

ARKANSAS CRUSADER

OCTOBER 2018

*Scripture: Psalms 32 What happiness for those whose guilt has been forgiven! What joys when sins are covered over! What relief for those who have confessed their sins and God has cleared their record.
(New Living Bible)*

Contents

- Page 1- Preface
- Page 2- State Ministers Report
Christian Women's Connection
NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES
- Page 3 - Bauxite, New Life
Benton, Grape Chapel
Benton, New Song
- Page 4 - Bryant, Community Park
Crossett, First Church
- Page 5- Gurdon, Evergreen
Hot Springs, Oaklawn
- Page 6- Kingsland, Smith Chapel
Little Rock, Eagle Point
Texarkana, First Church
- Page 7-8, Article from Pastor Bert Brown

Annette M. Rickard
#30 Redleaf Circle
Little Rock, AR 72210
annetterickard08@att.net

Heritage Hymn:

MY HEART SAYS AMEN

I have yielded myself to thy service,
And thy presence bosom doth fill
O my Savior, I haste to obey thee,
And my heart says Amen to thy will

Chorus:

Yes, my heart says amen to thy will Lord,
And I know that thou lovest me still,
While I bow low in humble submission,
And my heart says Amen to thy will

All the heart ties of earth may be sundered
So that I may thy purpose fulfill;
Help me gladly submit and not murmur,
Ever saying amen to thy will

Tho' my plans and my hopes may seem blighted
I will love thee and trust in thee still
For I know all is well that thou doest,
And my heart says amend to thy will

When I pass to that heavenly country,
And my soul with its glory doth thrill,
This forever shall be my rejoicing,
That my heart said Amen to thy will
Charles Naylor / Clarence Hunter



STATE MINISTERS REPORT

Greetings to pastors and the church of God in Arkansas.

I pray that all is going well with all of our pastors and churches.

I'd like to take this time to thank the Church of God in Arkansas for the way that each one of you supports the state work with your prayers and your finances. I believe the Church of God in Arkansas is moving in the direction that God desires.

I felt like we had a great summer convention. I believe God spoke through Pastor Shane Matthews. We are continually seeking God's guidance for what he wants to do in Arkansas. I have been having great meetings with pastors across the state. We have two new churches in the state. Pastor Kevin and Danielle Edgar have started a new work in Paragould Arkansas. And Pastor Roy Willis and Pam have started to new work in Sheridan Arkansas. Please be in much prayer for these two new churches.

Again I want to thank each pastor and each congregation for their diligence and seeking to win the lost for Jesus and make disciples.

Your brother in Christ

Jim Eustace,

Ministry Director of the Church of God in Arkansas.

CHRISTIAN WOMEN CONNECTION

CWC (Christian Women Connection) News

Preparations are made and we are looking forward to the Fall Retreat October 5 & 6 at Community Park Church, Bryant. Our speaker will be Diana Graves and worship will be led by Penny Bomar along with Jamie Duncan and Hannah Marshall. Diana will be following the theme of: Your Past, Your Present, Your Future. I hope all the ladies are planning to attend! If you have not contacted me with a count from your local, please do so today!

I was able to visit 3 locals during the month of September, Grape Chapel, New Song and Eagle Point. It was a privilege to become better acquainted with these locals and I'm looking forward to visiting others over the next few months.

On October 11, I will be traveling to Anderson, Indiana to take part in the National CWC meeting of all presidents across the US. I'm looking forward to this opportunity, to connect with other states and hopefully bring back some helpful information for Arkansas!

By now, all of the churches should have received the 2018 Christ's Birthday Observance materials. I hope that your church uses the resource book and materials in the packet as you prepare for the time of receiving the Christ's Birthday Offering, which supports worldwide frontline ministries. Many years ago, God revealed the need to me; I should give more to CBO. Through this revelation, our family adopted the practice of looking at the dollar amount that we were willing to spend on gifts for any one family member. Then we challenged ourselves to match or exceed that amount for the Christ's Birthday Offering. It continues to be a blessing to recognize the value of this gift. Great Joy for All!!! *Note to all local treasurers, submit your CBO to the state treasurer, Dollie Brink, and she will forward it to National.*

Lastly, it's never too early to communicate upcoming events. The CWC Spring Convention will be May 3-4, 2019, at Oaklawn Church of God, Hot Springs. The speaker is not confirmed, however, the worship leader will be Tara McKinney, Crossroads Community, Harrison, AR. Save the date and plan to come to Hot Springs in the springtime!

