

Prayers In the Corporate Service

Examples and Tips¹

Consider anchoring your prayer in a biblical text used within the order of worship for the day, OR from the preaching text.

Prayer of Praise

O Lord our God, You are high and lifted up, dwelling in unapproachable light. From everlasting to everlasting, You are God—unchanging in Your holiness, infinite in wisdom, and abounding in steadfast love. The heavens declare Your glory, and all creation testifies to Your majesty. Who is like You, O Lord? Glorious in holiness, awesome in splendor, and perfect in all Your ways. We praise You, not merely for what You give, but for who You are—the sovereign King over all the earth, worthy of all honor and worship.

Public Prayer Tip:

Draw directly from Scripture and the historic language of the faith. Avoid casual expressions. Let the prayer exalt God's transcendence while anchoring it in theological clarity.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Our Father in heaven, we thank You for every mercy that flows from Your sovereign hand. We give thanks for the redemption we have in Christ Jesus, for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and for the sure promises of Your Word. Thank You for sustaining us daily, for the fellowship of the saints, and for the freedom to gather in worship. Even in trial, we acknowledge that You are good and that Your purposes are wise. All we have comes from You, and for all that You are and do, we give humble thanks.

Public Prayer Tip:

Emphasize both spiritual and material blessings, but center your gratitude in the gospel. Use biblical phrasing and show gratitude in a posture of dependence and reverence.

Prayer of Confession

Most holy and gracious God, we confess that we have sinned against You. Though You have called us to walk in the light, we have often chosen the works of darkness. We have sinned in thought, word, and deed—by what we have done and by what we have left undone. Our hearts are prone to wander, our affections often cold, and our obedience incomplete. Yet we come, trusting not in our own righteousness, but in the righteousness of Christ, our Advocate and High Priest. Have mercy on us, O Lord, and restore to us the joy of our salvation.

Public Prayer Tip:

Use corporate language (“we” and “our”) and be honest about sin (*even specific sin*) without naming overly personal or graphic details. Always end with hope in God's mercy. Ground your confession in the reality of total depravity and the sufficiency of Christ's atonement. Let the tone be serious yet hopeful, sober yet gospel-saturated.

¹ These examples serve as a short reference point for crafting your own. We recognize that prayers in the corporate gathering will be longer and more robust.

For Corporate Worship Gatherings

Prayer of Petition/Intercession (Pastoral Prayer)

Sovereign Lord, we come before You as a needy people, dependent on Your grace and wisdom. We pray for the advance of the gospel in our city and to the ends of the earth. We ask Your hand upon those in our congregation who suffer, whether in body or soul; bring healing, comfort, and endurance. Strengthen our elders and deacons for faithful service. Above all, may Christ be formed in us, and may Your will be done in our midst as it is in heaven.

Public Prayer Tip:

Structure the prayer carefully (e.g., world, nation, church, individuals) and keep it Christ-centered. Avoid political partisanship but do not shy away from praying for moral clarity, godly leadership, and spiritual reformation.

Prayer of Lament

O Lord, how long shall the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper? We grieve the brokenness of this fallen world—disease, war, injustice, and rebellion against Your law. Many are the sorrows of Your people; some among us walk through deep valleys of affliction. Yet we do not grieve as those without hope. You are near to the brokenhearted and save the crushed in spirit. Teach us to trust Your purposes even when they are hidden. We look to the day when every tear will be wiped away and righteousness will dwell forever.

Public Prayer Tip:

Express sorrow with reverence. Draw from the Psalms of lament. Keep the tone respectful and measured, ultimately pointing toward God's sovereignty and future restoration in Christ.

Imprecatory Prayer

O Lord, righteous Judge of all the earth, we plead for justice to roll down like waters and for evil to be restrained. Look upon the deeds of the wicked—those who shed innocent blood, who mock Your truth, and who oppress the weak. Rise up, O God, and bring their schemes to nothing. Let those who will not repent be brought low, and let Your name be vindicated in righteousness. Yet even now, we pray for their repentance, knowing that Your mercy is great and Your gospel powerful to save. May Your kingdom come in truth and in power.

Public Prayer Tip:

Pray Scripture carefully and without personal malice. Focus on God's justice rather than human vengeance. Acknowledge God's mercy while still crying out for the defense of truth and the afflicted.