

BUILDING A PRAYER MOVEMENT IN YOUR CHURCH

June 8, 2019

What GOD has taught the Prayer Ministry at Venice Church about HIMSELF and then about Prayer

Disclaimer: This is our experience at VFMC. Your experience will be different. I will be sharing some important principles GOD has taught us and I hope you will find them useful in stimulating prayers for your prayer ministry

VENICE PRAYER MINISTRY DESCRIPTION

Venice Prayer Ministry is currently composed of two groups with very distinct characteristics

Prayer chain: 52 people very faithfully pray for requests sent via email. Requests come from people in the Church or from our Church website from strangers. They prefer to pray on their own. Prayer chain has remained steadfast for decades. Their prayers are valuable and much appreciated for they are received in heaven as incense in golden bowls (Rev 5:8).

Prayer group: 8 people who pray for people during special Sunday services or after service; They go to pray for people in the hospital or at their home, at church events or at prayer events at other churches or at Family camp. They meet to pray for one another and sometimes fast. This group has been actively praying for each other and the Church for about 15 years.

The two groups complement each other and strengthen prayer at VFM Church. Today I will discuss the development of the prayer group. I believe that GOD is raising up this different type of prayer to meet the new challenges of a changing world that now reflects more and more of Satan's character.

Key Principle One: Praying is all about an intimate, loving relationship with GOD. Releasing of GOD's love and power through prayer is correlated with the quality of our relationship with GOD (It's all about GOD)

Matt 22:36-38 The greatest commandment "Love GOD..." expresses our goal for a more intimate, loving relationship with GOD. The more intimate your relationship with GOD the more your prayers are aligned with GOD's love, will, and power. Hungering for GOD and seeking after GOD are characteristics of a powerful person of prayer. This transformation of our character to love GOD, to be more like CHRIST, comes when we submit ourselves to the power of the HELPER, the SPIRIT of CHRIST, who is the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD,

Key Principle Two: Praying is all about GOD. What kind of prayer is effective in aligning ourselves with GOD' will and purpose?

Matt 6:9-15 The LORD's Prayer gives us a prayer template we can use that we can adapt as the situation requires. Start by welcoming GOD through worship. Invite GOD to bring His Kingdom power into our earthly situations. Align your prayer requests with HIS will. You can ask HIM specifically what HIS will is as you pray. This requires that believe that GOD will answer us when we ask and we must be able to hear HIS answer accurately (this usually requires training). We must know the Bible well to test what we receive against HIS WORD. The HOLY SPIRIT, the author of the Bible helps us. Be prepared to deal with sins (that includes our sins) that GOD reveals through confession and repentance of sins. Ask HIM for forgiveness of sins, and be prepared to pray to forgive those who sinned against us. We must watch out for temptation. Be prepared to confront the enemy when he is exposed.

Sometimes what GOD wants to accomplish through prayer is not what brings the person in for prayer

Key Principle Three: Praying is all about GOD's love flowing through us to others.

Matt 22:39 Prayer is a powerful way to obey HIS second commandment to "Love others".

1 Cor 12:31 – 13:13: Powerful pray is filled with GOD's agape love. Agape is "a more excellent way" to glorify GOD and build up the body of CHRIST. The "greater gifts" of prophecy, healing, miracles, words of wisdom, words of knowledge, speaking in tongues, interpreting tongues can be compromised by Satan. I don't think that Satan can distort true agape love into something he can use for his purpose.

Gal 5:22 How can you possibly be filled with agape? HOLY SPIRIT working in our lives will produce agape.

Key Principle Four: When you pray and align yourself with GOD's will then you are engaging in Spiritual Warfare.

This is the same spiritual warfare we see in the New Testament. You must train yourself to use what GOD gives us to defeat the enemy in warfare. The authority for the weapons we have come to us through JESUS' life, death and resurrection. The HOLY SPIRIT gives us power to exercise this authority over earthly powers and principalities

Eph 6:10-18 Learn how to protect yourself and others and battle using the armor of GOD and prayer

2 Cor 10:3-6 Prayer can help access supernatural power to bring down the enemy's strongholds.

Eph 6:12 You will probably meet people who believe that GOD does not speak to you outside of reading the Bible, or that Spiritual gifts of healing, miracles, prophecy, words of knowledge, words of wisdom, tongues or interpretations of tongues are no longer given by the HOLY SPIRIT. Some of these people will go to the same Church you attend. Don't allow the enemy to bring about conflict. This verse gives you perspective on who the real enemy is and to whom you should direct your warfare prayers.

Key Principle Five: Praying in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT

Prayer is an opportunity for the supernatural power of the HOLY SPIRIT to work through us as we use their Spiritual gifts to bring about GOD's will as you pray for some situation. When we pray in GOD's will we continue JESUS ministry on earth.

