

Feedback Summary – Section 4 DEVOTED TO PRAYER

Do you believe most people in your church family are devoted to daily, personal prayer?

Average score: **2.7**

Are your church prayer meetings well attended?

Average score: 1.8

Are the church prayers in your services effective, engaging and done well?

Average score: 3.0

As a result of the early church's devotion to God's Word, to fellowship, to breaking of bread and to prayer, God moved powerfully in their midst and there was a daily flow of converts. How effective is your church in terms of seeing new people brought to faith from your local community and enfolded into the life of your church family?

Average score: 2.0

Further comments about your church's devotion to PRAYER: (In your opinion, what are the challenges and what needs to be done?)

New visitors are like new toy, they seem to lose their charm over the weeks. We need to be constantly supported and encouraging.

The challenge to effective prayer life in our congregation is a lack of deep understanding and commitment to the centrality of prayer in the life of the church and a lack of hunger to pray and meet with the LORD'S people apart from Sunday's. Unfortunately, there has never been a tradition of prayer and Bible study since the church first met in 1897. We are trying by faithful expository preaching to remedy this situation and combat formalism.

AGAIN, UNKNOWN ANSWERS FOR THE FIRST COUPLE. I DONT THINK THOSE WHO LEAD PRAYERS EVEN THINK ABOUT WHAT THEY SAY - IT IS MORE HERE ARE THE WORDS, LETS GET IT DONE AND I CAN SIT DOWN -

It should be central to our lives, and be a practice before and after our parish/church/community activities

It's hard for me to comment, except to say when I was younger, I regularly participated in prayer meetings, but not so in recent years. Life's events have worn me down. I passionately believe in Gods power, grace, mercy and love released through the prayers of believers meeting together to pray.

Some answers left blank. Do I ask people whether they are devoted to daily, personal prayer? No, I don't. Do I talk about my own prayer life? Yes, I do. Neither of the churches I minister at have regular prayer meetings (though there is always prayer time in Bible Study). If we meet to pray for something specific then yes, people come. One of the problems is the amount of time people have. For one church, many live 30-40 minutes away so Sunday plus a breakfast group plus a coffee group (with a strong Christian focus) is the limit of time for farmers etc. Prayer time can take many forms and I think we need to encourage people in this. Talking about what prayer means for people would be good. A church I know has a zoom morning prayer. This would be an idea we could try. I don't think intercessory prayer is done well. Prayers that are created for the particular church community are better than set prayers from a book, but I am aware that some people do not feel confident about writing their own prayers. When I had a parish, we would have regular training sessions for readers and intercessors so that people were equipped to carry out this important ministry. Sometimes it is hard to get people to fill spots on the roster. I would be inclined to have community prayer at such times; to pray as the Spirit moves one (like the Quakers) rather than rush someone into a 'spot'.

still some regulars who can't pray out loud in a meeting, but there are some people who do pray regularly.

Further comments:

Recently started five-minute testimonies during worship, what has God shown you this week. Really great, challenging.

Consider Bible study groups to be home groups, with Bible study and prayer.

Some Prayers of the People excellent. Some less so.

Frequent impromptu gathering around someone who needs prayer after the service, by those with this ministry gift.

Challenges/what can be done:

Local training for church prayers.

Some have started coming to church after attending a funeral, so more funerals!?!

Invite people to home groups, then come to church as part of home group. Coming straight to church can be scary/culture shock.

We need to address the conflict between the Biblical historical narrative and the lie of evolution. The Genesis record is the very foundation of the Gospel. We need to defend this truth. The Church has neglected to actively defend Geneses since the eighteenth century.

In my parish family I have no way of knowing about personal devotion to Bible reading. In a very limited number, I would assume a good level. For the vast majority I have no way of knowing. It isn't talked about in any level of depth.

Prayer could be utilised by all the congregation being encouraged to prayer for all aspects of life and evangelism seeking God's will in all things not the will of individuals.

Daily prayer is a personal choice. I don't regularly engage in it. Maybe some of the rural community do but not many around here. However, prayer is taken very seriously during the service and essential.

People are happy to add prayers requests but not to pray aloud which means it's the same doing it all the time.

For some years the prayers were written by parishioners on a roster basis. The "quality" was variable, but we were more engaged.

need leadership and exhortation

we pray individually and, in some groups, but not necessarily a specific church prayer group outside of our weekly service

Maybe those who do pray need to pray for more people to be committed to prayer and to believing that this is what invites God to work in and through us.

The members of our fellowship are largely older and very traditional. Many still hold the view that only the priest can/should pray. The reality of a personal saviour has not been embraced by all (unfortunately). People will bring up prayer points (praise and intercession) to be included in the congregational prayers at church and find the congregational prayers helpful. Special prayer meetings are very poorly attended. I have no suggestions as to how to get people move involved in personal prayer.

