

Note: This material was apparently originally assembled by InterVarsity MISSIONS in 1988, then reassembled by Nate and Paula Wilson later. Thanks to both parties for a great set of helps to all of us who want to lift up concerts of prayer to the father!

Brigada -- 2014
www.brigada.org

How to Lead A Concert of Prayer

A Two Hour Format that Really Works!

This is what the Lord Almighty says: Many peoples and the inhabitants of many cities will yet come, and the inhabitants of one city will go to another and say, "Let us go at once to entreat the Lord and seek the Lord Almighty. I myself am going" ...In those days ten from all languages and nations will take firm hold of one Jew by the edge of his robe and say, "Let us go with you, we have heard that God is with you!"-Zechariah 8:20~23

Entire city pauses for Prayer even at the high tide of business.

Remarkable outburst of gospel sentiment... noonday meetings draw congregations unprecedented in numbers.

For two hours at midday all Denver was held in a spell ... The marts of trade were deserted between noon and two o'clock this afternoon, and all worldly affairs were forgotten, and the entire city was given over to meditation of higher things. The Spirit of the Almighty pervaded every nook. Going to and coming from the great meetings, the thousands of men and women radiated this Spirit which filled them, and the clear Colorado sunshine was made brighter by the reflected glow of the light of God shining from happy faces. Seldom has such a remarkable sight been witnessed--an entire great city, in the middle of a busy weekday, bowing before the throne of heaven and asking and receiving the blessing of the King of the Universe.

Denver Post/JANUARY 20, 1905

(reprinted from *The Rebirth of America*, DeMoss Foundation, 1986)

Consider: If God has done this before, would He not be ready, willing and able to do it again? And if He did so--if He united the Body of Christ in *your* city in regular gatherings of prayer--would this not have far-reaching impact for spiritual awakening in the Church and for world evangelization?

CONCERTS OF PRAYER

A Call to United, Concerted Prayer

CONCERTS OF PRAYER: WHAT ARE THEY?

As Christians we experience prayer on many meaningful levels: through personal devotions, in small Bible study groups, at Sunday school, before meals, during worship. But the level of concerted prayer envisioned here differs from the rest (though every level of prayer is richly enhanced by it). That is why we give it the distinguishing name "Concerts of Prayer".

In the 1740's Puritan divine Jonathan Edwards defined "Concerts of Prayer." In the very title of a book he circulated to equip Christians then for the prayer movement that undergirded what historians often call "The First Great Awakening." The title? -An *Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth*. Concerts of Prayer, as defined by Edwards in this title, can be found throughout Scripture. For example: II Chronicles 15:1-15; Zechariah 8:18-23; Acts 4:23-31; Revelation 5:7-10 (see 8:3-4). In his book, Edwards borrowed the vision of Zechariah 8 to paint a vivid picture of prayer concerts. Zechariah describes the attitude, the agenda, the impact and the means for mobilizing such a prayer movement. His vision has been realized repeatedly throughout Church history and in prayer movements emerging across North America right now as well as in the global Church.

What makes Concerts of Prayer so different? For one thing, *in makeup* they gather a broader representation of the pray-ers. Christians unite across various boundaries: denominational, institutional, ministry, social, generational and even (minor) doctrinal ones. They meet around larger biblical concerns for spiritual awakening and world evangelization.

Accordingly, the *focus* in prayer concerts is quite specific: the *agenda* is limited to issues that fall under two main sweeps In Scripture: (1) prayer for God to reveal to His Church the *fullness* of Christ as Lord in her midst (revival, renewal, awakening) and (2) prayer for the resulting *fulfillment* of His global cause through His Church among all the nations, including their own (missions, world evangelization, advancement of the kingdom).

Also the *dynamics* in prayer concerts are often unique. "Concert" (from the same root as "concerted") means that people are united in sustained commitment to the Lord, to one another and to the answers they seek until God grants "fullness" and "fulfillment." Also, Concerts of Prayer (like musical concerts) involve the dynamics of a harmonious celebration--like a grand symphony--as pray-ers blend their hearts, minds and voices by faith in God's Word. Rejoicing, repenting and making requests, they intercede in harmony with all God has promised for His Church and for His world. They submit to the Holy Spirit who "orchestrates" each prayer meeting so that or prayer-theme builds on another according to the will of God. There becomes composition of intercession in Jesus' name which the Father delights both to hear and to abundantly answer.

Concert of **Prayer**

OVERVIEW OF THE FORMAT

Following the pattern of concerts of prayer over the past 250 years, as well as prayer movements emerging nation-wide and world-wide today, here is one model of a format for a two-hour Concert of Prayer. The approach provides not only a satisfying experience during a prayer Concert, but can be adapted back in the churches, fellowships and ministries from which we come--so that the vision and ministry of united prayer may spread.

