

Dear Small Group Leaders,

Because prayer is becoming more of a priority here at Constance, the newly formed prayer team has been asked to put together a guide using Biblical elements and tools to use so as to enhance and strengthen our small group prayer time.

Below is the prayer information that we taught at the Leaders Training session. The first 5 pages are explaining our vision, the ACTS format, Conversational Style Praying, the Guidelines, and Specifics. After we taught on the items mentioned, we actually practiced what we just learned using the Prayer Guide which are the last 2 pages. Please read over the information and print it out as you will be using it as a resource to you teach your own group.

Please feel free to contact me for any clarifications and questions. I welcome any feedback you might have.

May you all grow in a more intimate and personal walk with the Lord this year!

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There is **power** in prayer!

Small Group Prayer Training

Sept. 16 & 23, 2006

VISION

- Purpose
 - Our desire is to keep our church body firmly grounded in the Power and leading of the Holy Spirit, by growing as individuals and as a church in our devotion to God in prayer.
 - “House of Prayer” foundation as a church
 - Isaiah 56:7 – “And my house should be called a house of prayer for all nations.”
- Why
 - Prayer is the foundation of an ongoing, growing relationship with our Heavenly Father. It is imperative that we, as a church body and as individuals, remain in Him, depending on His strength and guidance as we go about our daily work for the Kingdom. We will be a church where God’s changing power is evident when He is the source of ALL of our work.
 - John 15:4 – “Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.”

ACTS format Elements based on the Lords prayer, Matt 6:9-13

- **ADORATION**
 - Focus
 - This is God’s time, not our time. Therefore, we do not intercede (with requests) at this time.
 - Why do we praise God?²
 - It gives Him the glory.
 - It is declaring, proclaiming, confessing who God is and what He does.
 - It is for our good. It brings freedom and encouragement to our lives because we focus on God and not on the situation.
 - It leads to true stability in life and develops a gentle and quiet spirit.
 - It dispels Satan’s power and he leaves. Psalm 22:3, “God inhabits (resides, dwells in) the praises of His people.”
 - Who God is; His character¹
 - His attributes and character
 - His power, love, majesty, greatness, deeds, and awesome works
 - His goodness, compassion, power, holiness
 - Truth of God and His Spirit who leads us
 - His wonderful gift of Christ and our Salvation
 - Our position in Christ
 - How do praise God in small-group prayer? Discussion
 - What can adoration/praising look like in small-group prayer (specific examples)?
 - Give examples?
 - Scripture
 - Psalm 145:8 – “The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and abounding in mercy and loving kindness.”
- **CONFESSION**
 - Focus
 - A time of confession before the Lord, seeing the sin as God sees it.
 - Either silently or out-loud, depending on the group.
 - God is clear that He responds to those whose hearts are right in the sight of a Holy God. It is critical that we also pray that our own hearts are humble, pure, broken, and repentant before the Lord. *2 Chronicles 7:14*³

- **Why** do we confess?²
 - It is agreeing with God concerning sin and repenting.
 - It must precede intercession.
 - It brings about healing, cleansing, renewing, and deliverance from the source of the sin.
 - It gives the right to confidently come to the throne room of grace and ask **boldly**.
 - It keeps the lines of communication open so that the Holy Spirit can tell us what to ask.
- **How** do we confess in small-group prayer?²
 - Name the sin specifically, agreeing with God that it is sin.
 - Repent concerning the sin. This will result in changed attitudes and actions.
 - Thank God that He has forgiven your sin because of what Christ did on the cross. *1 John 1:9*
 - Ask to be filled and controlled by the Holy Spirit. It is a matter of surrendering your will, a total commitment of yourself to God. Command – *Ephesians 5:18*; Promise – *1 John 5:14-15*
 - By faith, thank Him that He has filled you on the basis of His promise. Do not depend on your feelings. The promise of God's Word, not our feelings, is our authority.
- **What** kinds of things we might need to confess.¹
 - Pride, complacency, wrong thinking, actions, attitudes
 - Lack of prayer and communion with God
 - Rebellious spirit, willful disobedience
 - Our silence toward injustice; our silence toward untruth
 - Refusing to follow Christ as our Head
 - Lack of unity as believers, not being an example to an unbelieving world
 - Our loss of passion for the Gospel message
- **Scripture**
 - 1 John 1:9 – “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”
 - 2 Chronicles 7:14 – “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”
- **THANKSGIVING**
 - **Focus**
 - Dedicate this time to thanksgiving only. It will be tempting to mention requests, but remember to focus on giving thanks.²
 - **What** God has done and is doing – specific answers to prayer
 - **Why** do we give thanksgiving?²
 - Helps us focus on God's faithfulness, being watchful for the answers.
 - It is an expression of a grateful heart for His goodness, mercy, kindness, and graciousness.
 - It is an offering that honors and glorifies the Lord.
 - God's goodness deserves our thanks.
 - God wants us to give thanks.
 - Giving thanks puts us at peace with ourselves and others.
 - **Scripture**
 - (*Paul*) – “In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”
 - Psalm 116:12,17 – “How can I repay the Lord for all His goodness to me? I will sacrifice a thank-offering to you and call on the name of the Lord.”

