

Bipartisan Senate Group Meets Weekly for Prayer



In this deeply partisan political climate, it may come as a surprise that a group of Senate Democrats and Republicans come together each week to pray.

"It is literally the most liberal Democrats and the most conservative Republicans," Sen. Chris Coons (D-DE) tells CBN News. "It's not just the centrist group."

Coons, who co-chairs the group with Republican Sen. James Lankford, describes it as the best hour of his week. "We do two things we don't otherwise do; we listen to each other and we trust each other," Coons says.

This Senate Prayer Breakfast is a tradition dating back to 1943, and about one-quarter of senators participate in the weekly Wednesday morning event led by Senate Chaplain Barry Black. Each week, a different senator is picked to share a message with the group.

"What you're sharing is exactly what an opposition research guy would want to know in your next campaign—your weakness," explains Coons. "How have you fallen short? What's been difficult about your childhood, your marriage, or your public service? These aren't just sort of easy two-dimensional—these are folks really sharing of themselves to each other and that's what makes it special."

The group closes each meeting holding hands in prayer. Coons says friendships made in the prayer group have helped improve his working relationships.

“Look, it’s really tough to throw a punch, at least verbally, on the floor of the Senate or in an interview when that morning you were holding hands in prayer. And that’s powerful. That’s important,” says Coons. “It gives you a real insight into someone’s walk with the Lord to hear them pray on a weekly basis. It just lays a basis for a very different sort of relationship.”

A strong motivation for Coons to preserve relationships is his awareness that the world is watching. “In dozens of countries around the world they look at the Senate, they look at the Congress, they look at the United States and they say democracy doesn’t work. That’s bad,” says Coons. “So I remind my colleagues, ‘Look, folks, it’s not just our kids who are watching. It’s our kids, it’s the rest of the world, and it’s history. And we have to show that this is the best way to resolve conflict peaceably and that we can really solve those problems that the average American wants us to tackle.’”

–Taken from CBN News.