MAPLE VALLEY CHURCH

Small Group Ministry – Praying in Groups

PRAYING TIPS:

- Praying in a group makes many people **nervous**, so don't pray around the circle until later.
- Talk to the group about the following:
  - We are a people **learning** to pray together. No one will be pressured to pray aloud.
  - Let's forget religious sounding phrases, and concentrate on saying what we really **think and feel** and in our **own words**.
  - Let's observe the etiquette of group prayer.

Keep requests:

- Immediate (people we know or immediate family and very close friends)
- Succinct (1 minute)
- Self-focused (character growth, application of the lesson, personal needs, salvation, etc.)

  - Everything we share is **confidential**! It is not to be shared outside our group unless permission is given by the sharer.

- Expect God to **answer**.
- Focus on God.

CREATIVE WAYS TO PRAY TOGETHER:

- Focus - several people pray about one subject
- Conversational - **look up** (praise), **look in** (personal needs), **look out** (unsaved friends)
- Split men & women 50% of the time, which allows more sharing and gender requests.
- Pray the Lesson
  - Look back at the passage you have studied and ask what attributes they see of God. After stating them, repeat at beginning of prayer and use in praise.
  - Pray for each other in regard to application of the lesson.

CREATIVE WAYS TO PRAY TOGETHER continued:

- Pray written prayers

  - Have everyone think about the past week. List things for which they are thankful and then share them in prayer in one word or phrase.

  - Write brief love letters to God.

  - Write out words that relate to God's character and pray one word praises.

  - Use Psalms, etc.

  - Pray other scripture

- ACTS

- **A** doration

- **C** onfession

- **T** hanksgiving

- **S** upplication

- Silence

- Ask for a volunteer for each prayer request or a person to your right or left

- Pray for the **church leaders**

- Pray for our **nation** and **world** by clipping news articles and praying through them

- Passed prayers - (3x5 cards, basket)

- Music in prayer - (Colossians 3:15-17)

Let's just try to keep it fresh and alive unto the Lord. And remember, Jesus said, "Where 2 or 3 come together in my name, there am I with them." Matt. 18:20

PATTERN OF PRAYER FOR SMALL GROUPS

ADORATION: Focus on the greatness of God. Think of the wonder, power immensity, and presence of the God who created all things.

THANKSGIVING: Think of the mercy of God. Focus on how God has been gracious to you and your community. Give thanks for specific good things in your life.

DEDICATION: Recall your life vows and the parts of your life you have already committed to God. Think of yourself as a "gift of God." Think of new areas you are prepared to commit to Christ.

INTERCESSION: Pray for others. Think of various parts of your day and life and the people with whom you share life. Focus upon the ones who catch your attention, then widen the circle to pray for others. You may wish to keep lists of person for special times of prayer.

PETITION: Pray for yourself. Think of areas of your life which you would like help from God to change. Ask for spiritual transformation which is consistent with the character of Christ. Imagine yourself as a new person who has been changed by God.

MEDITATION: Brood upon the love of God. Imagine depth and intimacy with God which brings love, wisdom, beauty, joy, light, peace, power, freedom, holiness, and patience.

CONFESSION: Recall your mistakes, failure, and guilt. Ask yourself where you are hurt, afraid, angry, anxious, and passive. Reflect on the unpleasant parts of your life. Examine your life in light of the person of Christ and be open to see sin. Focus upon each of the ten commandments and bring your life under the judgment of each. Place all the negative stuff in front of God and ask for forgiveness and healing.

Source: Gareth Icenogle's Groups Handbook of Highland Park Presbyterian Church

PATTERNS OF GROUP PRAYER

- **Conversational** prayer
- Appointed prayer leadership
- Silent prayer
- Round the circle prayer (with caution)
- Neighbor prayer
- Groups of four prayer
- Topical prayer
- The Lord's Prayer (and other written prayers)
- Prayer list answers and additions
- Prayer out of study

GUIDELINES FOR CONVERSATIONAL PRAYER

- Prayer is a discipline of mind and attitude to be learned by doing. To pray is to learn to pray.
- Vocal prayer is a discipline of mind and mouth. It takes hard work to place disciplined thoughts into voiced prayers.
- Conversational prayer is a discipline of sensitivity to God and to the group in which prayers are offered. God and these people are listening.
- God is more concerned about every detail and generalization of our lives than we are. Nothing is too insignificant to address to God if it is important to us.
- Prayers should be in touch with reality and humanity: hurt, pain, confusion, joy, hope, fear, anger, and love.
- Make prayers short and simple, but not simplistic. Keep to one or two sentences at one time.
- Listen to the prayers of others. In group context, listen and watch for special feelings or insight. Affirm those who pray around you.
- Pray in a conversational tone. God in Christ is a person. Address God as a friend and Christ as a counselor.
- Pray about one thing at a time. Respond to the prayers of others. Be yourself, but also part of the group.
- Pray silently with the person who prays audibly.
- Don't be afraid of silence. Don't rush in to be heard.
- Pray as many times as time and sensitivity allows. Let those who are slow to participate feel open entry.
- Pray with and for each other. Affirm in thankfulness the words, insights, and actions of other group members.
- Keep a record of prayer requests and note when prayers are answered.

Source: Gareth Icenogle's Groups Handbook of Highland Park Presbyterian Church