an area within a 100-mile radius.

The spiritual awakening *followed* prayer and *resulted in* powerful preach-

ing. It transformed churches, families, households, local government, and every industry. Historians also record the general disappearance of crime. In the words of Charles Finney, it "swept through the town, and converted the great mass of the most influential people, both men and women, the change in the order, sobriety, and morality of the city was wonderful. . . . The public affairs of the city have been, in a great measure in the hands of Christian men; and the controlling influences in the community have been on the side of Christ."<sup>1</sup>

Every facet of the city—industry, commerce, culture, and government—was infiltrated by newly awakened believers. Paul E. Johnson provides an academic analysis of the Rochester revival—and it's astonishing. Johnson quotes Lyman Beecher, one the era's most prominent evangelists, saying that the Rochester awakening of 1831 "was the greatest work of God, and the greatest revival of religion that the world has ever seen."<sup>2</sup>

The issue of slavery is another example of awakening impact. Johnson writes:

Historian Gilbert Barnes wanted to explain why, in the 1830s, critics of slavery rejected gradualist techniques, recruited thousands of new supporters, and attacked the South by demanding immediate abolition. He analyzed the rhetoric and tactics of the movement and the sources of its support and argued convincingly that antislavery immediatism was a direct outgrowth of the revival of 1830–31.<sup>3</sup> [In fact], in the 1830s newly converted evangelicals invaded [most social] organizations and took most of them over . . . to eliminate sin from society [including the church, industry, economics, politics, marriage and homelife] and pave the way for the Second Coming.<sup>4</sup>

### *Nothing Can Thwart the Spirit's Work*

Does this give us hope for today? Well, of course it should!

## Do you want to see a greater passion for prayer in your church?

### Are you equipped to be a catalyst for prayer in your congregation?

Then you need to be a member of the



The Church Prayer Leaders Network exists to encourage, challenge, inspire, and resource you as you seek to motivate and mobilize your church toward deeper levels of prayer.

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Rochester and Jerusalem (not to mention God's people such as Moses in Egypt, David before Goliath, Jehoshaphat in the Valley of Beracah, and Peter in Herod's prison) should remind us that no set of obstacles or enemies can thwart the hand of God when He decides to move. Here are some other hopeful signs of a coming spiritual awakening:

- We should be deeply impressed with the quantity and quality of prayer being mobilized across our nation. The bride of Christ is waking up to the dangers in front of her.
- Even as scandals and compromise continue among certain Christians, a corresponding clarity and resolve are coalescing among others.
- A unity, unlike any in previous generations, is forming. This unity is diverse, multiethnic, and multi-national.
- We hear reports of revival meetings


almost everywhere on the continent—especially in some of the hardest hit cities in recent unrest, such as Minneapolis, Portland, Seattle, and Louisville.

### ***What's Missing for the Spirit's Work***

The one thing missing, however, is vision. I believe God will provide it, but we must pray for that united vision.

Charles Finney and his ilk, through their crusades, clearly united around the gospel. But they also envisioned what a city or a nation would look like if God were to come upon it. They pressed and prayed toward that vision with one mind until God brought it to pass. That vision attracted tributaries that became a river which overflowed its banks.

We are missing such clarity. Without it, we may disperse or drift away from

each other before achieving God's glorious end for our generation. I believe we are, indeed, ripe for revival and spiritual awakening. Let's ask God to give us the vision to see what its fulfillment would look like. And let's ask God to give leaders the wisdom to embrace it. 

<sup>1</sup>Garth M. Rosell and A. G. Dupuis "Original Memoirs of Charles Finney" (1989): <https://www.gospeltruth.net/memoirsrestored/memrest21.htm>.

<sup>2</sup>Paul E. Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revival in Rochester* (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1978), 5.

<sup>3</sup>Gilbert Hobbs Barnes, *The Anti-Slavery Impulse: 1830-1844* (New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1964), 6.

<sup>4</sup>Johnson, 44.



**DR. BOB BAKKE** is senior pastor of Hillside Church of Bloomington, MN, a member of America's National Prayer Committee, and the producer of several national prayer broadcasts.

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*The Praying Church Handbook* offers 30 chapters of ideas, principles and prayer guides, all taken from the pages of *Prayer Connect* magazine, that will help a pastor or prayer leader encourage, motivate and mobilize prayer in his or her church.

You will refer again and again to *The Praying Church Handbook* as you minister as a catalyst for prayer in your church.



**THE PRAYING CHURCH Handbook**

Ideas, Principles, and Guides for Local Church Prayer

COMPILED AND EDITED BY CAROL MADISON  
Foreword by Jonathan Graf





*Prayer for the  
Advancement of  
the Gospel*

# To the Ends of the EARTH

**H**ER QUESTION SHOOK US.  
“Why didn’t you tell us  
about Jesus sooner?”

This Muslim woman recently gave her life to Christ after hearing the Gospel of Luke in her own language. Her family and other people she knew had no idea Jesus died for their sins and offered salvation to all who believed.