We place much importance on prayer time in our services and personal prayer life but have no specific prayer services, something we need to look at. We don't have many recent converts (why I answered just 2) but the ones we have, have felt loved, welcomed and matured in their Christian walk.

New people are not coming. We need to adapt and change. People are coming back to church and joining us which is great. New growth is not occurring.

To be clear, I'm speaking of Dubbo Parish. The 6pm Saturday and 8am Sunday congregations are not good at seeking new converts. But at 10am, and through current youth and children's ministries, there is a real desire to see new people come to Christ and that desire is certainly beginning to bear fruit.

It is largely a dry and lifeless church with rambling sermons by some and unscriptural teaching by others. Efforts to bring renewal have been largely ignored by the general congregation.

Prayer in church has been improved by asking newer members in ... to write and pray their own prayers. This will be 'rolled out' in Blayney which will greatly improve the effectiveness of church prayers. We would benefit from starting a regular parish-wide prayer meeting. I have been surprised by how unused to public prayer people are - many rarely pray out loud with others. This can be encouraged through growth groups, more people writing prayers for church and group prayer meetings. (Actually, zoom church also assisted this as people were invited to pray together when we met!)

Again, we haven't recovered from the side effects of COVID. Just when we were experiencing a surge in Morning & Evening Prayer, 17 Hour Prayer Days etc. COVID struck and the ZOOM replacement has never felt as effective as joining each other in person for prayer.

We don't have prayer meetings yet, as far as I know

Some good prayer initiatives, but times/other commitments are an issue. I pray, but struggle to fit into local prayer and bible study groups. It's night-time, or it's worktime. If a whole family, perhaps easier. If a retiree with an uncommitted partner, harder.

We have been running Alpha programmes for the last 7 years and a good number of the congregation have been through it and we had a few non church attenders involved and some of these became Christians. They were younger and became Very committed to the church and filled many functions. These are the ones who recently departed. An Alpha prayer group pray together online every Tuesday. 10 -12 in this group. There are also morning & evening Prayer services at church (Tuesday & Thursday) through the week. Also, a group meeting for meditative prayer.

It's a reflection of our hearts. we 'know' it's a good thing but putting it poorly into action is our evidence of relationship to God, I think. I'm not sure what needs to be done - shake us?

We have just started monthly prayer meetings (4-5 attendees). I think prayer is something that many Christians struggle with (including myself!) We haven't seen many new converts and visitors to our church are infrequent.

We have a number of ways people in the community connect with the church, but this isn't translating in new converts or members in church.

There are people who feel the need to list everything and everyone in long demanding prayers rather than carry those who are struggling, unwell etc and simply asking that God's will be done and may He bring them comfort. Some assume they know what is best rather than leaving the issue/prison in God's hands. There are many who are housebound who see their gift is regular prayer.

We need to focus on this more

Again, we can't presume to know personal commitments

It would be good to have a regular parish time of prayer in addition to prayer time in church

With regard to question 1, I can't really be sure. It's only an assumption on my part. With regard to question 2, we don't have church prayer meetings. Prayers are always ad hoc in our church service. Perhaps if our congregation grows in the future, there will be an influx of people who have the gift of intercession and will gladly contribute. I have been told I have the gift of intercession, but I rarely use it in church, not because I am not given the opportunity, but because I am comparatively new and I'm not confident in such a small congregation, which sounds odd, I know, but I do like to prepare in advance. Perhaps new leadership will create some kind of roster system if we grow in attendance. Judging by the amount of people in our congregation, I would have to say our church is ineffective in terms of seeing new people brought to faith from our local community.

I don't know about people's personal prayer life or prayer outside of the confines of the church but believe inside the church we have adequate prayer.

There are many who are very committed to devotion in prayer, but I think we need to work on this as there are many who are not.

I believe that this is where our church family needs the most work. Our parish does not have regular prayer meetings. There are some who have very strong prayer habits but from what I can tell they are in the minority. This is only my opinion and I'm happy to be wrong.

We have seen prayer answered with in our church family, commitment is required by all in the church I am thinking of, there are good internal relationships, but hardly ever newcomers, who are made welcome.

Our readers have a great commitment to our Lord Jesus the prayers reflect the current worlds crisis situations and our concerns in general and ask for the Lord's intercession to bring about peace I think the Church needs to publicise its concerns and wishes for peace because I think the Media in general doesn't want to know or is apathetic or is ignorant of our point of view because of bias and populist thought and belief somehow, we need to get the media to know that Christians are Kind gentle caring people who have a staunch belief in a loving caring Lord who also loves and cares for them.

