

SEMESTER GROUPS

Building faith. Building community.



How to Lead Prayer in a Semester Group

Leader Prayer Guide

Semester Groups meet on campus at Wellspring Church for 6-8 weeks. Prayer helps create a space where people can grow closer to God and one another.

1

1. Why Prayer Matters in a Semester Group

Prayer deepens our:

- Relationship with God
- Unity with each other
- Faith and spiritual growth

"For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." - Matthew 18:20

2

2. Keep It Simple, Real, and Honest

- You don't need fancy words.
- Pray from the heart.
- Short and sincere is powerful.

Example:

"Lord, thank You for this group. Help us hear from You tonight. Amen."

3

3. Simple Prayer Format - A.C.T.S.

Use this model to guide group prayer:

A - Adoration: Praise God for who He is.

C - Confession: Ask for forgiveness, reflect on the heart.

T - Thanksgiving: Thank Him for His blessings.

S - Supplication: Pray for needs (yours and others').



4. Invite Others to Participate

Create a welcoming space:

- “Would anyone like to open or close us in prayer?”
- Try “popcorn” or “sentence” prayers.
- Break into pairs or threes to pray.



Reminder: It's OK to pray silently or pass. No pressure.



5. Create a Safe Prayer Environment

- Respect confidentiality.
- Encourage, never correct.
- Allow silence - it gives space for reflection.
- Be kind to those who are nervous or new.



6. Pray with Scripture

Examples:

- “God, help us to trust You with all our heart (Proverbs 3:5-6).”
- “Jesus, give us peace as You promised (John 14:27).”

Scripture keeps our prayers centered on truth.



7. Be Led by the Holy Spirit

- Ask: “God, is there someone or something You want us to pray for?”
- Be open to spontaneous prayer or encouragement.
- If someone shares a need, pray right then.



8. Practical Tools for Leaders

- Prayer Cards - Write down requests & updates.
- Prayer Journal - Track what you've prayed for weekly.
- Themes - Pick a topic each week (healing, peace, boldness, etc.).



SAMPLE OPENING PRAYER

“Lord, thank You for each person here. We welcome Your presence. Let our time together honor You. Open our hearts to pray with faith and love. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”



FINAL ENCOURAGEMENT

You don't need to be perfect - just present and willing. As you lead with humility, your group will grow in prayer and spiritual strength.



TIP FOR LEADERS

Follow up on prayer requests each week to show care and build trust.



Popcorn Prayer

Popcorn prayer is a style of group prayer where people pray out loud one at a time, in short, spontaneous bursts just like popcorn kernels popping.



KEY FEATURES OF POPCORN PRAYER



Short and simple - usually one or two sentences.



Spontaneous - anyone can speak when they feel led.



No order or pressure - people pray as they feel comfortable.



Silent pauses are normal - they give space for reflection.



EXAMPLE

Leader: *"Let's take a few minutes to pray popcorn-style. Just jump in with a short prayer as you feel led. It's okay to pass or stay silent."*



Group:

- "Thank You, God, for getting me through this week."
- "Lord, help my friend who's struggling."
- "Jesus, give us peace tonight."
- [Silence]
- "Thank You for our group and for new people here."



WHY USE POPCORN PRAYER?



Encourages participation, even from those new to prayer.



Helps people pray naturally without pressure to be polished.



Keeps the focus on God, not performance.



Sentence Prayer



Why Use Sentence Prayers?

- Reduces pressure - short and easy to say
- Encourages participation - everyone can join in
- Keeps focus - prayers stay clear and direct
- Creates unity - a rhythm of prayer builds group momentum



How It Works:

- 1 The leader invites everyone to pray one sentence at a time.
- 2 You can go around the circle or pray randomly as people feel led.
- 3 It's okay to pass if someone doesn't want to pray.



Examples of Sentence Prayers:

- "God, thank You for loving us today."
- "Please give me peace this week."
- "Help my friend who is sick."
- "Forgive me for being impatient."
- "Thank You for bringing us together tonight."



Tips for Leaders:

- Model it by starting with a sentence prayer yourself.
- Let the group know that less is more - no long prayers needed.
- Encourage silence - it's okay between prayers.
- Use prompts if people need help getting started:
 - ➔ "Thank God for something simple."
 - ➔ "Ask God to help someone you know."
 - ➔ "Tell God one thing you're worried about."



How to Pray Scripture (Simple Steps)

- 1 Read a passage slowly.**
Let it sink in.
- 2 Personalize it.**
Replace pronouns with your name or others' names.
- 3 Respond in prayer.**
Speak to God using the words of the verse as your guide.
- 4 Stay open to the Spirit.**
Let the Scripture spark deeper conversation with God.

Examples of Praying Scripture



1

Praise and Worship | Psalm 103:1-2

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name!"

Prayer: "Lord, I bless Your holy name with all that is within me. Thank You for all Your benefits - forgiveness, healing, redemption, and love."



2

Confession and Forgiveness | 1 John 1:9

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Prayer: "Father, I confess my sins to You. I thank You for being faithful and just, for forgiving and cleansing me."



3

Guidance | Proverbs 3:5-6

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding..."

Prayer: "Lord, I choose to trust You with all my heart. I won't lean on my own understanding - please direct my steps today."



4

Strength and Peace | Isaiah 41:10

"Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God..."

Prayer: "God, I will not fear, because You are with me. Strengthen me and uphold me with Your righteous hand."



5

Intercession for Others | Ephesians 1:17-18

"...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ... may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation..."

Prayer: "Lord, I pray that [name] would receive wisdom and revelation in knowing You. Enlighten their heart to Your truth."