

How to Get the Most People Praying

Churches are often looking for ways to encourage prayer among their people. A great way to get the most people praying is to design a prayer initiative—praying on a theme for a set period of time. Prayer initiatives disciple people to move beyond fix-it prayers for their own needs, and instead pray Kingdom-focused prayers that seek the power, blessing, and purposes of God.

Many denominations or organizations encourage a week of prayer or develop materials for a 30- or 40-day prayer emphasis. A church can develop its own initiative, but there are lots of good ones available, complete with Scripture-based prayer guides, sermon helps, and even promotional materials.

For best results, the initiative needs advance planning behind it, leadership support, and plenty of promotion. Initiatives work best when a pastor's preaching series goes along with the emphasis.

Here are three initiatives that Prayer Connect recommends. Each has a different level of support for a church.

Seek God for the City. This prayer initiative is put on every year during the Lenten season. It lasts 40 days, ending on Palm Sunday. While Seek God for the City does not provide extra materials for churches, its strength is the solid Scripture-based prayers its guide provides.

Each day your people will focus on praying Kingdom prayers for your church, neighborhoods, community, nation, and world. In

the process—besides the spiritual ramifications in the heavenly realms—your people will learn to pray Scriptures that fulfill God's purposes! There is also a downloadable children's prayer guide. For more information, go to waymakers.org.

40 Days of Prayer using Love to Pray. This is by far the most complete prayer initiative on the market. It has a resource kit with sermon outlines, promo pieces, DVD of teaching presentations for Sunday school classes or small groups, and a children's version of the guide. It mainly uses the 40-day devotional *Love to Pray* by Alvin VanderGriend, a 100,000-plus selling product that covers great basic theology of prayer and encourages praying beyond fix-it needs. Go to 40daysofprayer.net for information.

Revolution on Our Knees: 30 Days of Prayer for Neighbors and Nations. This new prayer guide encourages believers to pray daily for God's purposes to be released around them. Its content focuses on the moving of God's Spirit in a church, prayer for lost friends and neighbors, and the completion of the Great Commission. Go to prayershop.org for more information.