



# RESOURCES TO PRIORITISE PRAYER IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

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**PRAY IT**

**LIVE IT**

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**LIVE IT**



*'Prayer catapults us on to the frontier of the spiritual life. Of all the Spiritual Disciplines prayer is the most central because it ushers us into perpetual communion with the Father... To pray is to change.'* Richard Foster

**IT IS UNDENIABLE THAT PRAYER NEEDS TO BE FOUND AT THE HEART OF EVERY CHRISTIAN; IT IS OUR CONTINUOUS CONVERSATION WITH THE FATHER, AND IN PURSUIT OF THE FATHER, THROUGH PRAYER, WE GLIMPSE MORE OF HIS HEART AND BE TRANSFORMED IN THE PROCESS.**

Throughout scripture we see how prayer is woven through the story of God, and see the power of prayer displayed in mighty ways; we too read of how prayer continues to change lives and communities today... and why... because we pray to a God who listens and answers, and a God who makes the impossible become possible.

Prayer is a means of grace; a life source to the church; but can often be one of the things we struggle with the most. We fall over hurdles of thinking that we have to have the right words, or the right model and often do not utilise the power and potential that prayer brings; it becomes our back up plan instead of our first thought; and we often fall into the trap of being too busy to stop and pray.

*Have we become so reliant on ourselves, and on the means and resources at our fingertips, that we have forgotten to rely on the means of grace, and be expectant that God will be at work?*

Over the past few months we have been seeking God's heart for prayer and the Methodist Church in Ireland, and trying to discern what God is asking of us? Is it to promote another night & day of prayer, or something similar to this?

As we prayed and sought God, it became clear that God was not asking for us to create another single event, but rather that God wanted us to find a rhythm of prayer in our churches, acknowledging that this rhythm needs to look different in each of the settings we find ourselves. One 'model' or 'event' is not enough to reflect the creativity and movement of the God we worship! So we encourage you to find God's rhythm of prayer for the particular church in which you worship, and are offering ourselves as a resource to support you in finding that rhythm (See 'How we can Help' Section).

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### INTERGENERATIONAL PRAYER...

As we have been seeking God's heart for prayer, we have heard the challenge that prayer needs to be intergenerational. Everyone is able to pray, from the youngest to the oldest person and as a church family we should be encouraging the active participation of all ages. Our children and young people possess amazing power for prayer, and often the church has been guilty of overlooking the young and stifling their power and creativity; but scripture testifies to the power of the young. So let us hear the call to unleash the power and potential in ALL people regardless of age, and involve children and young people in the prayer rhythm of our churches; we may find ourselves humbled by the fact that the most powerful and effective prayer is spoken from the mouth of a child.

### PRAY IT. LIVE IT.

As this resource has been put together there have been certain words that keep being repeated:

- RHYTHM
- PERSISTENCE
- PASSION
- EXPECTANCY

**PRAY IT. LIVE IT.** is about the combination of these words in relation to prayer. We must hear the challenge to find a *rhythm* of prayer that encourages both individual and corporate spiritual growth; we need to be *persistent* in practicing prayer and in pursuing God's heart; that pursuit must be fuelled by a *passion* to seek God and discern his voice for the world; and we must be *expectant; expectant* that the Great God of Scripture, who made the miraculous happen, is the same God who is at work today. We must be people who live out what we pray, ready to stand by our convictions; people who trust in a God who answers, and are not surprised when God does something great because that is his very nature after all! We need to **PRAY IT. LIVE IT.**

*RICHARD FOSTER, CELEBRATION OF DISCIPLINE,  
(LONDON: HODDER & STOUGHTON, 1989), P. 43*

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LIVE IT**