Kathy Arington

501-293-5151



shutterstock - 155248655

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Bauxite - New Life

Hello from New Life Church of God! We've been busy! We held our Vacation Bible School in June and had a record attendance of 57 kids this year. We usually have 15-30. We have about 15-20 children each Sunday and Wednesday for our Children's Church and Kingdom Kids .On September 1st , we painted the church to match the new sanctuary. We plan on building the stage for it this fall when it cools off. We are planning for our Fall Fest for October 31st.

We also have been doing a prayer walk each Monday and Thursday night at Tyndall Park in Benton. We go out each week and walk the park handing out water and popsicles and pray with people that need prayer.



Congratulations to New Life on being the first to get their article in.

Benton - Grape Chapel

Exciting things continue to happen at Grape Chapel as the move of God is transforming hearts and lives. We are thankful for His continued blessing upon the people, as well as, Pastor Scott as he has battled major illness over the past several months. Here are just a few highlights of what has been happening or will be happening in the coming weeks and months ahead.

Our CWC was delighted to have our state president, Kathy Arrington at our last meeting. We have just finished a fundraiser that consisted of crafts, baked goods, canned and horticultural items that were shown at the Saline County Fair. Several of the items received Best in Show, Blue, Red, and White ribbons, as well as, financial awards that was then donated to the CWC. We are looking forward to our craft and baked good fundraiser in November and our annual Free Yard Sale in December. The surrounding community looks forward to these events with great expectation. We also will be hosting a Christmas party in December that will not include any type of gift exchange. Instead, diapers and wipes will be donated to our local Pregnancy Center.

The Sunshine Ambassadors are having a special outing instead of their regular October meeting. We will be car pooling to Iron Springs on Hwy 7 for a sack lunch and devotions led by Rev. Prenkert. We have many prayer concerns that we lift up to God daily and also continue supporting two children through Children of Promise. Most meetings are held the first Monday of the month with a potluck lunch, short business meeting and great devotions.

On Saturday, October 27th, we will be having a special outreach, "Fall Fest and Trunk or Treat" from 4pm to 5:30pm. It will feature a bounce house, games, prizes, candy, great food, fun and more. Everyone is invited to join us! Finally, our children are preparing for their annual Christmas program with hopes of taking it on the road to other churches and/or senior centers. If you are interested in having them come perform at your church, please contact Pastor Scott at 501-794-0563 at your earliest convenience so that we can get a date/time scheduled.

Benton - New Song

Greetings from New Song!

I hope and pray each of you are doing well. The Lord has been particularly gracious to us. We have seen several special needs attended to by the Lord. We resumed our Men's Prayer Breakfast this month and it was wonderful. Our next one is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 13th at 8:00 am. We would like to extend the invitation to any man who would like to join us.

Kathy Arrington, President of the CWC surprised our ladies this month by showing up at the monthly meeting. We have a "Trunk or Treat"/Harvest Party scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 28th from 4pm-7pm. We would love to have everyone who would like to come to please join us. There will be treats for the kiddo's and a bon fire for roasting hot dogs and making S'mores. Our youth are planning on going to the Memphis zoo Oct. 13th. We've kicked off a Wednesday night series in Revelation and Jeannie continues to march us through the Old Testament on Sunday nights. Currently we are working our way through John's gospel in our Sunday morning services. I sense God's presence and movement within our body. Please keep us in your prayers and know that you all are always in ours.

Until next time,

God bless,

Bro. Bob

Bryant - Community Park

Community Park Church is praising God for our 3 young people that were baptized in September. We had a wonderful service and thankful how it is still impacting the life of our congregation!

