



Prayer Ministry Handbook

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Prayer Ministry Handbook

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Upper Room (Pre-Service) Prayer

Upper Room prayer is held before the Sunday morning service as a way to usher in the presence of God, war against attacks of the enemy, and pray for the pastors and leaders of the service. Participants should not underestimate the power and the importance of this ministry for the effectiveness of Abundant Harvest Church in ministering to God and for the people who have come seeking His face and a closer walk with Him.

Qualifications

You must be born-again.

Guidelines

1. Be ready for prayer 45 minutes before the service.
2. Come ready to intercede for the service and the leaders.
3. No small children; only children who are of the age to understand and be part of an effective prayer meeting should attend.
4. Participants should submit to, and follow the direction of, the leader of the group.
5. Those who come late are still welcome to pray.
6. Prayer time should encompass the following:
 7. Prayer request cards.
 8. Praying for each other.
 9. Praying for the leadership of the service.
10. Welcoming the Holy Spirit and praying that He will move freely in the service.
11. Be careful that this time does not become a social function. Your prayers will release the power of God and should be taken seriously.

Prayer Chain

The Prayer Chain is a vital ministry that uses the power of multiple people praying at once for the urgent needs of the body here at Abundant Harvest Church and around the globe. It is important to note that this is not to be used for any form of gossip. The minimum amount of information should be shared to convey the need. The coordinator is responsible to ensure that only general information—and no confidential information—will be shared with the Prayer Chain.

Qualifications

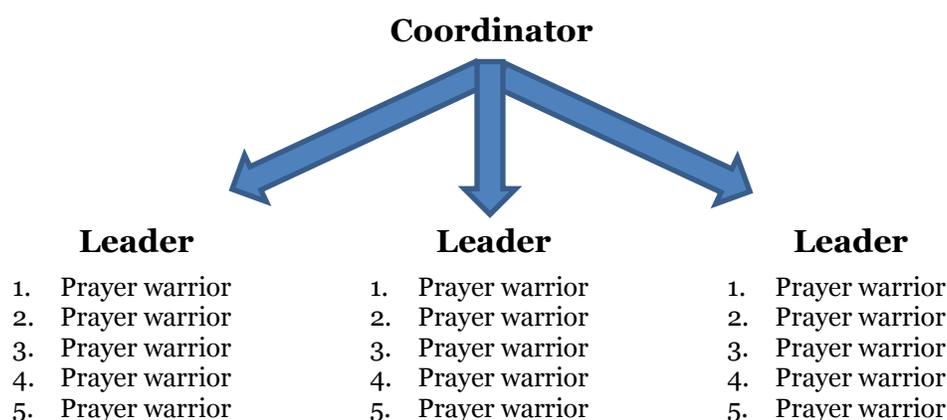
You must be born-again.

Responsibilities

- Prayer requests should be relayed through the Prayer Chain as quickly as possible.
- Pray for requests for at least one week, longer in cases of long-term illnesses.
- Please be discrete about prayer requests. Do not share them with people outside of the Prayer Chain unless you have been told it is acceptable to do so.

How it works

- Prayer requests are received from the following sources: the pastoral staff, prayer request cards, and word of mouth.
- All prayer requests will be funneled through the Prayer Ministry coordinator. The coordinator is the only one who should initiate a request down the prayer chain unless alternative previous arrangements have been made.
- The prayer coordinator will contact all the prayer leaders.
- Each prayer leader will have a maximum of five prayer warriors under them that they will contact with the request.



Altar Ministry

Altar ministers have the opportunity to impact the lives of people by working hand in hand with the pastor or speaker. An altar minister's sensitivity and performance can make or break the outcome of the service. Although we still have much to learn about these things, we must start using what we know to see others set free.

The pastor may call upon altar ministers at any time as the Holy Spirit leads.

Qualifications

Since the altar ministers can either positively or negatively affect the flow of the anointing and the ministry of those at the altar, all altar ministers must be approved by the senior pastor. Also, being a coordinator or a prayer chain participant does not automatically qualify one to be chosen as an altar minister.