Here are the basic components for a Concert of Prayer:

- Celebration • Seeking Fullness • Testimonies
- Preparation • Seeking Fulfillment • Grand Finale • Dedication

I) CELEBRATION (10 minutes)

- Praise in hymns and choruses, focused on awakening and mission
- Reports of God's answers to prayers offered up during previous Concerts
- Prayers of praise for God's faithfulness, for His Kingdom, for His Son

II) PREPARATION (20 minutes)

- Welcome to the Concert!
- Overview: Why are we here?
- Biblical perspectives on what we're praying toward (i.e., awakening, mission)
- Preview of the format
- Teaming-up in partners and in huddles

III) DEDICATION (5 minutes)

- Commitment: to be servants through prayer and to be used in answer to our prayers
- Thanksgiving: for the privilege of united prayer and for those with whom we unite

- Invitation for Christ to lead the Concert and to pray through us Hymn of praise

IV) SEEKING FOR FULLNESS/AWAKENING IN THE CHURCH (30 minutes)

- In partners-for personal revival
- In huddles-for awakening in our local churches and ministries
- As a whole-for awakening in the Church world-wide
- Pause to listen to our Father
- Chorus

V) SEEKING FOR FULFILLMENT/MISSION AMONG THE NATIONS (30 minutes)

- In partners-for personal ministries
- In huddles-for outreach and mission in our city
- As a whole-for world evangelization
- Pause to listen to our Father
- Chorus

VI) TESTIMONIES: WHAT HAS GOD SAID TO US HERE? (10 minutes)

- On Fullness (awakening)
- On Fulfillment (mission)

VII) GRAND FINALE (15 minutes)

- Offering ourselves to be answers to our prayers and also to live accordingly
- Prayer for God's empowerment in our own lives for ministry
- Prayer for prayer movements locally and world-wide
- Offering praise to the Father who will answer our Concert of Prayer
- Leave to watch and serve "in concert"

Welcome to a Real, Live Concert of Prayer!

This brochure can help you lead a two-hour Concert of Prayer. The practical format has been developed experimentally in a variety of situations and with many groups around the world over the past five years.

The format really does work! It creates a satisfying prayer experience, even when groups from diverse back-grounds gather together. It keeps people on target, giving them a sense of strategic impact for the Kingdom. And it is transferable by those who have done it, so that concerts of prayer can multiply. The format works effectively, whether with a band of five or a company of 500!

In fact, this brochure provides you a tool for leading a Concert of Prayer, so that those who attend can take the tool with them to help guide others in their churches and fellowships into a Concert approach. (Quantities are available through the "Concert of Prayer Project" of the National Prayer Committee, 6400 Schroeder Rd., P.O. Box 7895, Madison, Wisconsin 53707.)

Distinctives That Shape The Format

"Concerts of Prayer" is a term used widely to define a distinctive prayer gathering, differing at a number of points from most other times Christians pray together. The distinctives suggest a different approach to how the prayer meeting is shaped and led. Here are ten distinctives, each of which comes into play in the practical format that follows.

1) A concert of prayer is marked by a spirit of celebration. Throughout we rejoice in hope (Rom. 5:3), anticipating all God has promised to us in answer to our prayers for spiritual awakening and work evangelization.

2) A concert of prayer incorporates a broad scope in what we pray for. Our focus is on two major Kingdom themes (like the treble and bass clef of a music score) Fullness (revival or awakening in the Church) and Fulfillment (the advancements of God's Kingdom in the world). The "Lord's Prayer" models both of these key concerns.

3) A Concert of Prayer provides visible expression of unity in the body of Christ. Like the variety of instruments in an orchestra, brought together under one Conductor to play from one Score (the Scriptures), so believers united in prayer can release the music of God's Kingdom purposes for the whole world to hear. In a concert of prayer, Christians can experience at deep levels the unity Jesus intended (John 17). Through corporate intercession we are newly forged to Christ, to each other and to Christ's mission in the world. While we may not yet be able to achieve visible unity in other areas, certainly we can and must do so in the arena of Biblically-grounded prayer, especially prayer for awakening and evangelization.

4) A concert of prayer provides a way to network the Body of Christ within a city or on a campus. It helps us find one another across barriers, differences, spheres of influence and ministries that otherwise often divide us. It provides a neutral meeting ground. Here, despite our differences, the overarching Kingdom concerns that touch all of us can become our shared focus through united praying, and as a result, through joint-ministries (Rom. 12:1-5, 11-13).

5) Not only does a concert of prayer draw Christians together from different spheres, but it also benefits Christians from all spheres. The explanation is simple. When God answers Kingdom-sized prayers offered to Him unitedly, everyone in the prayer movement, plus the fellowships they represent, share together in being blessed (awakening) and in becoming a blessing to the families of the earth (world evangelization). God's whole vision for the whole city or campus (and, ultimately, beyond) must be realized through the whole Body. Thus, His answers are for the whole Body, too. A local concert of prayer may be the one ongoing effort among believers that forgoes any reasons for competition. (See I Timothy 2:1-8)

6) More specifically, a concert of prayer provides a point of contact for praying people and prayer groups within a city or on a campus. Here they can periodically interface, help each other expand their Kingdom concerns in prayer, sharpen one another's prayer ministry within the fellowships from which they come, and take new faith and vision back into their ongoing prayer efforts day by day. Prayer leaders and prayer groups will come from at least three major parts of the Body: the church sphere, the mission sphere, and the youth sphere. All three should be represented in a Concert. Those from the church sphere bring strong nurturing concerns (which relate to revival); those from the mission sphere bring concerns for outreach and advancement; those from the youth sphere often carry fresh dreams and aspirations, as well as new leadership potential, for nurture and outreach ministries. We all need one another.

7) A concert of prayer also offers a training ground for mobilizing prayer throughout the Body of Christ. Through its regular impact on those who gather to pray, it naturally accelerates prayer and sharpens our prayer agenda in all efforts in prayer everywhere within God's family. To help insure its contribution as a training ground, Concerts should be sufficiently organized so that participants can adapt what they gain from the experience back into the situations where they pray with others the rest of the month. Thus, a concert of prayer is both a workshop on prayer, as well as a ministry of prayer (see Luke 11:1). Along with the answers it secures from God's hand for the Church and the world, this training is another way prayer movements act as God's servants in the work of His Kingdom.