Need to be more committed to prayer. Making it a priority. Not leaving it to chance.

In my church we have had a couple of new people begin to come regularly who are committed in being actively in volved with reading, assisting with communion or helping to prompt our parish.

"Saying your prayers" is what is most often done. A deep and spiritual connection with the Father may not be quite as prevalent. Inspired teaching on the place, importance, and benefit of regular personal prayer. Intercessions are well prepared and well delivered. A good example for others to follow.

The prayer in our church is that " a daily flow of converts" would happen. It is so necessary for people to come into relationship with their God, Father and Saviour. How to have people make that first step into the church, to connect with a church member for support and encouragement is an ongoing prayer point/ issue/ concern for the church leadership.

As a relative newcomer to this congregation, I don't really know. Our pastoral team are devoted to prayer & set a wonderful example of giving of themselves in every area of church life including prayer because they love Jesus....

Many are uncomfortable with praying in public or impromptu prayer. I think there is some growth in personal prayer

As in most places prayer is relegated to a few people and is not seen as the backbone of all we do. I have tried several times over the years to encourage prayer meetings, but they have been poorly attended and have in the long run failed

Since Covid we haven't actually had a prayer meeting, this area is very much neglected. I sometimes sense that there is a fear in gathering people and allowing them to pray spontaneously, especially if it includes hearing God's voice. God does speak today; we fail to listen together at our own peril. Oh, how much is missed out on when we don't gather to talk with and listen to our loving Father together, prayer was never intended to be anything less than meaningful conversation to the Father, through the Son, in the power of His Holy Spirit

We have had new people come to our church which is great, but it feels as though they are more fussed over than the regulars. The regulars need to feel just as welcome

At 8 am traditional service it appears it does not attract the younger generation for many reasons, not uncommon throughout the world.

Our congregation seems to be older (60+) people and young (20-) people and there is very little interaction between both groups.

The church has been shrinking for years, it is a long time since I have seen a conversion in the church.

We need more engagement from the congregation in the works and activities of our parish

Q4 in this section, our church is committed to receiving new people and welcoming them into the life of the church. We have received new people in the last year and at least one of them was not a "refugee" from another denomination. That person is now a part of the bible study regularly reads the bible. We are effective in bringing people into the life of the church without judgement.

With respect to Q1 to Q3 how can i possibly know or assess this question

It is unknown what the prayer life of other members of the congregation are. Sometime ago, copies of the Daily Prayer for each day of the week, were made available to the congregation. I am still using this as part of my day. We do not have prayer meetings, apart from some Sundays when our Priest is not available. Prayers within the service are usually led by a LLM, who mostly use prayers from a book, linked to the Bible readings. Over time we have welcomed a number of new members to our congregation, who have become active and dear members of our community. On most Sundays more than half of our congregation would be people who have joined us. Sadly, many of our older members have

No prayer meetings in my church but prayer is always encouraged, and prayers during the service are always done well.

In our corporate worship I find the Intercessions more helpful if they are a series of petitions such as in APBA with responses that we can all join in. One long prayer is sometimes difficult to concentrate on.

Can we produce individual laminated cards with daily prayers for our parish, Diocese, our community and SRE in schools, and wider mission agencies such as BCA, Anglicare, CMS etc.?

I'm making some big guesses with my above scorings.

I think it would be good to have specific detail in relation got prayers i.e. I think it would be helpful to have specific prayers in relation to individuals in the church family....and then later to give thanks for the outcomes. At a practical level - I think that there needs to be some one-on-one prayer training given -= particularly in relation to voice projection because it is difficult when prayers cannot be heard and leads to a misfocus of attention.

We do need to pray more as a church.

The church has suffered recently from bad publicity in relation to misappropriation of funds and abuse. This has impacted people's support for an organisation that has been seen not follow Christian teachings, although the great majority of church leaders follow Christ's way. Unfortunately the ones who have broken God's law and the law of the land, get the publicity.

The prayers in the service are prayed with meaning, grace and thankfulness. The Gathering is and will achieve new followers in an informal way. Their initiative has grown from zero attendees to a regular 15-25.

As per previous comments, small numbers are a challenge unless someone organizes. This generally falls to the same people who also conduct services etc. During the drought years very successful ecumenical prayer meetings were shared amongst all the churches in our small town. This was valuable to be united in prayer for the whole community.

The prayers are written and provided so they are not from the persons heart or in their own words. I am not aware of any prayer meetings... but I am busy and would probably not be able to attend as they would most like it to be during the day. Coming to a very traditional church was always going to be hard work... and it has been, in some ways. In other ways it has been a wonderful experience and often surprising.

Definitely an area to focus more on, particularly in developing relationships within the local community.

