The development, implementation, and impact of an intercessory prayer ministry involving the pastoral and lay leadership of Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Atlanta, Georgia.

Jackson Yenn-Batah
Interdenominational Theological Center

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A Doctoral Dissertation
submitted to the faculties of the schools of the Atlanta Theological Association
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at Interdenominational Theological Center
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THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND IMPACT OF AN INTERCESSORY PRAYER MINISTRY INVOLVING THE PASTORAL AND LAY LEADERSHIP OF BUTLER STREET CHRISTIAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, ATLANTA, GEORGIA

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ABSTRACT

THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND IMPACT OF AN INTERCESSORY PRAYER MINISTRY INVOLVING THE PASTORAL AND LAY LEADERSHIP OF BUTLER STREET CHRISTIAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, ATLANTA, GEORGIA

by

Jackson Yenn-Batah

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This document addresses prayer ministry in the church as a facilitator in promoting spiritual and physical healing in the Body of Christ, and stresses that prayer is the weapon that God has given to the church to destroy the works of Satan and to establish the kingdom of God. The methodology for this model of ministry includes personal, leadership, and congregational preparation through scripture and prayer, the formation of prayer groups, and practical participation in intercessory prayer.

Qualitative analytical research and review revealed after a period of three months that prayer ministry in church is key to spiritual renewal both within and outside the church, and a source of power for effective ministry.
DEDICATION

I dedicate this doctoral dissertation to Senior Bishop Nathaniel L. Linsey and his wife, Mae Linsey, of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. Their gifts of faith, sacrifice, and prayer inspired me to a higher level of ministry in the church.

J. Y. B.
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To Rev. Dr. Anthony M. Alford Sr., pastor of Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, for his gracious consent to have me use his church as a site for my ministry project, for his affirmation of trust and his kind embrace of both the person and project, and for the immeasurable spiritual, moral, and financial support that he gave me.

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To my sons—Samuel and Andrew—I offer a sincere heartfelt “Thank you” for allowing me to stay away from them in order to complete this project.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The author of this dissertation is an ordained minister of the Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church from Ghana, West Africa. He united with the Butler Street CME Church in Atlanta, Georgia in July 1996 while studying at Phillips School of Theology of the Interdenominational Theological Center.

Serving as one of the associate pastors, he quickly observed that Butler Street CME Church is involved in many ministries. To name a few, there is ministry to the homeless in Atlanta; ministry for persons living with HIV/AIDS; missionary food pantry which distributes food to needy families; ministry to the sick and shut-in; ministry to the Hughes Spalding Children’s Hospital; ministry to children, youth, women, and men; Bible study ministry; van ministry, etc. No less than twenty ministries exist in the church.

The Ministry Issue

Surprisingly, there was no prayer ministry that would support not only the active ministries of the church, but also the members through strong group intercessory prayer. What disturbed this writer most was the fact that there was no mid-week prayer meeting. This does not imply that prayer was not taking place in the church. Indeed, prayer was integrated into the overall activity of the church
and there were individual members of the church who devoted themselves to praying for the church. Some of these individuals belong to the informal prayer structure of the church. The history of the Butler Street CME Church reveals that as early as the 1950s, there was a “Prayer Band” led by the late Rev. Chestina W. Delaney who joined the church in March 1950\(^1\) and started this prayer ministry in her home to pray for the sick and shut-in, the needs of the church and for the community.

Later in the mid-1990s, the Disciple Bible Study Program was introduced into the church by the Rev. Dr. Anthony M. Alford, Sr. The program introduced the participants to a systematic weekly prayer discipline that gave each member of the Disciple Bible Study Program an opportunity to pray for members in the program and for the needs of the church.

In addition, each year during the Pentecost season, the church involves the congregation in a week of fasting and prayer. During the Lenten season, the church produces a forty-five day Prayer Calendar and Lenten meditation booklet to guide the congregation in prayer and meditation.

Clearly, these examples support the fact that an informal prayer structure existed in the church. But the problem was that no formal prayer group made up of a number of people committed to praying daily for the church’s ministries, its activities, and its members, was in place. Normally, the purpose of such a prayer

\(^{1}\)Butler Street CME Church, *Souvenir Program*, May 1968, 15.
support group is to nurture and support the body of Christ through prayer and to pray daily for specific ministries and activities of the church. In this context, the mid-week prayer meeting becomes important both to members of the prayer support group and the church as they come together to pray on a regular basis.

Coming from Ghana, the writer had some definite assumptions about prayer. The most basic was that prayer meetings are essential and are of primary importance. In Africa and in many other parts of the world where Christians are persecuted and abused, the prayer meeting is the centerpiece of the church’s life. Everyone comes to prayer meeting, whether she or he belongs to the church. The meeting often lasts long into the night, and it is not unusual for believers to arise daily before sunrise to pray together for the work of the church. As the writer discovered in many of the churches that he visited in the United States of America, there was nothing like the prayer meetings he was accustomed to in Africa. There they pray and worship the Lord; they stay and wait upon God; they shed tears; they cry for guidance and direction; they present the list of the sick, the poor, and those in need; they pray for the pastor and the congregation and they intercede for a miracle.

The question that the writer kept asking is: “What is happening to prayer meetings in American churches?” He discovered, after studying the prayer life of some churches for a couple of years, that even in churches that have prayer meetings in their schedules, anything happens but prayer. There are
announcements, singing, preaching, but few prayers. It is understandable that individuals pray on their own for matters affecting the church and that each Sunday the pastor prays the pastoral prayer, but the question remains: “What is the justification for not coming together every week apart from Sunday just to pray in a group for at least an hour?” Even though the researcher is sensitive to and appreciates the different cultural norms that influence the practice of the Christian faith in different countries, it must be pointed out that in Africa and other countries where churches have strong formal prayer structures, people come together on a regular basis to pray. Unfortunately, it seems this is not the case with some churches in the United States of America.

The researcher is convinced that neither the presence of an informal nor formal prayer structure in the church should be mutually exclusive of each other. Both are needed. However, there is the need for more emphasis to be placed on the importance and the role that formal prayer structures play in unifying and nurturing the body of Christ. Clearly, the history of the early church affirms that when it comes to praying together regularly, it cuts across all geographical and cultural barriers. Therefore, addressing the problem of the absence of formal prayer structures and prayerlessness in most churches today becomes an urgent task for the church.
The Intent of the Project

As this researcher continued to serve at Butler Street CME Church, the need for such a ministry became very urgent in the light of the experiences through which the church was going. Before it became clear to him that God was calling him to lead a prayer ministry in the church, he had been challenged in the light of his experiences to investigate the causes of prayerlessness in most churches.

It seems to the researcher that our prayerlessness as a church is attributed to a false sense of self-sufficiency. The church has become like the church in Laodicea. That was the church that said of itself, “I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing” (Rev. 3: 17). Jesus, however, had a different opinion: “You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.” And worst of all, Jesus saw himself as standing outside the church, not inside; knocking on the door, asking to enter: “Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me” (Revelation 3: 14-22 NRSV).

To pray would be to open the door. Unfortunately, our sense of self-sufficiency paralyzes the hand that would turn the knob. Secularization has become our worst enemy. It is the process by which things like prayer are losing their practical social significance. It is the root of most of our difficulties with prayer. For many of us there is a lack of confidence that something like prayer can actually get anything done. Therefore, since our lives are full of things to be done, prayer
naturally gets pushed to the edges of the day. It is very unfortunate that the logic of secularization makes us over-committed and so full of blind activity that we have become too busy and too tired to pray.