Our men have been getting together; we had a breakfast / workday. On October 3 the men are treating the Church to a **Chili Cook-Off** with donations going to benefit our Children's Ministry.

CPC is excited about other upcoming events on our Fall calendar. We are always honored to host any of our state events and hosting the October 5th & 6th **CWC Fall Retreat** is no exception! The next day, Sunday October 7th we have our **Friend and Family Sunday**. After the service we have a bounce house for the kids, cornhole, bocce ball, gaga ball, music, food and more! We are praying for a great day!

We are nearing our conclusion of our 31-week series in Randy Frazee's *The Story*. To celebrate, we have invited ladies from **Teen Challenge Woman's Ministry** to come and share with us on November 11.

CPC will be presenting another **comedy play** to kick-off our Christmas season. *The Perfect Christmas* is scheduled for Friday and Saturday, December 7th & 8th at 7:00pm each evening.

Our hope is to lift-up the name of Jesus in all we do;

Loving God & Loving People

Pastor KC Graves

(Cornhole, better known in the south as Bean Bag Toss)



Crossett - First Church

Third Place winner

Well, summer is still holding on here in Crossett, Arkansas, but the promise of cooler weather is on the horizon. That first taste of fall is just around the corner, and bringing some excitement, as our hunters begin to prepare for the coming season. One thing I am certainly looking forward to is our annual Trunk or Treat at the church. I have never taken part in one before, but I understand it has become quite an outreach event. In the past it has presented many opportunities to witness to our friends and neighbors who bring their children for some special treats. I have seen pictures of last year's event and I tell you the pressure is on for the pastor to come up with a great costume!

This past month we have celebrated our teachers, with our annual teacher appreciation dinner. We are so thankful for the sacrifices they make to teach our classes. All our staff agreed to continue in their present positions, and we had several volunteers that have agreed to begin a weekly Children's Church program during our morning service.

Our kids are really stepping up and have even begun to fill their boxes for the Christmas Shoebox ministry. It's hard to believe the holidays are almost here again.

On a more serious note, we had a summer storm this past month that knocked down many trees in town around the church. Some of our people were without electricity for three days. Praise the Lord that no one was injured, but we did sustain some damage to the roof of the fellowship hall. The planning for repairs is already taking place.

May God bless until next time,

Pastor Mike Neal

Gurdon - Evergreen

Greetings from Gurdon,

We have quite a few things planned for this Fall including the hosting of nutrition and cooking classes for the public (adult and teens) at the Community Pantry, a Fall Gathering with a cookout and hayride, and a Thanksgiving Meal for the people of Gurdon November 19th.

The newest ministry launched is what we are calling Evergreen Connect. Ten individuals have been assigned as group leaders of roughly eight people who are part of the church or just beginning to attend. These groups will be caring for one another, sharing with one another and discipling one another through text message. Prayer concerns will be shared and those who may miss church will be contacted all within that group. I also share links to an article or a video once a week to the group leaders, who in turn share with their group. This ministry is an effort to disciple one another and to keep the church connected.

I'm thrilled to report we had 92 people at church this past Sunday! That is a packed house for our sanctuary (pulled out some chairs)! Within that number were 21 young children that participated in Children's Church! There was nothing special planned, just a regular rainy Sunday morning. It's not about numbers, but it excites us that so many people, including young families, are hungry for a meaningful relationship with God in their lives.

Blessings to the Church of God in Arkansas,

Kevin Sims

Hot Springs - Oaklawn

Fall is in the air and crisp mornings are warmed with hot coffee. Coffee is a wonderful thing. We use it in the mornings to get our juices flowing and many of the world's problems have been solved around sharing a morning cup of Joe talking about the day and the way the world is. Why is coffee so popular? What makes a good cup of coffee? Some, like me, think that the only good coffee is that which I can drink black...strong, smooth and full of flavor. Others doctor it with a lot of different flavors. Yet none of these things has to do with a good cup of coffee.