Her question compels me to pray for Scripture translation. Billions of precious people like this woman are still waiting for someone to faithfully intercede so they have the opportunity to accept Jesus as Savior and Lord. Our heavenly Father is calling you and me to be the hero intercessors on their behalf!

## *Crying Out for the Unreached*

Fourteen years ago, I served in the night watch at a 24/7 house of prayer in Jerusalem. We interceded for Israel six hours a night. I remember distinctly the grace and power I sensed behind my prayers when I began to

pray for the Great Commission fulfillment in Israel, specifically for unreached Jews.

Four years ago, I began directing prayer for a Bible translation ministry focused on accelerating the fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:16–20). We hear countless stories of the global impact on entire countries after people have the Bible in their native language. I now understand the strategic importance of prioritizing our prayer focus on the advancement of the gospel around the world. Some prayer topics are simply more important than others.

Jesus gives us this Great Commission command (v. 19): “Go and make disciples of all nations.” This is the eternal desire of God—that all His image bearers would know His infinite love and truth, demonstrated in the death and resurrection of Christ (1 Tim. 2:3–6).

In addition, Paul says, “How can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? And how

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BY SOLOMON LUJAN



# You are the **UNSEEN HERO** who releases the gospel to the ends of the earth.

will anyone go and tell them without being sent?” (Rom. 10:14–15, NLT).

The Moravians knew this. Their century-long prayer movement birthed the modern missions movement. Prayer is mission. Our maturity as intercessors is directly proportionate to the commitment and time we spend on our knees crying out for all unreached people to be set free!

## Great Commission Intercessor

You can join this prayer movement by using the three “H’s” of a mature intercessor: heart, habits, and house of prayer. God is completing His love story by bringing Scripture to every language community on earth so that the gospel will always be within reach.

**1. Heart.** Do you remember when you were without Christ? While those memories may be too painful to recall, they can humble us and give us compassion for those still in darkness. We, too, were prisoners of darkness before Jesus set us free and filled our lives with light. We must each answer the question, “How now shall we live?” Our mission is to help free other captives.

How many prisoners of darkness remain? About 3.22 billion people have no access to the gospel.<sup>1</sup> This does not include the lost who have the gospel yet choose to remain in darkness. The unreached have not had the opportunity to break free from Satan’s power. One-third of the world’s people are unreached, defenseless against their oppressor because they don’t have the Sword of Truth—God’s Word.

Take a moment and repeat that last sentence out loud about unreached, defenseless people. May we never become desensitized to this shocking reality. Barna Group research discovered that, in

today’s Church, 51 percent do not know what the Great Commission is.<sup>2</sup> That means more than half are missing their primary purpose on earth!

You can be a strategic intercessor who releases prayers of light into the darkness for the 3.22 billion—until zero unreached prisoners remain. Always keep your heart tender before the Lord so that you’re thinking and praying often for your future brothers and sisters in Christ, those not yet freed from darkness.

**2. Habits.** Prayer is not a discipline but a lifestyle. Our lives are composed of habits. It is easiest to start a new habit on top of one already established. Here are three habits we can incorporate as we pray for the three “B’s” of the Great Commission: Bible, believers, and body of Christ.

- **Bible.** Before reading your Bible, pause and pray for all the people on earth to have the Bible in their own language.
- **Believers.** Before you eat, pray for believers who know the Bread of Life (Jesus) to be found in every language group (so that the following point can be established).
- **Body of Christ.** Before your attendance at church, pray for all people on earth to have access to the testimony and fellowship of the body of Christ.

**3. House of Prayer.** In Mark 11:17, Jesus said, “Is it not written: ‘My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations?’” Like never before, God is raising up prayer communities to ask for the nations to come to Christ! Our success as prayer warriors will be determined by how effectively we unite others in prayer for the expansion of the gospel. Ask God right now whom you can invite to join

you regularly to pray for the Great Commission to be fulfilled in our lifetime. The Holy Spirit will provide overflowing grace to find the right people and to grow a prayer community that can rescue prisoners from darkness!

## One Prayer Away

You are the unseen hero in this story—the intercessor releasing the gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth where His children wait to be set free. Hear their cry, “Why didn’t you tell us sooner?” And pray, pray, and pray some more until you begin to see them in the spiritual realm and know by faith that they are only one prayer away from knowing their eternal Lord and Savior! **PC**

<sup>1</sup>Joshua Project, [https://joshuaproject.net/people\\_groups/statistics](https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/statistics).

