



February 23, 2025  
Worship Service  
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WeAreLifeBridge.com

## Congregational Prayer: Why Does It Matter?

*Acts 1:14; 2:42; 4:18-31*

*"For our part, delighted by our God, overwhelmed by His love, governed by His commands, thankful for His condescension toward us, and united as His family, we overflow in prayer together." – Megan Hill (adapted)*

*"It is in fact the most normal thing in the common Christian life to pray together."  
– Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

### What Is Congregational Prayer?

Gathering as a congregation to ask the Father for what is according to His will, in the name of His Son with repentance of sins and praise for His abundant mercies by His Spirit.

It's gathering as a congregation to **P.R.A.Y.:** *Praise, Repent, Ask, Yield!*

### Why Congregational Prayer Matters

#### 1. It Is a God-Given PRIORITY.

##### Congregational Prayer as God's Priority

- Is **MODELED** by the early church.

*Acts 1:14; 2:42; 6:4; 4:31-32*

- Is **REQUIRED** in every church.

*1 Timothy 2:1-2*

#### 2. It Calls for PARTICIPATION.

*Matthew 18:19-20*

#### 3. It Shows Dependency on God's POWER.

*James 5:16*

### Power in Prayer Does **Not** Depend on..

- The *length* of our prayers but the **STRENGTH** of our God!
- Our *eloquence* in prayer but our **DEPENDANCE** on God!
- Who *shows-up* but whether **GOD** shows-up!

#### 4. It Furthers God's PURPOSES.

*1 Timothy 2:1-6*

- God's purposes in the **CHURCH**.
- Gods purposes in the **WORLD**.

#### 5. It Exalts God's Triune PRESENCE.

*Romans 8:26-34*

- The Father is **FOR** us in our prayers.
- The Son is **LIKE** us in our prayers.
- The Spirit is **WITH** us in our prayers.

### Why Does Congregational Prayer Matter?

It is a *exalts* our *triune* God as we *enter* a conversation with Him that He is *already* having with Himself for His glory, our good, and the joy of all nations!

Join us tonight for congregational prayer at 5:30 PM!



## The Priority of Congregational Prayer in the Book of Acts

*"They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching  
and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."  
Acts 2:42*

In Acts we find the clearest picture of the priorities of the New Testament church: we follow the path of the gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth and watch its effects wherever it went. In its twenty-eight chapters, occasions of praying together are mentioned explicitly twenty times and implicitly many more. We read that Christians in Acts prayed together regularly, concert-and intentionally. But those early Christians did not invent praying together. Their corporate prayer was connected to the prayer during the previous thousands of years of covenant history. The early Christians knew the cloud of witnesses too.

The practice of the Christians in Acts also carefully lays the foundation for the next stage in redemptive history—from Christ's ascension until his return—reaching forward and defining the shape of the church into our present time. As Dennis Johnson explains, "The foundational, apostolic period may have some unique features about it, just because it is foundational, but the foundation also determines the contours of the building to be constructed on it." These believers in Acts prayed together because God's people have always been—must always be!—praying people.

We are first introduced to them while they are waiting for the promised Spirit: "All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers" (Acts 1:14). This verse highlights the characteristics of corporate prayer which repeat throughout Acts. Their prayer was

deliberate ("devoted"), it was united ("with one accord"), and it included the full diversity of Christians ("all these...with the women...and his brothers").

From this verse onward, Luke records the church's foundational priority of corporate prayer. Christians in Acts prayed together:

1. while waiting for the coming of the Spirit (1:14);
2. at the selection of Judas's replacement (1:24);
3. after Pentecost, as a mark of the spiritual life of the new believers (2:42);
4. at shared meals (2:46);
5. at the set times in the temple (3:1);
6. for boldness, when faced with the threat of persecution (4:23-31);
7. as the special priority of the apostles (6:4);
8. for the Spirit, with the church at Samaria (8:15-17);
9. in the middle of the night for Peter when he was imprisoned (12:5, 12);
10. at the sending of Barnabas and Saul (13:1-3);
11. when appointing elders for the church and committing them to the Lord (14:23);
12. at the sending of Paul and Silas through Syria and Cilicia (15:40);
13. on the Sabbath with the devout women of Philippi (16:13);
14. at the place of prayer in Philippi again (16:16);
15. in the prison in Philippi at midnight (16:25);
16. with the Ephesian elders as Paul departs for Jerusalem (20:36-38);
17. in Tyre with the disciples and their wives and children; for Paul as he sets sail for Jerusalem (21:5-6);
18. with thanksgiving for food onboard the ship (27:35-38);
19. for Publius's father on the island of Malta (28:8);
20. with the brothers in Rome who traveled to meet Paul (28:15).

For the early church, there was much to do. But essential to their gospel-proclaiming, bread-breaking, widow-feeding, and church-planting work was praying together. These early Christians—diverse, united, and devoted—prayed together when they arrived and when they departed. They prayed together when they were sick and imprisoned but also when they were simply sitting down for a meal. They prayed in the formal worship services of the temple and at the riverside prayer meetings. The apostles prayed together. Men and women and children prayed together. They prayed for the Spirit, for protection, for boldness in the proclamation of the gospel. They prayed for one another. Wherever the gospel went, wherever churches were established, God's people were praying people.

Brothers and sisters, can we think that Christians today ought to be any different?