8) In addition to training in prayer, concerts of prayer provide a sustaining foundation for ministry both to the city (or campus) and among the nations. It is a base of operations for advancing Christ's global cause as it: (a) equips the pray-ers to become more spiritually attuned servants; (b) helps the pray-ers to rededicate themselves to be Christ's ambassadors in any way He chooses; (c) plants in the hearts of the pray-ers new dreams and visions for ministry to earth's unloved and unreached; (d) attempts at times, to consciously link up the prayer movement with specific outreach efforts (evangelistic, justice, church-planting, etc.); (e) prepares the way for all other ministries inside and outside the Church as God goes ahead of us by actually answering our cries for spiritual awakening and world evangelization. (See Psalm 65:1-8; Acts 13:1-4)

9) Historically, concerts of prayer have retained a sense of manageability, both in format and in frequency. Often in the past they have met once a month, allowing busy Christians to rearrange their schedules so that united prayer gets the priority it deserves. That way, those

who participate, coming from different fellowships with differing responsibilities to those bodies, can still find a common time to gather without jeopardizing their other commitments. The same sensitivity is in evidence in prayer movements today.

10) A concert of prayer is more than an event. It is a movement -- a process in which we are moving on from where things are (in us, in the Church, in the world) to where God desires and deserves things to be. We are involved in a long-term ministry, seeking long-term impact for the Kingdom through united prayer. This requires that those who join in be persevering servants, consistently involved on a regular basis and actively inviting others to join with them month by month. (See Acts 1:14; 2:1, 42; 4:23-24)

Now, Let's Look At The Format

The suggested format below is only one model, but it does reflect many of the important distinctives found in concerts of prayer.

You might think of it as training wheels on a child's bike. Without them it's hard to keep one's balance when you're just learning to ride. But once you have balance, all you need are the real wheels. Even so, it's up to each prayer group to decide when this format (training wheels) can be exchanged for other "wheels".

Don't let the arbitrary time allotments feel overly restrictive for you. On the one hand, order and timing are important, to insure a balanced, in-depth coverage of the issues for which the movement exists. Further, some structure and control is required to insure a meaningful experience for the pray-ers, especially since they come from many backgrounds, and only meet periodically like this (once a month?).

But, we must also remain open to the Spirit's direction. Ultimately, it is Jesus, not a humanly-devised format, who conducts each Concert! Freedom and improvisation do have a place in God's Kingdom symphonies. So, we should pursue orderliness while, at the same time, we keep our eyes on the "Concert Master" (the Lord Jesus) for any adjustments He may want to make.

One nice feature of this particular format is that its basic components can be covered more briefly in a 30-minute gathering, or they can be expanded past two hours in order to provide a half-night of prayer (4 hours?). So, in the end, timing is up to the local prayer leaders, under the Spirit's guidance. (However, many find that two hours are needed to give people a satisfying prayer experience. And people usually can't believe how swiftly two hours can pass in a prayer event of this nature!)

Now, here are some comments on the components in the format. Each segment appears for a purpose. Experience

has shown each to be essential in order to insure good coverage of the strategic issues for which the Concert exists. Therefore, stress that pray-ers keep their thoughts relative to each component as you come to it. For example, urge that during the "Fullness" segment, intercession should focus primarily on issues relating to awakening in the Church, while prayer for world needs can come later in the "Fulfillment" segment.

However, be sure to encourage everyone to work at maintaining a proper blend of rejoicing, repenting and requesting within segments (though the celebration component will be mostly rejoicing). Of course, the primary response experienced throughout all Concerts is this: seeking God's glory and Kingdom in Jesus Christ.

One final insight: The format can help you put people at ease. Coming from different backgrounds as we do, the format permits us to vary in our perspectives and ways of expressing ourselves in prayer, so as to make uniquely meaningful contributions to the whole Concert thrust. Encourage everyone, however, to work at being sensitive to one another -- neither offending nor judging one another -- as we seek to pray in "harmony" and with singleness of purpose. Remind people to listen to one another, building our prayers on one another, and learning more from one another about how and what to pray.

FURTHER HELPS: If you have difficulties using this format in leading others, here are three suggestions: (1) Attend a Concert near you, and learn as you observe others using it. (2) Make some adjustments in the format so that it fits you and your group (keeping the basic components, however). (3) Contact Concerts of Prayer International for a 250 page handbook entitled With Concerts of Prayer.

Guidelines On Components And Action Steps

CELEBRATE (10 minutes)

Be sure that praise focuses on God's character and ways in Christ. Use this time as well to highlight important issues in spiritual awakening and world evangelization.

Provide a good mixture of hymns and choruses, making sure to tie each song into the major themes of concerts of prayer. This can be done by just a few brief comments (no preaching allowed!) to introduce each new number. In between songs, you may want to have a few brief reports on how God has already been answering your previous Concerts, either in new expressions of revival (locally or world-wide) or new advances of the Kingdom (locally or world-wide). Toward the end of this component, have three or four lead the entire group in brief prayers of praise for all you've sung and heard.

Rejoice throughout in anticipation of all God has promised to do in answer to your prayers. Rejoice in your vision of what God will yet do in the Church and in the world as a result of your united prayer. (Note: Since only ten minutes of the full two-hour format have been specifically allotted for celebration, you may want to start your singing ten minutes early as people are arriving. This also makes everyone feel much more at home, especially if you have "greeters" who encourage everyone to sit down and join in the singing as they arrive.)