<sup>2</sup>Barna Research Group, <https://www.barna.com/research/half-churchgoers-not-heard-great-commission/>.



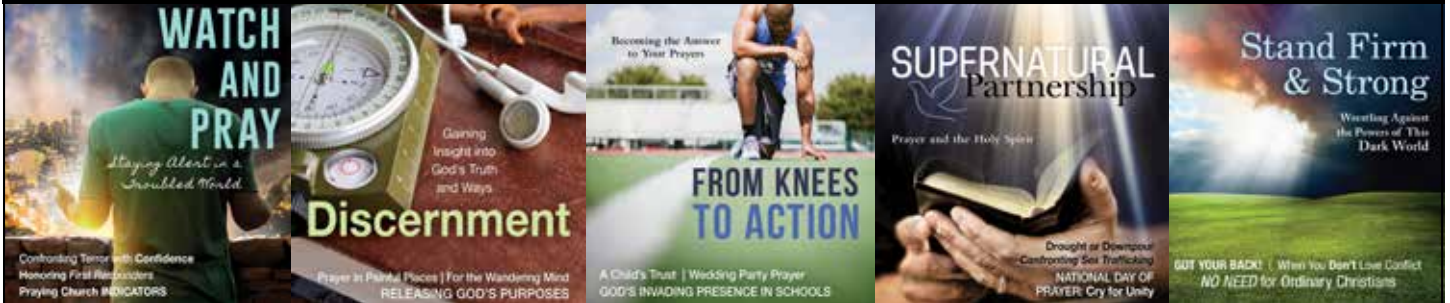
**SOLOMON LUJAN** is global director of prayer for Seed Company ([seedcompany.com](https://seedcompany.com)), a Bible translation ministry that is passionate about accelerating the translation of God’s Word into every yet unreached language by 2025.

## For Further Reading

Check out some additional articles on blogs and websites related to “Four Core Principles of Intercession for Believers” at [prayerleader.com/issue-43-extras](https://prayerleader.com/issue-43-extras).

- “A Biblical Model for Revival Praying,” by Dave Butts
- “A Prayer for the Salvation of Others,” by Debbie Przybylski
- “Praying for Awakening,” by OneCry staff
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# The Power

of a

About a year ago my husband and I discovered that our young adult son had derailed in his college academic studies and struggled to stay focused. After probing, we learned that he attributed his behavior to his father's absence during his formative years. He felt abandoned and insisted his father had no right to come back into his life and try to be "Dad." He said he wouldn't even stay under the same roof with him.

A similar conflict had come up previously. At that time my husband apologized for any ill effects he might have had on our son. We thought the two of them resolved things, so we were shocked when he brought everything up again. In response, I felt broken and devastated, but my husband took action: strategic prayer.

He began interceding fervently for the return of our son and for a renewed relationship. He prayed that our son would once again recognize him as his father. He asked the Holy Spirit to fill our son's heart and set him back on the right path. He prayed with belief that our son would return to right thinking. In strategic warfare, my husband rebuked the devil and his stronghold over our son's life.

To my shock, less than a week after declaring he would not stay under the same roof, our son invited his dad for a heart-to-heart talk. He

apologized for his behavior, and his father offered a blessing over him. Our son has since returned to school, and we've watched him grow in his relationship with his father—and with God.

## The Calling of a Father

Some men do not take their fatherly roles seriously. Perhaps they're exhausted from career responsibilities, perhaps they have misconceptions about the importance of fatherhood, or perhaps they simply lack interest.

But God calls a father to be a shepherd over his home—to love his wife and manage his children well. He sets a high standard for leaders in the church, but it is also consistent for the role of a father in his own household (1 Tim. 3:2–5). Jesus' parable of the prodigal son demonstrates that God calls fathers to unconditional love (Luke 15:20–24). Most importantly, God calls fathers to lead the family in the ways of the Lord (Gen. 18:19) and teach their children about Christ (Eph. 6:4).

BY EKEI JOY OKAFOR

er

# Father's Prayer

Blessing Your Children in  
God-given Authority





# The prayers of the righteous father carry with them blessings that transcend generations.

When a father prays, he has a unique, God-given role in the lives of his children. Here are some ways that a father's prayer makes a difference:

**1. A father's prayer is authoritative and filled with power.** Fathers have a responsibility to pray with confidence because they represent the love of God the Father in their families. God calls fathers to establish their households as places that honor God. With this comes both the authority and power to bless their children and establish truths for generations to come. God said this about the father's role in Deuteronomy 6:6–9:

“These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.”

A household filled with a father's prayer—and teaching of God's truths—is the best hope for a child's future.