Along with secularization, American individualism has also taken its toll. It is apparent that because the churches fancy themselves self-sufficient, they have pushed their members to share the same conceit. Many of us like our lives to be self-contained. As a result, we believe that the prayer meeting is unnecessary as long as we are praying in our own homes on our own time. Yet what is missed is the biblical foundation for prayer.

If it is true that “our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12), then we must pray, mustn’t we? Can there be any other way to reach a lost world without prayer? Do we really think our plans and programs can bring down strongholds of spiritual evil in heavenly realms? Can we really see church growth without consistent prayer in the church?

Yet this is the mistake many church leaders make. We think nothing of spending days planning programs or spending thousands of dollars to hire consultants to help us do it, but blanch at the thought of spending even a whole night to wait on the Lord to show us what to do. It is this unfortunate situation that caused this researcher to initiate the Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal
Church's prayer ministry in October 1998. Even though this ministry continues to have positive impact upon the life of the church, the writer believes that there is still an opportunity for further involvement of the pastoral and lay leadership of the church in intercessory prayer ministry for effective ministry within and outside of the church.

Therefore, the ministry issue is framed through the following question:

**How can the development and implementation of an intercessory prayer ministry, involving the pastoral and lay leadership of the church, who come together regularly under the power of the Holy Spirit in prayer of petition and intercession, impact the life of the Butler Street CME Church and its ministries?**

In light of this, the intent of this project is to develop, implement, and measure the impact of intercessory prayer ministry on the life of the pastoral and lay leadership in the church, and to explore how this process might empower not only the Butler Street CME Church but also the church universal to do effective ministry in the twenty-first century.
CHAPTER II
THE STUDY CONTEXT

Historical Summary of Butler Street CME Church

The Butler Street Colored Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in the year 1882 by Rev. S. E. Poe, who assembled a group of children and organized a Sunday school on Gilmer Street in the northeast section of Atlanta.¹ The John L. Grant Estate donated property on the corners of Butler Street and College Avenue and a wooden frame edifice was built at the present church site with Rev. A. J. Stinson as pastor.

Because of rapid growth in church membership and a desire for a better church, the wooden edifice was torn down prior to 1920 and the present church was erected under the leadership of Rev. H. W. Evans. During the building program, the Butler Street family held joint service with Holsey Temple CME Church on Boulevard.

The Butler Street CME Church has provided the leadership for the organization of three existing churches. In 1901, Holsey Temple CME Church was organized by Mrs. L. H. Holsey. In 1940, a major division took place which resulted

in establishing the congregation of Denson Temple Free Methodist Church. On August 2, 1953, Westside CME Church was organized in the home of Rev. Chestina Delaney, a member of Butler Street CME Church, under the pastorate of R. B. Shorts.²

Since 1882, the church has been led by many outstanding pastors and the membership has always consisted of many outstanding and professional lay persons. As a connectional church, the Butler Street CME Church was born out of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church. In the middle of the nineteenth century, the issue of slavery in the United States of America created a schism in the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. This resulted in the division of the church into the Methodist Episcopal Church (North) and the Methodist Episcopal Church (South), which led to greater consideration of the role of blacks in the church, whether free or enslaved. In 1866, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS), was petitioned by its African-American members for a separate church that would be governed by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.³ At the 1870 General Conference of the MECS, the committee that had studied the question at the previous conference of 1866 recommended that the black members be constituted as an independent church, rather than a subordinate group. Thus the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church was born on December 16, 1870 in Jackson,

²Ibid.

Tennessee. It was organized by forty-one delegates from eight Colored Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal, South. At that meeting, the delegates chose a name for their new church, and together with the organizational structure and ordination requirements of American Methodism, adopted the *Articles of Religion*. Two bishops, William H. Miles and Richard H. Vanderhorst, were elected and the doctrines and polity of the new church were firmly established. Thus, a new branch of Methodism was born among the followers of John Wesley and in the Church of Jesus Christ.⁴

In 1954 at the General Conference of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, held in Miami, Florida, the Conference approved a resolution to change the name "Colored" to "Christian" in order to do away with the inconsistency of having a racial designation in the name of the church. As a result, the Butler Street Colored Methodist Episcopal Church became known as the Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

**The Butler Street CME Church Today**

The Butler Street CME Church is now one of Atlanta's oldest and best-known churches. The ecological impact on the church is very interesting and challenging. The church sits just on the fringe of downtown Atlanta. Across the street from the church is the largest public hospital, Grady Memorial Hospital. A few blocks from the church is a large public housing complex known as Grady Homes. This complex

houses nearly fifteen hundred residents with a large portion of them being youth and children. Within one-half mile of Butler Street there are two elementary schools and one middle school. A careful study of the demographic composition of the membership of this church shows that it draws only a few members from this community. The largest number of her membership commute to church from outside the community. Nevertheless, in recent times the church has begun to initiate programs that will focus on drawing membership from this community.

The total membership of the church is about three hundred and fifty (350) on roll with an average Sunday church attendance of two hundred (200) members. The pastor, the Rev. Dr. Anthony M. Alford, Sr., was appointed in 1995 by the presiding bishop of the Sixth Episcopal District, Bishop Othal H. Lakey.

The Challenges Facing the Church

To study the challenges facing any particular church, there is always an appropriate method to apply. One of the best methods recommended for use today is outlined in the book, *Study Congregations: A New Handbook*, edited by Nancy T. Ammerman et al. In this book, six principles of congregational study are mentioned: theology, ecology, culture, process, resource, and leadership.\(^5\) The researcher first studied this book and participated in a course offered at Interdenominational Theological Center in congregational study in selected Black churches in Atlanta. Using the experience gained and a questionnaire designed for

congregational study, the researcher studied the Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. In doing so, he discovered many challenges facing the church. Even though the researcher does not intend to go into details, the following excerpt culled from one of the write-ups of the current pastor, presents one of the fundamental challenges facing the church today: "Within the Butler Street CME Church family, young adults active in the congregation can be counted on one hand. There are several young adults whose names are on the roll but in most instances they are not active in the church. In the area of Christian Education and nurture, the Sunday school is populated largely of adults and that being centrally a class taught in the sanctuary."⁶

In addition to the problems of lack of active participation of the youth in the programs of the church and the low attendance in the church's Sunday school, there were other challenges facing the church. A major challenge was how to renew and revitalize the congregation through a new understanding that theology can be used not only to help a congregation meet change in a way more faithful to their traditions and aspirations, but also proactively and prophetically. Another challenge was how to make the congregation understand that it exists in relation to an environment and that it was necessary to begin to formulate new programs to attract people living in the community in which it is situated. By far the most challenging problem facing the church was how to mobilize its resources for

effective ministry. The church is blessed with great membership, financial and capital resources but lacks physical space to expand on its programs and ministries.

Notwithstanding these challenges facing the church, it continues to engage in a host of ministries in order to meet the many different needs of the community. Prominent among these are the ministries to the homeless, the hungry, and the sick. In addition, the church continues to support its members through financial aid, counseling ministry, children's ministry, youth ministry, and van ministry. Recently, the following were added to the many ministries already provided by the church: the Disciple Bible Study, Hour of Power, music and drama, after-school program for children living in the community, and a health ministry.
CHAPTER III

FRAMING THE ISSUE

The proposed question for research is: How can the pastoral and lay leadership of Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal Church develop and implement an Intercessory Prayer Ministry which supports the other active ministries of the church? Specifically, is there a correlation between a strong intercessory prayer ministry involving the pastoral and lay leadership of the church, and the success of the ministries undertaken by the church?

