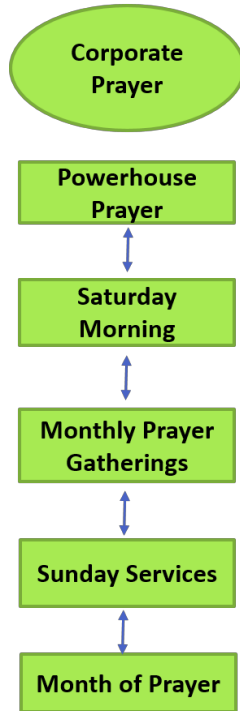


## Corporate Prayer - What is it?



Corporate prayer is the term used to describe praying together with other people - in small groups or larger gatherings of people.

Corporate prayer is an important part of the life of the church, we read in Acts 2:42 that the early church gathered to pray together

*<sup>42</sup>They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*

When we come and pray together with other believers this is both edifying and enriching, one pastor described it like this

*"When we pray together with other believers, the effects can be very positive. Corporate prayer edifies and unifies us as we share our common faith. The same Holy Spirit who dwells within each believer causes our hearts to rejoice as we hear praises to our Lord and Saviour, knitting us together in a unique bond of fellowship found nowhere else in life."*

The Bible gives numerous examples of corporate prayer<sup>2</sup>. Bible commentator Mathew Henry wrote, "When God intends great mercy for His people, He first sets them praying." There are numerous positive outcomes of Gods people coming together to pray.

Encouragement – Praying with others can bring encouragement to the members of the group. There may be people in the group who are struggling with trials. As they are upheld in prayer, the Holy Spirit brings them encouragement and reassurances.

Unity – Corporate prayer has the ability to connect people together, "a unity of purpose". People are built up and unified in the faith that they share together. As people pray together, they build a love and concern for others and the mission of God.

Worship – Corporate prayer brings about intimate communion with Jesus. The body of believers, praying in unity is an act of worship.

Dependence on God – As the we cry out to God in prayer it demonstrates our reliance on God to do the work of God.

Sometimes the question gets asked – Why can't I just pray on my own? The answer is, you can. The preface to that question is "there is nothing in scripture that suggests that corporate prayers are "more powerful" than individual prayers. The bible is very clear that we can pray anywhere, anytime on our own and God hears us. However, we also see many examples of the people of God coming to together to pray, it's not a matter of "either" "or", but rather, both individual prayer and corporate prayer.

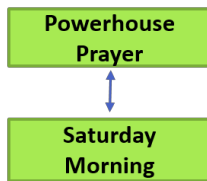
There is something very powerful when the people of God come together and cry out to him in one voice. The Rev Dr Stuart Robinson in his article titled "Praying the Price." outlines that throughout the history of the church there has been a direct correlation between times of revival (and God doing extraordinary things) and prayer meetings, when groups of people gathered together to pray, God moved. Robinson believes

<sup>2</sup> Nehemiah 9:1-38, 2 Chronicles 7:14, Joel 1:14, Matt 18:19-20 Acts 1:14, 4:24-31,12:5-18, 1 Timothy 2:1-8

that, the most significant expansion movements of the church through its history, happened when the church took up the imperative to, 'Devote yourselves to prayer.

At Lakeside we want to be a people who gather regularly and intentionally to pray, to cover, uphold and saturate the ministry of Lakeside in prayer.

### **Powerhouse Prayer & Saturday morning Prayer gathering.**



We have two weekly gatherings that meet for prayer. They are our Saturday Morning Prayer Gathering and our Powerhouse Prayer Gathering.

**Saturday Morning** – 7.30am to 8.30am in Meeting Room 2. Prayer for the broader ministries of the church. But also a focus on listening and seeking God.

**Powerhouse Prayer** – Sundays Mornings pre Service: 8.30am to 9.15am in the Hub. Prayer for the morning service and the broader ministries of the church.

It's been said that you can tell a lot about the health of a church by the number of people who attend the prayer meeting. The great British preacher Charles Spurgeon said it like this:

*The condition of the church may be very accurately gauged by its prayer meetings. So is the prayer meeting a grace-ometer, and from it we may judge the amount divine working among a people. If God be near a church, it must pray. And if He be not there, one of the first tokens of His absence will be a slothfulness in prayer. C.H. Spurgeon*

If we are honest in most cases attendance at prayer meetings are low. Have you ever wondered why? I heard one pastor say that the reason why prayer meetings or prayer gatherings are generally the lowest attended church event, is because it's the most spiritually attacked. His point is valid, the one thing that Satan doesn't want Christians doing is praying together.

Samuel Chadwick once said:

*"The one concern of the devil is to keep saints from prayer. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray."*

We want to provide numerous opportunities for the people of Lakeside to gather together and pray.



**Monthly Prayer gathering:** These gatherings happen on the last Sunday of the month starting at 5pm in the Hub. Again the focus is on the broader ministries of the church.

**Month of Prayer:** A focused month of different prayer gatherings consisting of prayer walks, 24-hour prayer meetings etc. This is usually held during the month of November.

It's also important to acknowledge that corporate prayer will happen in the life of the church in much more informal ways, whether that be in Life Groups, Events & Programs, Business & Ministry Team Meetings and worship gatherings, where ever there are groups of people.

