

United Prayer Guidelines for Leaders

Welcome to Ten Days of Prayer 2014!

God has worked thousands of miracles through the Ten Days of Prayer program since it began as Operation Global Rain in 2006. The Holy Spirit has wrought revival, conversions, renewed passion for evangelism, and healed relationships. Truly, prayer is the birthplace of revival!

These guidelines are meant to help you as a leader. The first section covers topics related to Ten Days of Prayer 2014. The second part includes pointers that have been helpful to other prayer leaders and will help you and your prayer group. Remember that these are just resources and ideas. Feel free to change things as the Spirit leads you.

During the first Ten Days of Prayer, January 8-17, 2014, your group should meet daily in person or by phone for an hour of united prayer. The eleventh day, January 18, falls on Sabbath. This day is a celebration of all God has done in answer to united prayer. We hope these ideas and suggestions will be useful to you as a prayer leader and will help to make Ten Days of Prayer 2014 a powerful experience for your small group or church family.

As you embark on this journey, we'd like to share some testimonies from individuals who participated in Ten Days of Prayer 2013:

The noted attendance was beyond our experience. We saw the glory of God and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We closed our Ten Days of Prayer program with a wonderful baptism which took place in our beautiful Lake Victoria. About 17 people were baptized, one of them being our fellow sister in Christ, Sunvy, from Finland. ~ Emmanuel Mgata, Mwanza, Tanzania

Prayers are being answered. . . . People are confessing, being healed. We thank God for every single day in this Ten Days of Prayer. All our centres are getting a blessing. People are witnessing. Members are coming up with strong prayer groups. ~ Christopher Chalo, Eldoret, Kenya

Last year, during the 10 Days of Prayer, we prayed for my wife's father, Petraq. He was a heavy smoker (for almost 50 years), but after we prayed, he got strength to quit, and in March or April, he quit totally! He was tempted a few times but didn't fall back. He was so sick from smoking and coughed heavily, but now he is a happy and healthy man! ~ Jan Johansson, Gothenburg, Sweden

We are already seeing the results and power of united prayer in our church members and youth. God is so Good! ~ William Wolfgramm, New Zealand

An amazing thing happened to our church during the 2012 Ten Days of Prayer. There were only three families left in our church last year, and my eldest son wasn't interested in going to church, since he was the only teenage boy in church. But after the Ten Days of Prayer, one family returned with their seven children, three of which are my son's age...my son is enjoying the fellowship.... Four other families have also joined our church. God is good! He is faithful ~ Sulueti Toga, Nadi English SDA Church, Fiji

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“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen” (Ephesians 3:20, 21).

General Ten Days of Prayer Items

Why Pray Through the Lord's Prayer?

During Ten Days of Prayer 2014, we will be praying through the Lord's Prayer, found in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:1-4. Our Savior's life was steeped in prayer, for it was in communion with His Father that He found His strength, His comfort, His power, and His joy. It was also here that He daily learned His Father's plans.

The disciples were impressed by Jesus' habit of prayer and asked Him to teach them to pray. His answer, though simple enough for a child to understand, encompasses all our needs and turns our attention away from ourselves to God.

We believe that as Seventh-day Adventists, we too need to learn to pray as Jesus prayed. As you lead your prayer group through the various aspects of the Lord's Prayer, God will open a depth of meaning to you that you never dreamed possible. These prayers lead us to the heart of God and, if we are willing, will reveal to us His plans for our church around the world, for your local church family, and for each of us individually.

Daily Theme Sheets

A theme sheet has been prepared for each of the Ten Days of Prayer. The first page gives a suggested plan for united prayer and includes suggestions for prayer format, Scriptures to claim, ideas for items to pray about specifically, and songs to sing together. Included on the second page is a passage from Ellen White that adds insight into the night's theme.

We recommend that you copy the theme sheets so that each participant can have one. These could be done front to back. This will help guide each person attending the prayer meeting to know what to pray for during the prayer time.

Churches all around the world will be joining you in praying about each day's theme. So join them in united prayer and pray through the Scriptures, quotes, and prayer suggestions on each theme sheet. The more focused you can stay on the theme, the more meaningful the prayer time will be to all present. However, you are not constrained to stick solely to the theme sheet—simply let it help guide you. You don't have to pray through each point in order—they are just suggestions of things to include in your prayer time.

