

21 Days of Prayer – Small Group Prayer Guide

Jesus was so devoted to prayer. He knew the only way the goals of the Kingdom of God would happen was certainly not by counting on human effort alone. Everything would happen through prayer.

It might be tempting for us to sit and discuss prayer as a topic, but let's not waste time. Let's just pray and learn about prayer as we go.

1. (8-10 minutes) When invited to pray – your immediate reaction might be tightness, nervousness, reluctance, resistance or just uncertainty. Speak out what your “thing” is if you have an aversion to praying with others. As people share, respond with kind but truthful encouragements. The answer cannot be that we DON'T pray with one another, because clearly Jesus is calling us to it. So how can we encourage one another to grow past our hesitations?
 - *Please note, for those who are just learning about prayer or would like to read a prayer to help get past the prayer road-blocks – we have included a Prayer Assistant to help out. Read the prayer, by practicing prayer...our hearts/minds/mouth become accustomed to prayer!*

PRAY TOGETHER

Split off into groups of 3-4 people max. within your small group.

Then use this guide to move you through prayer. *We are using Pastor Mike's outline from Sunday to pray through...*

1. The Church is working right when after it Gathers it Scatters.

Prayer 1

- Have someone read: **Matthew 28:19** “*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...*”. Jesus never said “world, go into the church” but “church, go into the world”. To influence it. We are to be salt and light.
- Have two people pray that SunRidge would bring joy to our Heavenly Father by being this kind of “scattered church”
- **Prayer Assistant:** Father, I want to be salt and light. I want to BLESS others around me. I want people to see your love through me. Please help me to be useful for Your Kingdom. I pray also for our church, that all of us would go out and BLESS our neighbourhoods and circles of friends and co-workers. I pray our church would not stand still, but would scatter and be about what You are about. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Prayer 2

- Have someone read: **John 17:15** “*I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but that you keep them safe from the evil one.*”
- Have one person pray that as we scatter and work in the world, that we would be kept safe from the evil one
- **Prayer Assistant:** Father, you are not taking us out of the world, separating us from the world and all its issues. You are calling us to engage the world. As we do, help us remember that nothing can separate us from your love. Help us to remember that you are our strength and help. And I pray that you would keep all of us safe from the evil one and that we would not be tempted to stray away from You. In Jesus Name, Amen.

2. The Church is working right when it Prioritizes Prayer.

Prayer 3

- Have someone read: “*The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.*” God will NOT do our part, and we CANNOT do His part. Some blessings He has chosen to give us ONLY if His people rise up in the partnership of prayer to ask for them (our part)! **James 4:2** “*You do not have because you do not ASK God!*”
- Have two people pray and for our present workers and for future works. Pray for SunRidge to have all the gifts needed to function well, including the gift of pastoral leadership. And pray that we as His people would be given faith and courage and opportunity in the world to do His work.
- **Prayer Assistant:** Father thank you that you do not leave the work of the Kingdom up to us to figure out on our own. Your Spirit is in us. Your Word is in our hand. You go with us wherever we go. You give us all the gifts and all the opportunities to partner with You. Please help us Lord. Equip us. Make us bold. Give us faith. Use us in the church and use us in the world I pray. May we see You at work this year. Grow me. And grow us as believers. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Prayer 4

- Have someone read **James 4:7** “*Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*” And **2 Corinthians 10:4** “*The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.*”
- Have one person pray that God's people would actively resist the devil; that we would not so easily fall to his tricks and schemes.
- **Prayer Assistant:** Father thank you that we are not helpless victims of the devil. You are with us. Your Spirit is in us and the enemy has no power over Jesus. I pray this year we would actively resist the devil and we would see him fleeing. I pray this for every area of our life where he might tempt us or where he may try to pull us down by poking our areas of weakness and

past bruises. Help us to more boldly, and with more conviction, using the weapons you put in our hands, stand against the enemy this year. In Jesus Name, Amen.

2. Fasting

Prayer 5

- Have someone read *Matthew 17:21. The disciples were struggling with some things. In particular as they dealt with someone who was demon possessed. They asked Jesus about it and he said, "this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."* We always try to explain things, but some things – especially things of God, we can't explain...we just need to trust. And Fasting is one of those. *1 Corinthians 1:27-29 says "But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28 He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things--and the things that are not--to nullify the things that are, 29 so that no one may boast before him."* Fasting is certainly something that shows our weaknesses; and we often do feel weak when we fast! When we fast we are drawn to focus on God and His power instead of our own. It is a voluntary laying down of our own self-reliance. *Ezra 8:21 says "I proclaimed a fast, so that we might humble ourselves before our God..."*
- Have two people pray for those who have or will or are fasting during these 21 Days of Prayer. Pray for the practice of fasting in our church that it would not be foreign.
- **Prayer Assistant:** Father, your Word speaks about fasting and how it is beneficial at times to fast as we pray. We humbly accept this and trust that it is for our God and has an affect. Help us as we fast. I pray that fasting would not be a foreign thing to SunRidge. I pray that we would become really familiar with it and use it as individuals when the Spirit is calling us to. Teach us to pray, Lord. Teach us to fast and give us the ability to fast, because it is hard, and we are weak and tempted. Thank you that you do this; you help us do the things you call us to. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Prayer 6

Have three people pray – take one prayer request each:

1. The future of SunRidge, including the future transition pastor and lead pastor.

Prayer Assistant: Father, thank you that you have been with us this year in our process of finding a transitional pastor. Thank you for our Elders. Thank you for the patience you have given our church to wait on you. We trust you that you will provide a transitional leader for us. We trust you that you have the next Lead Pastor for SunRidge already chosen. I pray that when you see us waiting for you to lead us in these choices, you would be pleased by how we lean on you and wait. In Jesus Name, Amen.

2. That SunRidge would grow in our generosity of our time, treasure and talents.

Prayer Assistant: Father, give us the perspective we need to open our hands to you. Give us your greater vision so we can see the times we are living in and the needs. Show us each our gifts and how to use them. May we recognize your nudge to serve others with these gifts and obey. This year, help me and help our church to grow in generosity with our time, treasure and talents. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

3. That the young leaders of SunRidge would see the harvest and become a worker.

Prayer Assistant: Father, as we look at our world, and at the generations coming, we know you are calling out to those who will carry the church forward, carry your Gospel to others, reach those who are struggling in this present and coming culture. I pray for SunRidge to have open arms to younger leaders and a willingness to mentor them. I pray that younger leaders would feel safe at SunRidge to practice their gifts. May we see a beautiful and healthy baton pass of responsibility from one generation to the next. May your church not stagger or dwindle, but look ahead to where your Spirit is leading and welcome in those who will carry her forward. I pray for Your call to go out to the young and that they would hear you and say yes to your call. In Jesus Name, Amen.