PRAYER: GENERAL INFORMATION

CALLED TO PRAY

Prayer is the heart of PWOC. Scripture assures us that unless the Lord builds the house those that labor, labor in vain (Psalm 127:1). This is true in PWOC as well. Unless we spend time in prayer both personally and corporately, we can be sure that any plans we make in our PWOC will fall short of what God has in mind to do. In fact, although our PWOC may seem successful (which is more form than substance) it will not be effective (which can be measured in terms of impact on lives) unless we pray. Therefore it is the responsibility and the privilege of the Prayer Ministry Team Leader to set an example of prayer, to encourage others in prayer and equip others for prayer.

"…Far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by failing to pray for you…"
I Samuel 12:23

EXAMPLE OF PRAYER

Because it is the Prayer Coordinator's responsibility to set an example of prayer, she must be sure that her own private prayer life is active and growing. It is not enough to organize a prayer vine or to lead the group in prayer at a meeting. A personal time of prayer on a daily basis is imperative. Jesus, Himself, modeled this by frequently going off alone to pray. (Luke 5:16) If you struggle with having a disciplined prayer life, ask someone to be a prayer accountability partner with you. Give them permission to ask you how you are doing. Ask them to pray for you that the Spirit would remind you to spend time with God. Set aside a specific time and place to pray. You may also find it helpful to keep a prayer journal. As you see God answering prayer, you will be more encouraged to continue spending time with Him. The important thing is to spend that time. As Ben Patterson reminds us in his book, Deepening Your Conversation with God, "a lack of prayer is a lack of hunger for God."

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."
Romans 12:12

ENCOURAGE IN PRAYER

A major portion of the PWOC prayer ministry is devoted to offering women opportunities to pray. Several potential ways to unite in prayer include: PWOC Prayer Mondays, TNT Prayer Groups, Prayer Walks, Prayer Vines, Prayer Bear-ers, Prayer Teams, Prayer Times and Prayer Events.

PWOC Prayer Mondays

It is the tradition of PWOC to call women to agree in prayer with one another on Mondays. This may be done through prayer groups that meet face to face, through email groups that agree over the Internet or through women's personal prayer times.

TNT Groups

If you don't already have a TNT prayer group that meets on Mondays, consider forming one. Although all PWOC women are encouraged to pray for PWOC on Mondays in their personal prayer/devotional time, the use of TNT groups is a great way for ladies to connect in prayer on Mondays. It is a time of dynamite prayer that will make a difference! We all know chaplains who are struggling, unsaved relatives, women who need Jesus, friends with troubled marriages, and ladies whose husbands are deployed.

Just set a time, invite ladies to come, and pray! If you find that your group doesn't seem to be motivated to meet together on Mondays at one location, consider uniting in prayer through the telephone or email. Ask ladies to "buddy" up with another PWOC lady and call her every Monday to pray. This is especially recommended for your board members. Email is also a great way to unite. Send out an email prayer to your ladies (or at least a list of requests) and ask them to take a moment right then to agree in prayer with each other.

T-targets of the enemy within the military community-Chaplains, PWOC leadership, and any others who are working to further the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

N-new people-for the Kingdom of God and PWOC

T-tenderness issues -things that weigh on women's hearts.

Prayer Walks

A popular way to gather women together in prayer is through the use of prayer walks. This is an excellent opportunity to exercise both your groups' prayer lives and physical bodies. Although the actual dynamics may vary, the idea is to pray together as you walk through a designated area. You may choose a specific neighborhood or area of your installation to walk through each time, praying for the people and programs represented in that area as well as the needs of the PWOC body.

Prayer Vines

An important part of the PWOC prayer ministry is the prayer vine. The goal of a prayer vine is to connect women via telephone or email in prayer for a specific need. (Galatians 6:2) The needs prayed for by a prayer vine are usually matters of emergency, although this is not always true. Below are some suggestions for local prayer vines:

The "leader" calls the second in line and prays for the need while still on the phone. Number two calls number three and does the same. Encourage each to keep a notebook by the phone for dates, requests, and praise reports. This method gives newer Christians confidence by hearing another pray and then praying herself. The praise reports of answered prayer will encourage their hearts as they learn.

For an email vine, the "leader" sends out the request via email. The only response needed from those receiving email requests is to pray when they receive the request. If you have the capability, please send out requests with Blind Copies (bcc) so that email addresses are protected.

Make sure that you are praying not gossiping. Only give out the details you have permission to give out and *never* share the request with anyone outside of the Prayer Vine without permission!

