



Rules for Prayer Competitors

You may be thinking to yourselves, "Praying Competitors?" Yes, you read correctly. It really reads **Rules for Prayer Competitors**.

I have a painting in my office that shows a baptism that is taking place in a river during the Civil War. In the painting there are soldiers from the North gathered together on one side of the river and soldiers from the South gathered on the other side of the river. They all gathered together to watch the baptism. I'm sure that before this baptism and after the baptism many of those same soldiers were defending their cause with scripture and praying fervently that God would be on their side. Both sides were engaged in competing prayers for the outcome of the war.

Competing prayers, I'm sure, happen all the time. Many of these competing prayers happen in our own homes. I recently read about a couple that was struggling with this issue in regards to Iraq. The wife explained: *"He thinks we should go to war against Iraq, and that we should get on with it quickly and get it over with. But I don't think we should fight at all. I favor diplomatic pressure, working through the U.N."* Then the husband said, *"And the problem is that we both pray about this. I pray for war and she prays against it."* I think many Christians, even husbands and wives, struggle with this same issue more often than we acknowledge.

This year is an especially important time to have rules for prayer competitors. Nothing brings out more competing prayers, even in marriages, than an election. Christians all over our nation disagree over candidates and issues. And those very same Christians are probably faithfully praying competing prayers. Whose prayer is right and whose is wrong? I believe that is impossible to answer. That is why we need to enter into this with the right attitude.

Let me share with you a few rules to follow when engaged in prayer competitions:

- **Keep praying about what matters to you.** God knows we are only human and we have a limited perspective on what is happening in the world. Pray with your heart.
- **Focus on the underlying issues.** Focus more on your hopes and fears. Don't tell God what to do.
- **Pray for those whose prayers differ from yours.** Pray for hearts to be open to God's will, including your heart. Pray for blessings upon those whose prayers differ from yours.
- **Acknowledge that you might be wrong in the way you view things.** Pray the prayer of the psalmist: *"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life"* (139:23-24).
~Gilbert

Family Meals

Growing up, meals around the dinner table were an every-day occurrence in my family. We all sat down after my dad got home to a meal where we would share stories and have general conversation (generally loud conversations due to the fact that I have 5 siblings). While the conversations would be punctuated by the arguments and disputes, overall, those mealtimes were an important part of our functioning as a family. The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University (CASA) recently released a report detailing some of the importance of family dinners. Their findings show that most teens (84%) prefer a family dinner as opposed to eating alone, and a majority of teens, as well as a majority of parents agree that it is the best time to talk about something that is important to them. Perhaps this is why we see so many scenes of Jesus sitting at a table conversing with people.

I wonder why we do not always eat together. We often allow our busy schedules to infringe on the time that we could be setting apart for families. Yet, it is not a difficult concept to envision: I have to eat, you have to eat, it makes sense that we should eat together!

During the retreat several students commented that they held Sunday Night Suppers in high regard not for the free food, but because of what it means to share a table with a group of people. When we share a table together we express mutual love, care, and respect for one another, strengthening the bonds of friendship and family. So from the students: Thank you for inviting us into your family week after week!

-Phil

Hattie Coffel is in St. Elizabeth Hospital, room 3102....**Mike Sutherlin**, brother of Greg Sutherlin, continues to recuperate in the hospital from a fungus in his lungs, cancer treatments, and a mini-stroke....**Bernie Ciota**, Mandy Anderson's uncle, is recovering from an assault that has left him severely injured....Continue praying for **Steve Cable, Elaine Borie, Alberta Cagle, Eugene Zinn, Randi Verett, Jean Stockberger, John Tapscott, Phyllis Kirby, Lance & Lane Pepper, Valley Stockton, Mandy Anderson, Eileen Richardson, Kaden Koebecke, Amanda Powlen, Julie Lichty, Pat Johnson, Marge Campbell, Irene Sims, Henrietta Frampton, Marie DeWoody, Paul & Argie Verett, Delpha Allen, Eagle Bailey, Minnie Scott, and Irene Fox.**



Serving in our military: **Philip Devine, Mark Wilson, Shawn Wilson, and Ti Draughon.**

Pray also for Pauletta & Rob Smith's cousins who were in the Houston/ Galveston hurricane--all sustaining loss of homes and/or possessions.



Dear Elmwood family:

Thank you all so much for all of your prayers over the last months for my grandma. Thank you also for all of the prayers for our families recently during the passing of both of our grandmothers. The people who came to visit, the cards of encouragement, and the beautiful plant were such an enormous blessing. We feel honored to still call you all family. We miss you and love you so much.

Love, Mark, Sarah & Zay Bird

Thank you for the lovely lily that was sent in memory of my Mom. Just knowing that in countless ways our family and friends are with us, makes the way easier.

-Susan McClain, Martin Mueller & the entire Mueller family

To my brothers and sisters at Elmwood,

I am the lady who broke her leg in the parking lot a few weeks ago. I want to say "thank you" to those who helped and comforted me and visited in the hospital. I am sorry I do not know all of your names. We are back in Michigan and I am recovering. Thanks again.