All elders serve as altar ministers. A person who is not an elder and wishes to serve as an altar minister will fall under these guidelines and must go through training before they can serve. See the prayer ministry coordinator for more information. Positions are filled on an as-needed basis.

Altar ministers must:

- Be born again and baptized with the Holy Spirit with evidence of speaking in other tongues.
- Be totally sold out to living the Christian life.
- Be teachable and able to receive correction without offense.
- Be faithful in his or her church attendance, regularly committed to three or more weekly services per month.
- Be humble and free of pride.
- Complete the interview process.

General Guidelines for Altar Ministry

1. When the worship leader or pastor has opened the altars, altar ministers are asked to follow the prompting of the Spirit as to whom to approach. When approaching someone, first ask if they need prayer or if they are just there to worship.
2. If the worship portion of the service is ending and you are not finished praying with someone, gently suggest that the person accompany you to a prayer room.

3. If a person at the altar is very loud to the point of distracting others, the altar minister should tactfully suggest relocating to the prayer room for privacy.
4. If you need to take a person to a private place to pray, follow the rule: *When in private, man with man, woman with woman*. When praying in private, it is best to have two altar ministers praying together.

Body Language and Presentation

1. Stand close, but not so close as to enter the person's private space (generally about three feet away).
2. Have fresh breath. Do not be afraid to inform your fellow ministers if they have bad breath.
3. Maintain a soft tone unless the Spirit directs you to be authoritative.
4. Only two people at most should pray for individuals needing prayer. Too many people crowding around a person can hinder them from receiving.
5. Be sensitive to when you have lost their attention.
6. Be sensitive to the time of the service. If the person needs further prayer and they agree to it, lead them to a private room with another altar minister.
7. When praying for people, be cautious of how hard you lay your hands on them and where you touch them. Men and women may minister to each other in public at the altars; however, be cautious about hugs and affection and where you touch them.

Spiritual Principles of Altar Ministry

1. Have something to give: pray, fast, and prepare for ministry.
2. If you are not sure how you should pray, be sensitive to what the Spirit is leading you to do and ask God for wisdom.
3. Always be sure the person is born again by asking them if they have received salvation.
4. Pray biblically.
5. Always walk in love.
6. Pray the blood of Jesus over yourself before and after ministry.
7. When ministering in a team, only one minister prays out loud at a time for the person being ministered to. The other altar ministers should quietly pray for the one leading and for one receiving prayer.

Communication Guidelines

1. Don't counsel at the altars, simply pray and minister.
2. In some extreme cases where counseling is needed, you may need to refer the individual to a pastor.
3. Always follow the flow of the pastoral leadership.
4. Maintain confidentiality by not sharing private prayer requests with others in the church. However, the pastor should be informed of any critical situations in a person's life.
5. Follow up privately with people for whom you have prayed.

Understanding the Anointing

1. The anointing will always flow as the Holy Spirit wills.
2. We must be sensitive to what the Holy Spirit is doing because once we miss the flow of the Spirit, often we cannot regain that opportunity in that service again. It is important that we seize the moment.
3. Always submit to pastoral leadership if they take over the situation where you are ministering.
4. Many times the anointing works as a wave of the ocean, rising and falling in its intensity as the Holy Spirit wills. As ministers, we must flow with those waves as He directs.
5. Do not be easily offended by pastoral leadership when the anointing is in operation; quickly obey any commands given by pastoral leadership.

Prophecy and Its Safeguards

1. Be very careful when saying, "Thus says the Lord" unless you are 100 percent sure you have heard God; rather, say, "Does this mean anything to you?"
2. Avoid using timelines when prophesying unless you have specific direction from God. For example, keep it general by saying, "I believe God is going to give you a child," rather than adding "this year."
3. Do not give a "prophecy" to someone when it can be naturally discerned.
4. After prophesying, ask them if the prophecy bears witness with their spirit.
5. Be very, very cautious when prophesying "Thus says the Lord" concerning the call of the Five-Fold Ministry. When in doubt, ask a pastor.