Luke 4:14-19. These verses describe the FATHER's purpose for JESUS coming down to Earth. During HIS Earthly ministry, JESUS brought the Kingdom of Heaven down to Earth. The FATHER wants us to work through us to continue JESUS' work here on Earth. To accomplish this we need the power of the HOLY SPIRIT.

Key Principle Six: Growing in these areas of prayer often means you must look for help from other trusted sources. One example is the Free Methodist Church website <https://npmfmc.org/>

Please consider praying for discernment when you go to different teachings to learn more. Any teaching not consistent with Biblical principles is NOT true and is a deception of the enemy. There is no room for compromise on this point.

Key Principle Seven: Redirect people back to GOD and the Bible. GOD deserves all glory not us. Help guide them into a deeper relationship with GOD. Remember you are not GOD...you will be wrong more than once in your interpretations, actions and prayers

GOD desires a deeper relationship with the person coming for prayer. While healing or revelations are important ways that GOD expresses HIS love for people, we can help others realize that GOD wants to use this opportunity to draw them into a deeper and more intimate relationship with HIM. Please remember that as you pray for others, GOD wants you to also experience something that will also deepen your relationship with HIM.

1 Thes 10:19-21 While we prepare ourselves as best as possible to pray over others, our words of wisdom, words of knowledge prophetic words or interpretations may be wrong. People must test the words they received by spending asking GOD, and studying the Bible for confirmation. , Asking experienced Christians like their Pastor can be helpful also when seeking confirmation. Please remember saying you believe that GOD gave you something to share with another person is a tremendous responsibility that we must take very seriously.

EXAMPLE: National Prayer Ministry of Free Methodist Church – Vision Statement

A nation-wide community of CHRIST-followers from the FMC family, dedicated to seeking the LORD persistently, diligently and passionately for spiritual renewal, defeat of the enemy's ways, the flourishing of the Gospel in our regions, and full manifestation of CHRIST's mission to seek and save the lost. Our unification in hearing what GOD is saying, and responding across our land in unified prayer, will come from regularly receiving what our people are hearing from GOD, and regularly distributing ways and means to intercede in harmony with GOD's will

Why Every Church Needs A Prayer Ministry

Praying for others is a great opportunity to partner with GOD using your special Spiritual gift to bring about HIS will in a particular situation. Praying is a great way to glorify GOD as people experience HIS love and power and other qualities of HIS character. You get to see and learn something new about HIM with every prayer experience. You get to see HIS authority on heaven and earth and over powers and principalities. You get to participate in GOD destroying strongholds of the enemy in the lives of believers, and in your Church. You get to help align your heart and the heart of others with GOD's heart and will. You see that GOD today is the same GOD you read about in the Bible. You will love it.

Why Praying for the Conference is Important

Here are just a few reasons: Through prayer and GOD's revelation to us we can become more in one SPIRIT; united in vision, direction, intentions, processes. There will be less conflicting priorities amongst us, less of what is logical or seems best to us and we can move more accurately in HIS will. We can work with GOD more in HIS power to accomplish great things, things that we cannot even imagine. How about: equipping, nurturing, and growing a highly contextual network of healthy Asian leaders and multiplying churches that will transform the spiritual landscape of the Pacific Rim and beyond. Prayer can help usher in spiritual revival in our Churches and our Conference See Appendix 3

How You Can Start a Prayer Ministry

1. Start praying – Ask GOD what type of prayer ministry HE wants at your Church. Begin to formulate a vision/mission/core values statement as a way of putting on paper what GOD is telling you. Try to get the key fundamental things right as quickly as possible. Regularly pray about the fundamentals that GOD reveals are important for your ministry. Review with your group and update regularly as GOD teaches you new things.
2. Early on share what GOD is telling you with those in authority over you (Pastors, Ministry directors)

3. Ask GOD who HE wants in the Prayer Ministry. If you see someone who has a great relationship with GOD they are probably already praying. Pray about these people...if you get the OK from GOD approach them. Not everyone who has some gifting in prophecy, healing etc can work in a team. They may have a stronghold in their life that hinders their effectiveness. Consider praying for them for a breaking of that stronghold.
4. Ask GOD for spiritually mature people. Here is one important criterion: do they display the fruit of the SPIRIT? Growing in agape is an important quality.
5. Start meeting to pray.
6. Meet with other prayer ministry leaders and share what GOD has taught you to do and not to do.
7. Grow together with others in your group: Live your lives together if that is what GOD wants for your group. Recognize and support each other in your Spiritual gifts.
8. Get help to grow in the new directions that GOD is taking your ministry.
9. Be accountable to one another and to those in authority over you
10. Have fun, GOD is fun.



