

BEECH GROVE NOTES

13 Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. 14 Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up, and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. 16 Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. 17 Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months, it did not rain on the earth. 18 Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest. — James 5:13-18

OUR VOW - PRAYERS

“Pastor what is the point (or benefit) of being a member of a church?”

COVENANT:

- The act of **professing our faith** in God is embedded in baptism
- You profess your faith in God and you **covenant** with God.
- We make vows to our faith in God and how we will live out our faith here on earth.
- Membership with the local church is connected to our understanding of baptism because of the nature of covenant.

Church membership recognizes the covenant and vows that you make not only to God but to the local church you are committing to be a part of.

- Faith is best lived out in a community.
- When you covenant with God as a part of your faith, you also covenant to be a part of a local church community.

*“As **members** of this congregation, will you faithfully participate in its ministries by your prayers, your presence, your gifts, your service, and your witness?” (UMH 38)*

PRAYER

- *“the expression of our relationship with God, entailing talking, listening, and acting on who God calls us to be.”*
- John Wesley called prayer a “means of grace,”
- Prayer from a faith perspective asks - “how do we pray?” \
- To participate in the community through prayer asks - “What or who should we pray for?”

UNPACKING COMMUNAL PRAYER IN JAMES 5

- Defines how a community comes together and what it means to lift one another up in prayer and praising.
- Just like in our relationship with God, prayer becomes the embodiment of relationship and community.
- We both live in to and express community by way of prayer.
- People understand our empathy, care, and compassion through the manner we utilize the spiritual discipline of prayer within and for the community.

PRAYER IN OUR LOCAL CHURCHES

- All our ministries in the church start with prayer
- We pray for everyone.
- We pray not only for people but for organizations as well.
- We pray for God to work in, to revitalize, and renew the church.
 - Not only in this church but to work in the global Church.

PRAYER AS A PART OF OUR MINISTRY

- Prayer gives us the opening we look for to do ministry within the church.
- We are asking God for a calling.
- Prayer should be woven throughout all the ministry we do.
- Prayer not only is a show of God’s presence within ministry but also a continued call for God’s help and vision.

When we make prayer the central theme of our church we center ourselves on listening to God.

We faithfully participate in the ministries of the church by our prayers

...when we look to prayer as a discipline to grow community together.

- Prayers to lift up the lowly, to gather the lost, to reach out to the searching, and to discern the community that God calls us to be.

SO PRAY FOR THIS CHURCH. PRAY FOR ITS MINISTRIES.

FINAL REMINDER

Prayer is one way that we all have an opportunity to participate in the life of the church, and honestly, it is a great place to start if you want to dip your toe into the shallow end of the pool of local church ministry.