Praying for the Sick

1. There are two primary ways a person is healed: the *Prayer of Faith* and the *Gift of Healing*. You must be sensitive to which method the Spirit is leading you to use.
 - a. *The Prayer of Faith* spoken of in James 5:14 requires faith from both the minister and the person needing the healing.
 - b. In other cases, the Holy Spirit heals people through the *Gifts of Healing* requiring only the minister's faith. However, if the person that is praying to receive healing gets into too much doubt, the infirmity could return.
2. While praying for the person, ask the Holy Spirit if the illness is the result of demonic activity or if the illness is strictly physical.
 - a. In the following passages, Jesus ministered physical healing—nothing is mentioned about evil spirits.
 - Matthew 9:20-22—The woman with the issue of blood
 - Matthew 9:27-31—Two blind men
 - Mark 1:40-43—Jesus cleanses the leper
 - b. In other passages, Jesus dealt with evil spirits; when the spirits were addressed, healing was manifested:
 - Matthew 12:22—Healing of the blind, mute, demon-possessed man.
 - Luke 13:10-17—Healing of a crippled woman who had a spirit of infirmity
 - Matthew 17:14—Healing of the epileptic who was possessed with a demon
 - c. If the Spirit reveals that it is demonic, take authority over the evil spirit, bind it, and loose the Holy Spirit into the person's life so that the illness will leave with the evil spirit.
 - d. If the illness is physical, pray for the ailment in the person's body. If you are not aware of the source of the illness, treat it as physical.
3. In some cases it helps to have the individual repeat a prayer of faith after you—a prayer both of you can agree on. For example, often I will ask, "Can you agree with me that God will heal you?"
4. Altar ministers are *not* to encourage people to stop their medications or to stop going to doctors for further follow-up. If they decide that God is leading them to do these things, **it is their choice**. We do not recommend that people violate the recommendations of their doctors or other medical professionals.

For further study, request from the pastor sermon notes from the messages "Healing," "Methods of Healing," and "Hindrances to Healing."

Praying for Deliverance from Demonic Oppression and Possession

1. If you discern that someone may be demon oppressed or possessed, you have to deal with the demonic spirits. Born again believers can be *oppressed*, while non-believers and backsliders can be *possessed*.
2. Don't allow the spirit of fear to cause you to question who you are in Christ. Pray in other tongues continually.
3. Don't ask a demon questions, they only tell lies. Be led by the Holy Spirit and cast the spirit out by name.
4. Never allow a demon to manifest itself in front of the church. Command it to stop immediately, cast it out, and command it to leave the property. This is God's time to show His authority—not the devil's time to show his power. Lead the person to repentance and salvation and have them renounce Satan (Matthew 12:43-45).
5. If a possessed person does not want to be free, you cannot make the demon leave.
6. Be careful when the person becomes quiet. Quite often the demon will attempt to deceive you into believing it has left when really it has not.
7. Don't hesitate to call for pastoral leadership if necessary.

For further study, request from the pastor sermon notes from the message "Demon Possession."

Praying for a Believer to Receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

1. Ask the person if they are born again. If they doubt their salvation in any way, first lead them in the sinner's prayer.
2. Once you know they are saved, ask them to pray with you and to invite the Holy Spirit to flow out of their inner man. After the initial prayer, the altar minister should be praying in the Spirit, not the understanding (with words). Be positive and speak from faith because your confidence and faith will help them to receive from God.
3. Instruct them that they must do the speaking while the Spirit gives the utterance.
4. Don't make them feel like they are captive in the front of the sanctuary for so long that they are embarrassed.
5. If you need to, take them to a private place using the rule *when in private, man with man, woman with woman*, and pray with them there. When praying in private, it is best to have two altar ministers praying together.
6. Some people will receive the baptism at a later time.
7. Ask them later or call them to see if they have received the baptism yet. If they have stammering lips, encourage them to speak it out and let go (Acts 2:4).