

Intensive Intercessory Prayer



There are times in our lives and in the ministry of the church that the greatest need is to go to God is desperate intercessory prayer on behalf of others. This is a “Call to Prayer.” A “Call to Prayer” can take on many different forms.

In our experience there are significant times to call the church to intensive prayer; In a time of internal crisis and division, a time of attack or oppression from the enemy, when great decisions such as a building program are looming, when many marriages, individuals, backsliders or lost people are in crisis or need the Lord, and before a special event. Here are some tested and tried prayer strategies that may be planned:

1. Early Morning Prayers – every morning between the hours of 6 a.m. and 7 a.m the church is called to prayer. Wherever they are, in the car, in the shower, at the breakfast table, or in the prayer closet or church, every committed prayer warrior goes to God with the same needs for one week.
2. Lunch Hour Prayers – every lunch hour ½ hour is dedicated to God to seek his intervention on behalf of those who need him. This is a week long commitment.
3. Twenty-four Hour Prayer Chain – this is a prayer schedule for each 24-hour period during an entire week. People volunteer to “man” a ½ hour time slot each day of the week. The hard part is usually the 1 a.m. to 4 a.m slots. A tag team approach can be used in which each pray-er tags the next in line with a phone call to wake them up to pray. The clock needs to be displayed for sign ups at least two consecutive weeks before the prayer week.
4. A Day of Fasting – fasting can be done many different ways. It is not always about leaving off eating all food. It can be a soup and juice fast, and only water fast, an entire week fasting one meal for the purpose of prayer, or for instance, giving up TV from 9 p.m. to 10 p.m. each even to fall on your face before God in prayer.
5. Home Cottage Prayer Gatherings – either one night is designated as intercessory prayer night with at least five homes being “Houses of Prayer.” These homes should be spread throughout the communities from which church people come. Example: Grove City College,

- Slippery Rock University, Grove City, Mercer, Slippery Rock, New Castle-Volant, Lake LaTonka, Sandy Lake, and other locations. At the same hour all homes gather two to eight people to pray for 55 minutes for the specified requests.
6. All Night Prayer Vigil or Half-Night Vigil – the church is opened and organized for a minimum of four hours of prayer. It is similar to a Concert of Prayer with every 20-30 minutes praying in a different manner, about different matters, by different people, even in different rooms. It can be a delightful time if organized and equipped properly. All night vigils are more difficult to populate but can be done with the interesting twist of shift-work. People sign up for prayer shifts in the three “watches” of the night: 9-12 midnight, 12-3 a.m., and 3 a.m. to 6 a.m. Coffee and refreshments should be provided as well as a schedule for active prayer as opposed to passive one-at-a-time prayers. The period of 8 p.m. to 12 midnight also works well.
 7. Saturday of Sunday Morning Prayer Breakfast – If the church is not conducive for this because of many competing activities and to simplify matters it can be done at a local restaurant that has separate banquet facilities where meetings can take place.

We recommend that the Pastor of the congregation preach on the crisis and need and a clear plan an outline of events be promoted by a prayer team, so the leadership is spread throughout the congregation. Visibility of the effort is essential to its success. Leaders must be excited about doing it together. Excitement breeds excitement.

Corporate reading of the same prayer material is also helpful. Such books as *The Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren, *The Bondage Breaker* or *Victory Over Darkness* by Neil Anderson, *Mighty Prevailing Prayer*, or *Touch the World Through Prayer* by Wesley Duewel, *Binding and Loosing* by Neil Foster, or *The Authority of the Believer* by J.B. MacMillan.

Specific and clear purpose for these intercessions needs to be established. Too many prayer meetings are insipid because they lack passion and urgency. People need to feel the urgency otherwise they will see no motive for the effort. A clear and compelling call to prayer is needed along with clear and very specific prayer targets, whether individuals, situations, or desperate needs. Be specific about the need or needs. Be specific about what you are asking God to do, or about what you are asking God for.