PREPARATION (20 minutes)

First, welcome everyone to the Concert. (If at a host church, the host pastor may want to do this.) Then, explain the purpose and distinctives of a concert of prayer, restating exactly why we're here (1-2 minutes).

Next, turn to the Scriptures to provide a brief Biblical perspective on what God wants us to pray toward as we seek spiritual awakening and world evangelization (10 minutes). In other words, what is the hope the Scriptures set before us that needs to form our prayer agenda. (Books like Isaiah and Ephesians provide a wealth of such studies.)

Next, introduce everyone to the basic components of the format, to acquaint them with the approach to the rest of the meeting. (You may want to have it printed out and in their hands. If so, use the camera ready copy at the front of this booklet.) Explain the flow of the Concert, why each component is important and how each fits with the others. (It is at this point that you may want to make a few suggestions about being sensitive to each other in how long our prayers are or how loud, etc.)

Finally, get people teamed-up. First, find out who is at the Concert for the first time (show of hands). Give them a card to fill out their address and their church or fellowship. Also have people identify the churches, groups, or fellowship that they represent (to give everyone a sense of how God is bringing the whole Body together). Have one representative from each body call out its name.

Then have them form partners (maybe with a shy friend, or with a new friend). Give them 30 seconds to get acquainted. Then, form huddles by putting together three sets of partners (six people to a huddle). Allow another 30 seconds to get acquainted. You might observe for everyone that throughout the evening you will pray in partners (for each other's needs for revival and in ministry), in huddles (for the needs of Christians and the unreached, locally) and as a total group (for the needs of Christians and the unreached, worldwide). (Someone has called these the "duets," "ensembles," and "symphonies" in your concert of prayer!)

DEDICATION (5 minutes)

One person on your leadership team now steps forward to lead the whole group through a period of guided, silent prayer. After each suggestion is made, give them a time of quiet to make it a personal point of prayer.

First, suggest that they reaffirm their desire to serve the Church and the world through this ministry of intercession. Have them reaffirm, as well, their readiness to be used of God in answer to any prayers agreed on in the Concert.

Next, lead them in a period of confession of any known sin, so that they might be clean and ready to pray. Then, have them personally ask and receive the Spirit's filling in their lives so that He might lead them in all that they pray.

Now, guide them to quietly thank God for everyone else gathered into the concert of prayer with them, and have them ask God to blend all of you together so that you really do become a great symphony of rejoicing, repentance and requesting throughout the meeting.

Finally, as the leader, you should offer an audible prayer on behalf of everyone, inviting the Lord Jesus to take up His role as High Priest among you, and to bring you together into His

ministry of prayer for fullness and fulfillment. Ask Him to make the Concert His prayer meeting from beginning to end. You might conclude your audible prayer by having the pray-ers join you in a hymn that focuses specifically on Christ and His Kingdom.

SEEKING FOR FULLNESS/AWAKENING IN THE CHURCH (30 minutes)

In united prayer, guided by another member of the leadership team, your concert begins to concentrate on seeking the fullness of Christ in the life of the Church, both locally and world-wide. "Fullness" is a popular word used to describe revival or awakening (see Eph. 1:21-23, NIV).

First, have them pray in partners. Have them turn immediately to one another, and begin praying for awakening and renewal in each other's lives. Their prayers should be brief, back and forth. Have each pray for their partner what they also desire of revival in their own lives.

After about 3 minutes of this, call for the huddles to form immediately (as partners quickly put their heads together with other partners). Urge them to pray for awakening in their own fellowships and in the Body of Christ throughout their city (or on their campus). Ask that prayers be brief, based on Scripture, and specific to the needs of the situation. Huddles may continue for approximately 7 minutes.

Then, call the huddles back together so as to pray as a whole. Ask for a few to lead the entire prayer meeting in specific concerns for spiritual awakening world-wide--either for the Church in other parts of the world, or for the Church generally according to its needs in this generation. (Be sure to encourage people to speak up as they pray in the large group.) As a leader, you may want to give some designated "points for prayer", asking for someone to lead all of you in prayer for one specific issue or matter (see suggestions on the following pages). Pray as a whole for 15 minutes.

You might conclude this segment in creative ways, such as having pastors and other spiritual leaders (like campus staff workers with local student ministries) stand to receive special prayer for their ministry to the Body of Christ. (You may want to ask a few nearby them to stand and lay their hands on them where they are.)

Finally, lead the whole group into a period of listening (2 minutes). Ask for complete silence. Ask each one to see if God has something He may want to say to them personally about issues touching His concerns for spiritual awakening -- either in them, in local fellowships, or in the Church at-large. (What God says to them will form some of the testimonies later on in the Concert.) Conclude the listening by leading everyone in a chorus or song that focuses on spiritual awakening (1 minute. Be sure to let them stand).

SEEKING FOR FULFILLMENT / MISSION AMONG THE NATIONS (30 minutes)

In united prayer, another leader begins to help your group concentrate on seeking the fulfillment of Christ's global cause, among those who do not belong to His Kingdom, both locally and world-wide.

"Fulfillment" is a popular word used to describe mission, outreach, and world evangelization in all its many facets (see Eph 1:2-11 in the NIV). The special focus should be on the three billion currently beyond the reach of the Gospel. But you should also touch on issues of hunger,

justice, poverty, war, disease, immorality, etc. all of which is part of the battle with the kingdom of darkness.