**2. A father's prayer is prophetic.** Whatever a father speaks over his child carries a destiny with it—for good or for bad. Children are likely to embrace and believe the truths their father prays and declares over them. A father can envision a future for his children and intercede for that prophetic fulfillment.

When Jacob was nearing the end of his life, he asked to bless the children of his son Joseph (Gen. 48). As Joseph brought the two boys before him, Jacob crossed his arms and placed his right hand on the head of the younger Ephraim instead of Manasseh, the elder son. Joseph took it for a mistake. But Jacob understood what he was doing. Jacob's prophetic prayer set forth the

destiny for Ephraim to fulfill a role greater than Manasseh. Jacob then blessed Joseph and his sons with this prayer:

“May the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked faithfully,  
the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day,  
the Angel who has delivered me from all harm  
—may he bless these boys.  
May they be called by my name  
and the names of my fathers  
Abraham and Isaac,  
and may they increase greatly  
on the earth.” (vv. 15–16)

**3. A father's prayer blesses.** The prayers of the righteous father carry with them blessings that transcend generations. Psalm 112:1–2 says, “Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who find great delight in his commands. Their children will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed.”

Even when a child is rebellious, fathers need to bless and not curse. One day our son stumbled upon his dad's written prayer request over him and something broke inside him. The realization that his dad loved him took away our son's determination to keep fighting. The Holy Spirit's conviction, through that note, brought him peace.

## Ways to Speak and Pray

Fathers, your prayers do not need to be formal. They do not need to follow exact formulas. But here are some ways to pray for your children, and interact with them, that will demonstrate your heavenly Father's heart:

- Always speak hope and positivity in love. At times your children will make you angry, especially when

they act contrary to your expectations. You might want to “growl and bark” at them. But, instead, pray first and then offer gentle words, spoken in love, that turn away wrath (Prov. 15:1). Demonstrate to your children, through your words, how much you love them.

- Let your children hear you pray and say uplifting words of hope about them. Don't remind them repeatedly of their mistakes. Sometimes we are tempted to say, “Look what you've done to yourself. You'll never amount to anything.” But, instead, stop and say, “I know God can and will restore you because He loves you. He will give you a new beginning. Your end is great because you have a ‘godly heritage’” (see Ps. 16:6, κτν). Such scriptural prayers and truths will fill your children with hope and help them make a life change.
- Continue your prayers even when you don't see immediate answers. Pray with expectation that you *will* see God move, no matter how long it takes. It took my husband five years to pray his son's heart fully back to him. My husband gave thanks to God knowing that Malachi 4:6 had been fulfilled in our family: “He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents.”
- Pray for the protection of your children and bless them regularly. Birthdays, new school terms, weddings, new jobs, a new year, and other occasions provide opportunities for prayers and fatherly blessings. Affirm Scriptures over your children and declare what you want for them. For example, on birthdays, you can pray, “Happy birthday, child. May God bless and keep you throughout this

new age you have reached and grant you wisdom. I call you blessed, and no one can curse you. In everything you set your heart to do this year, may you have great successes.”

- Declare positive affirmations over your children. When I was growing up, my dad called me his river of hope. Whenever I had exams or milestones to achieve, he would cheer me up with the words, “A river of hope lacks no fish.” I didn’t fully understand, but I worked extra hard not to dash his hopes. The words that fathers speak over their children are powerful.
- Pray *with* your children. When they discuss their challenges with you, pray with them. Continue praying until they get answers. Demonstrate often that you are with them.


## Establish Prayer Habits

Fathers are crucial in leading their families in prayer. Here are some ways to build family prayer habits:

- Establish prayer times. Choose a convenient time and encourage everyone to prioritize gathering for family devotions. Establish a time frame that is comfortable for your family—from 30 minutes to an hour.
- Take the lead. Be prepared to instruct your family how to pray and interact with each other.
- Establish patterns that teach your children how to pray. Include things like prayers of praise, praying God’s Word, and interceding for others.
- Lead your children in praying for each other. Take time to pray over each child and encourage him or her to respond with an Amen.
- Demonstrate personal prayer time. Take seriously your responsibility to pray for your children. Make a list of ways to pray for their character traits, likes and dislikes, and scriptural destinies.
- Ask God for insight to pray in unique

ways for each of your children.

As you continue steadfastly in prayer as a father, it will become a habit. Use your spiritual authority and the power of prayer to set your children on the straight path according to God’s purposes for their lives. And trust God to help them continue to grow in their

relationship with you, as a father, and with their Father God. 