Once, when I was on my mission trip to the Dominican Republic, I had the privilege to tour a coffee plantation. The owner met us and began to share the life of a coffee bean. We viewed the drying process as he explained how the chaff is weeded and the first "crack" for the bean. That is when heat is applied and moisture begins to escape and it makes a noise like corn popping. This process gets rid of the outer layer, hardens the bean and enriches the flavor. What stood out for me the most is that this finishing process only enhances the growth process. The best coffee is raised at an altitude of 3000-6000 feet. Anything lower than that causes bitterness and lowers the quality of the bean. Anything over that is above the frost line and cannot grow.

My mind began to wander through the spiritual overtones of coffee. We use the valley to symbolize hardships and sadness and the mountain top for blessings and joy. What would happen if God picked us up in the valley and planted us on the mountain? We would miss the journey and growth process that goes with it. You see, the best is grown on the way up the mountain. It is the journey up that turns the trials into treasure.

Our choice is simple. We may remain in the valley and become bitter, we may try to remain on the mountain top and become cold, or we may travel up the mountain and become rich, warm, flavorful people. A people that make a difference for Jesus Christ. The best part of the journey is that Jesus said he would never leave us or forsake us. "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:16 NIV

Pastor Terry Arington

Upcoming event:

On October 28, Oaklawn will be a part of a huge Trunk 'r Treat being held at the Hot Springs Mall Parking lot and sponsored by the "The churches of Hot Springs". There is a coming together of the churches in Hot Springs, and they are expecting 5,000 kids to attend, with 100-125 cars decorated and giving out candy. We are excited to support this effort and have the opportunity to get out into the community!

Kingsland - Smith Chapel

Happy fall!

Smith Chapel is gearing up for the season by: restarting the Wednesday night ministries for our children and youth with a good crowd, running 3 buses each week.

Our Women's Exercise classes will resume October 15 in advance of the Thanksgiving and Christmas calorie temptations.

Our Powerhouse small group gatherings are held on the first Sunday evening of each month in various homes. They enjoy devotions, fellowship, and food.

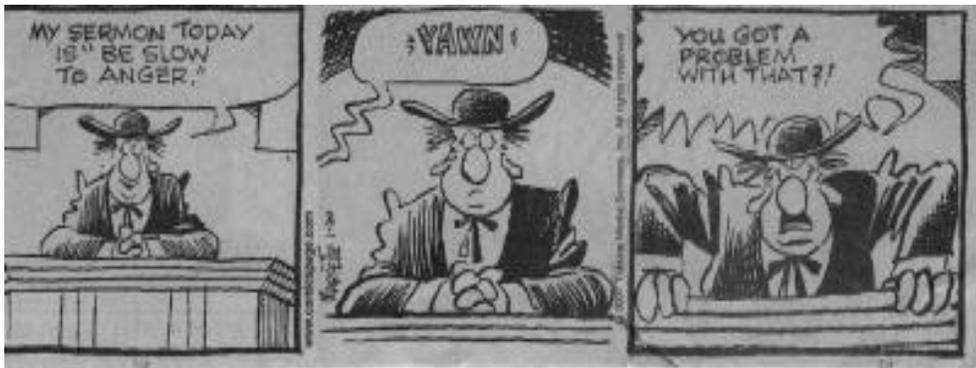
A group of women from our church and community attended a Beth Moore Devotion Meeting in Hot Springs recently. A good time was had by all.

Pastor Shane Matthews has been preaching recently enlightening the congregation with his words and scripture on the Holy Spirit. We hope to hear and better understand this aspect of our faith.

Blessings!

Becky Morgan Cheney

(No, this is not Pastor Shane.....A)





Second place winner!!!