The segments are the same as before--partners, huddles, as a whole, and listening. But, this time partners pray for each other's ministry for Christ in the world. Huddles pray for new advancements of the Kingdom in their city or on their campus. The whole group is led by a few to pray for the work of the Gospel all over the world. (Again, the up-front leader may at times suggest some specific key issues that need special attention. See the following pages for a list of a few important issues.)

You might conclude the large group prayer time in creative ways, such as asking missionaries, those preparing for missionary work, or those involved in exceptionally difficult ministry to locally unreached people, to stand for special prayer (as we did earlier with spiritual leaders to the Church).

During the two minutes of complete silence, ask each one to listen to God to see if He has something He may want to say to them personally about issues touching His concerns for world evangelization--on their campus, in their city, or around the globe. Conclude the listening by leading everyone in a chorus or song that focuses on world evangelization. (Have them stand to sing.)

TESTIMONIES: What Has God Said To Us? (10 minutes)

This component provides an opportunity for the pray-ers to find out how God has already begun to answer their prayers during the Concert. Already, He is working in them as they have prayed and listened. Possibly, He has shared insights or dreams that will benefit the whole group. These need to be heard.

First, ask for a few testimonies on Fullness. That is, what has God said to some; what has He opened up to them that should be shared for the sake of the whole group? It might be a Scripture verse. It might be an exhortation on an issue that needs specific prayer in our daily quiet times. It might be new insights on awakening, or an expanded understand of what God is preparing to do in awakening. It might be a word of repentance, or of hope. The key is to keep the testimonies short, to the point and for the encouragement of the whole group.

Next, ask for a few testimonies on Fulfillment. That is, what has God said to some regarding the advancement of His Kingdom that should be shared for the sake of the whole group? Again a variety of things could be shared. It might be a new dream or vision for ministry to which others will rally. (In fact, this opportunity to share a vision for some area of outreach can become, over time, a wonderful way to insure that our "waiting" on God gets translated into action together.) Or it might involve a new sense of a personal incentive in an area of existing ministry. This will encourage others to renewed commitment in ministry. It might also be a Scripture verse, or an exhortation toward courage or compassion.

Throughout, the sharing needs to be done for the encouragement of the whole group, and not just to allow individuals to talk about themselves. The bottom line of all testimonies is to hear from God and to recognize how fully He has been involved with us throughout the concert of prayer.

GRAND FINALE (15 minutes)

Moving back into huddles, ask each huddle to pray that God would begin in them the work of awakening and of bringing forth new ministries to the world. Pray as well for the power of the Holy Spirit in it all. In other words, have the huddles "personalize" the vision and thrust of the entire Concert (5 minutes).

Then, have everyone move into a time of personal, private prayer. At this point each pray-er offers their life to be used in any way God may choose, in answer to the prayers agreed on in the Concert. They also ask His help in living lives daily that are increasingly more consistent with what they have prayed at the Concert. This two-minute offering may be even more meaningful if those who can get down on their knees, do so as an outward demonstration of commitment. (They may even be encouraged to pray audibly and simultaneously, as Christians do in many parts of the world).

For the next three minutes, ask the Concert to stand to form again as one body, while two or three people lead prayer for a growing prayer movement for fullness and fulfillment. For example, have one person pray that God will daily keep all of you consistent in prayer. Have someone else pray for the emerging prayer movement in your city or on your campus. Have a third pray for God to raise up concerted prayer in the Church world-wide.

Finally, conclude the Concert of Prayer by offering prayers of praise (3-4 leading) in anticipation of the answers coming out of your united intercession. These prayers are followed with a final hymn, focusing on Christ and His Kingdom.

Urge people to greet one another as they leave. And provide them with a flyer giving details on the next Concert of Prayer.

What Are The Issues?

Filling in the following grid can help us chart specific issues prayed about during a Concert and help us keep a balance:

	FULLNESS		FULFILLMENT	
REJOICE	global issues	local issues	global issues	local issues
REPENT	global issues	local issues	global issues	local issues
ASK	global issues	local issues	global issues	local issues

More specifically, Concerts of Prayer should concentrate on some of these crucial issues:

FULLNESS (Revival / Awakening)

- That God would give a global awakening to His Church, helping us to know Christ well enough so we trust Him and love Him and obey Him so we move with Him in new ways for the fulfillment of His global cause in our generation.
- That the Spirit would bring to ultimate fruitfulness and impact all His current renewing work He is already accomplishing in parts of the Body of Christ.
- That the Church would see the need to **seek** a global awakening and renewal for a new mission thrust.
- That God would give His Church a **spirit of prayer**.
- For God to raise up many **prayer bands** of "world Christians" on our campuses, in our churches and mission agencies, and throughout His church worldwide.
- For new awareness of God's **holiness** and the church's need to be holy like He is, if we are to have a significant impact for His glory on the world.
- For a fresh sense of God's **love** for the world, and a rekindling of our love for Him.
- That God would bring **reconciliation** to His church, so all Christians can become transparent before God and each other. In repentance and forgiveness, band together to do the work of Christ.
- That God would renew our **world vision** and our faith to move forward to face the challenge of reaching the nations, beginning where we live.
- That God would **educate** His people about His heart for the world and how He sees the world, so our acts of obedience would correspond to the facts.
- That God would give His people wholehearted **zeal** for His worldwide purposes.
- That the Church worldwide might be **unified** with one purpose: to fulfill the Great Commission in our generation, especially among the 2 billion people who can only be reached by major new effort in cross-cultural evangelism.
- That the Church would awaken to the universal **authority** of Christ, which is the basis of her commitment to the world missionary movement.
- That God would give us such **gratitude** for all He has done already for us personally and collectively, that we would delight to bring what we have found to those who have never heard,
- That the Spirit would summon Christians to **accountability** before Christ in the sharing of their unique blessing in Him with the billions locked away in extreme spiritual and physical poverty. That we would repent of hoarding the Gospel, so we might release its full impact of love and justice worldwide.
- That God would fill His people with hearts of **compassion** for the earth's unreached, until we come to the place that, like Christ, we are ready to die for them.
- That we would awaken to the **world-sized part** God has given to each one of us and to His global Church, with our world-sized potential in its impact on His plan for the nations.
- That God would give mature **leadership** for the solid discipling of national churches, especially in those countries and among those peoples where we have recently seen such spiritual vitality and evangelistic ferment, such as: Nigeria, Kenya, South Korea, Philippines, India, Brazil, Columbia, Norway, Poland, China, and many others.
- That Christian groups and churches would be awakened with a vision of how God has sovereignly **teamed** them up, giving them unique experiences and gifts, so that together, they might fulfill strategic missions that touch the ends of the earth.
- That God would help us **repent** of everything that prevents us from following Christ without limits, even to the ends of the earth: sin, unbelief, pre-occupation, and serving self.