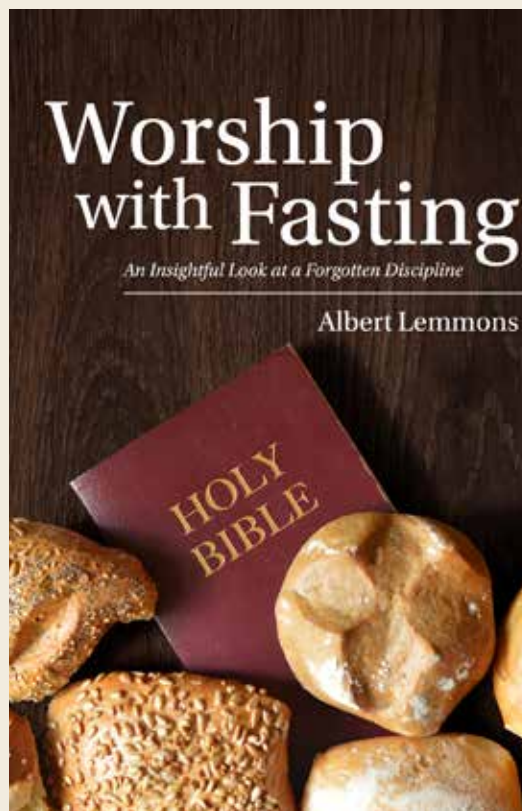


**EKEI JOY OKAFOR** is a freelance writer specializing in health and fitness. She also teaches children and teens in her church. You can find her on Twitter, LinkedIn, and her website [daraswitemom.com](http://daraswitemom.com).

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## Praying for the Inauguration and Beyond

The first 100 days of any presidency—second-term or new administration—is a time of intense, focused activity. Decisions made during this time frame in 2021 will greatly impact our nation. Here are some practical ways we can pray during these crucial days:

**1. Protection.** Pray for the Lord’s protection, not only over events surrounding Inauguration Day, but throughout this presidential term. The president, vice president, their families, and everyone in the administration, all need physical and spiritual protection. *Lord, be the Defender of our nation!*

**2. Presence.** Pray for God’s manifest presence at the highest levels. Nothing is more important than the presence of the Lord Himself in the halls of government and on Inauguration Day. Too many people in our nation confine their faith to a private, personal one or to a house of worship. But the presence of God *in public* changes lives and meets the deepest needs—of individuals and a culture. Welcoming the Lord’s presence into

government can usher in a longing for His presence in all of society. *Make Your presence known, Lord!*

**3. Peace.** In the midst of a badly divided nation, from top to bottom, we desperately need God’s peace. Pray for the Lord’s peace to come into the Congress of the United States and into the Supreme Court of the land. Despite any controversies stirred up during a campaign, may the administration become known as one that unites and brings peace. Pray also that God’s peace will touch the Church that has been badly divided over this election. *We long for Your peace to come to our nation, Lord!*

**4. Provision.** Pray that we, as a nation, will humbly come before the Lord and confess that we need Him to pour out His great provision upon our nation. We need wisdom from above. We need His provision to meet healthcare needs in just ways. We need His provision of a robust economy that allows us to provide good jobs to those able to work. We especially need to be a nation that realizes all things come from Your



hands. *Thank You for being our Provider, Oh Lord!*

**5. Proficiency.** We need the administration to function well. People often view government as inept, inefficient, and incompetent. Pray for the Lord to help our leaders govern proficiently. That includes understanding the proper role of government. *Lord, You who created the world in six days, please empower our government to properly use its power for efficient and just government.*

Regardless of the political party in office, these prayers on Inauguration Day and beyond are crucial for the welfare of our nation and its people.

**DAVE BUTTS** is founder of Harvest Prayer Ministries ([harvestprayer.com](http://harvestprayer.com)) and chairman of America’s National Prayer Committee.

## Finding Focus in a Noisy World

Have you ever closed your eyes to pray and found yourself, five minutes later, scrolling social media? Our world is noisy, but this is not a new thing. Believers throughout history have had to fight for focus in their prayer lives. Susanna Wesley had 19 children (nine of whom died in infancy). But she draped her apron over her head to pray while her kids were playing or studying all around her. George Müller kicked his



conversation with God into gear by praying over what he had studied in the Bible that day.

Seven years ago, when I was anxious

and pregnant, I had a thousand things I wanted to cover in prayer. But I had no “brain space” to make it happen.

I have a newspaper-design background, and I like structure. I was convinced a format must already exist, but after a few months of Google searches, I created my own system to organize my thoughts and focus my prayer—a prompted prayer journal.

Since that time, we’ve heard from tens

of thousands of people that prayer is a struggle for them, even seasoned believers.

Hearing their comments has increased my passion to help every believer pray confidently and consistently. So how does this prayer journal practically do that?