The hypothesis is that an effective intercessory prayer ministry involving the pastoral and lay leadership of the church will create a special bonding and spiritual awareness necessary to effect positive changes in the ministries of the church through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The researcher is persuaded that spirituality and intercessory prayer are keys for effective ministry in the new millennium. In an article entitled "Intercessory Prayer: A Spirituality for Modern Times," Dr. William E. Lesher, president of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, affirms this point when he writes: "I think of intercessory prayer as a particularly appropriate part of spirituality for modern times. Intercessory prayer functions spiritually like an interactive computer or
mobile phone. It can link us to God and bind us to one another in a lively ongoing network of care and support at any time, wherever we are.  

The point is that intercessory prayer is a spirituality for modern times that is necessary to cultivate in communities of faith today. We are aware of the problems we face daily in this world, and we want to be spiritually prepared but are often overwhelmed by the extent of the need and the complexity of the problems. This, perhaps, explains why we have difficulty in ministering effectively in the church.

It seems apparent to the researcher that a strong, disciplined practice of intercessory prayer as part of a personal and congregational life style is a practical, possible way to meet the spiritual needs of modern life and the challenges facing us in ministry. To overlook this would spell our doom.

Motivation for Research

Motivation for studying this question stems from the knowledge that the church itself is often the focus of struggle, conflict, and brokenness. In his book, Claiming All Things for God, George D. McClain explains that because the church is a community, especially chosen by God to name and unmask evil and to proclaim God's sovereignty, it is a prime target for evil's disruption and confusion. "The struggle, however," he says, "is waged in the shadow of Christ's victory over the

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powers of evil, sin, and death."\(^2\) The warning is that if pastors only lead crusades for social justice but fail to demonstrate conviction and faith in dealing with the tyrannies of church, the church can never achieve its growth potential.

This researcher’s motivation is therefore driven by the fact that if the clergy and laity are not encouraged to take a firm prophetic stand through prayer against those forces, powers, and principalities which stifle the church from within, the full emergence of the redemptive community would be thwarted and the ministries of the church would suffer. It is imperative, therefore, that emphasis be laid on the prophetic ministry of the church. "The task of prophetic ministry is to nurture, nourish, and evoke a consciousness and perception of the dominant culture."\(^3\) One way of achieving this is through intercessory prayer ministry that involves the total pastoral and lay leadership of the church. The driving force of this project, therefore, is to use intercessory prayer as a means to transform, liberate, and give personal empowerment to the leaders of the church so that they might actualize their full potential and realize human wholeness. When this is achieved, hopefully it will liberate the church and help the congregation experience growth.


Historical Background That Informs the Question

History is full of examples of how churches, individual Christians, prayer fellowships, and families involved in serious intercessory prayer have brought about changes in their lives. There are numerous testimonies about how God intervened in health issues, family problems, divisions in churches, social injustices to bring about positive change. For example, C. Peter Wagner in his book, Churches That Pray cites how the Christian Life Center, founded by Pastor Waymon Rodgers in Louisville, Kentucky in the early 1980s, used prayer to grow its membership.4

The Center, he said, grew well up to 500, but then took a nosedive and went back down to 200. The pastor became discouraged and began to look for another church. Then a word came from God: “I’ve called you to Louisville, and I’ll give you the keys to the city.” The key, Wagner said, turned out to be prayer.

Rodgers, the pastor, challenged seven (7) deacons to pray with him one (1) hour each day. He presented the need to the congregation and 100 of the 200 agreed to pray regularly for the church. The church turned around almost instantly. It grew to 2,000 then to 6,000 and became the center from which 55 new churches were planted in the state.

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Another example is found in Larry Dossey’s book, *Prayer Is Good Medicine*, which gives true stories of how people have allowed the power of prayer to help them deal with the challenges of daily life.\(^5\)

Dossey narrates how a friend named Matt had a roommate who turned out to be a paranoid schizophrenic. After spending some time in a mental health ward, the roommate checked himself out of the hospital. When Matt came home one day to find the roommate muttering to himself, he decided to give him space and went upstairs to lie down and read a book. Lying face down, Matt felt as if someone had punched him in his back. Actually, his roommate had stabbed him. Eventually he was able to call 911.

At the hospital, the initial prognosis was that Matt—in his late twenties—would never be able to walk, urinate normally, or engage in sex. After taking a knife in his spinal cord, he was paralyzed from the chest down. People prayed. Dossey asked his friends and co-workers to pray. Matt’s story was placed on an Internet prayer page. His friends and family prayed. The faith of all these people paid off. A year later, Matt was able to walk with the help of a brace on one leg. He could actually run, though awkwardly. Above all he also had full control of his urinary and sexual functioning. These testimonies affirm that prayer is a way of channeling our energy. The energy that is channeled in prayer becomes God’s

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energy which flows through us, and God uses our prayer as an opening for a creative intent far beyond our plans and purposes.

The other interesting factor is that scientifically, doctors in health institutions are beginning to recognize the power of prayer in bringing about healing in their patients. An article published in the *Journal of Religion and Health*, suggests that there is "an important and positive relationship of religious commitment and health, and that prayer can positively impact healing of physical and mental disease."\(^6\)

Recently in an article in *Jet* magazine (November 19, 1999), a study links prayer to recovery in heart patients. The report says, "heart patients who had someone to pray for them without their knowledge suffered 10% fewer complications,"\(^7\) according to the study. William S. Harris, a heart researcher and lead author of the study, observed 990 patients admitted during a year to the coronary unit of St. Luke's Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri. They were divided into two groups. In one, patients were prayed for daily by community volunteers for four weeks; the other patients did not have anyone assigned to pray for them. In addition, the patients, their families, and their caregivers were not informed of the study. The volunteers were told only the first names of the patients and asked to pray daily for their recovery.

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After four weeks, the prayed-for patients had suffered about 10% fewer complications, ranging from chest pains to cardiac arrest, the researchers reported in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* published by the American Medical Association. The findings suggest prayer might be an effective addition to standard medical care. There is no doubt, therefore, that history affirms that intercessory prayer can bring about positive change.

### Personal Background That Informs the Question

This researcher's personal history also informs this issue. In 1986 after studying in the United States of America, he was appointed the missionary supervisor of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church and assigned to the first church in Ghana. The first problem he encountered was antagonism from the lay leadership of the church for the simple reason that he did not belong to the dominant tribe that made up the membership. In view of this, every effort to win their loyalty was met with resistance. In order to overcome this barrier, the author decided to organize an intercessory prayer ministry in the church to pray for the needs of the members. This was the turning point of his ministry.

As we prayed together, the Lord began to work miracles in the life of the church. So strong was the impact of this prayer ministry that it changed the negative attitudes of the lay leadership, and within eight years the church grew to the extent that four new churches were established. These four churches in Ghana --Bethel CME Church, St. Paul CME Church, Grace Temple CME Church, and Bishop
Linsey CME Church--are now monuments of what an intercessory prayer ministry in the life of a congregation can do.

When this author arrived in the United States of America to study at Phillips School of Theology of Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC), he assumed that seminarians would wake up very early each morning to pray in groups. He was disappointed. Nothing like morning or evening group prayer meeting was held. Becoming concerned, he tried to organize such a prayer meeting at Phillips, but it did not materialize mainly because fellow seminarians did not understand the importance of such prayer meetings and gave all kinds of excuses for not attending.

