



GUIDELINES FOR LEADING A PRAYER GATHERING

I. The Invitation to a Prayer Gathering

Many people have never been to a prayer gathering and may feel nervous about praying in front of others. Putting an announcement in a church bulletin will only draw out those who are comfortable praying publicly. Personal invitations are important to help people feel welcome and overcome their reluctance or anxiety about prayer.

Here are some suggestions of things you can say to help people feel comfortable about coming to your prayer gathering:

- The time of prayer will last for only an hour and is highly structured. Don't worry about awkward silences or wondering who's supposed to go next.
- There's no pressure to pray out loud. You can sit silently if you wish.
- We will use a printed outline to direct our prayer time and keep us on topic.
- We will be praying short, simple, focused prayers. No fancy language necessary.
- We will alternate prayer with Scripture reading to guide and inform our prayers.
- It won't be boring. You will be amazed by how fast the time will go.
- There will be refreshments served after the time of prayer.

Ask your guests to arrive 10-15 minutes before the prayer gathering starts and make sure they know when your prayer time will conclude. (This is very important. Some people fear that a prayer meeting will go on until Jesus returns!)

Personal invitations are key. If people are personally invited and made to feel welcome, they will come. Make a list of the people you want to invite and make plans to contact them.

Finally, people need to understand the importance of gathering to pray for Children at High Risk and those who minister among them. This is a significant work for God's people.

II. Preparation for the time of prayer

Before your prayer gathering, enlist a few volunteers who can help you during the meeting. You will need:

- Two or more people who will assist you in hosting the prayer gathering and who will pray in preparation as well as for those who will come.
- Greeters to meet and welcome people as they come.
- Readers to read the suggested Scripture passages.
- People to bring refreshments.

Remove potential distractions. Silence your phone, turn off the television, and ask people to turn off their cell phones and pagers.

Prepare a few more handouts and refreshments than you think you will need. If you expect 20 people to come, plan for 24 to attend. If you have extra Bibles, make them available.

If possible, arrange seating so people face each other rather than theater style.

If you expect more than fifteen people, it may help to use name tags.

Set up a display table with Oakseed's prayer materials and a sign-up sheet.

III. The Welcome

Welcome people and thank them for coming. Hand out and go through the prayer gathering outline.

Point out the ground rules for the prayer gathering:

- We will follow the outline.
- Prayers should be brief, but you are welcome to pray as many times as you wish.
- Pray loudly enough for everyone to hear.
- Please join us in repeating the refrain that ends each section of the outline.

Encourage people to stay for refreshments and fellowship after the time of prayer.

Before beginning the time of prayer, remind participants that God loves hearing the prayerful concerns of his people.

Lead in prayer as you begin the prayer gathering. Ask God:

- To guide you in prayer.
- To understand God's heart for "the working child."
- To help you set aside our own burdens and problems for an hour.
- To help you celebrate God's love for "the working child."

IV. A Time of Prayer

Keep track of time as you move through the outline so that you can finish on schedule. The tendency is to go too long.

V. Conclusion

Thank people for coming. Invite people to sign up to receive Oakseed's Monthly Prayer Guide or the Children's Prayer Guide to pray regularly for ministries on the cutting edge among the urban poor and children at risk.

Oakseed Ministries International is celebrating 25 years of faithful ministry and service. Since 1992, Oakseed Ministries has been assisting indigenous ministries by serving abandoned children and the poor in the Developing World's largest cities, bringing the good news of Jesus through word and deed.

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