

PASTORPEDIA™

Cutting Edge Conversations for Pastors and Church Leaders

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Prayer: How to teach and model

“Our Father, who art in heaven....”

That’s a good start, as given by our Lord himself, to teach us how to pray. It includes what may be the greatest incentive of all to pray: because God is our Father. Our loving, merciful, generous Father, “who art in heaven.”

And we probably all have that wonderful prayer memorized—a good one to pray together in church services, by the way.

But how else shall we model prayer and teach the church to pray?

We probably would all admit that consistent praise, confession, and “supplication,” as Paul called it, are hard work in a busy life. It is hard to teach and model to a whole church full of busy people, some of whom feel little motivation to pray better unless their kids are growing into teenagers or their health is at risk.

We hope our papers and our video will make you think and plan more about prayer for you and yours. We want God’s to be “the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever,” so we must keep growing.

Come with us!

Fellow strugglers,

Knute, with Jeff and Jim

How do we make prayer more vital in the church services?

Jeff Bogue

- I would encourage praying for specific people or specific situations. For instance, if something happens within the church family or even within the community at large, take a moment in the service to address it specifically. The coronavirus is obviously the conversation of the day, so teach people that praying for this is a normal part of a Christian's response, and model it in services.
- I also think it helps when we break routine. I am a proponent of routine times of prayer, but I'm also a proponent of stopping our normal flow and praying for something specific. Doing this brings more emphasis to what we're praying for and catches people's attention in a different way.

Jim Brown

- Plan it into the actual service by having a time when you do a pastoral prayer for the people.
- Give updates of answered prayer in your messages.
- Do a midweek corporate prayer time as a church and personally invite people to join you.
- Use social media as a catalyst to get people praying.
- Begin every ministry meeting with prayer and even, if possible, on your knees. Posture allows a hunger for God to show up.
- Do a message series on prayer.

Knute Larson

- Model it! Pray a planned pastoral prayer that fits into the order of worship in a good way. Many in our services never join in any carefully planned prayer, as in the Psalms.
They do hear many spontaneous quick prayers spun around a song theme, and said while strumming. (Forgive my sarcasm bred by concern.)
- Preach and teach about prayer, including the use of prayers in the Bible, and the teaching of Jesus on prayer.
- Consider the Praise-Repent/Confess-Ask-Yield (P-R-A-Y) pattern for personal prayers and for community. This can also help individuals, families, and church groups learn to pray privately and with each other.

How do we teach it to individuals and families?

Jeff Bogue

- I would go back to the idea that the number one way is to model it. We can certainly lay out prayer systems and prayer acronyms, which are healthy and good, but if there's any way (maybe over Zoom or in a Livestream) we could either describe what our family prayer time looks like, or actually pray with kids or for kids, that would be incredibly helpful.
- If there are opportunities where a husband and wife can pray publicly. This, of course, is not to be a show that's being put on but rather an example that can be set.

Jim Brown

- First by modeling it in your home and workplace.
- Make yearly prayer goals and plan prayer events.
- We actually do a 24-hour church-wide prayer and fast and give a list of things for people to pray for. We end it at a corporate prayer gathering on Wednesday night.
- Invite people in your ministry gatherings to pray.
- Put together resources they can use to learn more about prayer—podcasts, books, videos, web resources.
- Preach on the value and importance of prayer and invite people to join in big prayer concerns for your community. We had a drought in our community and invited people to get on their knees during a Sunday morning service and pray.
- Schedule a certain time during the day for people to pray related to a passage of Scripture.

Knute Larson

- I am very sold on the P-R-A-Y model because it helps people see and experience the four parts of prayer, and is easy to learn and remember. It is good for the church to teach the same model for all ages.
- I strongly recommend that every church, of every size, have a point person who studies what the church can be doing better by reading and studying what can help. This person can then give input, guidance, and vision to the staff and church. Too often the prayer strategy is just left to chance, and does not change.
- For sure we should teach and model prayer in a very deliberate and consistent way, and not just give it to chance. In services, community groups, discipleship-accountability groups, and one-on-one.

What are some personal helps for you?

Jeff Bogue

- One of the biggest things I have implemented in my prayer life is to just “pray without ceasing.” To stop right where I am and grab a person’s shoulder or pray over them in that moment, for instance. And to also do that in my personal prayer life, so that my prayer with the Lord sounds more like an ongoing conversation with God than it does a list I’m trying to complete.

Jim Brown

- I love to read some of the classics on prayer from heroes of our faith: Andrew Murray, EM Bounds, DL Moody, and even Mark Batterson.
- Roger Peugh’s *Principle of Prayer* class at Grace Seminary was a great resource.
- Spending time with people who are prayer warriors.
- Google

Knute Larson

- The system and schedule of teaching and modeling prayer, as already suggested. I greatly benefit from thinking and discussing with others what is best, and then carrying out the plans.
- Trying to kneel in prayer three times a week without asking for anything at all, but just to worship, the Praise section of our model.
- The daily call contains formal and huge decision-making as well as planning sermons and creating them—how could you not make the prayer for God’s wisdom a constant?
- Praying the Psalms and Colossians 1:9-14 and other prayers of Paul.

Pastorpedia is a resource provided to you by CE National, a church effectiveness ministry. Please contact us at cenational@cenational.org or 574.267.6622 if we may be of any help to you or your ministry!

Jeff Bogue, of [Grace Church](#), in several locations in the Bath-Norton-Medina areas of Ohio, and also president of CE National; Jim Brown, of [Grace Community Church](#) in Goshen, Indiana, a church known for its strong growth, family and men's ministries, and community response teams; and [Knute Larson](#), a coach of pastors, who previously led The Chapel in Akron for 26 years. Pastorpedia is brought to you by [CE National](#). Visit cenational.org/pastorpedia for more issues and to read the bios of our contributors.