I can only vouch for myself - daily prayer, early morning, about 45-60 minutes

I am aware that morning prayer takes place a number of days during the week however there is no encouragement or invitation given to parishioners to attend. I understand that there may be one or two other prayer groups where friends or like-minded people participate. In my view those who are ordained as clergy or LLM's should be sufficiently committed to regularly participate and encourage others

Fear and weariness limit outreach.

People are slowly opening to praying in public.

Our family gather to pray with people from other or no church.

Recent Australia wide zoom prayer meeting had my wife and I with one member of a church from another town.

More communication with others and with the youth is needed. Open hearts are needed too. We need to be welcoming to all, regardless of Gender, Sexuality, Race and other religion.

I am uncomfortable about commenting on Church community members prayer life - I have heard assertions made about this but am aware it is a very personal experience of the Lord.

That is hard to say as people don't speak of it. There are certainly some who would read the bibles every day.

There are some studies held each week but for me they again are not at a time I can attend.

There is one service where that is happening.

This level of prayer is unlikely to come naturally without a personal living belief in Jesus. About 20-25% our number attend a regular prayer meeting and again more targeted preaching/teaching should encourage this. (God willing of course, as I believe Him to be.)

We haven't seen any new converts in the community despite best attempts. Anyone who does come, trying Christianity out, returning is definitely enfolded into church family. The rest of the church regarding prayer would be a 2, and the prayers in the other service are a 1.

Prayer meetings are not promoted in the general congregation

I've not been here long so I'm not sure about personal prayer, but our weekly prayer time together is very poorly attended though it's very valuable. We continue to encourage our people and challenge them

We use prayers from the prayer book. Whilst the language is beautiful & they are usually relevant to the service, I feel at times we should include more prayer relevant to local & world events. The bishop's prayers at the end of the sermon were good when we had them.

Attracting new people is very hard. We send the pew sheet out electronically to some fringe people who don't attend. Hopefully they will read the Bible readings & ministers homily, so they have some teaching.

Our church is good at corporate prayer during the weekly church service, and I think personal prayer. We have not had church-based prayer meetings since I have been involved in the church, our prayer meetings tend to include a number of churches within the community coming together.

No leader. Some personal daily prayer, in time of need and also in thanksgiving.

I can never make the monthly prayer meeting because I'm stuck at work at that time. More prayer meeting times might help others too. Incorporating more spontaneous congregational expressions of prayer in the weekly meeting could help. Also, to be effective, I think we must discern what the Father's purpose for us as a church is, and to see ourselves as a team carrying that purpose forward - in prayer and in training and in action.

We always have an open door & welcome people when they come to a service or make enquiries- new people to town are always advised of the service times & contact numbers.

Prayer is not an easy thing in public for most people, personally, learning to pray could maybe be taught, if people wish. In small groups 3/4 only and just going around the group with each saying a word or sentence from what the leader has given as a subject. And is not prayer "talking to God"? so could we be saying "let's talk to God"? Just a thought, anything to help.

Prayer is an important part of our church life. Many prefer to pray as someone else leads or pray privately.

The 8.30am service has a fairly constant level of attendance. The 10.00am sees a shifting membership. People come and people go. None of them are new Christians. The Sunday School numbers are down a little from earlier this year. It was obvious that some new people had to be brought in to boost the numbers but none of those who came could be called evangelists. I have no idea of how they witness to friends, workmates or the casual person they meet along the way.

The 8.30am service is the traditional service and has a simple and logical structure. James does them well. His sermons are far better than those of the 10.00am. The usual Anglican reserve limits their outward looking behaviour, although we do have two ex-Muslim members who have now become a part of the congregation.

The 10.00am members are mainly ex Presbyterian or Baptist and in my view are church hoppers. They tend to more inward looking and shallow in their Christian outlook. Like the 8.30am congregation they do not embrace strangers easily. I have not seen many of their number talk easily with those who are older than them readily.

We do not have special prayer meetings.

Should be seeking guidance from the Holy Spirit about what we should be praying for. For many in the congregation, one long prayer during a 'standard' Anglican service is too much. Several shorter prayers would be better.

We do not have prayer meetings in

We are a new group just starting to get to know each other. In order to see God's direction for us as a group of believers, we need to firstly identify our spiritual gifts, natural talents and skills learned through the school of life.

In order to be effective, I also suggest that a community survey be conducted so we actually identify what the community needs are.

Prayer in service happens every service. Members are reluctant to share prayer needs, though will share a need in a general way. Occasionally someone will ask for prayer. Prayer is very formal, no laying on of hands. Report back is not common. Perception among some that only a priest can offer prayer ministry.

I would think that most members pray fairly often at home, but there are few 'Prayer Meetings' as such. The Morning Prayer (Zoom) is very poorly attended.

Survive
