

Design and Establish a Prayer Room in Your Church

Most Christians would agree that prayer is a fundamental part of every healthy, growing church. Yet, sadly, many churches don't have a place set aside in their facility specifically dedicated to prayer.

The following contains ideas for developing and establishing a prayer room in your church. It's not intended to be a "one size fits all" plan, however. Every church is unique. Size of facility and congregation, ministries of the church, and makeup of the church body all enter the equation when creating such a room. What's important is that your church grows in a commitment to prayer. A prayer room that helps foster this environment will be as unique and diverse as the congregation itself. However, here are a few principles to keep in mind:

1. Purpose

Ask yourself, "Why will this prayer room exist? How will the church be better off after this project is completed than it was before?" The way you answer these questions will help guide you in where the room is placed, as well as the specific resources you place within the room. A good place to start is by examining the mission statement of the church. Quite often, churches will establish their mission statement around the three-fold purpose of the church: to help believers connect with God, others, and their purpose in the Kingdom. In light of this, think about ways you remind members of their purpose while they spend time in the prayer room.

Keep in mind that the prayer room won't focus only on your church and its mission. Many will visit the room in response to a personal need, a family crisis, or even to simply observe some quiet time with the Lord. Thus, it's valuable to make this room accessible not only Sunday, but throughout the week as much as possible.

2. Visibility

It's vital for the congregation know that the prayer room is there for them—in a place where they are able to find it. Here are some suggestions to keep in mind:

- Strive to locate the prayer room in a part of the church that makes it easy to find. It is also preferable to have the room on the main floor, as some members of the congregation may struggle to climb stairs.
- Promote the room with signage in the foyer. This allows the congregation to be reminded of it when they arrive. It also reinforces the concept that prayer is a central part of what your church is all about. There are many ways to present such a sign: a metal signpost, a framed wall sign, or even a painted sign on the foyer wall. Confer with your pastor to decide what is best for your church.
- Have a prominent sign displayed outside the door of the prayer room, as well as directions along the way to the room if necessary. Strive to make it easy for churchgoers to make their way to the prayer room.

3. Prayer Ministry

Most Christians believe strongly in the need for prayer, and they greatly desire to be consistent in their prayer lives, including both personal devotions and intercession. Yet through our ministry here at the prayer center, we have discovered that a big reason for the lack of involvement in prayer can be traced to the frustration of, "I don't know how to pray or what to pray for? Then my mind starts to wander, and I feel as though I'm really not focused on prayer." It was this concern that led us to create many of the prayer resources we offer—and it also serves as encouragement for prayer ministers to find ways to bring clarity and direction to those they mentor in the practice of prayer. This concept can be applied in a practical sense within the church prayer room.

There are a number of ways to highlight and emphasize within the prayer room the various, specific prayer needs in your church, community, nation, and world. This can help believers catch a vision for these needs, and why their prayers are so valuable. In addition, providing such emphasis can bring light to needs that might otherwise be overlooked. Here are a few suggestions on how you might bring focus to the prayer ministry happening in your prayer room.

- Post pictures of your pastor/pastoral staff, as well as their families.
- Post pictures of your church board and their families.
- Post a list and/or pictures of lay leaders in your church, such as youth leaders, children's workers, and music ministers. This can serve as a reminder to pray for those working among the congregation in the church.
- Provide a bulletin board or similar space where members of the congregation can post personal prayer requests as well as praise reports.
- Display a map of the world, identifying specific ministries and missionaries around the world supported by your church.
- Display a map of the nation, identifying specific ministries and missionaries across the nation supported by your church.
- Display a map of your city. There are several ways you can utilize this map to encourage focused prayer:
 - * Identify ministries your church performs or supports around the community.
 - * Label schools around the community, and encourage prayer for students, faculty, and staff.
 - * List public officials, be they political figures or public servants such as police and fire officials, and encourage prayer for these leaders in the community.
 - * Note specific needs, issues, or crisis within the community as they arise, and encourage prayer for these.

Note that our site also offers several Strategic Prayer Guides containing specific prayer points for many of the emphases noted here. Visit www.prayer.ag.org and click on the Prayer Room banner, or look in the Prayer Resources drop down, to access these.

4. A Final Thought:

It's highly desirable that every church have a room entirely dedicated to the ministry of prayer. That way, it can be freely accessed during all church services. This also allows you, as prayer coordinator, to design and decorate the room exclusively for a prayer setting.

However, a dedicated room is often not possible. Churches have limited space, especially in the easily accessed areas where a prayer room would be located. And so, as you establish your prayer room, consider opting for a room that is smaller or "more plain" if that allows you to devote it solely to prayer. Remember that things like size and ambiance are secondary when it comes to finding a place to seek the Lord. But if you must share a room, there are still ways to make it a special place of prayer. See if you can install dimmable lighting for prayer times. Arrange the chairs in a circle, and push aside tables, when prayer is going on. And you can likely still decorate the walls with the photos and maps noted above, to emphasize prayer.