

# GUIDELINES FOR PRAYING IN GROUPS.

Many people are hesitant, apprehensive and uncomfortable about praying in groups. This is quite understandable.

Prayer is a very personal thing and people feel nervous, self-conscious and unqualified.

## Why do we pray in groups?

### 1. **Because there are many examples in the Bible of people praying together.**

One of the most significant examples is in Acts after Peter and John were arrested and warned to stop preaching.

We read that: "On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God." (Acts 4:23-24)

After their time of prayer we read that: "After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly." (v.31)

### 2. **Praying together encourages us.**

Sometimes we become discouraged about prayer. The discipline of meeting together is valuable and the practice of praying in the group will enhance our own prayer times.

### 3. **We learn from each other.**

When we pray by ourselves, our prayers can become habitual and formulaic. When we pray with others, we get different perspectives.

### 4. **We get a sense of where God is guiding our prayers.**

God prompts us about things to pray about. I have often had the experience of someone "stealing my prayer" (praying about the very issue I was about to pray about.) I am encouraged when this happens as it is often a sign that I am tuning in to what God is laying on our hearts.

### 5. **We hear about answers to prayer.**

When we pray about needs in the group we get to hear about how those prayers were answered. This is very encouraging.

### 6. **There's power in corporate prayer**

Matthew 18:19-20 says "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."



## How do we pray in a group??

### 1. **Don't be nervous!**

A lot of people have performance anxiety about praying in public. We don't have to pray fancy prayers. In fact, Jesus commended brevity and simplicity.

### 2. **Be on time.**

It really makes things easier for everyone if you are on time. It's quite disruptive when folk are late. However, if you are late, come in quietly and join up.

### 3. **Keep your prayers short and simple.**

People think that they need to pray prayers like the pastor does on Sunday mornings. It's actually much easier to have people frequently pray short sharp one-sentence prayers on the current topic than long rambling prayers.

### 4. **It's OK to pray silently**

You don't have to pray out loud. Obviously if you pray out loud, others can hear your prayer and agree in prayer with you. But if you are shy or don't have anything to add to the current prayer topic, just pray silently in your heart.

### 5. **People show their agreement.**

If you pray about something and someone in the group feels passionate about that need, you may hear them say "yes Lord" or "amen" (which means "let it be so"). This is nice confirmation that our prayers are flowing in the direction that God is guiding us.

### 6. **Stick to the topic.**

The leader of the prayer meeting may set up a "menu" for the topics of prayer. This is very helpful to structure the time of prayer. Try to stick to the topic – it stretches our hearts and minds to pray about things we may not normally think of.

### 7. **It's OK to pray in your home language.**

If English is not your first language, feel free to pray in your home language.

### 8. **It's OK to have long gaps of silence.**

Many people are uncomfortable by silence. But we use the silences for praying silently or for listening. Don't feel that you have to fill the silence with audible prayers.

### 9. **You don't need lots of details**

God knows the details. While one wants people to be able to agree with your prayers, they don't need to know all the nitty gritty details. Keep it simple.

Praying together is a great way to enhance and encourage a closer walk with God. We sincerely hope that you will come along and be part of this significant activity.  
Come along and join us!