

Holding a Prayer Event without Lots of Funds

Many prayer leaders might be thinking, "Our church would greatly benefit from a workshop or special emphasis on prayer but we have no provision for this cost in our budget. What can we do to bring expert teaching to our people?"

If you have no funds in the budget to provide an "expert," several options come to mind:

–Do due diligence, figure out what an event would cost, and submit a request for an outside speaker to the appropriate committee for consideration when next year's budget is drafted. If you need testimonials of churches that have had such an event, and what it meant to the church, contact me at jong@harvestprayer.com. I can provide some insight into the benefits of having a prayer weekend. I also facilitate a number of prayer weekends each year.

–Pray for a permission to raise the funds from an individual who could make such a donation (set a realistic budget before you contact anyone). In a number of places where I have spoken, my honorarium was covered by a wealthy parishioner who thought the event important.

–Invite a speaker who will come on the basis of a special offering given at the event to cover his/her expenses and honorarium. This is usually only fair when you bring in a speaker who lives within a few hours of your church. If you bring someone in for an offering, make sure you take an offering rather than just putting a plate at the back. Also make sure it is clear to the people what the offering is going toward. If you say it is for the speaker, don't take money out to cover your expenses. Be upfront about why you are taking

the offering.

–Ask another ministry in the church to partner with you. The Evangelism Ministry, for example, could partner with you on a seminar on Prayer Evangelism. Their funds cover the speaker’s travel and housing with an offering to cover the honorarium.

–Make it a community-wide event. Invite other churches and/or ministries to share in the expenses, giving their participants a discount off the registration cost. This typically only works if your church already has a relationship with other churches. If you choose this route, make sure individuals from those churches are on your event planning committee. They need to feel some ownership in order to participate.

–If you are part of a denomination, check with your district office and see if they have a person who teaches on prayer. Sometimes district staff will speak in churches basically free as a way of helping churches.

–Not last and not least, pray! Ask the Lord for a creative idea, a divine appointment with someone who may know someone who would come at their invitation, or for the boldness to make a cold contact with an “expert” (you’d be blessed to know that many nationally known prayer leaders will come without a large upfront guarantee of dollars).

–Another possibility, scrape the money together to purchase a DVD of a well-known teacher. Recruit the best cook in the congregation. Borrow a large screen TV or a video projector. Offer a cheap but delicious breakfast and a larger-than-life presentation by an inspiring speaker.

Don’t be discouraged. There are ways to facilitate a prayer event without a lot of funds. Pray, trust God, and go for it.

Finally, if you cannot afford to bring the “expert” to your people, take your people to the expert. Many church members are willing to pay their own way to a conference or seminar if

they deem it important enough.

Special events can be a great catalyst toward more prayer in your church. We encourage you to explore the possibilities.