Little Rock - Eagle Point

Ministry both within and beyond the walls of the church is changing lives! Pre-registration is strong as we prepare to initiate our 8-week, Art of Parenting Class, a teaching and training resource of Family Life. We had chosen to make our "End of September Movie Night" a venue for sharing "Like Arrows," produced in congruent with the "Art of Living" Curriculum. Classes are being led by Gary Clark and Michael & Rachael Blasingame. Our fall Warrior Training 3.0 and Women of Warriors Groups have, also, just begun. Our Warriors are studying the life of David, while Women of Warriors (W.O.W.) are focusing on "The Armor of God" Bible Study by Priscilla Shirer. Our church calendar is loaded with "Pack the Pew" Sunday, Hero Sunday for First Responders and Community & State leadership and Bible/Gideon Sunday. By the time you read this article, we will have most likely attended the Central Arkansas Unity Service, hosted by Community Park and our Pastors & Spouses will have joined pastors from throughout Arkansas sharing time together atop beautiful Petit Jean for their Annual Retreat.

This is year # 9 helping spearhead pre-game meals for the coaches and student athletes of McClellan High School. Tommy Lewis leads this ministry and the building of an alliance of additional congregations, businesses and individuals to minister at this point of need. We are guaranteed 10 games and hope for 14 extending through the play-offs. The bottom line is Christ reigns, God is gracious and we are blessed ... may we be about our Father's business!

Texarkana - First Church

I'm Overwhelmed, Flabbergasted, and Gobsmecked. Our church building and property is going to sell in January to the credit union next door. It was appraised at \$140,000. They offered to build us a new fully equipped building, and pay all the expenses with no cost to us. Originally they offered \$225,000. In addition we will have no rent, utilities, or any other expenditures. This will be in the contract we will sign. Today they informed me that they are going to raise the selling price to \$235,000. And a additional \$2,000. for the next 5 years. We started low and they increased the sale by \$20,000. **GOD IS GOOD.**
Mark Roper, Pastor

PARTNERS IN MISSIONS REPORT

Pictures of our August 28-September 10 trip to Guatemala are now on our website on the following pages:

Guatemala: leadership (our seminary for church leaders)

Guatemala: Mayan (our work camp to Prince of Peace)

Special thanks to those who make this trip possible,

From a Mother's Loving Arms To the Caring Hands of the House of Hope

On June 3, 2018 Yoselin's life was radically changed. Her dad was working out in the fields, she being only two months old, was being held in her mother's arms, when the volcano Fuego in Guatemala violently erupted. Her family had always lived in the vicinity of the active volcano, working the fertile soil. With Yoselin in her arms, the mother tried to outrun the 65 miles/hour pyroclastic flow. Realizing she would not be able to save herself and her baby, the mother handed Yoselin to a man racing by on a motorcycle before she died.

Yoselin is a miracle baby!!! If the man on the motorcycle had not been going by at that very moment, she would have perished with her mother. We can only imagine what plans the Lord has in store for her life.

The government placed Yoselin in the care of the House of Hope orphanage, which we have been paying at \$500/month. When Sandy and Karvin visited Yoselin September 5 they learn that DNA had matched Yoselin with the man who claimed to be her father. They were united later in a new house built by a church, so PiM had the inside painted and bought the necessary furniture.

Karvin Adams, Founder/President,

www.partners-in-missions.org

Article by Bert Brown

Biblical Principles of Corporate Prayer by Jonathan Graf

There are five biblical principles of powerful corporate prayer. The more these elements are present in our prayer times (during worship or other times), the more powerful the prayer.

Desperation

Ezra records a time of corporate prayer surrounding a three-day fast. The priest Ezra was taking a group of Jews back to repopulate Israel. They were going to cross dangerous terrain and needed protection.

There, by the Ahava Canal, I proclaimed a fast, so that we might humble ourselves before our God and ask him for a safe journey for us and our children, with all our possessions. I was ashamed to ask the king for soldiers and horsemen to protect us from enemies on the road, because we had told the king, "The gracious hand of our God is on everyone who looks to him, but his great anger is against all who forsake him." So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer. (Ezra 8:21-23)

They prayed out of desperation. They were in trouble if God did not come through. The interesting thing here, however, is that Ezra had a solution. Ask the King for soldiers to go along. From the pages of Ezra we see he had a good relationship with the King. The king had given them permission to go. But Ezra refused to take that option. He refused to do the obvious thing in favor of relying on God.

