

**May 23, 2021**  
**Willerup United Methodist Church**  
**Sermon Notes**  
**Pastor Marvin Singh**



Our Ministry of Intercession

Jonah 1:1-6

Created by Pelin Kahraman  
from Noun Project

God: “Go! Preach against wickedness!”

Jonah: Ran away, fled from the Lord, set off – but in the opposite direction

God: Stood against him, brought great winds against the ship

Fellow Travelers: Each crying to their own gods

Jonah: Went below deck, out of sight from the crowd, lay down, fell into a deep sleep

Captain of the ship: When all others are seeking their gods, you, (the prophet of God!), are sleeping?!?

“How can you sleep?”

“Get up,”

“Call on your God!”

“Maybe He will take notice of us, and we will not perish.”

**Our Ministry of Intercession,**  
**Get Up and Call on Your God!**

1. Intercession in the Old Testament:

a. Abraham: The Lord asked, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?” (Genesis 18:17). Abraham remained standing before the Lord. (Vs 22)

He began to intercede for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah as his immediate family was dwelling there. He was trying to find a few

righteous people so God would preserve the city, but they could not be found.

b. Esther: The Jews were sentenced to death, and Mordecai sent her the word. Esther called for intercession by the Jews.

“Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maid will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go the king, even though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish.” Esther 4:15-17

c. Call to the Israelites. 2 Chronicles 7:14

“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

## 2. Intercession in the New Testament:

a. Jesus was praying on the Mount of Olives and had asked his disciples to pray also. But they slept. When he rose from the prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. “Why are you sleeping?” He asked them. “Get up and pray that you may not fall into temptation,” (Luke 22:40, 45-46).

“Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?” Matthew 26:40

b. In John 17, Jesus prayed first about himself and then gave intercessory prayers for his disciples, and for all believers.

c. Acts 1:14 All prayed.

d. Acts 2:1, “When the Day of Pentecost came, they were all with one accord in one place and praying.”

e. Acts 4:31, “After they had prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.”

f. Acts 6:2-4 – The ministry of the Word of God and Prayer was their priority.

g. Acts 12:5 The church earnestly prayed for the release of Peter from jail.

3. George G Hunter III, in his book *Church for the Unchurched*, defined how a church today can be like the early church, an “Apostolic Church.”

\* Rooting believers and seekers in Scripture

\* **Disciplined and earnest prayers; then expect and experience God’s action in response.**

\* Compassion for the lost, unchurched and pre-Christian people.

\* Obey the Great Commission.

Hunter gave the example of the Community Church of Joy, whose Pastor Bjorn Pederson has led the prayer ministry for several years. The church involved 1,000 to 1,200 people per week.

They had eight prayer meetings at the church at different times each week; each prayer meeting involved ten to twenty-five people and had a target group - like business people, young women with children, or retired people, or a focus such as missions or healing. They have prayer retreats from time to time. And the Prayer council organized a “Prayer Partner Ministry.” Every one of the 6000 members had a prayer partner.

Hunter, George G III, *Church for the Unchurched*. Abingdon Press, Nashville, Pg 29-20

#### 4. *The Post Quarantine Church* by Thomas S Rainer

This book was recently read by our church leadership. Each chapter is presented as a Challenge.

#### **Challenge 4: Take Prayer to A New and Powerful Level**

Acts 1:14: They all joined together constantly in prayer along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Prayer was not only important, but it was also a unifying force in the church.

Acts 2:42 ‘All the believers **devoted themselves** to the Apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and **to prayer.**”

Thomas Rainer mentioned the roads built by the Roman Empire which were made for purposes of war, but also used to bring the gospel to the world.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the roadways of digital technology became a major conduit for prayer ministries to travel on.

Like the Roman Roads, digital technology can be used both ways – as an instrument of evil, but also for great good.

- \* Zoom prayer ministry
- \* Facebook
- \* email
- \* phone
- \* On-line ministry

Rainer suggested Practical Examples of Prayer Ministries,

- a. First, church leadership must be intentional about keeping prayer at the forefront of the congregation’s priorities.
- b. Second, church leaders should promote periodic prayer to re-stoke the fire.
- c. Third, members should be encouraged to *pray* and *wait*.

How do churches decide on opportunities to connect better with their communities? The process is simple but profound: Asked people in the community how the church can best help them. Listen. And act. Where prayer is the action needed, collect prayer requests, and Pray.

**Ask; Listen; Act.**

God Honors praying churches.