

# 4 Simple Ways to Get More People Praying for Your Church



A short time ago, I received an email from a local church prayer leader who was expressing her gratitude for something God was doing in the midst of her church.

“Our church has been struggling for years but a faithful few have kept on praying. Thanks to Jon Graf and [the Church Prayer Leaders Network] we are now doing *Pray the Word for Your Church* by Tiece King!,” she wrote. “We started in June and groups/individuals are still going. I have distributed over 200 books. Let me tell you!!! Stuff is happening at HFUMC. I believe with all my heart it is because of the prayers!”

I am often asked by prayer leaders, “How can I get more people praying into the life of our church?” Here I share four simple ways to get more people praying for your church.

## **Put a resource with targeted prayers and prayer points in their hands.**

Most people do not know how to pray beyond fix it prayers for needs. It is very difficult for them to grasp why and how to pray for the expansion of God's Kingdom in the life of a church. But if you provide them with Scripture-based guides to use, they can rise to the occasion!

The two biggest keys you need to follow here are: 1) make sure what you give them is dynamic and offers good Scripture-based items to pray over; and 2) figure out regular ways to remind people to keep praying and to keep using the guides. With no regular reminders—or obvious results to their prayers—people will quickly drop away.

Two of the best resources I know are a 31-day prayer guide *Pray the Word for Your Church* by Tiece King (the resource that was mentioned in the prayer leader quote above) and a simple 31-day brochure-formatted prayer guide "Targeted Prayers for Your Church."

*Pray the Word for Your Church* is currently having a profound affect in many churches. Here is a first-hand story from a pastor in a church that started using the guide.

## **The Holy Spirit Ignites a Church**

### **Set up a pastor's prayer team.**

One of the easiest areas to start asking for prayer that will engage your people is to set up a Pastor's Prayer Team. People need something that pulls at their heart strings to be motivated to pray. Most people in a church love their

pastor(s). If you challenge them to the need to always pray for pastors (the person in a church Satan most wants to destroy), they will respond. This is an especially effective way to get your men to pray (if your pastor is male). They will rally to his side with prayer . . . if you give them something to pray about.

For a Pastor's Prayer Team to work longer than a few weeks, you need to give your people current items to pray about each month. This works best if you have someone assigned to put a simple prayer sheet together that includes both some kingdom items to pray over for your pastor—the Holy Spirit speaks as he prepares his messages; a rich devotional life with the Lord, etc.—and some specific items to pray over that month that are directly from him or her. The person who puts this together will need to set up a regular, once-a-month meeting (or email exchange) with the pastor(s) to garner items for which your pastor wants prayer.

### **Make the Prayer Sheet More Dynamic—More Kingdom Minded**

Many churches under 1,000 in attendance hand out weekly or monthly prayer request sheets that usually have the current needs of people for whom they should pray. Most of these are only filled with personal needs, and leave off outward-focused and Kingdom-focused areas for prayer. If you want to see this guide used by more than the senior saints, you need make it 50% to 75% church ministry related rather than a list of people's needs.

Include items to pray for the various ministries of the church, for missionaries the church supports, for your community and nation, etc. Don't allow it to always say the same thing—keep changing the prayer points.

I like ones that are monthly and are printed on 8.5 x 11 paper, but folded and formatted to look like a 4-page

brochure. The open panel is nicely designed with the church name and logo and a title announcing it as the Prayer Guide for (Month).

This will work best if a plug is given by the pastor or a key lay person on the Sunday it comes out. The plug should remind people to use it to pray, and might even share an answer to prayer from the last one.

### **Engage the Congregation with a Prayer Initiative**

One of the best triggers to get more people praying is to do an all-church prayer initiative. This is where an entire congregation prays through the same prayer theme for 30 or 40 days. There are many great ones available for use. Most prayer initiatives have Scripture-based prayers or prayer points to pray and are focused beyond people's personal needs.

*Pray the Word for Your Church* can be used as a prayer initiative if you so desire.

Another great initiative that happens every year is *Seek God for the City*, developed by Waymakers. Each year hundreds of churches pray through this guide 40 days prior to Palm Sunday.

While the initiative is coming to a close, you encourage your people that you want to help them continue to pray effectively for their church. You are now going to start using a Church Prayer Guide that you will hand out each month, or you are giving them a simple prayer guide like "Targeted Prayer for Your Church" so they can continue praying, or you are setting up an ongoing pastor's prayer team, and would they like to sign up to be a part of it? This way keeps many praying in a more regular way for your church.

Any one of these ideas can be used to motivate more people to pray for your church. The key to all of them is ongoing,

gentle reminders to keep at it. If that happens in a church, you will start to see the transforming power of Christ at work in your church in new ways!



—Jonathan Graf is the president of the Church Prayer Leaders Network. He is available for prayer weekends in local churches or to consult with local churches on growing prayer.

To have access to more articles like this one—on growing prayer in your local church—we encourage you to join the Church Prayer Leaders Network at this site. Annual fee is only \$35.99.