APPENDIX 1

Prayer Chain: Akutagawa, Pastor Linda; Ariyasu, Mayme; Ariyasu, Reg; Chee, Helen; Cherney, Valerie; Cherney, Pastor Nathan; Chew, Laurie; Chew Randy; Chung, John; Chung, Patty; Crawford, Edna; Doan, Jimmy; Flores, Tim; Flores, Nam; Fong, David; Fujimoto, Marie; Holmes, Emi; Honda, Lynn (moved out of the area); Hong, Danny; Hong, Joy; His, Jean; Kaneshiro, Lucy (moved out of the area); Kaufmann, Joann; Kaufmann, Larrow; Kaufmann, Brisa; King, Bobby (moved out of the area); Koshimizu, Diane; Koyama, Sandy (no longer comes to Venice); Magnuson, Pam; Matsunaga, Lori; Mendoza, Grace; Mendoza, Merli; Miura, Monica; Miyabe, Pastor Jim; Miyabe, Pastor John; Namba, Lynn; Nishihara, Leslie; Oda, Alan; Rubke, Ruth; Sakai, Cheri; Sasamoto, Ellen; Synder, Amiee; Sugiman, Daisy and Jacob; Sumida, Winnie; Tang, Rob and Denise; Tong, Jason; Tong, Melissa; Tritasavit, Sophie; Tritasavit, Sutut; Tsutsui, Kathy; Tuggy, Steve; Uyeda, Josh; Weber, Willie; Yokota, Jodi; Yumori, Randy

Prayer Group: Cherney, Valerie; Cherney, Pastor Nathan; Chew, Laurie; Chew Randy; Sumida, Winnie; Sumida, David; Ariyasu, Mayme; Ariyasu, Reg; (Isbister, Pastor Linda; Endow, Keith; Endow, Dianna; Kaufman, Brisa; Kaufman, Larrow important people who shared a prayer life together with us in the past)

APPENDIX 2

BIBLE VERSES



Rev 5:8 ⁸When He had taken the  book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the  saints.

Matt 6:9-15: ⁹“Pray, then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰ ‘Your kingdom come.

Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ ‘Give us this day  our daily bread.

¹² ‘And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ ‘And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from  evil.  [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]’

¹⁴For if you forgive ^[h]others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵But if you do not forgive ^[l]others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.

Matt 22:36-38 ³⁶“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” ³⁷And He said to him, “‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’” ³⁸This is the great and ^[o]foremost commandment.

Matt 22:39 ³⁹The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’

1 Cor 12:31 to 13:13 ³¹But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way. If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have *the gift of* prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I surrender my body ^[a]to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

⁴Love is patient, love is kind *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant, ⁵does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*, ⁶does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; ⁷^[b]bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸Love never fails; but if *there are gifts of* ^[c]prophecy, they will be done away; if *there are* tongues, they will cease; if *there is* knowledge, it will be done away. ⁹For we know in part and we prophesy in part; ¹⁰but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. ¹¹When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I ^[d]became a man, I did away with childish things. ¹²For now we see in a mirror ^[e]dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. ¹³But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the ^[f]greatest of these is love.

Gal 5: 22-23 ²But the fruit of the Spirit is (agape) love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control

2 Cor 10:3-6 ³For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴For the weapons of our warfare *are* not ^[a]carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, ⁶and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

Luke 4:14-19 ¹⁴ And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district. ¹⁵ And He began teaching in their synagogues and was praised by all. ¹⁶ And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. ¹⁷ And the [e]book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the [f]book and found the place where it was written,

¹⁸ "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME,
BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR.
HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES,
AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND,
TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,
¹⁹ TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD."

Eph 6:10-18 ¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For our struggle is not against [e]flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. ¹³ Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, ¹⁵ and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; ¹⁶ [f]in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil *one*. ¹⁷ And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ [g]With all prayer and petition [h]pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, [i]be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

Eph 6:12 For our struggle is not against [a]flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

1 Thes 10:19-21 ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit; ²⁰ do not despise prophetic ²¹utterances.

²¹ But examine everything *carefully*; hold fast to that which is good;

APPENDIX 3

Question: "What is Christian revival?"

Answer: *Revival* refers to a spiritual reawakening from a state of dormancy or stagnation in the life of a believer. It encompasses the resurfacing of a love for God, an appreciation of God's holiness, a passion for His Word and His church, a convicting awareness of personal and corporate sin, a spirit of humility, and a desire for repentance and growth in righteousness. Revival invigorates and sometimes deepens a believer's faith, opening his or her eyes to the truth in a fresh, new way. It generally involves the connotation of a fresh start with a clean slate, marking a new beginning of a life lived in obedience to God. Revival breaks the charm and power of the world, which blinds the eyes of men, and generates both the will and power to live in the world but not of the world.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Christian-revival.html>