Things, however, changed when the researcher was elected president of the Student Christian League (SCL)--the student government organization. One of the first things we did was to start early morning prayer meetings in the school chapel for one hour. At these prayer meetings, not only did we praise, worship, and adore the Lord, we also confessed our sins and interceded on behalf of the leadership, the faculty, staff, and students of ITC. As we progressed through the academic year, we were able to see changes take place in the institution in terms of grants received for the renovation of classrooms, computerization and updating of records and teaching procedures. Increased enrollment occurred as well as better working relationships among students, staff, and faculty.

During this time period, one of the female seminarians was admitted to the hospital with a very serious illness. Through the powerful intercessory prayers offered by this prayer fellowship and others in the community, she was totally
healed and returned to seminary to complete her studies. Serving as president of the SCL was a blessing indeed. Because we were always engaged in prayer, God moved mountains and opened doors for us. Such is the power of an intercessory prayer ministry.

**How the Issue Relates to the Writer's Present Model of Ministry**

In a paper presented to Dr. Stephen C. Rasor, director of the Doctoral Program at Interdenominational Theological Center, on February 1, 1999, entitled "The Theory of Ministry: Autobiographical, Theology, Critique, and Projections," this researcher pointed out that the present model of ministry from which he works is an Evangelist. Billy Graham defines an evangelist as "a person with a specific gift and a special calling from the Holy Spirit to announce the good news of the Gospel."9

The word "evangelist" means "one who announces the good news." It is listed as one of the gifts God has given to the Church in Ephesians 4:11, "He gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers."

An evangelist, therefore, according to Scripture, is an ambassador, a proclaimer, an advocate, an announcer of good news. His or her main assignment

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is to declare the Good News of Jesus Christ to the end that people may understand
God’s offer of salvation and respond in repentance, faith and discipleship.

To be an evangelist, one needs to be called by God, to be holy, to preach in
the power of the Holy Spirit, to labor in prayer, to magnify God’s name, to walk
by faith not by sight, to press on toward the mark, and to preach to the ends of the
world. These are the marks that have shaped this author’s model for ministry for
the past twenty-five years.

The fact is that this researcher was born into a family and tribe in Ghana that
used to worship ancestral spirits and regarded certain trees, stones, dwarfs, and the
river that runs through the village as gods. As he grew up in the family, he realized
at an early age of about three, that he had been assigned a god that he must grow
up to worship and to sacrifice to. But because he was very young, sacrifices were
often made to this god on his behalf for protection. He resented the idea of
worshiping this god and hated the sacrifices of goats and fowls made to this and
other gods for appeasement. He also hated to see amulets on his arms.

As a result of this resentment, one day the author cut off all the amulets and
charms from his arms and threw them away on the public incinerator. When this
was discovered, pandemonium broke loose in the village. It was believed that if the
amulets were not found, something disastrous would happen to him and the entire
village would suffer some form of disaster.

In order to avert this, the people of the village gathered in the author’s house
with frightened and mournful faces to search for the lost amulets in such a frenzied
spirit he had ever witnessed in his life. Eventually, the amulets were found in the evening, and sacrifices were made to thank the gods. However, this incident marked the author in the village as a very rebellious child who must be watched carefully in order to avert any disaster that he might bring upon the people.

While all eyes were on him, he had what he called providential grace when an uncle of his, who was a peace officer, arrived in the village to spend his annual leave. When the uncle was returning to post, he took the author away to live with him. This gave him the opportunity to escape from the village environment and the chance to attend school, for there was no school in this village.

As the researcher grew up, while attending school, he learned about the living God and the Lord Jesus Christ through the Anglican Church missionaries in Ghana, and received baptism after accepting Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. Thereafter, each time he visited his people in the village, his hatred for the gods mounted to the extent that he often felt like destroying the shrines of these gods.

By the time the author was fourteen years old he had lost his father and the uncle with whom he lived in mysterious circumstances. His older brothers took charge of the gods of the family. It was at this point that the author had the opportunity to confront them about this business of worshiping idols and ancestral spirits. When he did, it divided the family. Some felt he was showing disrespect to his ancestors and following a strange religion called Christianity. Others felt he was too young to understand the nature of these gods and should be given time to grow to understand the customs and beliefs of his tribe.
In the midst of this confusion, the author decided to separate himself from the family for some time in order to reflect upon what was happening to him. During this period of separation, he placed his trust in the Lord Jesus and drew very close to Him through Bible studies, prayers, and church services. By His grace, the author was able to finish grade school and joined the Army at the age of sixteen to serve in the infantry division.

While he was in the army, the author continued to live by the Word of God. During his third year of service in the Army, he had a vision in which the Lord said: "Jackson, I want you to serve me in the future but you need to start preparing now. Leave the Army and further your education in high school and I will show you what to do."

When the author received this vision, he argued with the Lord on all of the strong points about his need to remain in the Army. He enjoyed being in the Army. It gave him power, money, prestige, respect and a future. He thought, why should he leave? But as he argued with the Lord for almost six months after the vision, God finally confronted him one day to make a choice. God referred him to the book of Hebrews 11: 24-26: "By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered abuse suffered for the Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he looked to the reward." Day by day, this researcher was tormented by this passage. Finally, he realized that Moses took a step of faith and that he must also do the same if he
was to serve Jesus. So he gained a discharge from the Army and enrolled in high school. Since he had studied in the Army, he spent only three years instead of five years in high school to graduate.

It was during his high school years in Saint Stephens Secondary School that he met the late Bishop Peter Randolph Shy of the Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church of the United States of America who was in charge of the Ghana Annual Conference. Bishop Shy had a very special love for the author and regarded him as his son. He encouraged him to study hard and guided him with the Word of God until he received the call to preach. Later, he ordained the author as a deacon in the CME Church in Ghana. At this time, the author decided to attend Bible College and did enroll. While in Bible College, he served as evangelist for the CME Church until he graduated. Later he was ordained an elder and assigned to Beulah Temple Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

Beulah Temple CME Church was basically a church full of high school students because it was built as a chapel to serve the students of Christian Methodist Secondary School. The challenges he faced as a pastor were how to witness Jesus effectively to the students, how to give them guidance through the Word of God, and how to involve them in productive activities sponsored by the Church.

To overcome these challenges, the author had to rely upon some Christian organizations, counselors, and teachers of the school. This led him into serious evangelistic activities with “The Jesus Movement” of the Korle Bu Hospital in
Ghana, headed by Dr. Ampofo. This movement was made up of medical students, officers, nurses, and workers in the hospital with the primary goal of evangelizing youth in high schools. They did this by touring high schools in the country to witness Jesus Christ. Through the author's involvement with this group, they were able to witness effectively, not only to the students of Christian Methodist Secondary School, but also to many other students in Ghana.

Dr. Ampofo and Dr. Amoah were the most influential persons in this researcher's life. Both showed him what it meant to be a true evangelist. Even though they worked very hard in the hospital all day and night, as soon as they were off duty, they would send the members of the movement packing to go on the next crusade without any rest on their part. This researcher saw their commitment and passion to preach the Word of God to lost souls. He also saw their humility. In those days when some doctors and lawyers went about boasting about who they were, these humble servants of the Lord taught this researcher how to count his richest gain as a loss for the sake of Jesus and the Cross. What really impressed him was their passion for lost souls. These doctors would use every opportunity at their disposal to witness Christ. Their passion, devotion, and commitment to witness Christ was beyond this researcher's comprehension.