- That Christians would be set free to reorganize their **lifestyles** so they can better respond to peoples' deepest needs in effective ways, especially in places where the Gospel has not yet come.
- That those being won to Christ around the world would sense their calling not only to join themselves to Christ but **also to wrap** their lives in Christ around His global cause.
- That God would raise up **pioneers of faith** to lead the Church to embrace the new things God wants to do through us in this generation.
- That God would raise up godly **visionary leaders** to take His people on into the "promised land" of redemption and healing among all nations and peoples.
- That God would give many churches and teams around the world **new dreams** and visions for specific missions to the world.
- That God would help His Church identify the starting place for such dreams: that we'd discover our **resources and gifts** in Christ--the unique blessings God has given us to share with families of the earth.
- That God would bring commitment to Christ's global cause among the hundreds of thousands of Christian **students** worldwide, and prepare them to assume leadership and sacrifice to carry out that commitment.
- That the Church would be filled with **victorious optimism** in keeping with God's love and purposes for the whole earth, and step forth boldly in the light of that victory, to see fulfillment of God's promises through us for this generation.

FULFILLMENT (Advancement, Missions)

- For God to be **glorified** throughout the earth, among all people everywhere. Tell Him you want this to happen and tell Him what it will mean to you personally when it does.
- That God would receive new **praise** in the earth, not only for what He is presently doing in the Church, but especially for all He does through the Church to reach, salvage, and fulfill unreached peoples around the world.
- For the **climax** of history which depends, to a large degree, on the compassionate, Spirit-empowered witness of Christ's worldwide Church.
- That Christ's global cause of love and justice will **prevail**. It is a life or death issue. People without Christ everywhere lack an inheritance in God's Kingdom and have no way to receive His salvation.
- For churches to be **planted** within every people group within this generation.
- For major **new thrusts** in world evangelization through the intentional, sacrificial penetration of major human barriers worldwide.
- For awakening and spiritual **hunger** among the 2 billion people, such as Muslims, Chinese, Hindus, Buddhists, who have yet to hear of Christ. That they may have a new sense of reality of God and an awakened desire to seek Him.
- For **Satan** to be bound and fully routed. That Christ's victory on the cross would break Satan's hold on nations and cultures.
- For world **leaders and governments**, and for the outcome of world events. All of these can directly affect the free course of the Gospel within a nation or within a people-group.
- For major **global issues** which impinge upon a world mission thrust, and are part of the moral darkness that must be penetrated by the planting of the Gospel and responsible communities of disciples among the billions who have yet to hear. Such issues include: global hunger, nuclear proliferation, political and economic oppression.

- For **mission agencies**, the vessels through which God often thrusts forth laborers into the harvest. Pray they will be purified and reshaped to channel the new wine of revival to the ends of the earth.
- For God's people everywhere to see **those nearby** them whose ways of living differ from them enough to cut them off from the regular witness of the Gospel-to see them and reach them.
- That individual churches around the world will **adopt** some of earth's unreached people groups, taking them as their special focus for prayer and action.
- For specific people **groups** (there are over 17,000 beyond the reach of the Gospel. Ask God to give your church and His people in many places the wisdom to know how to reach them. Ask Him: What opportunities now exist? What barriers stand in the way? What will it take for Christians to cross those barriers? How might Christians best do this now? As He answers, turn those answers into points for intercession for the specific group.
- That God would give to the church the gift of "**apostles**" (I Corinthians 12:28,21). We need hundreds of thousands of new cross-cultural messengers to be sent out by churches around the world. Ask God to give the church wisdom to know who these people are, to set them apart for the work to which He has called them, and to send them forth by a movement of prayer and sacrifice.
- For **technical areas** of mission work such as Bible translation, Bible correspondence courses, Christian radio and TV, Theological Education by Extension, saturation evangelism, student work worldwide, medical mission relief and aid ministries, and short-term missions.
- That God would deploy a new force of **self-supporting (tent-making) witnesses** to relocate among those people of the earth closed to professional missionary outreach. That laypeople would get a vision for this for themselves.
- For the Christian church **within every country**. That God would raise up our new mission thrust from every nation and people-group where communities of disciples already exist.
- For **suffering Christians** who often experience temptations, oppressions, and persecutions because they aggressively operate with the Gospel in the whirlpool created by two diametrically opposed spiritual powers. Pray especially for those facing increased dangers from revolutions and terrorism.
- For specific missionary movements in the Third World. Today, there are 15,000 **Third World missionaries** sent out by over 300 Third World agencies.
- For specific evangelical **North American missionary** societies. For their organizational and personnel needs, and for particular outreaches and mission projects.
- For those people and places where **the doors are open** for hundreds of more laborers to enter. That the doors would remain open and that workers would soon be found to walk through them.
- For all current efforts to **research** and formulate mission **strategy**, to effectively deploy a new generation of missionaries.
- For **America** as a major sending base of missionary personnel. Of the 80,000 Protestant missionaries worldwide, almost 60,000 come from North America. Pray that God would revive the Church in our nation so that the base of Christians here, containing 80% of the evangelical resources of the world and 70% of its trained Christians, might continue to release these God-given blessings for ministry to the earth's unreached. And pray that the revival will enrich the quality of the missionaries who go.
- For the unreached "**nations**" in America. The unique U.S. ethno-cultural panorama includes 120 ethnic groups speaking over 100 different languages. At least 3 million in the U.S. have no knowledge of Christ and no one near them who is like them to tell