Prayer Bear-ers

Ask ladies to partner with a particular PWOC board member by praying for them regularly. (Romans 15:30) This may be done without the board member knowing who is praying for her throughout the year (like secret sisters) until she is revealed at the end of the year. It may also be done with the board member knowing who is praying for her so that she is able to more effectively pass on prayer needs to her prayer partner

Prayer Teams

It may also prove beneficial to develop a prayer team committed to praying on a daily basis for PWOC needs. This is most easily done through email. Periodically or as the need arises, an

email with prayer needs is sent out to the team listing concerns (related to PWOC or Chapel leadership or PWOC/Chapel ministry) to faithfully cover in prayer.

Prayer Times
Often, the Prayer Coordinator is called upon to lead group prayer times at PWOC Bible Studies and Programs. Group prayer is an opportunity to agree with one another in presenting our requests and it is an opportunity to encourage one another by the expression of faith we make when we pray. There are a few things to take into consideration when leading others in group prayer.

- Really take time to listen to each other's prayers. Give time during prayer for people to add their own silent prayer or amen after someone has prayed.
- Encourage your women to say "short" prayers with many people praying. This way no one is overwhelmed with the "spirituality" of one person's prayer compared to her own.
- Plan your prayer time. Treat prayer time with the same regard you do the rest of your program or study. Prepare for it.
- Set an example of prayer. If you are a PWOC leader, show your own dedication to corporate prayer.
- Incorporate Scripture into your prayer. Pray God's Word when you lead others in prayer. The Psalms are a great way to pray Scripture. (More ideas are presented in the equipping section.)
- Add variety. Don't be afraid to try different ways of praying
- Ask for permission before you give a prayer request. Make sure you know how much information that person is willing to have given out. Use discretion and keep confidentiality.
- Remember that you are talking to God, not "sharing" with those around you. Prayer time is not a time to "announce", "rebuke", or "inform" anyone.
- Consider whether the prayer request is better prayed for in private than in public. Encourage your women to be discerning - perhaps the prayer should be made as an " unspoken" one.
- Balance your prayers. Don't just spend all prayer time, every time in prayers of petition. Set aside times just to pray prayers of thanksgiving or adoration or contriteness.
- Enjoy prayer. Sometimes we have to learn to enjoy prayer (in our group and personal life). Let the Spirit teach you.
- Don't get caught up in the process - get caught up in Prayer. These are just some suggestions that you may or may not find effective for your PWOC group. Either way, the important thing is just to PRAY!

PRAYER EVENTS
Occasionally the need for planning a prayer event arises. World Day of Prayer and National Day of Prayer are two events your PWOC may benefit from participating in. Please consider working with you local PWOC board to find a way to incorporate these opportunities into your program. The NDP website is www.nationaldayofprayer.org

EQUIPPING FOR PRAYER

Last but certainly not least is the need to equip our PWOC women for prayer. Even Jesus' Disciples recognized their need to learn more about effective prayer when they asked Jesus to teach them to pray. Like the Disciples, PWOC women benefit from instruction on prayer. We can teach women to pray Scripture, to use prayer models, and to be disciplined in prayer.

Praying Scripture

There is power in the Word. (II Timothy 3:14-17; Psalm 119:130) It contains promises of God women can claim in prayer, commands of God women can ask God to help them follow, and praises of God women can echo in prayer. Women need to know that God can answer our prayers through Scripture. If we want to hear from God, we cannot divorce our prayer time from the reading of His Holy Word. He speaks through His Word, not just through His people.

Prayer Models

There are several prayer models available, such as ACTS and PRAY. We need to teach those who are new to prayer ways to become more comfortable with prayer. We also need to teach those more experienced in prayer ways to keep from getting stagnant in prayer. Two ways we can teach them is by providing seminars on prayer or by offering Bible studies on prayer. We can also take a small amount of time during PWOC Prayer Monday TNT groups to train women on various aspects of prayer.

ACTS
Adoration
Confession
Thanksgiving
Supplication

PRAY
Praise
Repent
Ask
Yield

Disciplined Prayer

The Prayer Ministry Leader helps women develop discipline in their personal and group prayer times. Once again this can be done through studies on prayer, recommended books on prayer, or through small group teachings on prayer. Of course, the best way to teach about disciplined prayer is to model disciplined prayer. As Prayer Ministry Leader be sure that your personal prayer life is one that is worthy of imitation. In modeling group prayer, respect set time limits in group-prayer time. Keep the focus on God, not the problem. (Matthew 6:7) Do not allow women to use prayer time as a gossip time. Encourage praise, not just petition.

SUMMARY OF PRAYER IN PWOC

Whether it is in setting an example of prayer, encouraging women in prayer, or equipping women for prayer, the Prayer Ministry Leader's role is vital as she continually helps guide people to the Throne of Grace. And while this is a position of honor, more than anything it is a position of humility, because in the end she more than anyone should know that the real work is being done by God- not man.

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

Philippians 2:3-7