Nevertheless, his association with these doctors and "The Jesus Movement" led him into contact with Billy Graham of the United States of America, Oswald J. Smith of Canada, and other leading evangelists, both in Ghana and abroad. These
persons influenced the author's life and ministry and helped him identify

evangelism as his major model of ministry.

It was during this period that the Lord made it clear to the author that even
though his people worshiped ancestral spirits, God loves them and God created him
and put him into that family and that tribe in order that God could use him to bring
them to the knowledge of the living God and Jesus the Savior. The author realized
then that he had the duty to witness to his people. This gave him the opportunity
for reconciliation with his family after a long separation. Through crusades held in
the village, many came to know the Lord Jesus. Ever since, many more have
become Christians and now a church has been built for worship in this once remote
village.

The experiences in the life of this author illustrate how, at a young age, God
gave him spiritual awareness to resist the works of the devil. He was not afraid to
challenge the beliefs of his people which he thought were wrong; for the Word of
God speaks against idolatry, witchcraft, the worshiping of demons, idols of gold,
silver, bronze, stone, and woods . . . idols that cannot see or hear or walk and magic
arts (Galatians 5 and Revelation 9).

As a result of leaving his people to stay in another town, the researcher had
the opportunity to rely more on the Lord who loves him so much that He opened
doors for him and prepared him to minister to the same people he had turned his
back against. It also gave him the opportunity to shape his theological and
psychological grounding for ministry to all peoples.
In the midst of his pastoral work at Beulah Temple CME Church and evangelism through "The Jesus Movement," the Lord gave this author the opportunity to study in the United States of America at Texas College and the University of Texas at Tyler from 1980 to 1985. He returned to Ghana to serve as the missionary supervisor of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, a publisher for the Christian Council of Ghana, with the responsibility of producing Christian literature for the churches, evangelizing, training pastors, and establishing new missions for the church. To help with evangelism, he formed the International Gospel Association in 1991 to continue with his interest in evangelism.

The question then is: What motivates this author to be in ministry as an evangelist? His first motive is found in Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 5:14: "The love of Christ constraineth us." This author is convinced that the greatest act of love we can ever perform for another person is to tell about God's love for the person in Christ. It is not just an emotional feeling. It is a compassionate concern for them in their spiritual need, a concern which leads this researcher to act every moment of his life to save souls.

The other motive that he has is the sense of judgment. The Word of God says in Acts 17: 30-31, "that God . . . commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he ordained." There is a Judgement Day approaching and this author must obey his calling to announce the good news of the Gospel to everyone.
In view of this, he is not content to stay at one place to pastor, teach, and manage a church. He is called to preach to the ends of the world. Passion for souls is what constitutes the heart of this model for ministry. This is because the author's personal life and experience affirm that God first evangelized him in order that he might evangelize others.

Mindful of this, he has throughout the years evangelized in Africa, Europe, and the United States through preaching, teaching, tract distribution, published articles in journals and personal testimonies. No matter what else he does in ministry, the principal model of ministry that will continue to guide and shape his future ministry will be that of an evangelist. Not only will he always be inspired by the Word of God to evangelize, but he will also be inspired by the words of Fanny J. Crosby's hymn to save souls:

Rescue the perishing, Care for the dying,  
Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave;  
Weep o'er the erring one, Lift up the fallen,  
Tell them of Jesus the might to save.

Though they are slighting him, Still he is waiting,  
Waiting the penitent child to receive;  
Plead with them earnestly, Plead with them gently;  
He will forgive if they only believe.  

This model of ministry includes saving souls, dealing with hunger and poverty, and empowering people to live holistic lives.

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The issue we are dealing with is how to empower the pastoral and lay leadership of the church through a prayer ministry that focuses on intercessory prayer to bring about harmony and spiritual growth in the church. The question, then, is how does prayer ministry, and for that matter, an intercessory prayer ministry relate to the writer’s model as Evangelist? It is no gainsaying that the hardest work for Christ is winning souls. Soul winning does not come about without prayer. A good evangelist is one who cultivates a life of regular and faithful prayer and Bible study for spiritual growth and power for ministry. Prayer enables the evangelist to listen to God in such a way that he or she recognizes God’s plan for specific situations in ministry. In the quietness of prayer we are motivated to strive for spiritual unity. It trains us for a disciplined life style and offers joy and peace in the Holy Spirit to do the Holy Spirit’s work. Above all, through prayer we are led to identification with the crucified Lord and can conquer our egotistical self-realization through self-denial.

The hope of this researcher is that through this prayer ministry in the church, the lay leaders will conquer any egotistical self-realization that they cherish and be led to self-denial. When this happens, it will open the way for evangelism to take place and the church will be able to do effective ministry within and outside.

Jesus Christ is no doubt the greatest evangelist of all time. He had passion for God, for people, and believed that the gospel he embodied was powerful to change lives. As a result, prayer dominated His evangelistic efforts. He knew that prayer unlocked the power of the Holy Spirit to work in the lives of the
unregenerate, and so challenged His disciples to pray to the Lord of the harvest for more people to work in the harvest fields for souls (Matthew 9: 37-38). Some reflections on the prayer life of Jesus are discussed further in this paper but for now it is the conviction of this researcher that if we are able to effect intellectual and moral conversions in the church through intercessory prayer, our priorities will be set right and we shall be more effective in service to Christ. This is the contribution that this project seeks to make to the local congregation as well as to the Church Universal.
CHAPTER IV
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Normative Literature

Review of the normative literature reveals previous efforts at addressing the question of this dissertation project. From the biblical side, the significance of prayer in general and intercessory prayer in particular, is stressed both in the Old and New Testaments. Prayer, throughout the Bible, is depicted as a natural way of relating to God. Those who pray believe that it is a style of living as they share their life with God in prayer: thanking God, confessing their sins, and asking things of God, confident that God answers prayer.

As a result, the Old Testament records dozens of prayers in the form of prose offered by individuals to God in times of need. In addition to these prayers, the Old Testament also contains more structured, formal psalms and public prayers. Examples of these kinds of prayers can be found scattered throughout the Old Testament: Exodus 15, 32, 33; Deuteronomy 32-33; Joshua 17, 10; Judges 5-6; 1 Samuel 1-2; 2 Samuel 7; 22; 1 Kings 3, 8, 18, 19; 2 Kings 19; Ezra 9; Nehemiah 1, 9; Psalms; Daniel 2, 9; Jonah 2; and Habakkuk 3.

In 2 Chronicles, chapter 30, verse 27, the Bible records that “the priests and the Levites stood up and blessed the people, and their voices were heard; their
prayer came to his holy dwelling in heaven” (NRSV). This suggests that in the Old Testament, the priests and the Levites took prayer seriously and prayed for themselves and the people they represented. Other Old Testament characters that believed and practiced prayer were Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Elisha, Hezekiah, Job, David, Amos, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. These and others in the Old Testament used prayer not only to bring about religious, social, political, and economic changes in the society in which they lived, but also to affirm their faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

As we read through the New Testament, we discover that of all the writers, prayer is a central theme in Luke-Acts. In Luke, every moment of Jesus’ ministry is marked by prayer. No other Gospel writer so consistently highlights the prayer life of Jesus. The following examples illustrate our point: “And when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove” (Luke 3: 21-22, NRSV). Luke helps us to see that Jesus was a person of prayer: “He went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom” (Luke 4: 16). Sometimes Jesus seemed to pray alone while the disciples were with him (9:18) and sometimes he went aside and prayed all night (6:12). Another great moment of prayer came when Jesus took Peter, James, and John up on the mountain to pray (9: 28-36). “And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white” (9:29). For Jesus, breaking bread was always a holy moment never to be experienced without prayer. He prayed when he fed five thousand hungry people
with five loaves and two fish (9: 12-17). In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed (22: 41). Jesus prayed when he was crucified on the cross: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” (23: 34). Luke follows up this theme in the Acts of the Apostles.