them. Tens of millions more, many locked away among the urban poor of our cities, are out of touch with compassionate, witnessing Christians, and see little credibility in the Gospel.

- For the 300,000 **international students** on our campuses, many from the major "closed" countries. For the over one million international visitors in the U.S. every year.
- For God to raise up a **new movement of "senders"** worldwide-people who know God has called them to send a new force of cross~cultural witnesses and who embrace that assignment with the same vision and sacrifices as those who go.

A KEY TO THE ISSUES: THE HOPE WE'RE PRAYING TOWARD

Ultimately, the key to a proper focus in united prayer for fullness and fulfillment is that the concert of prayer and its leaders remain clear on the Hope we are praying toward. How might that Hope be defined? One suggested way to do so is by using the following two questions. Perhaps your concert of prayer Leadership Team might want to discuss your answers to both questions, and then derive your own sense of key issues for fullness and fulfillment.

The questions are: (1) If Christ and His Kingdom became the center of attention in your city, in answer to a movement of united prayer, what might be the impact of such a work of God? (2) What might be the impact, for example, on four key areas: (a) on the daily walk of individual Christians through-out your city? (b) on the local churches in your city (both within them and among them)? (c) on your city as a whole (considering all of its unique problems, needs and potential)? (d) and ultimately on the nations of the world (on peoples and ministries around the world, as a result)?

Concerts Of Prayer

Basic Standards And Guidelines (1994)

Frequently one hears a comment like this, "We met for two hours of prayer last Saturday, but it wasn't a 'real' Concert of Prayer."

What is a Concert of Prayer? This question prompted an effort to outline some basic guidelines on this issue... The following concepts will help people everywhere understand the basic thrusts of a Concert of Prayer movement.

Focus

Historically speaking, the primary focus of Concerts of Prayer has been on two major agendas: spiritual awakening and world evangelization. (Sometimes the terms "fullness" and "fulfillment" are used.) God's desire for the glory of His Son and the advancement of His Kingdom, as revealed in His Word, provide the principle source of our prayers.

Unity

Community and citywide Concerts of Prayer should be broad based and representative of the whole body of Christ. They should try to blend together the strengths of various theological frameworks within biblical Christianity, while holding a high view of scripture and of the Lordship of Christ. Concerts of Prayer unite various denominational expressions of worship and prayer, as well as various social, racial, cultural and economic groupings within the community. In each gathering, the hill-hearted participation of all Christians is desired.

In the same way, a Concert of Prayer within a single congregation should seek to unite all groups in the church, young and old alike, giving everyone ways to participate.

Balance

Concerts of Prayer should be committed to providing a united prayer experience that draws on the strengths of various praying traditions in the body of Christ. They should seek to be spiritually and culturally sensitive to different forms and styles of prayer, so that participants feel represented, as well as enriched, through their praying together. Concerts of Prayer should also seek balance in the various themes brought before the Lord. A balanced format of united prayer would include elements of:

Rejoicing: Praise and celebration of the hope that God has set before us in Christ.

Repentance: Turning away, both individually and corporately, from all that might hinder the fulfillment of that hope.

Resistance: Intercession at every point where the Enemy is seeking to thwart the unfolding of what God has promised to His church and to its mission in the world.

Restoration: Praying for God to fill the church with the fullness of the life of Christ.

Releasing: Asking God to release many new works of His Kingdom, both locally and world-wide.

Receiving: Listening to hear and confirm whatever new words of promise and mission God may be speaking to us.

Recommitment: Offering ourselves back to the Lord, in view of the great hope toward which we've prayed.

Movement

Concerts of Prayer are not just one time events. Rather, the term refers to a multifaceted movement of united prayer that is on-going and finds expression at many levels of corporate Christian life. Concerts of Prayer have historical precedent in the great prayer movements that have preceded other spiritual awakenings. In some ways, the movement can be expressed on four key levels:

- *Closet* - Personal praying for spiritual awakening and world evangelization.

- *Cluster* - Small groups praying within the church.
- *Congregation* - Times when the whole congregation unites to pray for revival.
- *Concert* - Christians gathering from various back-grounds to pray for revival, whatever size the group.