We need to learn from that. The more desperate we are about something, the more vibrant our prayers. When going to prayer corporately, look for ways to impress a sense of desperation in your people. Remember what happened in churches following 9/11? Prayer meetings were full for several weeks. Why?

We will see corporate prayer become more dynamic—and have greater participation—is our focus is about something with a measure of desperation in it. When you plan the focus about which to pray, figure out a way to build in desperation. Is there something happening on the world front or in your city that has people's attention? Pray about that. When you can pray in a sense, "we can't solve this, God; we need You," you will see more people participate and their prayers will be filled with greater passion.

One Focus

Powerful prayer is focused prayer. It is not a shotgun approach—giving prayer requests and praying for ten different things. Effective corporate prayer is topical. The leader explains, "now we are going to pray for . . ." We see this played out in the story of Peter's imprisonment (Acts 12). Verse 5 tells us "so Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him." This obviously was a very focused prayer meeting! They did not take requests and pray for everything under the sun. No, "Martha, how is that back of yours? How can we pray?" and then "Oh yeah, don't forget Peter. Who's got an update on Peter? He's still in prison isn't he. Let's remember Peter."

One of the ways over the years that the church has severely weakened corporate prayer is that we let prayer be about the people there, rather than about God. We allowed prayer to focus on every little fix-it need of those in attendance, and ignored the kingdom advance of God. As Daniel Henderson describes, we made prayer horizontal rather than vertical.

That kind of pray is dull and no one really wants to be there. In any prayer gathering it is far more dynamic to let a leader pick a focus and stick to it. As soon as you give up leadership to everyone's agenda, you lose the dynamic nature of corporate prayer.

Especially if you are having a prayer time in the morning worship service, you need to pick one subject for which to pray. That will be far more powerful than opening it up to requests.

One Voice

Another powerful principle about corporate prayer is the One Voice principle. And that is a numerical principle. As was mentioned above, the same story of Peter in Acts tells us that the church was earnestly and constantly praying to God. Everyone. Not five people in a little room on Wednesday night. A powerful dynamic occurs when an entire congregation prays on the same theme.

That principle is why all-church prayer initiatives are a great practice. A prayer initiative is where the entire church prays on one theme for a set period of time—usually a week or 30 or 40 days. Usually they use prayer guides that get everyone praying on the same page.

If you want to have the One Voice principle in your church, you need to make prayer accessible in those places where you have the most people gathered. The primary place you will have the entire congregation together is Sunday morning worship. While I think the morning worship service is the most significant place to develop times of corporate prayer, there are other ways to see the One Voice principle at work.

Look for places where everyone in a given ministry is gathered. A church board meeting, an elders meeting, a Sunday school teachers meeting, youth ministry leaders, worship participants gathering, etc. In any one of these gatherings One Voice prayer can take place. If that group prays for the kingdom purposes of that group—what ministry areas are under its authority—than they are calling out with one voice for those areas of ministry. But alas, even when those groups get together, when they add a prayer time to their meeting, it is usually focused on the needs of those in the ministry. If that would stop, and they would focus on the kingdom purposes of that ministry, something very dynamic would happen!

Invoking the Presence

In 2 Chronicles 6-7 at the dedication of Solomon's Temple, we see God's glory indwelling His temple so much that everyone fell with their faces to the ground. No one went inside. In Solomon's dedication prayer, he invited God to come and dwell:

"Now, my God, may your eyes be open and your ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place.

"Now arise, LORD God, and come to your resting place, you and the ark of your might.

**May your priests, LORD God, be clothed with salvation,
may your faithful people rejoice in your goodness." (2 Chronicles 6:40-41)**

When we think of the presence of God we often just take comfort in the presence spoken of in Matthew 18:20: “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.” But there is another presence of God—what old time Puritans used to call, “His manifest presence.” That is a presence you can literally sense. It is a transforming presence. That is the presence Solomon invoked to come into the Temple. We need to look for ways to encourage that presence of God into our midst as well. He comes by invitation and He comes through praise. Psalm 22:3 tells us that God inhabits the praises of His people.

