Fighting for Each Other

Spend the afternoon praying for the members of your church—praying together for those in attendance, but also praying for all those not there. Take your church membership list and print it off. Depending on how large it is, you may want to divide your group up into smaller prayer teams, giving each one a few of the names on the list. If your church is small, then pray together for all of the names.

You may want to create a slip of paper with each member and/or family name. You can let members know ahead of time that you will be praying for every church member and invite them to share specific requests that they would like lifted in prayer. If you receive these, include them with those names. Then encourage those praying to take home these slips and to send a short note, postcard or email, letting that person(s) know they were prayed for specifically.

It could be helpful to divide the names into several groups: active/attending members, missing members who are no longer attending because of their own choices, shut-in members who are no longer attending because of health/age, and children/youth/young adults.

Please remind people that prayer is not a time for “holy gossip.” No sharing of “concerns” or information that isn’t public knowledge.

• Begin this time of prayer, by spending time praising God—focusing on who He is. If you’re going to divide up your group to pray, begin this time together as one large group. Then separate into smaller prayer bands.
• Spend the afternoon praying specifically for every member and those attending your church. Give those praying names of members and any specific requests. Or have the slips of paper in a basket/container and have each prayer warrior draw out a name and pray for it. If there aren’t specific requests, some areas to pray for members include (see additional resource, “What do I pray about?” on page 19):
  ▪ Spiritual growth/relationship with God
  ▪ Health
  ▪ Relationships—marriage, parenting, friendships
  ▪ Finances
  ▪ Jobs/school
  ▪ Challenges and struggles
  ▪ Temptations/battle with sin
  ▪ Passion and purpose—that each one would find their way to serve God
• Pray specifically for the missing members—those who are no longer attending by choice:
  ▪ Pray not only for the ideas listed about, but pray specifically for their relationship with God and with the church.
  ▪ Ask God to heal any wounds they’ve felt inflicted by the church or church
members.

- Pray that God will give them the desire to come back to church or to find a church in their new community.
- Pray for your church, that it will be an accepting, grace-filled church where every person, no matter where they are in their journey with God, will feel welcomed and wanted.

- Pray for the **shut-in members** of the church. This can be a difficult time in life for people. They may feel forgotten and like they have no purpose.
  - Pray for the ideas above, but pray specifically for their health.
  - Ask God to help them find purpose and passion even in their limited abilities—to show them ways they can continue to serve Him and to feel encouraged that they are making a difference even if they can’t be as active as they may have once been.
  - Ask Him to help them feel connected to Him and to the church.
  - Pray for ideas and opportunities to minister to this group of people who may have at one point been a vital part of the church and are not feeling forgotten.
  - Ask God to raise up those who will visit and care for these members.

- Pray specifically for the **children, youth and young adults** of the church. Young people are choosing to leave the church, thinking it is not a relevant part of their lives and not a way for them to make a difference (Barna).
  - While praying for the ideas above, pray specifically for their salvation.
  - Pray that God protects them from all harm—not just physical, but also emotionally, mentally, and especially spiritually.
  - Pray for a passion and love for God that will not end.
  - Pray that they experience a personal and intimate relationship with Christ and that church isn’t just a habit, but a place where they find people who truly care about them, find courage and help in their day-to-day lives, and discover ways to serve God with their unique gifts and abilities.
  - Ask God to convict you of ways that the church is failing or letting down the young people of the church and to show you ways to connect with the kids, teens and young adults of your church.

- **Specifically pray for the leaders** of your church. The enemy works extra hard to take out leaders and those serving in ministry.
  - Pray for their protection—again, not just physically, but spiritually, emotionally and mentally.
  - Pray for courage and strength as they face temptations.
  - Pray for their relationship with God—that it will always be their top priority and that they will never be too busy for time with God, recognizing that they can do nothing without this connection.
  - Pray for wisdom and discernment as they lead.
  - Pray that the church will be encouraging and not critical—that even in those moments when a leader needs to be talked to about something,
that it is done with much love and prayer.

- End this afternoon of prayer by coming back together and spending time in thanksgiving and praise.

*Continue to Fight for Each Other in Prayer*

There is something powerful about hearing another person pray for you—really pray for you and the things that are the heaviest on your heart. It’s also incredibly encouraging to know that others are praying for you. Let’s not just pray for each other one day a year. Here are some ideas for keeping members praying for each other throughout the year:

- Provide ways people can **share prayer requests** whenever there is a need:
  - Have a prayer request box where members can drop off specific requests. Then make sure to have people praying for those requests.
  - Include a prayer request slip of paper in the pew racks that people can fill out and place in the offering plate. Then make sure to have people praying for those requests.
  - Have a prayer request page on your website where people can submit prayer requests—and again, make sure someone is following up and praying.
  - Create a private prayer group on Facebook (make sure it’s private so that no one except those in the group can see it) for church members where they can share requests and “pray” for each other by posting a short prayer for the requests shared.

- Create a **prayer room** at church that is open on Sabbath. A place where people can go and have someone pray with them. Staff it throughout the Sabbath morning and for a short time after church. Remind people that there is someone there who will pray with them.

- Each week, **focus** on a different family/couple/single of the church for whom to pray. Encourage people to not only pray for this member(s) during the week, but to drop them a note, email, text, or Facebook post letting them know prayers are being lifted for them. Make sure to include inactive or shut in members on this prayer focus schedule, too.

- Create a **MUCK** group for your church—Mothers United in Christ for Kids. A group of moms committed to praying specifically for the salvation of children—not matter who young or old they are. Share the list of children’s names submitted with all who have committed to pray. Encourage moms to share updates and then share updates with the entire group regularly. A resource is included on page 16.

Share the resource, “Praying Like Crazy,” on page 18, with prayer warriors and encourage them to continue to pray for others.