In Christian love, Janice Bell

20 Something's Fall Retreat

When: October 17-19

Starts at 6:00 on the 17th

Ends at noon on the 19th

Where: Rainbow Christian Camp, Converse, Indiana

Speaker: Gilbert Kerrigan

Cost: \$25 per person (includes place to stay and meals provided)

If cost is a problem, contact Jason Cochran at 409-4522



Our deepest sympathies to **Jan Lucas**, on the death of her sister-in-law, **Jane Haga, 75**, who died Thursday in Danville, Illinois. Greg and Chris Sutherlin and Jan's son, Andy, were able to accompany her to the funeral on Monday in Danville.

Pauletta Smith's cousin lost his oldest son, **Keller Verett**, in an accidental shooting last week. His funeral was Saturday in Waco, Texas. Our sympathies to Pauletta and the Verett family.

While **Jim Markle** is looking for a full time job, he is doing tree work. If you or your neighbors need trees cut or trimmed, please give Jim a call at 838-2377.



Parents:

There will be **NO Children's Church** (grades 1-5) on **Sunday, September 28**, as that is the 4th Sunday of the month.

September 21, 2008

Class: 190 Worship: 294

Contribution: \$6,007

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What An Idiot!

I have always liked the story of Jonah. It is filled with so many applicable lessons for us. Of course, like many of you, I read or listen to Jonah's story and think, "What an idiot." I mean seriously, the man was a prophet of God...God spoke directly to him and yet he made the stupid choices he did. I begin to be amazed at how God could be so patient with someone so hard headed and slow...and then I realize (I think Gilbert said this first), I'm Jonah. While I'm not hearing God speaking to me audibly, He is screaming at me through His Word and through His servants, His creation, etc. I am afraid I often find myself in the same spiritual slumber it appears Jonah was in. That can be a real danger for those of us who have been "in the church" for a long time. Satan has a way of dulling the excitement, the wonder, the awe that we once felt in our relationship with God and His family. We find ourselves saying things like, "God is going to do whatever He wants." The statement may be essentially true, but He does listen to our prayers...he certainly heard the Ninevites!

We have just returned to LIFE Groups. Do we get it? Here is our chance to really live out the first century pattern: "they devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer." I don't want to play down worship or Bible class – they are essential to our spiritual lives, but that is not really where life change takes place. Life change takes place in smaller groups where we share what God is doing in our lives, where we share the struggles we are facing, and where we can communicate our care and concern for one another by simply looking each other in the eye and seeing what God sees.

I'm wondering – yes, I'm meddling – but the finger is pointed at me first, just how devoted are we to the privilege we have of meeting together for teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer? Have we become desensitized? Was that Jonah's problem? Is it possible that we have been "over blessed?" Are we taking God's grace for granted? Truth is that we need to never take our relationship with God or His children for granted. We need to pray that our sense of awe and commitment is refreshed daily. I'm like some of you and have found myself saying, "I've got to go to LIFE Group, or church, or class, etc." We all know we GET to do those things. Next time my devotion is waning, I hope I hear myself saying, "What an idiot." I pray you will all forgive me for not being as devoted to the community of faith as I need to be...if you need it, I forgive you too. The lost world needs to see us living out what God intended, in every way and every day!

– Lee

Opportunities for Extra Giving

God has blessed all of us in many ways, and a commitment to weekly giving at Elmwood is one of our responses to those blessings. In addition to this regular giving, many people at Elmwood also provide some support to individual missionaries or ministries. In case some of you are looking for worthy causes to support over and above your usual Elmwood contribution, here are a couple that bear consideration. Josh Boyd has extra information on both if you'd like to see it.

Easter European Mission is trying to raise \$1,000,000 on September 28 in order to provide Bibles to all schools in Donetsk, Ukraine. This is in response to a government request, which is an exciting opportunity.

The system has about 366,000 students. If you're interested, you can send your contribution to Eastern European Mission, P.O. Box 670928, Dallas, TX 75367. There's also a website at

www.milliondollarsunday.org.

Rogers City Church of Christ in northern Michigan is a small congregation looking for help in building a new building. From a start of 7 people, the church now has 31 members in just three years. They sent us a sweet letter asking for help, and if you'd like to send something, the address is Rogers City church of Christ, Building Fund, P.O. Box 242, Rogers City, MI 49779.

New Sunday Class

A new class beginning Sunday, **October 5**, will be meeting in the Elders' conference room. The class will study the adult Challenger Program's "Prophets, Captivity & Return." Study materials will be handed out prior to October 5. If you are interested, contact Kevin Walters at 474-3110, or Greg Sutherlin at 447-7785.