- **SUPPLICATION**

- Focus

- During this time, we come to God, interceding on behalf of:
 - Internal small group focus
 - Ourselves
 - Our marriages
 - Our families
 - Pastors/Elders
 - Church and Missionaries
 - External small group focus
 - Community
 - State
 - Nation
 - World
 - Since Jesus is our example, and He is seated at the right hand of God, interceding on our behalf, we can rightly conclude that the ministry of Intercession is one of the highest callings we can have.²
 - Why do we intercede?²
 - We focus our prayer-attention on others.
 - We can release God's power in the things just asked.
 - We realize the power of using God's Word in prayer.
 - Scripture instructs us to be intercessors. *1 Timothy 2:1, 3-4*

- Scripture

- Ephesians 6:18 – “And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.”
 - James 5:16b – “The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”

Conversational Prayer (One-Accord)

- What is *conversational prayer*? **Seeking God's face as one body, one voice, one thing.**
 - Corporate interdependency – as if one person is praying
 - One subject at a time, just as in daily conversation
 - Praying in agreement
 - “Tag-team” praying; bouncing off previous prayers
- Why should we pray in conversational prayer?
 - It's biblical
 - 2 Chronicles 20 – Jehoshaphat at war
 - Acts – at Pentecost
 - Dynamic
 - Powerful
 - More focused
 - Individual praying style *can be* dull and lifeless in a corporate prayer setting
- How to do it
 - Introduce prayer requests in prayer; bounce off previous requests

Prayer Guidelines

Keep the prayers:

- Short – 1-2 sentences
- Simple
- Spirit-led
- Scriptural
- Silence is OK!

Specifics

- Leader guides group in prayer through the ACTS format using the Conversations Style or prayer
 - We will pray through ACTS each time with an special teaching time on:
 - ~ *Adoration* in October
 - ~ *Confession* in November
 - ~ *Thanksgiving* in December
 - ~ *Supplication* in January
 - The guided small group prayer time will be themed after the current sermon series
 - October: marriage
 - November: prayer
 - December
- Note:* due to the limited time, prayer requests are focused on the theme. If outside prayer requests arise, either include them at the end or encourage them to use the church prayer chain.
- Each person will get a prayer guide to have and use during the prayer time
 - Again, due to time restrictions, we encourage everyone to introduce prayer requests in prayer during supplication rather than talking about the prayer request. If someone is shy and doesn't want to introduce it in prayer, they can write their request down and give it to the leader so they can introduce it in prayer at the appropriate time.
 - 20 minutes of prayer time
 - Adoration – approx. 2-3 minutes
 - Confession – approx. 2-3 minutes
 - Thanksgiving – approx. 7 minutes
 - Supplication – approx. 7 minutes
 - Each small group will be “adopting” a pastor, assistant, director or staff member to pray for weekly (see monthly prayer guide for requests)
 - You will get a new prayer guide each month

Practicing...

- Groups of 4-6; Janna and Michelle will model ACTS transitions

¹ *Handout from Constance Free Church corporate prayer gathering*

² *“Moms in Touch International” Leader’s Guide*

³ *“Journey to Transformation” 2006 Prayer Guide*

ACTS Prayer Guide (Sample)

Theme: Small Groups

Sept. 16 & 23, 2006

Adoration: Focusing on *who God is and His character*

Approx. 2-3 minutes

- His attributes and character
- His power, love, majesty, greatness, deeds, and awesome works
- His goodness, compassion, power, holiness
- Truth of God and His Spirit who leads us
- His wonderful gift of Christ and our Salvation
- Our position in Christ

Note: This is God's time, not ours. Therefore, we do not intercede (with requests) at this time.

"The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and abounding in mercy and lovingkindness."

Psalm 145:8

Confession: Focusing on *repentance*, seeing our sin as God sees it, praying that our hearts are humble, pure, broken, and repentant before the Lord.

Approx. 2-3 minutes

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

1 John 1:9

"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

2 Chronicles 7:14

"Father, we want the Holy Spirit to convict and purify any sin that may act as a barrier to what You want to do in our lives."

- Pride, complacency, wrong thinking, actions, attitudes
- Lack of prayer and communion with God
- Rebellious spirit, willful disobedience
- Our silence toward injustice; our silence toward untruth
- Refusing to follow Christ as our Head
- Lack of unity as believers, not being an example to an unbelieving world
- Our loss of passion for the Gospel message

Thanksgiving: Focusing on what God has done and is doing – answers to prayer.

Approx. 7 minutes

Note: Dedicate this time to thanksgiving only. It will be tempting to mention requests, but remember to focus on giving thanks.²

*“In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”
1 Thessalonians 5:18*

*“How can I repay the Lord for all His goodness to me? I will sacrifice a
thank-offering to you and call on the name of the Lord.”
Psalm 116:12,17*

Supplication: Focusing on interceding internally and externally

Approx. 7 minutes

*“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.
With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.”
Ephesians 6:18*

*“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”
James 5:16b*

- Internally (yourselves as leaders)
 - God-empowered
 - Praying to be effective small-group leaders
 - Dependent on God
 - Grow in Christlikeness in leadership

- Externally (your small group)
 - Experiencing God’s power and presence
 - Transformation and life-change
 - Relationships would be established
 - People in your small group
 - Grow in Christlikeness as individuals
 - That God would surprise us

Leader closes in brief final prayer.

¹ Handout from Constance Free Church corporate prayer gathering

² “Moms in Touch International” Leader’s Guide