I designed a journal that allows you to fill out the prompts at the beginning of the month (areas, such as world and

nation, church, family, and personal, with blank spaces to customize). Then you can pray through a section or two a day. At the end of the month, you can look back and fill out the “God Answers” section. This is a good way to remember all He’s done, and it can encourage you to continue trusting Him for the months ahead

God didn’t call us to an impossible task. A prayer journal can help overcome

the lie that we’ll never grow our prayer lives. Even the most unlikely pray-ers, in an organized way, can experience a deeper relationship with the Lord in a chaotic and noisy world.

**VALERIE WOERNER** lives in Lafayette, LA, with her husband and two daughters. Her various prayer journals—for women, men, teens, and kids—are available on her website: [valmariepaper.com](http://valmariepaper.com).

## PrayerU Launches to Help Churches

The newly launched PrayerU ([prayeru.com](http://prayeru.com)) is designed to help your church take steps toward becoming a “praying church” filled with people equipped in principles of prayer. Created by Harvest Prayer Ministries, this “practicum on prayer” offers high-quality content that’s easily accessible to churches at an affordable annual membership of \$120 per year.

This user-friendly, online platform allows churches to offer courses to multiple groups at once, on an unlimited and on-demand basis. And PrayerU also offers access to expanding content throughout the life of the membership.

People of all ages and comfort levels in prayer can deepen their love for God and grow in their prayer lives through this material. PrayerU courses are available at any time, and content can be accessed by groups meeting in person or virtually. An annual membership includes the following and more:

- insightful, highly practical video courses covering a wide variety of prayer topics
- robust content that provides deep and thoughtful discussion questions, powerful guided prayer times, next steps to apply what is being learned, and supplemental materials to go deeper
- unlimited use of courses throughout the year
- all present and future courses, with

- new courses added regularly
- guidance for small-group leaders as well as PDF lesson downloads
- blogs for further insight and growth in prayer
- a PrayerU exclusive Facebook community to help participants connect, discuss, grow, learn, and pray together

- tech support as needed.

PrayerU can be a consistent training ground to help Christians grow deep, loving attachments to God in and through prayer. You can sample the curriculum with a free short course called “Watchmen on the Wall” by going to [prayeru.com](http://prayeru.com).

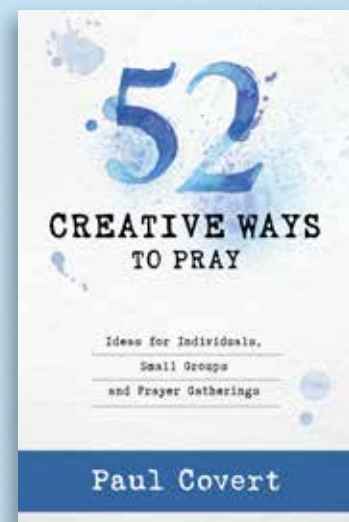
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## WayMakers: Biblical Prayers of Hope

WayMakers might be best known for their 40-day *Seek God for the City* prayer guide, but their vision for united prayer encompasses gospel harvest and community transformation. Steve Hawthorne (director and founder) explains: “A prayed-for world becomes an evangelized world in which Christ is glorified by obedient, worshiping movements in every people group.”

Hundreds of thousands of believers use the *Seek God for the City* prayer guide each year during the 40 days of Lent, from Ash Wednesday to Palm Sunday. The 64-page booklet is rewritten each year with prayers and themes to unify a congregation or city in sustained, biblical hope. *Seek God for the City* (English and Spanish) is available at a modest cost in printed form and as an app. In 2021, it will also be accessible as an ebook.

### Missions Mobilization

The ministry mobilizes a broad audience nationally and internationally. They emphasize unified, coordinated prayer mobilization in local churches and among national prayer leaders in the U.S. They prepare church and mission leaders to help Christians—whatever their vocation or location—to devote their lives to fulfilling God’s global purposes. Increasingly, WayMakers focuses on equipping mobilizers in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America.

In collaboration with the U.S. Center for World Mission (now Frontier Ventures), Hawthorne and Ralph Winters co-edited a well-known book and study course called *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*. The material is now in nine languages and 40 countries. The

200 classes offered yearly in the U.S. enroll approximately 15,000 students.

One young woman had been involved in beauty pageants for years—and even competed for the Miss America title. Then she took the *Perspectives* course.

“One summer I was on stage in front of 5,000 people in a beautiful evening gown, gorgeous jewelry, and five-inch heels,” she says. After taking the *Perspectives* course, “I found myself in the middle of the most AIDS-infected country in Africa, with no electricity or running water . . . surrounded by orphans. They were filthy, hungry, diseased, and poverty stricken. They were also more beautiful than any crown I’d ever worn.”

“The focus of the course is not to turn students into foreign missionaries,” Hawthorne says, “but instead to build a vision and practical passion to integrate their lives [with] God’s global purpose.”