Leadership

Concerts of Prayer should seek to provide a platform for local pastors and leaders to lead the way together for an awakened church and a cooperative effort in reaching their city for Christ. Many others may help serve the prayer movement, but pastors and other spiritual leaders must set the pace, provide the covering, and keep the vision clear.

Linkage

Local Concerts of Prayer should see themselves as part of a larger movement of united prayer, both nationally and internationally. In so doing, local Concerts of Prayer should seek to communicate with other local movements, updating their own leadership and sharing with others what God is doing in their area...

Summary

Perhaps it is best to boil down our conclusions to a few statements of what a Concert of Prayer is not, as well as some summary statements of what a Concert of Prayer is.

A Concert of Prayer is *not*:

- simply anytime Christians gather to pray.
- a one-time event.
- a specific kind of prayer program per se.
- a specific format for leading united prayer.
- an organization with formal membership.
- a certain size of prayer gathering.

Rather, a Concert of Prayer *is*:

- a prayer gathering with a specific focus on revival and mission,
- broad based and representative of the body of Christ.
- balanced praying in traditions, styles, and emphasis.
- an ongoing effort that touches all aspects of corporate church life.
- a means for pastors and spiritual leaders to unite the body of Christ in kingdom praying.
- a part of a larger movement, uniting the Church world wide in prayer.

Concerts of Prayer International

**Pentagon Towers, P.O. Box 36008, Minneapolis, MN 55435
(612) 853-1740**

C.O.P. FORMATS DEVELOPED BY NATE WILSON

2~HOUR FORMAT

30 min. WORSHIP

- Music (Majesty, Thou art Worthy, Ascribe Greatness, Ain't no Rock, Show me your Ways, Lord You Are, Through our God, You are my Hiding Place, Lord of Love, Holy, Holy, Holy Lord)
- Scripture: Psalm 100: 1-2, Job 37:14

10 min. CONFESSION

- Pray in groups of 1 or 2
- James 5:16, Isaiah 1:16-18
- End singing "The Blood Flows"

20 min. THANKSGIVING as a whole group

- Read Psalm 40: 9-10, Heb. 13:15
- Praise God for attributes, Give testimony, or Thank Him for something

50 min. INTERCESSION

- For the CHURCH

Read Rom. 12:11, I Peter 4:7-8

Pray for ourselves (individually 5 min.)

Pray for the renewal of the church world-wide (group, 10 min.)

Sing "Spirit of the Living God"

- For the LOST

Read: Colossians 4:2-3, I Sam. 12:23

Pray for the mission of the Church, including current fellowship you are attending as well as home church, missions organizations, the church worldwide. (groups of 2, 10 min.)

Sing "Shine, Jesus, Shine"

Pray for missionaries, the lost, and the unreached peoples--Pass out missionary prayer letters and unreached people cards (large group 25 min.)

- Share testimony of the power of prayer in missions

10 min. CLOSING (large group)

- Share any testimony of God's work through this meeting
- Offer ourselves as living sacrifices to build the kingdom of God
- Sing: "In My Heart, Lord, Be Glorified"

1~HOUR FORMAT (includes children!)

6:45 Intro:

1. Children are welcome, don't worry with a little crying or whispering, but, if they're crying so loud that people can't hear or if kids are starting to play and get foolish, or if baby needs nursing, you can take them across the way to the bedroom.
2. Concert of Prayer format: sing, pray on a specific topic, close with song, then pray on a new topic, etc. We'll be going through the themes of the Lord's Prayer this evening and ending around 7:45
3. Respond quickly: You only have 3-5 minutes to pray in groups, so there is not time to discuss things; if you have something to share, just share one simple prayer request and make it concise. When we break into groups of 2 or 3 adults, quickly re-group, grab a couple of children, and go right to prayer.

"Our Father Who art in Heaven, hallowed by Thy Name"

6:50 SONGS:

"Come Thou Fount"

"Hail Jesus, You're my King"

"Our Father"

6:55 Large group: Prayers of worship, focusing on:

- Fatherly nature of God
- Heaven
- Holiness of God
- Names of God

7:00 *"Thy Kingdom Come"*

VIDEO: Dungan People of Kyrgyzstan ([From Caleb Project](#))

7:05 Pray for Dungan in four groups (4 corners of room)

- that they will realize the rituals they perform are empty and bring them no closer to God
- that they will open their hearts to the Gospel, despite their strong identity with Islam
- that they will soon have the Scriptures translated into their own language
- that God would send out missionaries to live in their villages and share the Good news in a way the Dungan can understand.

7:10 Pray for God's kingdom to come in the lives of non-Christians you know

- neighbors
- friends
- family

SONG: "Jesus Shall Reign Wherever the Sun"

7:15 *"Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven"*

Two Groups: Pray for our local church and for Christian friends to do God's will.

SONG: "Psalm 9:1 Will Praise"

7:20 *"Give us this day our daily bread"*

Groups with only two adults :One adult shares brief prayer request, then group prays for them and for a child in the group

7:25 Other adult shares brief prayer request, then group prays for them and for child (if applicable)

SONG: "Seek Ye First"

7:30 "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"

Kneel and pray individually

- Examine your heart Confess your sin to God
- Ask forgiveness for sin
- Ask God to deliver you from these sins Thank God for His forgiveness!

7:35 SONG: "The Blood Flows"

"Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever, Amen."

Large group: Prayers of worship, focus on God's:

- Kingship
- Power
- Glory

7:40 SONGS: "Now Unto the King Eternal," "Be Thou My Vision"

Thanks to Nate Wilson for assembling all this material!