A separate leader's guide has not been provided this year, in an effort to streamline things and help everyone know how best to pray together.

Daily Intercession Requests

The daily intercession requests were selected to reflect our greatest personal and corporate church needs. They also highlight the initiatives and mission emphases of our world church in 2014. Feel free to add your own local needs that relate to the daily themes.

Mission to the Cities Prayer Requests

A special prayer focus this year is the Mission to the Cities initiative. Mission to the Cities is a major outreach of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to share Jesus' love and the hope of His soon return with people in urban settings. It envisions initiatives in more than 630 of the world's largest cities. These began in New York City last year and will continue throughout 2014, 2015, and beyond. Outreach activities are comprehensive (to address mental, physical, and spiritual needs) and ongoing, creating a lasting Seventh-day Adventist presence in the cities. Outreach methods include Centers of Influence, prayer and revival ministries, community events, health seminars, small groups, women's ministries, youth ministries and reaping

campaigns. In each place our members will be using Christ's method of mingling, sympathizing, meeting needs, winning confidence, and then calling people to accept Jesus. (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143)

Each day during these Ten Days of Prayer, we will highlight one prayer need for the Mission to the Cities initiative. For a list of cities and more information, go to www.MissiontotheCities.org and www.RevivalandReformation.org/777

General Daily Format

Introduction: As the group leader, you have the privilege of setting the tone and focus of the prayer time. You can direct people's thoughts to God, His power and love, and His eagerness to answer prayer, or, you can allow the natural human tendency to focus on ourselves, keeping everyone talking about prayer requests that may really just be gossip or are limited only to our few very personal requests.

Your introductory remarks each day should accomplish three things: 1) Welcome everyone. 2) Give a brief overview of the day's theme and prayer goals. The day's EGW passage will give you a good basis for this introduction. You could mention highlights from the EGW passage, or read the passage through together. 3) Remind people of the basic principles of united prayer, such as praying in short sentences, agreeing with other's prayers, praying about the current topic, and praying Scriptures. These items are outlined in detail later in this guide, under the section "United Prayer Pointers." You may also want to go over the general prayer format outlined below at the first meeting or two.

Praise: Begin and end your group prayer time with praise and thanksgiving. You may want to choose an applicable psalm to pray through. For example, *"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name"* (Psalm 100:4). *"Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. . . . O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker"* (Psalm 95:2, 6, KJV).

It is a powerful experience to begin prayer time with thanksgiving and praise. Also, remember to mingle any requests with praise and thanksgiving. The prayers in the Bible, by men such as Daniel, Elijah, and others always began with praise, thanksgiving, or confession of who God is.

Confession: *"Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight"* (1 John 3:21, 22, KJV).

What a difference it makes to spend a few minutes near the beginning of your prayer time clearing the path for God to hear your prayers as a group. Allow God to impress your mind with any sin you need to confess. This should generally be a silent time for each person to pray individually.

Intercession and Supplication: Here is where we take God at His Word. He tells us to ask, to seek, to knock. *"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. . . . If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"* (Luke 11:9, 10, 13). So let's take Him at His Word and ask!

Don't be afraid to ask large things of God. He tells us to! So plead for the Holy Spirit, for people's salvation, for God to reveal Himself to you, for open doors for the gospel. And then praise Him as He answers your prayers. Pray Scriptures and promises throughout your prayers also.

Thanksgiving: Return to praise and thanksgiving of God at the end of your prayer time. This is time to specifically thank God for the many gifts He has given us—salvation, life, family, friends, etc. Answers to prayer can be shared as thanksgiving to God during this time. Also, praise and thank God in faith for hearing and answering the prayers you have just prayed during the supplication time. Praying the Psalms and other Scriptures back to God is a wonderful way to thank God.

“We do not pray any too much, but we are too sparing of giving thanks. If the loving-kindness of God called forth more thanksgiving and praise, we would have far more power in prayer. We would abound more and more in the love of God, and have more bestowed to praise Him for” (Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 317. Read pages 315-317. It is so good!).

Ellen White Passage on the Lord’s Prayer

We have included a passage from the pen of Ellen G. White for each night. These are mostly taken from *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing* and bring out the true depth and meaning of each part of the Lord’s Prayer. We suggest that you read it together at some point during the prayer time. This could be done at the beginning of the prayer time—to set the stage for the day’s prayer theme, or between the confession and supplication sections.