### Prayer Initiatives and Partnerships

Over the years, WayMakers has collaborated with various prayer initiatives. In the 1990s and early 2000s, they worked with Mission America and the Lighthouse Movement, which mobilized people to pray strategically for neighborhoods. Hawthorne also contributed to the biblical theology that brought maturity to the March for Jesus movement, which has had a recent resurgence.

The Global Day of Prayer was another movement that Hawthorne and other international prayer leaders initiated. He edited the prayer guide that was translated and used in various countries.

Hawthorne admits that people in the prayer movement know him as “the prayerwalking guy.” And people in the


missions movement know him as “the *Perspectives* guy.” Carol Madison, editor of *Prayer Connect* magazine, recalls having dinner with Hawthorne and other prayer friends when Steve looked at her and said, “Carol, *prayerwalking* is one word. I’m the one who coined it, and it’s one word.” Since then, *prayerwalking*, as one word, is a part of the *Prayer Connect* style guide!

### Practical Resources

WayMakers offers a variety of resources to help people engage:

- ***Seek God for the City***: This prayer guide offers focus and hope as you pray for your community’s spiritual awakening and transformation.
- **Prayerwalking materials**: The book *Prayerwalking: Praying On-Site with Insight* provides simple training and vision for prayerwalking. Other prayer guides help prayerwalkers pray in their communities with biblical substance. These guides also help leaders of short-term mission efforts pray effectively in distant lands.
- **Prayer-Care-Share material**: This colorful, short, practical guide suggests ways to live a prayer-care-share lifestyle.
- **Fresh Prayer**: Free two-page PDF prayer guides help small-group members pray together.

### Biblical Hope

WayMakers especially emphasizes hope. Their initiatives and materials are strongly grounded in Scripture and rich in theology, communicating prayer toward God’s purposes according to biblical promises. Information on all the resources and the *Perspectives* course can be found at [waymakers.org](http://waymakers.org). 

## Can We Pray Together? | By Andrea Hebeisen

**T**he police-involved death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, in Minneapolis, MN, ignited a fiery focus on racial justice and unrest throughout the country. I live in the Twin Cities area, and this was not the first time I had viewed a video documenting a black American man dying at the hands of those who are supposed to protect. But, for some reason, this was the first time I felt it personally.

I am not proud to say that. I knew I needed to personally repent and look deeply at my own complicity. As a church leader, I started to educate myself regarding ways people of faith have historically worked against racial justice. Even past accounts of revival in our nation are tainted by compromised biblical teaching about human dignity and equality.

A few people in my church started a learning circle to educate ourselves about the role of the Church throughout our nation's history. We started reading books and watching videos. We identified racist thoughts and actions in our own lives. We prayed and asked God to do what only He could do in our hearts.

### The Power of Listening

One person in our group had recently started attending a black congregation. She and her husband asked that church's pastor how to help in these fearful and tension-filled times. He suggested we start with prayer.

Another church also asked to participate, so the three churches—one mostly white, one mostly black, and one mixed church—started praying every Monday from noon to 1:00 p.m. I invited others from our church's Prayer Force to join us.

Gathering outside, with masks over our faces because of the COVID pandemic,

we stood in a circle in the park across the street from the church and prayed. We didn't just start with prayer and then discuss the issues.

Our prayer times consisted of heartfelt repentance, a sense of oneness, and, most importantly, grace. We have found it hard at times to even know what to pray. I am a pastor of prayer who is used to leading in prayer. But I found myself mainly listening. I heard pain. Pain of so many lives gone too soon because of one's skin color. Pain of fear and not being heard.

I have never felt my heart change the way it has since we have gathered in this circle to pray. Listening has been the biggest change—listening to the way the Holy Spirit speaks through others whose experiences are much different from my own.

### The Joy of a New Thing

During one of our prayer times, God reminded me of His promise to do "something new" in the lives of His people (Isaiah 43:19). And in my spirit I heard, "This is the new thing I am doing, and if I would have told you about it you would not have believed Me." I recognized the second half of that statement, reflecting Habakkuk 1:5.

This resonated deeply in my spirit because it is true. God did it. He drew us together. Previously, the thought to pray with my brothers and sisters in Christ who are black had never crossed my mind. I didn't think I held any prejudice or racist thoughts. I was blind and couldn't see the log in my own eye.

But now, Monday noon prayer times are the highlight of my week. Although we can't even hug one another because of the pandemic, we still feel the love for one another that God is growing in

us. We can pray together. We *must* pray together. Prayer is the work of love.


