

The logo features the words "PRAY" and "FIRST" stacked vertically in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The background is a soft-focus image of a cloudy sky with a light sun flare on the left side.

PRAY FIRST

How to Pray for Your Local Church

The uplifting and refreshing presence of God is upon a church where God's people have humbled themselves to pray!

When we were born again, we were born into a family—our church family (Ephesians 3:15, John 1:12-13). God purposed this inter-relationship for our spiritual good. We need each other in united prayer and prayer warfare. (See Acts 2:42 and James 5:16).

Every New Testament local church was exhorted to pray without ceasing. Prayer with fasting is practiced. Consider:

- The church at Ephesus was exhorted to pray always (Ephesians 6:18).
- The church at Thessalonica was told to “Pray without ceasing” (I Thessalonians 5:17).
- The church at Rome was admonished to “be constant in prayer” (Romans 12:12).
- The church at Colosse was exhorted to “continue in prayer with thanksgiving steadfastly” (Colossians 4:2).
- The church at Philippi was encouraged to not worry about anything . . . but in everything by prayer and supplication let your requests be made

know to God (Philippians 4:6).

- The Hebrews were urged to “continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God” (Hebrews 13:15).

Around A.D. 400, Chrysotom wrote, “*What we cannot obtain by solitary prayer . . . we may by cooperative prayer.*”

The uplifting and refreshing presence of God is upon a church where God’s people have humbled themselves to pray! By prayer we are talking about more than a few minutes here and there. We speak of focused prayer . . . groanings . . . cries from the heart . . . fasting . . . seeking God’s face (Romans 8:26).

We are keenly aware of spiritual forces at work in the congregation and also outside the church. Preaching, teaching, lecturing, discipling — without prayer — have little impact against these powers (Zechariah 4:6).

Every local church must be united in unceasing, intercessory, concentrated, prevailing prayer! There is unusual power in united prayer. Jesus said, “My house shall be called the house of prayer” (Matthew 21:13).

When you pray for your local church, pray for:

1. YOUR PASTOR AND HIS FAMILY

- Pray that God would anoint your pastor and his wife to be the godly leaders that the local church needs (I John 2:27).
- Pray that they would be strengthened physically and that their financial needs would be met (Philippians 4:19).
- Pray that they would have wisdom in rearing their own children in the fear of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4).

2. SUNDAY SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

- Pray that God would anoint and inspire the teachers to reach and teach the children on their level.
- Pray that the children's hearts would be tender to the Lord and that they would receive the Holy Ghost even in their classrooms (Acts 2:39).
- Pray that the children would lead their unchurched parents to know Christ.

3. HOME BIBLE STUDIES AND OUTREACH MINISTRIES

- Pray that teachers and workers would be sensitive to the needs of those they meet.
- Pray that the hearts of the contacts would be fertile soil for the Word of God to take root and grow. Pray that the entire church would feel the burden to reach their world with the love of Christ and His gospel.

4. YOUTH MINISTRIES

- Pray that the youth staff—the youth pastor, youth leaders, Sunday school teachers, and others—would have genuine love and concern for the youth of the church and city and the wisdom to deal with the manifold problems that face today's youth.
- Pray that parents and older saints would be examples of righteousness for the youth to follow.
- Pray that the youth would learn to put God first in their lives (Matthew 6:33).

5. MUSIC MINISTRIES

- Pray that those involved in the music ministry would be divinely anointed as they play and sing unto the Lord.
- Pray that they would be sensitive to the move of the Spirit and complement the ministry of the Word.
- Pray that they, as more public examples of the church, would walk circumspectly before the Lord (Ephesians 5:15).

6. SINGLE MINISTRIES AND SUPPORT GROUPS

- Pray that the singles would find the companionship and emotional support they need within the church body.
- Pray that the other support groups would be understanding and compassionate as they reach out to those in need.
- Pray that those in material need would be drawn closer to Christ because of their problems.

7. DAUGHTER CHURCHES

- Pray for the ministers of the daughter church to be anointed and strengthened both spiritually and physically (III John 2).
- Pray that those attending the daughter work would pick up the burden —both spiritually and financially.
- Pray that the community surrounding the new work would be receptive to the Word of God (II Thessalonians 3:1).

8. PRAYER MINISTRIES

- Pray for the leaders of the prayer ministry to be strengthened physically and spiritually—intercession is taxing both to the body and spirit.
- Pray that they would be sensitive to the leading of the Spirit and to the needs of the church.
- Pray that others would have a burden to join the prayer ministry.

9. MEDIA MINISTRIES

- Pray that the media ministries of the church would be tools of evangelism and encouragement.
- Pray that God would anoint the hearts of those that hear the tapes and see the videos to be receptive to the Word of God.
- Pray that the church dramas and newsletters would make an eternal impact on lives.
- Praying for your local church is not only an obligation, it is a wonderful privilege. Heaven and hell respond to those who pray (II Chronicles 7:14; Matthew 16:18). Your prayers can bring revival, healing, reconciliation, and salvation.

Please pray for your local church.

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