Suggested Times for Each Prayer Section

How much time you spend with each section of the prayer will probably vary somewhat each time you pray together. The following time frames are suggestions for what typically works well in a united prayer time.

- Welcome/Introduction: 2-5 minutes
- Reading of Ellen White passage: 3 minutes
- Praise: 5-10 minutes
- Confession: 5-10 minutes
- Supplication and Intercession: 30 minutes
- Thanksgiving: 5 minutes

Twos or Threes

It is nice to have more people, but you only need two or three. Whether you have a lot of people for Ten Days of Prayer 2014 or just a few, be assured that your prayers will be heard and answered in heaven. *“Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:19, 20, KJV).*

“Our Saviour follows His lessons of instruction with a promise that if two or three should be united in asking anything of God it should be given them. Christ here shows that there must be union with others, even in our desires for a given object. Great importance is attached to the united prayer, the union of purpose” (Testimonies, vol. 3, p. 429).

If you have a lot of people attending Ten Days of Prayer 2014, make sure to give people some time each day to pray in small groups of two to four people. This can be time to intercede on behalf of the people listed on the intercession cards. Encourage people not to pray with the same small group each night but to deepen their relationships with others in the church by praying with a variety of people.

Intercede for Five

Encourage each person to ask God to show them five people to pray for during the ten days. These may be family members, friends, coworkers, church members, etc. Have them ask God what they should pray about for these individuals, then make a list of these individuals, pray for them daily, and reach out to them as God leads.

Intercession Cards

Give each person five 3 x 5 cards on the first night. On each card they are to write the name and prayer needs of the five people they have chosen to pray for during the ten days. (Participants may wish to write only a first name or refer to the person in some other way if privacy is an issue.) At the end of the first meeting, collect these cards and place them in a general intercession box to be kept at your meeting place. During the prayer time each day, have people come and take a card out of the box and pray for those people and their situation. If God impresses someone with a specific Scripture to claim for that individual, the verse or passage can be written on the card for future reference. Make sure that cards are returned to the box at the end of the prayer time.

Final Friday Night

There are several options for the final Friday. You may want to simply meet as you have on the other days. Or, you may want to plan a special communion and foot-washing service to be held after a fellowship meal together. Another option is to coordinate an all-night prayer vigil, with various church members each leading out in an hour of prayer time. See the Night of Prayer sheet for suggestions on hourly prayer themes.

Sabbath Services During Ten Days of Prayer 2014

Have a special prayer focus and share testimonies of answered prayer during the church services on both Sabbaths. Be creative—there are many ways to share with the church family what is happening during the daily prayer meetings.

Final Sabbath Celebration

The final Sabbath, especially, should be designed as a time of great rejoicing in all that God has done throughout the ten days. Include ample time for testimonies of answered prayer, biblical teaching/preaching on prayer, and singing. Lead the congregation in a time of united prayer so that those who have not attended the daily meetings can experience the joy of praying with others. See the Day 11 materials for more ideas.

Follow-up to Ten Days of Prayer 2014

Pray much about how God wants your church/group to continue what God has begun during Ten Days of Prayer 2014. Perhaps you will continue with a weekly, united prayer meeting. Or perhaps God wants you to begin a new ministry in your church or an outreach to the community. Be open and follow where God leads. You're sure to be amazed as you walk with Him.

Testimonies

Please share stories of how God has worked through Ten Days of Prayer 2014! Your stories will be an encouragement to many others. Testimonies may be sent to stories@ministerialassociation.org or submitted online at www.tendaysofprayer.org.

United Prayer Pointers

Agree Together

When someone prays a request to God, be sure some others pray for that same request and agree together—this is powerful! Don't think that because one person has prayed about the request, no one else needs to. *"Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven"* (Matthew 18:19, KJV). How encouraging it is to be lifted up in prayer!

Bible Promises

Ask God to lead you to promises in His Word that you can claim for the people and situations in your prayers. We are told to put our finger on the promise and bring it before the Lord, thanking Him in advance for the answer according to His will.