In the process, we are getting to know one another and forming friendships. One of the churches helped lead a larger prayer gathering with other congregations in North Minneapolis (a high-crime area with much racial tension), and they invited us to join them. Another church held a fall harvest festival and asked for help. And as part of Pastor Appreciation Month, one church asked the other two pastors to help "speak encouragement into their pastor."

### The Path of Unity

We begin each prayer time with the song "We Are One in the Spirit." The last line says, "And they'll know we are Christians by our love."

During this time of racial unrest, we can:

- educate ourselves to better understand how we have all compromised what the Bible teaches about human dignity and equality
- demonstrate humility and minimize our defensiveness by actively listening to others
- ask God to help us—through prayer—to build authentic relationships and trust with people in the body of Christ who don't look like us or who hold different views.

When we pray together, we can't help but love one another. And out of that love will come the healing we so desperately need. 



**ANDREA HEBEISEN** is pastor of prayer and worship programming for Wayzata Evangelical Free Church, Plymouth, MN. She desires to lead her church to center on Jesus through intimacy in prayer and lavish worship.

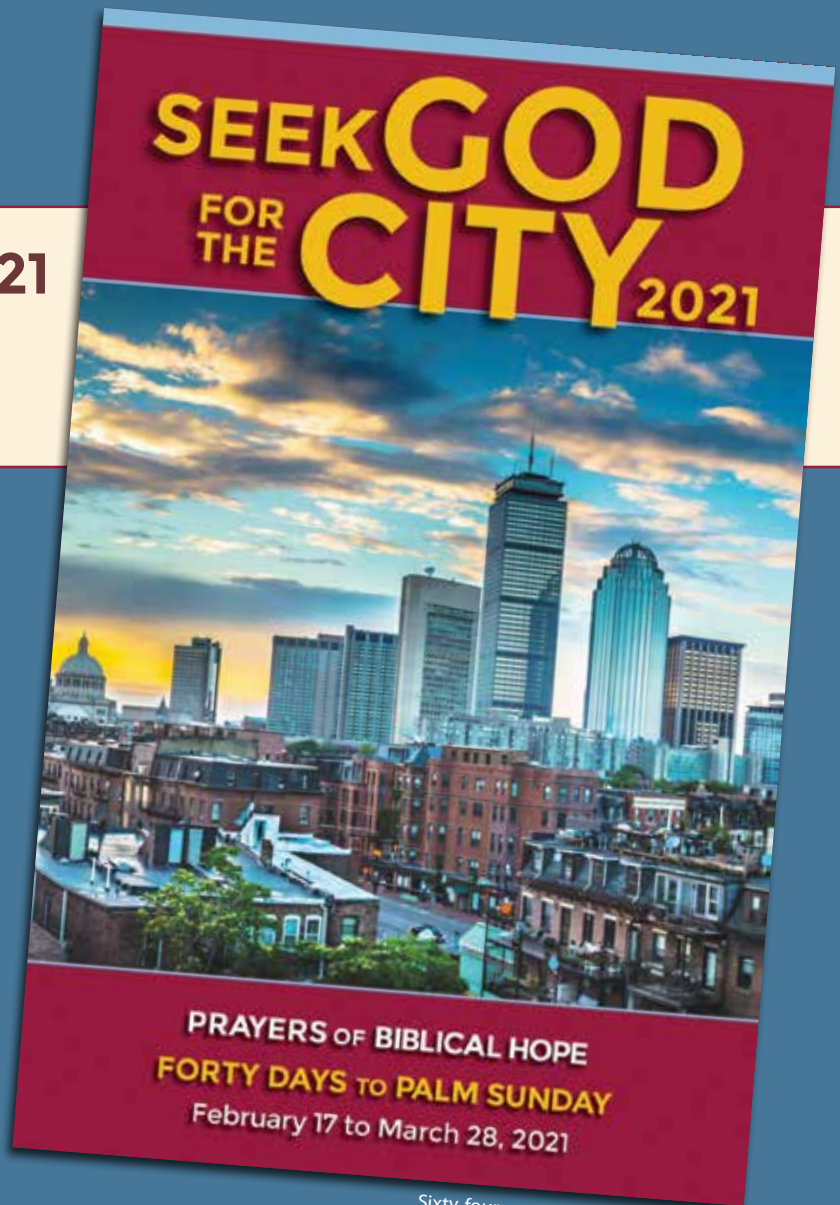
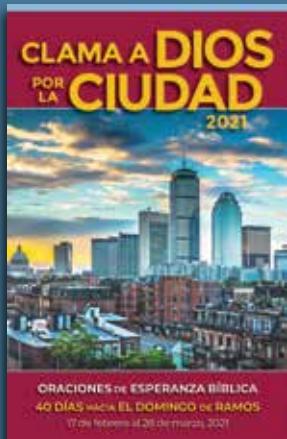
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