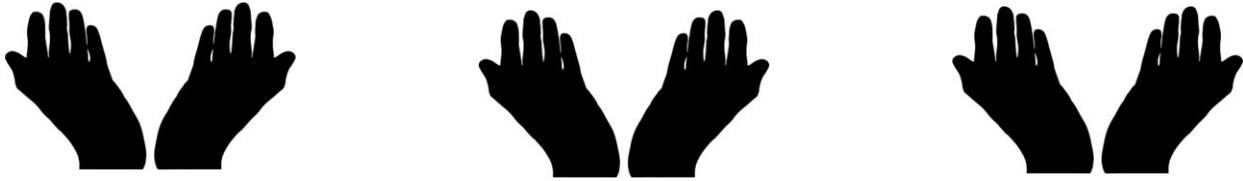


# Praying for Your Church



**Mark 11:15-18** (NIV) On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves,<sup>16</sup> and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts.<sup>17</sup> And as he taught them, he said, “Is it not written: ‘My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations’? But you have made it ‘a den of robbers.’”<sup>18</sup> The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.

**Isaiah 56:1-7** (NIV) *Salvation for Others*

This is what the LORD says: “Maintain justice and do what is right, for my salvation is close at hand and my righteousness will soon be revealed. <sup>2</sup> Blessed is the one who does this—the person who holds it fast, who keeps the Sabbath without desecrating it, and keeps their hands from doing any evil.”

<sup>3</sup> Let no foreigner who is bound to the LORD say, “The LORD will surely exclude me from his people.” And let no eunuch complain, “I am only a dry tree.”

<sup>4</sup> For this is what the LORD says: “To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant—<sup>5</sup> to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will endure forever. <sup>6</sup> And foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant—<sup>7</sup> these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.”

## 1. What does God desire His church to be?

A house of prayer.

A house where salvation is found for all who are willing to faithfully follow and obey him.



- Pray that we may fill God’s house with prayer and be faithful in following his will.

## 2. A House of Prayer has Vision

**Proverbs 29:18** (NIV) Where there is no revelation, people cast off restraint; but blessed is the one who heeds wisdom's instruction.

Our Mission:

- **To Make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world**

Our Vision:

- **To Love God:** honoring scriptural truths, worship in unity, praying intentionally
- **To Build Bridges:** Bringing the lost to God, applying time, talent, and treasure, supporting meaningful community engagement
- **To Grow Together:** Recognizing and addressing the needs of others, nurturing spiritual gifts, participating in small group ministries

**Do we, as a church, fall short of God's vision?**

**Are we gaining ground in fulfilling it?**

- Pray that we can fully embrace and fulfill the mission and vision God has given to us.
- Give thanks for the successes we have experienced so far, by God's grace and power.
- Pray for wisdom, strength, and determination to faithfully continue obediently serving God's will.



## 3. A House of Prayer is Faithful and Humble

**Ezekiel 22:17-30** (NIV) Then the word of the LORD came to me: <sup>18</sup> “Son of man, the people of Israel have become dross to me; all of them are the copper, tin, iron and lead left inside a furnace. They are but the dross of silver. <sup>19</sup> Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: ‘Because you have all become dross, I will gather you into Jerusalem. <sup>20</sup> As silver, copper, iron, lead and tin are gathered into a furnace to be melted with a fiery blast, so will I gather you in my anger and my wrath and put you inside the city and melt you. <sup>21</sup> I will gather you and I will blow on you with my fiery wrath, and you will be melted inside her. <sup>22</sup> As silver is melted in a furnace, so you will be melted inside her, and you will know that I the LORD have poured out my wrath on you.’”

<sup>23</sup> Again the word of the LORD came to me: <sup>24</sup> “Son of man, say to the land, ‘You are a land that has not been cleansed or rained on in the day of wrath.’ <sup>25</sup> There is a conspiracy of her princes within her like a roaring lion tearing its prey; they devour people, take treasures and precious things and make many widows within her. <sup>26</sup> Her priests do violence to my law and profane my holy things; they do not distinguish between the holy and the common; they teach that there is no difference between the unclean and the clean; and they shut their eyes to the keeping of my Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them. <sup>27</sup> Her officials within her are like wolves tearing their prey; they shed blood and kill people to make unjust gain. <sup>28</sup> Her prophets whitewash these deeds for them by false visions and lying divinations. They say, ‘This is what

the Sovereign LORD says'—when the LORD has not spoken.<sup>29</sup> The people of the land practice extortion and commit robbery; they oppress the poor and needy and mistreat the foreigner, denying them justice.

<sup>30</sup> “I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one.



- Pray that we may each stand before God in the gap on behalf of the church and ask God for forgiveness and mercy.

## Qualities of a house of Prayer . . .

*The following questions should serve as a partial guide to evaluate the church's effectiveness. Then pray the promises of scripture for your church.*

### **A. Is it a place where people enter the gates with thanksgiving and the courts with praise?**

**Psalm 100:4** (NIV) Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

### **B. Is there worship in spirit and in truth?**

**John 4:24** (NIV) “. . . God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”



- Pray that our worship would be genuine, filled with praise and thanksgiving.
- Pray that we will embrace and be filled with God's Holy Spirit and worship in truth.

### **C. Do hurting people find healing?**

**Luke 9:1-2** (NIV) When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases,<sup>2</sup> and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

### **D. Are broken relationships being reconciled?**

**2 Corinthians 5:18** (NIV) All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:

**Matthew 5:24** (NIV) leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.



- Pray that we might embrace all of God’s miracles knowing they can happen right here, even today.
- Pray for healing of minds, bodies, spirits, and relationships.
- Pray for humble hearts able to see God’s hand in those around us who need his healing.

**E. Do the blind see?**

**F. Are those in bondage being set free?**

**G. Is the good news being preached to the poor?**

**Luke 4:18** (NIV) “The Spirit of the Lord is on me [Jesus], because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free,

**Luke 7: 22** (NIV) So he [Jesus] replied to the messengers, “Go back and report to John [The Baptist] what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.



- Pray for the mission of Jesus to be carried out in our church, community, and nation.
- Pray that God will use us in sharing the Good News of Jesus.
- Pray for someone by name to receive the healing they need from Jesus.

**H. Are disciples of Jesus being made?**

**Matthew 28:19-20** (NIV) Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,<sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”



- Pray for an opportunity to share the message of hope and salvation we have in Jesus with someone this week, this month, this year.
- Pray for God to give you the right words to share at just the right time.

**I. Is the church in unity?**

**Psalms 133:1** (NIV) How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!

**J. Do the people exhibit brokenness and humble hearts?**

**Psalms 51:17** (NIV) My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.



- Pray for the humility be the person God created us to be.
- Pray for the ability to be a peace with everyone around me.
- Pray for the opportunity and ability to mend any broken relationships in our lives – home, work, school, community, and here at church.