"He is pleased with the faith that takes Him at His word. The mother of Augustine prayed for her son's conversion. She saw no evidence that the Spirit of God was impressing his heart, but she was not discouraged. She laid her finger upon the texts, presenting before God His own words, and pleaded as only a mother can. Her deep humiliation, her earnest importunities, her unwavering faith, prevailed, and the Lord gave her the desire of her heart. Today He is just as ready to listen to the petitions of His people. His 'hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy that it cannot hear'" (Testimonies, vol. 5, pp. 322, 323).

Encourage people to write down the promises He leads them to so they can remember to claim them in the future.

Fasting

Invite those joining you in Ten Days of Prayer to consider some type of fasting, such as fasting from TV, secular music, movies, the Internet, sweets, or other types of food. Use the extra time to pray and study the Bible, asking God to reveal Himself to your congregation.

Holy Spirit

Be sure to ask the Holy Spirit to show you how or what you should pray for in a person's life or in a particular situation. Claim Romans 8:26: *"Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."*

Physical Togetherness

As you begin a united prayer session, invite everyone to come close together. When people move close together to form a tight circle, it helps to promote a spirit of unity, which is very important for united prayer. If people are spread out in a room, it is also difficult to hear each other's prayers.

Pray Scriptures

Reading or praying a short portion of Scripture is a wonderful way to ensure you are praying God's will. Praying God's promises back to Him is an incredible faith builder. God loves for us to pray His Word in expressions of praise or promise. *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord"* (Colossians 3:16). You'll be amazed at how long a group can pray and enjoy it!

Here's an example of how to pray Scripture back to God: 1 Thessalonians 3:13 says, *"May He strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus*

comes with all His holy ones" (NIV). Then pray something like this: "Dear Lord, please strengthen my son's heart-level determination to do what is right. Give him your grace to make decisions that lead to holiness. Jesus, may he look forward to your return . . ." and so on.

Journaling

Keeping a prayer journal during the Ten Days of Prayer can be a good way for participants to internalize the daily prayer theme, make concrete commitments to God, and recognize His blessings to them. Writing out our prayers and keeping a record of God's answers is a proven path to encouragement.

There are several ways journaling could be included in the Ten Days of Prayer if you desire. You could provide time during the prayer meeting for people to journal their responses to God in their private prayer journal. Or you could keep a group journal of prayer requests and answers—either in a notebook, on a large poster, or online. A simple way to do this is to draw a line down the middle of the paper. Write requests in the left column and answers in the right. It is exciting and faith-building to look back and see how God has answered prayers!

Reverence

Encourage and model a reverent attitude. We are approaching the throne room of the King of the universe. Let's not treat this prayer time carelessly in our posture or mannerisms. However, it is not necessary that everyone kneel continuously. You want people to be comfortable for an hour, so encourage people to kneel or sit or stand as God leads and as they are comfortable.

Sentence Prayers

Prayers should be short and to the point. This gives others an opportunity to pray as well. Try to limit your prayers to a few sentences. Each person can pray multiple times. Short sentence prayers keep the prayer time interesting and allow the Holy Spirit to impress the group how to pray. You don't need to open and close each short sentence prayer with phrases such as "Dear God" and "Amen." It is an ongoing conversation with God.

Silence

As a leader, don't dominate the prayer time. The goal is to get others praying. Times of silence are wonderful, as they give God time to speak to our hearts. Allow the Holy Spirit to work, and give everyone time to pray.

Singing

Spontaneous group songs, mingled between prayers, add beauty to the prayer meeting. Appropriate songs are listed at the end of each theme sheet. Do not feel that you need to use all the songs—these are simply suggestions. Singing is also a good way to transition from one prayer section to another.

Taking Prayer Requests

Don't ask for prayer requests from the group. Instead, tell people to pray their requests and encourage others to join in agreement and prayer for those requests. Here's why: time! Talking about the requests will take up most of your prayer time. Satan is thrilled if he can keep us talking about the problem instead of praying about the problem. Group members will often begin counseling and suggesting solutions. The power is from God! The more we pray, the more His power is unleashed.

Your Daily Time

This is so important! Make sure that you as a leader are spending time daily at the feet of Jesus, talking with Him and reading His Word. If you will make knowing God a first priority in your life, it will open such a beautiful experience to you. *"From the secret place of prayer came the power that shook the world in the*

Great Reformation. There, with holy calmness, the servants of the Lord set their feet upon the rock of His promises” (The Great Controversy, p. 210).

***“It is a part of God’s plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask.”
(The Great Controversy, p. 525)***

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