

A Ministry Of Prayer At Bridgeway

The Purpose of this Ministry

To raise up volunteers who are available after our worship services to minister with those who request prayer, and to nurture a wider movement of prayer at Bridgeway.

The Values For this Ministry

1. Each believer in Christ is considered a “priest” before God. (1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:5-6). One of the primary roles of the “priest” is to pray for others and bring them before God. Note: to **not** pray for others is a sin (1 Samuel 6:5, 12:23)
2. The Bible commands us that we are to pray for each other in times of trouble, in times of sickness, and in times when we need guidance, or to confess sin. (James 5:13-16)
3. Jesus told us to pray with sincerity (Matt.6:5), with simplicity (Matt.6:7), expectantly (Matt.7:7-11), communally (Matt.18:19-20), persistently (Luke 18:1-8), and joyfully in His name (John 16:23-24).
4. Prayer is something we need to be taught how to do. It does not come naturally or easily (Luke 11:1). The principles of effective prayer can be learned.

Qualifications For this Ministry

1. ***Spiritual Maturity.*** *James 5:14 – “He should call the elders of the church to pray over him...”*

While a person does not need to be an official leader in the church to be a part of this ministry, they should possess qualities and characteristics of spiritual maturity that are evident to those around them. A list of maturity characteristics is found in 1 Timothy 3:1-10.

2. ***Holiness.*** *Psalm 66:18-19 – “If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; but God has surely listened and heard my voice in prayer.”*

We are all “wounded healers”. We all struggle and stand in need of grace and forgiveness. Nonetheless, those involved in this ministry must take seriously the call to holiness. (Rom.6:1-14; 1 Peter 1:13-15; 1 John 5:3-5.)

3. ***Humility.*** *Galatians 6:1 – “Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted...If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.”*

To stand as a “priest” before God and intercede for another requires an attitude of “There but for the grace of God go I”.

4. **The Ability to Listen.** James 1:19 – “Everyone should be quick to listen and slow to speak.” Isaiah 50:4 – “The Sovereign Lord has given me an instructed tongue, to know that word that sustains the weary.”

A ministry of prayer requires one to listen both with the ears and heart.

5. **A Passion for Prayer.** Romans 12:6 – “We have different gifts according to the grace given us.”

While every Christian needs to pray, some are equipped with a unique giftedness and desire for intercession. They can’t help praying! Those with this passion are drawn naturally to a ministry of prayer.

The Principles and Procedures for the Sunday Prayer Ministry

1. Two people – ideally one man and one woman – will be assigned as Prayer Volunteers for each service. After Communion, they will move to either side of the sanctuary. Be sure to wear the Prayer Volunteer badge. Remain available for prayer 5 to 10 minutes after the benediction and dismissal.
2. When in a private setting, men should minister to men, women to women. In a public and more visible setting (such as in the sanctuary) this is less critical.
3. Begin by simply introducing yourself and asking: **“How can I pray for you?”**
4. Step two – Listen! Step three – Listen! Step four – Listen!
5. After they have expressed their need, ask only those questions that may aid you in praying for them. If no questions are required, transition to prayer by saying something Like:

“Well let’s talk to God about that. Let me pray me for you.” Or...

“I know God is with you through this. So let’s talk to him.”

6. As you go to prayer, consider the following:
 - a. If it seems appropriate, reach out and gently lay one hand upon their shoulder. Touch is important in a time of need but use discernment here. It’s usually good to preface this gesture by saying:
“The Bible talks about laying hands upon people as you pray for them. Is it okay if I place a hand on your shoulder as I pray?”
 - b. Just pray naturally and be reasonably short. Jesus told us that we are not heard for our many words (Matt.6:7). Just use your natural tone of voice, vocabulary and style of prayer. Be yourself.

- c. If the Spirit should prompt you, use Scripture as you pray. Claiming God's promises that seem appropriate to the given situation can make the prayer time more meaningful.
- d. Use the person's name as you pray for them. This is a reminder to make sure you remember their name! If you should forget, use the words "my brother", "my sister", "my friend", "Lord, touch Your son/daughter". These are ways to keep the prayer personal.

What do I pray if they request prayer for...

