

Garden of Eden Church (GOE) - Prayer Meeting Information

In March of 2024 the GOE church held its first dedicated weekly prayer meeting. Seen as a needed and vital part of their growing ministry to the nudist community, the hope is that prayer will become central to everything the church does while helping to build closer connections to living in God's will for our lives. Our plan is to offer this opportunity most Monday evenings at 7:00 pm. All are welcome.

To help you know what to expect when you attend a GOE church prayer meeting, we created these guidelines to help keep us focused. It's our hope that this will help avoid any discomfort you may feel about being in new circumstances with people you may not know. In all things please seek and follow the Spirit's leading when committing your time to any activity.

To keep us from potential disruptions and distractions, the prayer meeting is currently being held as an in-person meeting only in the home of Steve and Connie Bebell. They are active in the GOE church and offer the use of their home on the grounds of Lake Como for this and other church functions. Please contact someone on the worship team for exact location. In the event their home is unavailable, the prayer meeting may be canceled or moved to a different location.

To help make our prayer time dynamic and meaningful we have adopted these eight prayer guidelines (from *Old Paths, New Power: Awakening Your Church Through Prayer and the Ministry of the Word*).

- 1) Foundation:** Start with a Bible reading; keep a Bible available; let God start the conversation.
- 2) Fervor:** Intentional focus and reliance upon the Holy Spirit to align us with God's will.
- 3) Faith:** Hebrews 11:6 reminds us, "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."
- 4) Focus:** Scripture-fed, spirit-led, worship-based prayer, God comes first, our needs last.
- 5) Flow:** ABC - *Audible* (when you pray aloud be sure others can hear you), *Brief* (please be concise and considerate of others), and *Clear* (keep it simple, one thing at a time).
- 6) Freedom:** You don't have to sit in one place, eyes closed, hands folded (unless you want to fall asleep!); feel free to move, read scripture, and stay actively engaged.
- 7) Flexibility:** Things may not go the way you planned; be open to the Holy Spirit's leading.
- 8) Faithfulness:** Prayer is a way of life, for your entire life, not just an occasional scheduled task.

With these guidelines in mind we ask for those who attend to commit to an hour and to conclude at the end of that hour. Again, with flexibility in mind, if you need to leave early that's okay. The meeting could be somewhat shorter or longer but our goal is to respect the one hour time commitment.

Audible prayer is encouraged but silent prayer is okay as well; don't stay away because you don't believe you pray well. Remember, one of our guidelines is to avoid long rambling prayers no matter how eloquently they are spoken.

Each prayer meeting will be led by a person preselected at the previous prayer meeting. This person will be responsible for opening the meeting with a prepared scripture reading and closing the meeting with a definitive concluding statement, so it is clear when the meeting is over. All are encouraged to share scripture during our prayer time as desired. Please bring your own bible or we can provide one.

Our prayer meetings are open, feel free to invite someone new to the group (or church), but because we are a nudist church we ask that you not invite non-nudists and that you ensure Lake Como's entry requirements are being met. Nudity at the GOE church is always encouraged and preferred, at Sunday services and at any meetings, but we will never turn anyone away just because they are wearing clothes.

Last but not least, we ask that anyone who comes to the prayer meeting respect the privacy and confidentiality of the others attending by not discussing or sharing what is said at the meeting to anyone outside of the meeting. We want these meetings to be a safe place that demonstrates the love of Christ.