In view of these examples in the life of Jesus and the disciples, the church must always remember that Christ says prayer can have limitless results (John, chapters 14-16). James tells us about healing as an answer to prayer, and about Elijah, who prayed for rain and was answered (James 5: 15-18). A careful reading of the Gospels also demonstrates that Jesus did not underestimate the power of Satan. He took the power of Satan seriously and so must the church be serious about the power of Satan.

The struggle against Satan is very real even though we know the final outcome. In this context, God mandates our involvement with him in the conflict of the kingdoms. In the struggle, prayer is the weapon and it is effective. Through prayer God empowers us (God’s people) toward achieving God’s purpose in bringing in God’s kingdom. This means there can be no authentic relationship with God or with any other human being without prayer. The mark of the power of the church is prayer (Acts 2: 41-42). The only way to the power and presence of the Holy Spirit is through prayer. In the early church, the spirit community could only work by the power of the Holy Spirit through prayer. The wonders and signs done by the apostles throughout the book of Acts were done through prayer. The following examples illustrate our point:
Acts 3: 1-10  Peter and John were going to the temple at the hour of prayer when they healed the crippled man at the Beautiful Gate.

Acts 4: 23-31  Peter was released from prison while the church was praying for his release.

Acts 4: 31-37  They spoke the word of God with boldness and shared all things as everyone needed and there was no person in need.

Acts 5: 1-42  They endured persecution through prayer.

Acts 6: 1-7  The church solved the problem of differences among them with prayer, elected their leaders in prayer and the word of God continued to spread, the number of disciples increased and many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

Acts 6 - 7  Stephen was arrested and stoned to death. He withstood all that suffering in prayer. It is recorded that while they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, “Lord do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this he died.

Acts 8: 4ff  The ministry of Philip was fruitful through prayer. Peter and John went to Samaria and prayed that people might receive the Holy Spirit. The Samaritans received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 9  Saul was converted, Ananias prayed for Saul and he received the Holy Spirit and his sight was restored.
Peter received a vision to go to the Gentiles at the rooftop. He went and the Gentiles were converted and they received the Holy Spirit.

Peter was delivered from prison as the church prayed fervently for him.

These examples show that the church cannot do without prayer. Through prayer we gain strength even to be obedient to our Lord. Throughout Paul’s missionary journey, he never ceased to pray and ask the church to pray for him. The dramatic release of Paul and Silas from prison through prayer is recorded in Acts 16: 16-34. Within the same experience, the Philippian jailer was first saved from committing suicide and he later received salvation from eternal death for himself and his household. They became believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul knew the power of prayer and lived in prayer. He recommended prayer to the church knowing that prayer is the weapon of the church.

The point is that there is power in prayer. The Apostle Paul writes that:

Indeed we live as human beings, but we do not wage war according to human standards; for the weapons of our warfare are not merely human, but they have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to obey Christ (2 Corinthians 10: 3-5).

The power of prayer can release the oppressed, and the weak can be made strong. Through the power of prayer, we can pull down the stronghold of Satan which militates against the work of the church and build a strong relationship with Jesus Christ. Therefore, the church must lead its members to pray with passion for power to destroy the works of Satan and to establish the kingdom of God.
Moreover, beyond prayer in general, “intercessory” prayer is highlighted as a special category of prayer. An article on intercessory prayer by Walter Wink deals with the problem of struggling against the powers that are either in the church or society. The article shows that the act of praying is itself one of the indispensable means by which we engage the powers. "It is in fact that engagement, where their secret spell over us is broken and we are re-established in a bit more of that freedom which is our birthright and potential." The writer stresses that when it comes to prayer and the powers, history belongs to the intercessors because we are able to co-create with God new things. This infers that intercession is spiritual defiance of what is, in the name of what God has promised. It affirms the role of intercessors as those who, together with God, create a desirable future through prayer.

In the book, *They Cried to the Lord*, Patrick D. Miller gives the form and theology of biblical prayer. The author contends that a careful study of the stories of the Old Testament attest to the fact that intercession in the Old Testament seems to belong primarily to figures who were leaders of family, tribe, and community, or who, in some fashion, represented God to the people. This is an interesting revelation, for we see examples of this in Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Amos, who prayed on behalf of others, the community as a

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whole or individuals within it. Since many stories and texts from the Bible confirm that intercession in ancient Israel was primarily a mediatiorial function associated with those who represented the people before God, it seems right for the pastoral and lay leadership of every church to take on the same role. What is important is the understanding that prayer is fundamental not only to personal life and interpersonal relations, but also to the community, because prayer transforms community into communion.

In intercession, we show that "we care for the members of the church and community and as we pray for each other and for the community, we build up and nurture our life together."\(^3\) We need to stress that as much as individual prayers are important, a careful study of the Bible shows that corporate prayer has a special place in God’s heart. We see examples of what God does when people come together to pray. Unforgettable is the prayer life of the young church in Jerusalem, as “all these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers,” and who, when threatened with persecution, “raised their voices together to God” for him to demonstrate his power against his enemies (Acts 1:14; 4:23-31 NRSV).

It was also in a congregational prayer meeting that a missionary movement was launched in Antioch: “While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have

called them.' Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off” (Acts 13: 1-13). All these examples show that intercessory prayer played an important role in the life of the disciples and the early Christians; therefore, the importance of this project.

**Empirical Literature**

From the empirical literature, several articles were discovered from both sociological and psychological writings that attempt to address the question. David M. Dippold in a dissertation entitled "Intercessory Prayer at Expressway Assembly of God," looks at how intercessory prayer affects the understanding, attitudes, and behavior of the congregants. William H. Swatos also writes in *Review of Religious Research* about the power of prayer and gives his observations. In that essay, Swatos stimulates investigations of prayer as a sociologically relevant variable that can be studied without abandoning such virtues as value neutrality. He argues that if we are to develop a sociology of prayer with the greatest theoretical potential, then "prayer must not be definitionally limited to its professionalized sense but in its pre-theoretical sense be seen as an activity open to everyone." Swatos suggests that hundreds of millions of people in the Western world pray sometimes in their lives and many often. Therefore, what this involves for them and for others must

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5Ibid.
be studied. This point is of great interest to this writer because it affirms the importance of the project that is undertaken in this program.

In the area of psychological writings on prayer, one of the best books written is by L. B. Brown, *The Human Side of Prayer: The Psychology of Praying*. In this book, the author gives a comprehensive treatment of the personal dynamics which take place in the act of praying. It carefully weaves theology, anthropology, and philosophy into an overall psychological framework. Three central threads run throughout the book. These are the many diverse forms of prayer, the large variety of explanations of the power of prayer, and the important role prayer plays in authentic human development. The fact that Brown not only affirms the role prayer plays in human development, but also the power of prayer, is of great interest to this research project. It is this power of prayer that is sought primarily to be explored in this study.

