

Practical Steps to Becoming a House of Prayer

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*The church's greatest deficiency today is in prayer—
not in programs, strategies, materials, or ideas.*

The power for ministry can be released only through prayer.

1. **Pray for a hungering and thirsting after God.** Unless God draws us to Himself and gives us a desire to know Him and be transformed by His presence, we as a people will never seek the Lord. Claim Zechariah 12:10 as a church: “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for a firstborn.” Ask God to give each church member a burden for prayer. Identify a group of praying people who can lead a prayer movement. Start with key church leaders.
2. **Remember that praying leaders are essential.** The prayer life of the church leadership will be reflected in the prayer lives of the church members. Pray for your church leaders to catch the vision of prayer. Appoint a prayer coordinator or prayer director in the church who will plan, program, and manage times of prayer. Such an individual's main task is to keep the vision of prayer before the people.
3. **Give prayer a high priority in the church's life and ministry.** It is impossible to explain the power and effectiveness of the New Testament church without reference to prayer. Prayer is the most important work in God's kingdom. It is a labor that has no substitute.
4. **Remember that correct thinking about prayer is essential.** God rules the world through the prayers of His people. Christ actually meant prayer to be the great power by which His church should do its work. Teach about prayer in sermons, Sabbath schools, etc., so members can develop a Biblical understanding of the science of prayer.
5. **Link prayer to every ministry in the church.** Ministry without prayer becomes work in the power of the flesh. Prayer without ministry is complacent

Christianity. Promote prayer in connection with church projects, such as ministries, events, the work of the local Adventist school, and evangelistic series.

6. **Remember that communicating the needs and answers to your church members' prayers is vital.** If we expect our prayers to make a difference, then we must watch for the answers. A simple way to increase the amount of effective prayer within a congregation is to clearly and consistently communicate prayer needs and answers. Regularly publish and distribute a church prayer list. Emphasize prayer victories.
7. **Emphasize intercessory prayer for unsaved people.** Praying for others and seeing God work in their lives will bring life to the church like nothing else. Aim to have at least 50% of your congregation praying for others.
8. **Encourage personal devotions.** Private prayers are an indispensable part of every Christian's life. It is the highest activity in which any soul can engage. Only during personal prayer can we look into our hearts and see the deepest and most profound issues the Lord needs us to bring before Him most.
9. **Encourage family devotions.** If a family neglects to worship together, any other attempts at prayer that the family members make are like sprinkling the foliage of a plant with water while leaving the roots dry. Family devotions should be part of every Christian family's experience.
10. **Make times, ways, and places for people to pray together.** This encourages consistency in prayer. Praying with others expands our prayer life. When we listen to others pray, we learn things from them that will strengthen our own prayer life. Praying together not only strengthens our faith but makes the task of prayer more manageable.
 - **Have more than one prayer meeting.** Develop a whole program of prayer meetings according to ages, agencies, tasks, and needs (for example, prayer for the sick, a ministry to Jewish people, men and women in the armed forces, college students, and missionaries).
 - **Plan interesting programs with a special emphasis on prayer.** Some ideas are:
 - Involve children.
 - Hold a prayer conference in your church.
 - Provide two or three prayer retreats each year.
 - Host a prayer banquet.
 - At least once a year, preach a series on prayer.

- Offer a small group Bible study or Sabbath school class on prayer.
- Establish men's and women's prayer breakfast groups that meet regularly for prayer.
- Schedule prayer testimonies during church several times a month.

Sources:

- Joseph Kidder. *The Big Four*. Review and Herald Publishing. 2011. p. 96
- Alvin J Vander Griend with Edith L. Bajema, *The Praying Church SOURCEBOOK*, Church Development Resources © 1990