

Effective, Intercession

Remote

By Heather Roberts



The COVID-19 crisis united intercessors on a global scale, opposing one deadly foe. As statistic after statistic flashed across television screens for months, our hearts hurt with the stark reality that these statistics had real human souls attached to them. Loved ones suffered and survived—or suffered and died.

Through the pandemic, God has stretched His Church in new ways. Today's technology allows us to connect without the restriction of physical contact. It illustrates perfectly God's promise that He knows and provides for what's coming next: "The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged" (Deut. 31:8).

Sometimes we don't know what we need—or stop to think creatively—until desperation arises. We did not know that COVID-19 would force us into isolation, but the Lord did. Prayer groups have united across the world on phone lines and Internet connections in unprecedented numbers.

This crisis has taught us new tools for intercession. We can now expand these resources to sustain the momentum for a

growing prayer movement.

Virtual Connection with a Plan

With or without a pandemic, remote networking can help deepen prayer connections.

- The physically frail or homebound can take part safely in corporate prayer.
- Participants can enter and leave as their lives dictate—and with less interruption. If they can only pray with others for 20 minutes, they waste no time in a commute.
- Location is not a factor. Those praying together don't need a meeting area—and don't even need to live in the same community or nation.

The lack of physical presence creates a different prayer atmosphere, but it can also add new dynamics. Some may find themselves increasingly bold in their prayers. Others may feel they can quietly pray in agreement and enjoy the fellowship of other pray-ers.

As a prayer leader, you can create a comfortable format for interaction while also allowing for the Holy Spirit to move. Planning ahead helps with the flow of prayer. I'll use my local church's mission team as an example for organizing and motivating a virtual prayer connection team:

- Establish a specific date, time, and frequency of the meeting. Routines help people reserve time on their calendars.
- Establish roles within the group. For instance, a lead intercessor can open the group and invite prayer around points of concern. Another team member can be the contact person responsible for interacting with missionaries or the missions team for the most current information. Someone with an administrative gift can summarize key requests and answers to send out for

continued prayer.

Helpful Technology

Several technology options are available for your remote intercessory group. Find one that fits the demographics and comfort of your group. Some examples:

- Free phone conference call (audio only) information can be found with a quick Internet search. Set up an account, obtain a number and code, and distribute to participants.
- Zoom is an online service that allows for video and audio. Set up an account and obtain a zoom room with a code. You can send the invite to the virtual location via email or text. Participants (up to 100) will need a device (smart phone or computer) with a built-in camera. Zoom also allows an audio-only option, but those participants will need a special call-in number and code.
- Facebook messenger group video chats can accommodate up to 50 intercessors. Each will need a device with a built-in camera. If participants do not have a Facebook account, they will need to download the Facebook messenger app and select the not-on-Facebook option.
- Skype is another online service that allows for video and audio. Participants (up to 50) will need a device with a built-in camera and will need to download the app or software.
- Google Duo group chat can accommodate 12 participants. Create the group chat, then call participants at the designated time. Google Duo allows for both Android and Apple users to work together. Participants need to download the free Google Duo app onto their phones.

As prayer leaders, let's use technology with our prayers to expand and fortify the Kingdom of God.

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