**Operational Literature**

In searching through operational literature, articles were found in the areas of homiletics and religious education relevant to this issue. In an article written by Jeremy Taylor, the need for intercessory prayer is stressed. The author says, "We, who must love our neighbors as ourselves, must also pray for them as for ourselves. This is called intercession; we are to remember our relatives, our family, our church, our benefactors, our creditors; not forgetting to beg pardon and charity for

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our enemies, and protection against them.\textsuperscript{7} Richard J. Foster, writing on how prayer energizes preaching, declares:

Prayer gets us in touch with God, causing us to swing like a needle to the pole star of the Spirit. It gives us focus, unity, purpose. We discover serenity, the unshakable firmness of life orientation. Prayer opens us to the subterranean sanctuary of the soul where we hear the voice of the Lord.\textsuperscript{8}

This statement is very significant because it suggests that until a congregation attains focus, unity, and purpose in the life of the church, there will always be mounting problems. The ultimate way out of this is through prayer--praying for the hurts and fears and anxieties of the congregation to mitigate these problems. For the truth is that in every church there are people who need pastoral care. There are people whose spouses have died, people whose marriages have been troubled, people who have been divorced, people who are changing or losing jobs, people facing problems raising their families, and people in ill health. The pastor alone cannot help these people. The lay leadership needs to be involved in prayer for these people, in addition to meeting their other needs. An intercessory prayer ministry which is suggested would be of great help indeed. To summarize, the collective review of the empirical, normative, and operational literature reveals sufficient data to justify a further in-depth search.


How the Literature Has Helped to Formulate the Ministry Issue

There are several ways in which the literature has helped to formulate the ministry issue; however, three will be addressed specifically. The first is the importance of group prayer. Literature affirms that in recent decades there has been a new development of small-group prayer activity, resulting in hundreds of people praying together in closely knit fellowship of spiritual adventure. New measurements for life are being found, as well as new experiences in spiritual comradeship. This is very important because any process that makes us increasingly aware of our true nature as spiritual beings linked to others serves the ultimate purpose for which the church exists.

Secondly, the sources that the researcher examined illustrate that a longstanding practice in the church and among the spiritually disciplined has been intercession for others through the use of prayer. This type of prayer is a demanding discipline, for it employs a faith that would see the other free from any harm or danger and blessed in every possible way. This means the art of praying for others and the church may be the most demanding form of prayer today. Hence the need for an intercessory prayer ministry in the church.

Thirdly, literature affirms that the praying church becomes a different church. The church that develops groups of persons dedicated to the discipline of prayer takes on a new vitality. The people in it see the marks of the power that the prayer attitude releases. Therefore, in recognition of the importance of group prayer and the difference that is seen in a praying church, all of the literature
helped to formulate the ministry issue and provided a theoretical basis for the viability of the dissertation project.

**What Is Missing from the Literature**

There are two things, in the opinion of this researcher, missing from the literature. First, there are few materials concerning the development of intercessory prayer ministries in churches. Worst of all, there is no documentation on the development and implementation of intercessory prayer ministry in all the books and articles that the researcher reviewed. The concern of the researcher is that even though there are many books and articles written about prayer, for example, *The Power of Prayer in a Believer's Life* (Hall 1993); *The Meaning of Prayer* (LeFevre 1995); *They Cried to the Lord* (Miller 1994); *Churches That Pray* (Wagner 1993); and *Prayer Is Good Medicine* (Dossey 1999), none of these books or the articles written about prayer address the issue of how to organize an intercessory prayer ministry in the church. Notwithstanding the fact that some of these books and articles present ideas, helps, and tips for pastors, individuals, families, and the whole church on prayer, they do not *per se* deal with the issue we seek to address in our dissertation project.

Secondly, there are fewer dissertations written on intercessory prayer ministry than other areas of ministry, such as evangelism, pastoral care, and church growth. A careful study of the *Index to Doctor of Ministry Project Reports* submitted
by reporting ATS schools from 1981 to 1998 published in “Research in Ministry”\(^9\) affirms the point that fewer dissertations have been written about intercessory prayer ministries. There are numerous dissertations written on prayer, focusing on spiritual growth, the Lord’s Prayer, prayer and healing ministries, prayer and evangelism, an examination of the prayer life of Jesus, but not many on intercessory prayer ministry. However, in 1990, Dal M. Turner developed a dissertation on intercessory prayer with emphasis on worship at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.\(^{10}\) This was followed by Robert W. Horner who in 1991, developed a comprehensive intercessory prayer program (not ministry) for Southside Baptist Church.\(^{11}\) The following year, 1993, Richard G. Melton led First Baptist Church in Spartanburg, South Carolina in developing an intercessory prayer ministry in his church.\(^{12}\) In 1996, David H. Robertson developed an intercessory prayer room in which trained intercessors could pray.\(^{13}\) Lastly, Michael David Hunter developed an intercessory prayer ministry at First Baptist Church in Screven, Georgia to


\(^{10}\)Ibid., 1990, 120.

\(^{11}\)Ibid., 1992, 78.

\(^{12}\)Ibid., 1993, 84.

\(^{13}\)Ibid., 1996, 100.
encourage members of a local congregation to become active in intercessory prayer ministry.¹⁴

Yet it is very unfortunate that for nearly twenty years now only five dissertation projects dealt with the subject of intercessory prayer ministry in the church. This explains why there is little literature or documentation on intercessory prayer ministry in the church. Our attempt, therefore, to develop and implement an intercessory prayer ministry focusing on the pastoral and lay leadership in the church is much needed.

**How the Literature Informs the Approach to the Issue**

From the literature survey, one key idea emerges which informs the approach to the ministry issue. The idea is that nothing but intense-believing prayer can address the spirit of worldliness we see today. The challenge is how to use intercessory prayer ministry to mitigate this spirit of worldliness. Therefore, the relevant questions are: Why should the researcher do this ministry? How can it be best accomplished? What is the purpose of this ministry? and How would it impact the congregation? The literature has clearly helped to focus meaningfully on the ministry project in these ways.

CHAPTER V

OUTLINING THE PROJECT

The Title of the Project/Dissertation

The title of the dissertation is: The Development, Implementation, and Impact of an Intercessory Prayer Ministry Involving the Pastoral and Lay Leadership of the Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Atlanta, Georgia. This title sets three limits to the study. First, the research is limited to developing an ongoing intercessory prayer ministry at Butler Street CME Church. Second, the method is to involve the pastoral and lay leadership in the process of implementation; and third, to evaluate the impact of intercessory prayer on the personal lives of the participants and the life of the church.

The title contains four key elements--"intercessory prayer," "pastoral leadership," "lay leadership," and "ministry." In this project, the meaning of intercessory prayer is the act of interceding in prayer and petition on behalf of others. It is the means by which we present the needs of others to God. Gordon P. Wiles’ understanding of intercessory prayer undergirds the researcher’s definition. “Intercessory prayer is namely the supplications by which Paul
presented the needs of others to God, rather than for the thanksgiving by which he gratefully recounted God’s gifts to them.\textsuperscript{31}

Pastoral leadership means the pastor and associate pastors who care for the spiritual life of the congregation. Lay leadership is the term used for the officers of the church. These are the elected officers of the church who are not members of the ordained clergy. Ministry in this context means the act of serving.\textsuperscript{2} By this definition, the researcher introduces intercessory prayer as a ministry in the church. This ministry will pray for the spiritual and physical needs of the congregation in particular and the world at-large.

**How the Researcher Addresses the Issue**

The act of ministry that this researcher proposes to carry out has one objective: to develop an ongoing intercessory prayer ministry at the Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church. The project will be executed in three phases.

Phase One will involve a three-week training of a group of fifteen people, consisting of the pastoral and lay leadership, to equip them to become the nucleus for the intercessory prayer ministry. The goal during this phase is to maintain a


daily journal in which the researcher will record his feelings, observations, reflections, reactions, and conversations with the participants.