Healing:

1. Ask God to bless their whole being – body, mind, emotions, and spirit – in Jesus' name. (Psalm 103:1).
2. It is appropriate to "rebuke" or "speak against" a specific affliction. *"So Jesus bent over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her."* (Luke 4:39).
3. Sicknesses may have a sin root, but you should never presume when that has occurred. Jesus granted us authority over the power of the enemy (Luke 10:19) so it is appropriate to pray something like:

"If Satan is in any way behind this illness, then I rebuke him in Jesus' name and command him to leave _____ alone."

4. Sicknesses may have physical or emotional roots. Are these recurring headaches related to my genetics or my workaholic tendencies? (In which case, aspirin or prayer may not be the sole remedy.). It is appropriate to sometimes ask the Lord to reveal underlying causes for an affliction.
5. Sicknesses may have unknown roots, hidden in the will of God. Paul talked to God repeatedly about his "thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 12:7-9). With humility, we often need to say: ***"If it be your will..."***. Paul's experience should also remind us that it is okay to repeatedly pray for an ongoing illness until God tells us, *"My grace is sufficient for you."*

Conversion:

(The following tips are from *Becoming A Contagious Christian*, by Willow Creek Resources):

1. Assess their readiness by asking one of these questions:

“Have you come to the point of accepting Christ, or are you still in the process of thinking it through?”

“Where would you say you are right now in your spiritual journey?”

“Is there any reason you wouldn’t want to cross the line of faith and give the Lord your life?”

You should be prepared to share a brief presentation of the Gospel with them, using “The Bridge” or “Do/Done” or the “Romans Road”, or any appropriate and simple tool.

2. Pray.

It’s important to prompt them to pray at this point. They should express their desire for Christ in their own words. Guide them in their prayer, prompting them to express the following ideas:

- a. **Admit** that they are sinners and need God’s forgiveness.
- b. **Believe** that Jesus died on the cross for them and rose from the dead.
- c. **Call** on Jesus to become their Lord and Savior, and to live inside of them through the Holy Spirit.
- d. **Determine** to follow Jesus as his disciple.

Here’s a sample prayer: ***“Dear God, I know I have sinned in your sight. I have broken your laws and broken your heart by the way I have lived my life. I repent and turn from my sins. I believe Jesus died for my sins, rose from the grave and is alive forever. I open the door of my heart and life, receiving Jesus Christ as my Savior. I want to follow him as the Lord and Leader of my life. Fill me Holy Spirit of God. Wash away my sins and make me new. Thank you for saving me. Amen.”***

3. Celebrate their commitment and their salvation.

- a. Keep in mind that not everyone will react the same way. What matters is that they took a step of faith not that some specific feeling is evoked.
- b. You may want to scripture such as:

Luke 15:10 “There is rejoicing the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

Romans 10:9: “If you confess with your mouth, Jesus is Lord’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”

4. Now need to encourage them to strengthen their relationship with Christ by:

- a. **being baptized**

- b. developing Christian friendships / joining a LIFE Group
- c. praying and reading the Bible
- d. Share with a pastor or church leader what has happened

Confession

1. Confession can be an important part of intercession.

James 5:16 says, "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."

2. The chief attitude for hearing a person's confession is humility and grace.

Galatians 6:1-3. "Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself."

3. It is important for the person who is confessing to talk to God in their own words. Encourage them to pour their heart out to God. When they are finished, pray for them by claiming a promise for them.

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

4. There are certain behaviors that fall under the category of "mandatory reporting" should you hear of them. If you sense that the conversation is moving in this direction, it may be appropriate to seek out support from a pastor or elder.
5. It is appropriate to ask the individual what steps they will now take as a follow-up to their prayer of confession. In some cases, restitution may be required (Leviticus 6:1-7); or reconciliation should be sought. Perhaps counseling should be encouraged.

Further Notes:

1. Though it might sound redundant, remember to pray for the Prayer Team! The Enemy of our souls will resist the movement of a church toward prayer and seek ways to discourage and attack those who are leading the charge.
2. Anyone who cannot serve on a Sunday they are scheduled for should find a replacement for that week or contact the team coordinator.
3. Even if you are not "scheduled" on a given Sunday, be sensitive to opportunities where you may be called upon to pray. Listen to what people share in church or during times of fellowship. After the service, you may feel led to seek out certain people to encourage them through listening and prayer.

4. Though we'll attempt to meet review this ministry, please offer feedback as we move forward with this ministry.