

## 9 WAYS TO BUILD PRAYER INTO A WORSHIP SERVICE

Jesus strongly reminded us that God's house is to be a house of prayer (Luke 19:45-46). Getting there means building prayer into the DNA of a congregation, but the worship service can be central to that process.

So, if I were to attend only your church's main worship service, would I think that your church is a house of prayer? If not, here are some options to build prayer into that service:

1. **Enlist prayer warriors who pray during the entire service – and be certain the church knows they're praying.** Their intercession will only strengthen those who lead the service, and their prayers will encourage the congregation to hear and respond to God's Word.
2. **Begin the service with an intentional time of guided prayer to focus on God.** Allow music to draw the people together, then guide them through a time of praising God for who He is. Consider concentrating on a different attribute of God each week.
3. **Build a time of cleansing and confession into the service.** Teach folks about the need for confession as part of worship, and call them to an honest, personal response. Invite them, beginning with your church's leaders, to kneel together at the altar as they pray.
4. **Read a biblical prayer during the service.** Consider, for example, portions of Jesus' prayer in John 17 or Paul's prayer in Philippians 1:3-11. Include the words on a screen so attenders both see and hear the words. Employ a great reader who reads at the right rate, who knows when to pause, etc.
5. **Make time for a "missionary moment" each service to pray for missionaries and missions needs.** You can find needs at the International Mission Board ([www.imb.org](http://www.imb.org)) and the Joshua Project (<http://www.joshuaproject.net>). Think about combining this "moment" with the time for taking the offering.
6. **Begin a weekly "Focus on the Family" prayer time.** That is, focus on one family in the church each week, and pray for them. Intercede for them during the service, and invite others to greet them personally after the service.
7. **Regularly pray for sister congregations and ministries in your area.** How many church buildings do you and your members drive by each week without praying for them? Intentionally and strategically praying for churches during your service will encourage your members to notice those churches.

8. **Make time in services to talk about God's answers to prayers.** I suspect that God has answered many of our prayers, but we've told very few people about it—and we've missed an opportunity to glorify Him. Our churches will pray more if their faith is increased by hearing about God's response to us.
9. **End the service with a prayer to commission the congregation and to pray for more laborers.** That's how Jesus taught laborers to pray (Luke 10:1-2), and it's always wise to do what He taught us.

Author: Dr. Chuck Lawless

[www.chucklawless.com](http://www.chucklawless.com) August 1, 2018