

## A TIME OF MINISTRY (serving others)

Congregational life is a necessary, but not always easy or pleasant, part of our walk with Jesus. Over the last few weeks you were asked to pray for and to help out a ministry of our congregation or the larger church.

How did it go? What did you learn?

## A TIME OF EVANGELISM (sharing Jesus)

Jesus did not pray that God would take us out of the world, but that he would protect us in the world. Jesus has left us here (for a time anyway) to connect with others for the growth of his Kingdom. Over the last few weeks you were asked to pray for and interact with a non-church agency or person in our community.

How did it go? What did you learn?

## CLOSING PRAYER

In your closing prayer please pray for continued growth in our congregation: growth in faith, growth in faithfulness, growth in the spread of Jesus' love.

## ONE MORE THING

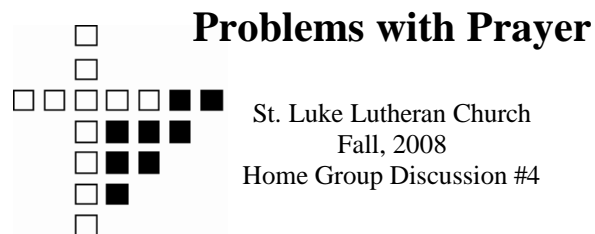
Make plans for some kind of activity together between now and the next home group sessions (which will be in January).

## CYBER CONVERSATION ABOUT PRAYER

Go to our web site for more information.

[www.stlukehas.com/chat](http://www.stlukehas.com/chat)

This site will be open until December 17, 2008



## Problems with Prayer

St. Luke Lutheran Church  
Fall, 2008  
Home Group Discussion #4

## Encouragement for Greater Involvement in Prayer

*The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. James 5:16*

This four part study is designed to do two things.

**First**, it serves to help us continue in a “life on purpose.” Each session will accent five purposes in life:

**Worship:** live to please God

**Fellowship:** be connected into God’s family

**Discipleship:** become like Jesus

**Ministry:** serve others

**Evangelism:** share Jesus

**Second**, it leads participants into a discussion on various prayer issues. Good communication is crucial to any relationship—that includes our relationship with God! A robust prayer life helps our relationship with God flourish.

## A TIME OF FELLOWSHIP (connected to one another)

Share with one another something good that is going on

- In your family.
- In the church
- In your walk with Jesus

## **A TIME OF WORSHIP (pleasing God)**

Talk about times or places in life where it is hard to see God at work. Consider this statement, “One of the purest acts of worship is to keep praying when it looks like there has been no answer to prayer.”

Taking turns reading a verse, have the group read out loud Psalm 42.

Spend some time in prayer praising God for seeing you through life’s difficulties.

## **A TIME OF DISCIPLESHIP (becoming like Jesus)**

*“Jesus... went off to a solitary place where he prayed.” Mark 1:35*

### **A PROBLEM WITH PRAYER: IT TAKES PRACTICE**

Tonight we are going to think about prayer and practice.

Discuss this statement, “Practice doesn’t make perfect; practice make permanent.” (Sound like a piano teacher?) How might this apply to prayer?

### **VIEW THE FOURTH DVD SEGMENT**

*For years I resisted a regular routine of prayer, believing that communication with God should be spontaneous and free. As a result I prayed infrequently and with little satisfaction. Eventually I learned that spontaneity often flows from discipline. Leonardo da Vinci spent ten years drawing ears, elbows, hands and other parts of the body in many different aspects. Then one day he set aside the exercises and painted what he saw. Likewise, athletes and musicians never become great without regular practice. I found that I needed the discipline of regularity to make possible those exceptional times of free communication with God... As with physical exercise, much of the benefit of prayer comes as a result of consistency, the simple act of showing up. Prayer: Does It Make Any Difference? p. 166*

Discuss the sentiment shared by Philip Yancy. Discuss your *prayer practice* and how you *practice praying*.

The following passages speak about prayer practices and devotion to prayer. Examine each one and discuss how it can help you to “work on” or “practice” prayer.

- I Samuel 15:10-11
- Ezra 9:3-6
- Psalm 5:3
- Daniel 6:6-10
- Acts 10:1-3
- Colossians 4:2
- I Thessalonians 3:10; 5:17
- I Timothy 5:5

In sports and music the position of arms, legs, elbows, hands and all the other body parts is crucial for success. Discuss how this applies to prayer. Which of the following “prayer postures” do you use and how do they help with the practice of prayer?

- Sitting in a chair with an opened Bible
- Hands folded, head bowed
- Standing, hands and head raised
- Flat on your face on the floor
- Kneeling with your shoulders slumped
- Curled up in bed under the covers with a soft pillow

From tonight’s conversation what will you take home with you about practicing prayer?