

Adding momentum to your Small Group's prayer time

Prayer is essential to our relationship with God and is a great source of connection between your Small Group members. When you create the right atmosphere and prioritize prayer, your prayer time can be the thing that drives the success of your group. As a leader, it's your role each week to set the tone and energy around this special time.

Here are a few ways you can set the right atmosphere for your group's prayer time:

Keep it consistent, but add variety

Don't fall into the trap of having prayer time each week in the same way at the same time. Adding some variety will keep it from becoming stale and unengaging.

Mix it up with these simple ideas:

- Have your members write down their requests, then trade them with another person in the group.
- Break into smaller groups of people and have everyone share their requests and pray for each other.
- Ask people to specifically pray for the person on their left or right.
- Pray scripture over each person in the group.
- Start your Small Group by praying for one another and for God to use your time together.

Follow up

When you follow up with a group member about a prayer request they've shared, they are more likely to update the group on that request or share the next time an opportunity comes up. Send a text or make a quick phone call to check on the person and their situation; it will go a long way toward building relationships, community, and momentum during your prayer time.

Keep the prayer at the right level

Set the expectation for the right tone with prayer requests. Try to encourage requests that avoid these pitfalls:

- Too shallow (e.g., pray for my cousin's cat that ran away)
- Too dominated by one person or one family (e.g., that guy who has six requests each week)
- Not close enough to the group member to allow for celebration or follow-up (e.g., pray for my old roommate's cousin who lives across the country... he broke his toe)

When your prayer requests are at the right level, you'll see more engagement with your group members.

Recognize heavy moments

As your group shares, pay attention to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. When a heavy or serious prayer request is shared, don't embarrass the person by putting them on the spot, but do give it the right attention. Consider having the group place their hands on the shoulder of the person who shared and lead a prayer dedicated to the request, or set up a support system for the request. When someone has the courage to share a major request, recognize the moment. (And follow up!)