

# *Prayer—the Heartbeat of the Church*

## *Churchwide Prayer Initiative*

### COVENANT

*We* verily believe that God has divinely commissioned the Church of God to be a champion for truth in the 21st century. That He has instituted prayer as a direct source of power from Him to embrace the mandate, to effectively expand His Kingdom, and to live the abundant life in Jesus Christ.

*We* will therefore:

**Make** prayer a priority in fulfilling the mission and vision of the Church of God.

**Recognize** that prayer is the direct channel to connect with the presence, promises, and power of God.

**Endorse** the outlined prayer emphasis set forth by the leadership of the Church of God.

**Participate** in Great Days of Prayer, January Churchwide Prayer Study, and Wednesday Morning Prayer time.

*We* believe these statements with our heart and confess them with our mouth and boldly stand on the eternal truth of God's unchanging Word to fulfill them. Be it so!

*AMEN!*

# *Plans for a Churchwide Prayer Initiative*

We are asking every local church to be a partner in three special prayer functions—Great Days of Prayer; Prayer—The Heartbeat of the Local Church January Study; and Wednesday Morning Family Prayer Time.

These three events will bring the entire Church of God together to experience God's purpose and power for the church in challenging days of both opportunities and opposition.

Study carefully the approach and plan to implement the three special prayer initiatives.

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## **GREAT DAYS OF PRAYER**

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In the early days of the Church of God Great Days of Prayer were sponsored. Throughout the denomination on certain days local churches would unite in prayer and seek God's blessings for unity, spiritual armor to defeat the enemy, and for Holy Spirit power to reach the lost.

These early days of prayer were a strong foundational force for our church and resulted in God's anointing and remarkable church growth.

We believe Great Days of Prayer will position the Church of God to experience the spiritual and numerical growth God has planned for us in the 21st century.

### **Plan of Action Great Days of Prayer**

1. Once a quarter Great Days of Prayer will be observed throughout the Church of God. This means the entire Church of God family will be praying together. The dates are:

2008 — October 19

2009 — January 4

April 5

July 5

October 4

2010 — January 3

April 4

July 25

2. The Special Days of Prayer will take place on Sunday—early morning prayertime, during morning worship, and Sunday evening. Churches will be encouraged to develop creative approaches for involvement: Friday or Saturday evening prayer times, prayer breakfast, prayer walks, home prayer groups, prayer chains, and other innovative approaches.

3. To assist in sponsoring impactful Special Days of Prayer support materials will be offered on a continued basis—*Evangel*, state papers, books, devotional guides, and group study lessons.

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## PRAYER —JANUARY Churchwide Study

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### Plan of Action Prayer—January Churchwide Study

1. The prayer study is for the entire church. The lessons can be taught on Sunday or Wednesday evenings, in Sunday School classes, or small groups. The goal is to include all age groups.
2. A complete array of support material will be available. The study book is titled, **Prayer—the Heartbeat of the Church**. The lessons can be taught in four or six week sessions. A DVD with an 18-minute foundational presentation for each lesson is provided plus an instructor's guide. It is recommended that each participant be provided with a study book plus a daily prayer devotional booklet.
3. Sermon resource material will be provided for the pastor. This material can be downloaded from the Church of God website or ordered from Pathway Press. Ongoing support materials will be offered in the quarterly Covenant Resources publication.

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## WEDNESDAY MORNING —Prayer Time

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We are overwhelmed with joy and expectation with the plan of the entire Church of God family joining in prayer every Wednesday morning at 8:30 a.m. Time zones will vary but unity of purpose will be present. This will create a binding spirit, a fresh flow of faith, and a God-move in local churches around the world.

### Plan of Action Wednesday Morning Prayer Time

1. The Church of God headquarters family will pray before and during chapel on Wednesdays, 8:30 a.m., for the ministry of local churches, for the support of pastors, for global evangelization, and for the welfare of the personnel at the international offices.
2. Church members will pray around the breakfast table, or before the children leave for school, for family togetherness, for the salvation of neighbors, and for the ministries of their local church.
3. State overseers will meet with their office staff for devotion and prayer. Petitions will be offered for office harmony, effectiveness for the leadership of pastors, and for the far-reaching impact of state ministries.

## **SUMMARY**

The prayer emphasis is not a short-term venture. Prayer is the core of communication with God and commitment to Christ and the expansion of His Kingdom. We ask you to be consistent in observing the outlined events and to develop a prayer culture in your local church. Without question, this will equip the Church of God to be a dominant force in God's plan for end-time outreach.

### *Prayer for God's Leadership and Empowerment*

Father of Light, Love, Liberty and Loyalty, guide the Church of God family in being faithful to our prayer emphasis. May your LIGHT dispel any participation darkness or hesitation. Let Your LOVE create a spirit of oneness and unity. Give us LIBERTY in thought and practice as we study about and engage in prayer. Endow us with spiritual integrity to be LOYAL to You, and to one another in supporting the prayer emphasis with a clear vision of how You want to communicate and work among us in last-day expressions of Your might and majesty. We commit to You to be a faithful and fruitful prayer family.

**AMEN!**