Sept. 24, 5:50 PM....Good \$ense Class with Janet Boston

Sept. 24, 7 PM....Bible classes

Sept. 28, 6 PM....LIFE Groups meet

Read:
Jer. 1-16; Psalms 120-130;
I Tim. 4-6; II Timothy

2008 Spiritual Adventure

Week 41: October 6-12

Pledging Allegiance in an Election Year

The scriptures for this week [*Psalms 120-30, Jeremiah 1-16, I Timothy 4-6*] say something important in common, that we must be wary of those who seek to deceive us. David prayed “deliver me, O Lord, from lying lips.” Jeremiah urged that God’s people “not learn the way of the nations.” And Paul the Apostle warned that some would pay “attention to deceitful spirits.”


These passages are remarkably appropriate for the year 2008, the year of a national election. Along with many of you, I have seen enough elections to know that politics is a contact sport. Candidates will make promises they cannot keep, shade the truth when they know better, and conveniently forget their own mistakes. As human beings with the dreams and hopes we all have, they will also do some things right. At times, they will be courageous and helpful. But in the end, they will demonstrate mixed behavior; they will serve us and they will fail us.

We might not agree about which candidate to believe or which issues deserve our support. But by God’s grace, we could agree on the biblical principles that govern our conversation about such matters. Specifically, we could listen to one another attentively [not a strong attribute in our society] and speak to one another with reverence and respect. In these ways, we could show that our love for one another far surpasses our disagreements.

Above all let us pray for faith and wisdom, knowing that our first allegiance is to a King who claims our minds, our hearts, and our whole selves. Our first loyalty is to a Kingdom—not to our nation, not to our democracy. In the coming days of deceit and disagreement, let us “not learn the way of the nations,” let us speak in ways that honor the one who made us. Let us look beyond our temporary politics, fixing our eyes on that permanent Kingdom whose builder and maker is God.

—Mark Tucker

 <i>Weekly Schedule</i>	 <i>Elders</i>	 <i>World Missions</i>
<p>Sunday Worship 8:00 a.m. Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m. Life Groups 6:00 p.m.</p> <p>Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Bill Bell 463-1139 Joe Mathews 474-8369 Rick Swensen 463-6822 Don Vice 471-8653</p>	<p>Kevin Chambers World Christian Broadcasting Anchor Point, Alaska 99536</p>
 Our Vision: Knowing Christ, Making Christ Known.	 <i>Staff</i>	<p>Loren and Penny Hollingsworth Phuket, Thailand 83000 E-mail: lholly54@yahoo.com</p> <p>Bren and Cheryl White P.O. Box 245 New Market, MD 21774</p>
	<p>Ministers Gilbert Kerrigan 418-3652 Lee Porter 463-6993 Phil Travis 447-2874</p> <p>Office Sherry Marks, Manager 447-2874 Carol Bell, Secretary 447-2874</p>	



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Community Opportunities:



Greater Lafayette Leadership Prayer Breakfast

Living our Faith ~ Loving Our City is the theme for this year's **Greater Lafayette Leadership Prayer Breakfast**, to be held at University Plaza Hotel on **Thursday, October 2, from 7:00 until 8:30 AM**. The goal of this year's breakfast is to continue to increase an awareness of the social needs of our community and to strengthen and expand cooperation among area churches in meeting these needs through the transformational power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Keynote speaker: **Isaac Randolph, Jr.**, Executive Director of the Indiana Office of Faith-Based & Community Initiatives. For reservations: contact@teammglpw.org or call 497-4509 by Wednesday, September 24.

Feel the Joy! Walk for Life, October 11

Join friends of Matrix Lifeline Pregnancy Center on **Saturday, October 11**, for an easy 2-mile walk around and through Columbian Park. Register to walk and obtain financial sponsors to help Matrix offer alternatives to abortion and free support services that include pregnancy tests, options information, parenting education and material assistance.

It's easy (Matrix collects the money). It's fun (bring friends and family). Contact the Matrix office to register or to sponsor a walker.

Walk for Life Saturday, October 11
Columbian Park (Shelter 5 Blue on Park Avenue)
Registration: 8:30 AM Walk begins at 9:00 AM
742-1533 or matrixlifeline@comcast.net



Praying for Jefferson High School

Over the past year a few mothers have felt the Holy Spirit's nudging to begin a prayer group to pray specifically for Jefferson High School. In response a weekly **Moms-in-Touch Prayer Group** was begun. Moms-in-Touch, International's mission is to impact children and schools worldwide by gathering mothers to pray. Prayer makes a difference!

The YMCA has offered the use of their chapel every Friday from 12:00 noon to 1:00 PM during the school year. Any mother or grandmother of Jeff students are invited and encouraged to join them as they lift up children, school, teachers and staff to the throne of grace. Questions? Contact Becky Bathe at 446-0944 or rbathe@comcast.net.

LUM Meal Providers

Serving dinner at Lafayette Urban Ministry Monday night, September 22, were **Michelle Robson, Marilyn Walters, and Barbara Tilley**. Our thanks to those who prepare the meals and participate in this ministry. If you might be interested or have questions about this ministry, call Mandy Anderson or the church office for more information.



***Our vision:
Knowing Christ, Making Christ Known***