There is no better place to regularly experience the manifest presence of God than the worship service. When we pray in the middle of, or following a time of intense worship—worship that is entirely focused upward, on Jesus Christ rather than on us—we more readily sense His presence and our prayers become more kingdom focused. Why? Because when we see God for whom He really is, our needs pale in comparison. We become inspired to focus on His purposes and kingdom.

By the same principle, if you want to make weekly prayer gatherings that are held outside the morning worship service, any time you can add worship that is focused on Jesus Christ, you will see the passion and intensity of the prayers increase.

Agreement.

The last element of powerful corporate prayer is praying in agreement. Agreement is different than focus. It is where everyone knows and agrees with what they are asking God. Often when a congregation prays about an issue in a church there is not agreement. We all have a different idea of what should be done. So when we pray, we often just pray our own agendas.

In a leader-directed prayer time during a morning worship service it is easier to be in agreement. The leader simply gives direction as to what they will ask God to do. He might say something like this, “After seeking God, the leaders of our church feel that God is moving us to look for a piece of property on which to build. Let’s ask God to reveal that piece of land to us.”

Bringing It All Together

So how do all of these work in a prayer gathering? Let’s say you have a situation where God is really blessing your congregation with growth. More and more people are coming to church; you are starting to pack your facilities out. Your leadership knows that you need to do something to allow for this growth, but what? You decide to seek the Lord for His direction. In fact you decide we need to get everyone praying about this issue. So you call for special times of prayer, including an all-church prayer meeting.

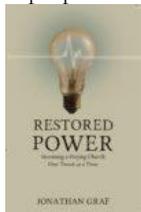
At that prayer meeting you have your sense of desperation because you have acknowledged you do not know what to do. You need God’s wisdom and direction. You will have your one focus. The prayer meeting you call everyone to will not be open to requests or other prayer needs. You will only focus on direction. You will have your one voice. Because of the nature of the subject, I suspect most of your congregation will come out—many not because they want to pray, but because they are curious about what others think. You have a time of worship and you invite the Holy Spirit to come in, to guide and direct your prayers, to reveal His will.

But you won’t have your agreement—at least not at the start. Why? Because many will come already knowing what you should do. Some think you should go to two services, other, plant a daughter church, others rent the Kmart building that is empty down the street. But here is what will happen: Agreement will come in any issue if people pray together. As we pray with others, we become more open to God’s agenda and we let go of our own. People at that prayer meeting will begin to let go of their idea as they pray and start sensing what God truly wants to do. Agreement will come as you pray. By the same token, if you have an intense issue in your church you are praying about, and you reach a decision, I can just about guarantee that those who criticize the decision did not pray with the body about it!

I remember a time when I was involved in a church plant in Colorado Springs and we came to the point where we wanted to buy our own facility. We had been meeting in schools for 7-8 years and felt the time was right for our own place. Two pieces of property were in the minds of our leadership—a 13 acre piece right outside the neighborhood that surrounded the school in which we were meeting (but with a 1.5 mil price tag) and a 6 acre piece of property about 3 miles away, but in a retail part of town (\$450,000 price tag). We had people on both sides. Many of our people came from the neighborhood the school was in, all our ministry outreaches were there. What would a move—even only a 3 mile away move—do to that dynamic. We prayed. We even held a prayer meeting (attended by 80% of our congregation) on the \$450,000 piece of property. God started putting visions for the new ministry we could have on the \$450,000 property into the hearts of those who wanted the other piece of property!

Work at It

Having dynamic prayer times that focus on kingdom advancement will revolutionize your congregation. People will feel more passion and a stronger desire to pray if you work at developing these spiritual principles of corporate prayer. Fringe people and those who don’t view the Christian life much beyond what’s in it for me, will be impacted spiritually. And you will begin to see greater and greater areas of transformation in people’s lives, in your church and the community around.



—Jonathan Graf is the president of the [Church Prayer Leaders Network](#) and the publisher of *Prayer Connect* magazine. This article is adapted from his new book: [Restored Power: Becoming a Praying Church One Tweak at a Time](#).