

Pray

For Mayfair.

Twelve Key Prayer Areas

As an expression of our desire to be a church committed to personal and collective prayer, we encourage you to pray for the following items:

- 1) Ask God to give our people boldness and depth in our commitments to personal and communal prayers.
- 2) Ask God to richly bless our church with an experience of His presence and power, transforming us and empowering us to love and to serve in extraordinary ways.
- 3) Ask God to raise up and develop new leaders and volunteers who would leverage their lives for God's purposes in our church and in the greater Genesee County area.
- 4) Pray for God to give guidance, understanding, and encouragement to those who preach and teach the Word of God.
- 5) Ask God to open all our hearts to the convicting work of God's truth and the healing balm of God's grace as we receive the food of the Holy Scriptures.
- 6) Pray for God to move in the hearts of our men to take spiritual initiative in their homes, in our church, and in our city.
- 7) Pray for God's deepening influence in the lives of our people through our THRIVE Groups, Sunday classes, and other Bible studies. Pray that these groups might be a catalyst for spiritual formation among our church family *and* for missional initiatives within our neighborhoods. Ask God to encourage and equip new and existing teachers and leaders.
- 8) Pray for those living in our city who do not know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ask God to lead people to a place of considering Christ and entrusting their lives to Him. Pray that they might be brought into the fellowship and ministry of our church or another like-minded assembly.
- 9) Ask God to make our church a benevolent and beneficial presence, positively contributing to the well-being of the people in our community.
- 10) Pray for God to cultivate a spirit of radical generosity among our people, as they give of their time, energy, talents, gifts, and offerings to the work of the ministry. Ask God to provide the resources our church needs to minister efficiently and effectively in our city.
- 11) Pray for wisdom about the changes we may need to make to effectively reach our community with the Gospel and fervently make disciples. Ask God to give us ingenuity to fully utilize the worship, education, and fellowship gathering space He has given us.

12) Pray for God to continually strengthen our unity in mind, spirit, and mission as we serve together for the glory of Jesus Christ.

Learning to Pray

Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray..." Luke 11:1

Prayer has been defined as *attending to and answering God*. Prayer isn't trying to get God's attention or attempting to wrangle a blessing out of Him. Nor is it informing God about what is going on or telling Him what He should do. Rather, prayer is God's gracious invitation for us to pay attention and then respond to Whom He already is revealing Himself to be and to what He already is doing in our lives and in our world. In other words, prayer is entering into the "Eternal Conversation" that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have been enjoying all along. Prayer first involves listening to God's Word and God's Spirit through silent meditation on Scripture, Bible reading, solitary reflection, etc. This is our "communion" experience in prayer. Then we speak to God our words of praise, confession, thanksgiving, affirmation, concern, need, hope, etc. And this is our "communication" involvement through prayer.

We best learn to pray by learning to pray the Book of Psalms in the center of our Bible. The Book of Psalms is the worship and prayer book of Holy Scripture. These psalms are hymn-prayers to our God that cover the wide-range of our unique wants and diverse needs, as well as the depths of our nuanced expressions of prayer, such as praise, confession, thanksgiving, petition, lament, affirmation, etc. The people of God have been praying these psalms personally and communally for thousands of years. So, why not start with Psalm 1, praying through one, consecutive psalm each day? There are 150 psalms, so at this beginning pace you will pray through the entire Psalter in just five months. Then as you become more familiar with prayer and the psalms, increase your daily participation until you pray five psalms per day. Praying in this more extensive and expansive way, you will journey through the complete Psalter every month.

The Bible's exhortation to us is to "pray continually," meaning to pray in an ongoing, intentional way throughout the day and night. Traditionally, this kind of prayer has been embraced by God's people according to the "Divine Hours" of set times for prayer, such as in the morning, noonday, evening, night, etc. So how about following the caring counsel of one pastor who said, "Give God the best time of your day"? Are you a morning person? Then begin your day in prayer. Or is nighttime better for you? Then start by finishing your evening in prayer. Regardless of which time you enter into prayer, gradually add prayer to the remaining moments of your whole day and entire evening.

By J.R. Vassar