A second goal is to encourage the participants to take a pre-test that the researcher will administer and ask the participants to keep a journal of their observations, reflections, feelings, reactions, and conversations with each other. The objective is to find out the state of their spiritual life before the program and to measure the same after the program. During this phase the researcher will prepare literature on prayer in general and intercessory prayer in particular, and share it with the group. This literature will define prayer, reflect on its theology, analyze its practical application, examine obstacles to effective prayer life, and above all, the researcher will teach them what is an intercessory prayer. He will also use this period to teach them how to become an effective intercessor.

Phase Two will involve the group in practical intercessory prayer. A room will be secured for intercessory prayer during the next five weeks. In phase two, the process will involve short Bible study sessions relating to prayer, meditation, and praying for actual needs of the church, i.e., the pastors, leaders, members and their families, the sick and shut-in, the community, and the state. The overall objective is to enhance the spirituality and prayer life of the group and to see how this will impact the intercessory prayer ministry and other ministries of the church.

Phase Three, which is the last phase, will attempt to increase the number of people in the intercessory prayer ministry. The participants will be asked to invite their friends, relatives, and other church members to participate in a weekly
intercessory prayer meeting in the church in order to renew their prayer life. The goal of this phase is to involve the congregation and to sustain an ongoing intercessory prayer ministry that will be guided by the trained intercessors. This phase will last four weeks after which the researcher will evaluate the impact of the project.
CHAPTER VI
THE MINISTRY PROJECT

Developing the Model

The first phase of the ministry project involved more than fifteen persons comprised of the pastoral and lay leadership of Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church in a three-week intercessory prayer ministry training. The objective was to equip the participants for effective prayer ministry. To achieve this, it was necessary for the researcher to prepare the ground for such a ministry to begin in the church.

Sharing the Vision of Prayer Ministry

Knowing that to start a ministry in this church, it must first be approved by the pastor and the Board of Christian Education, the first thing that the researcher did was to invite the senior pastor, Reverend Dr. Anthony M. Alford Sr., to share the ministry issue and the vision of the prayer ministry with him, and to seek his approval to initiate such a ministry in the church (see Appendix A). The pastor’s response was very positive. He was very excited about such a ministry and gave his full support in terms of helping the researcher to gain the support of the entire membership of the church.
To achieve this, the researcher was invited to share the vision of this ministry with members of the Board of Christian Education of the church at a retreat. During the presentation, the researcher shared the vision of the prayer ministry with the members of the board. It was explained that through this prayer ministry Butler Street CME Church would have constantly operative a dynamic prayer dimension in the church to support the pastor, leaders, members, and the larger prayer needs of the community and the world. The researcher also explained that the mission of the prayer ministry would be to provide biblical teachings on prayer that would help members form the habit of daily Bible study and prayer to empower them to grow spiritually and become effective disciples of Jesus Christ. In addition, the researcher shared with them the three phases of the ministry project: (1) prayer seminar and training, (2) practical participation in group prayer, and (3) evaluation of the prayer ministry after a certain period. Before presenting the Board’s response, below is a complete report made to the Board. Initially, the ministry issue was identified and discussed: “How can the pastoral and lay leadership at Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal Church develop and implement an intercessory prayer ministry which supports the outreach and active ministry of the church?” After the discussion the researcher outlined what he proposed to do about the issue. The process involves:

a. Inviting the pastoral and lay leadership of the church to form an intercessory prayer ministry;
b. Sharing with them the biblical and theological basis for intercessory prayer ministry in the church;
c. Teaching them what is an intercessory prayer; and
d. Involving them in practical intercessory prayer meetings, i.e., praying for actual needs of the church.

The overall objective of this process is to enhance the spirituality and prayer life of the group, and to see how this will impact the various ministries of the church.

It was important for the researcher to discuss the criteria for choosing the persons for this ministry. He explained that he preferred to work with the pastor, the associate pastors, lay leaders, and selected interested members of the church. Therefore, the criteria for choosing the participants are: (1) one must be a pastor, associate pastor, leader of one of the organizations in the church to ensure that every organization in the church is represented; and (2) these persons should be interested in prayer and have time to commit to intercessory prayer. In setting these criteria and ensuring that persons meet this requirement, the researcher believed that if these leaders of the church are spiritually empowered, they might be able to effect positive change in the church through prayers, and lead the church to spiritual and numerical growth.

Lastly, the researcher discussed the duration of the project with the members of the Board of Christian Education. The project, he explained, was to begin in January 2000 and end by April 2000. After answering questions from board members, the board graciously approved the researcher's proposal and gave him
permission to initiate an intercessory prayer ministry in the church. With this approval, the researcher was ready to develop the prayer ministry.

**Preparing the Ground for Prayer Ministry**

Before initiating phase one of the project, the prayer seminar and training, the researcher ensured that certain things were in place for such a ministry to occur. There were questions: Where will the group meet to pray? How would the participants get the congregation to submit prayer requests? On paper? On the telephone? On special prayer request forms? Do we have prayer request receptacles in which prayer requests would be placed for the attention of the participants? How would the received prayer requests be sent to members of the intercessory prayer ministry in a timely manner in order not to create any lapse or loss of time in acting upon the prayer requests? With these questions guiding the researcher’s steps, the first action was to secure the sanctuary of the church and a day of the week for prayer meeting. The researcher was allowed to utilize the existing request boxes to collect prayer requests. However, there were no prayer request forms for the congregation to use. Therefore, the researcher suggested to members of the congregation to write down their prayer requests on a slip of paper, identifying the name of the person making the request, the person(s) for whom prayer was requested, the nature of the request; deposit them in the prayer request boxes. At this time, the researcher felt the need to develop a proper prayer request form for use in the church.
Registration of the Prayer Ministry Members

In order to recruit interested persons to initiate the prayer ministry, the researcher wrote a letter of invitation explaining that the Butler Street CME Church was planning to develop and implement an intercessory prayer ministry involving the pastoral and lay leadership of the church (see Appendix B). The ministry is designed to support the ministries and members of Butler Street Church in prayer. With this explanation, the researcher appealed in the letter to all the pastoral and lay officers of the church to become a member of this intercessory prayer ministry. Forms were made available for interested persons to complete with their name, address, telephone number, and to indicate days available for prayers. Once the invitation letters were sent, it was time to publicize the prayer ministry.

The senior pastor was the first to announce the ministry to the congregation during Sunday worship service on January 23, 2000. He spoke positively about the prayer ministry and encouraged the congregation to participate and support the ministry. The result was that within two weeks more than thirty members of the church registered to join the prayer ministry. The composition of the membership of the prayer ministry was awesome. It included members of the ministerial staff, choir members, leaders of the various boards of the church, and members of the church who were simply interested in praying for the church.

Once the registration process was completed, the researcher turned his attention to developing a paper on the theology of prayer. In the paper he reflected on the theology of prayer, analyzed its practical application, examined
obstacles to effective prayer life, and explained what is an intercessory prayer (see Appendix C). He also developed a second paper on prayer ministry, addressing questions such as: What is a prayer group? How can a prayer group be effective? What are the characteristics of a sound prayer fellowship? Are there any strict disciplinary rules for members of the prayer group? Why do we need an intercessory ministry? What is your response to God's call for you to become an intercessor (see Appendix D)? A survey questionnaire was developed by the researcher seeking background information about the participants and a confidential spiritual questionnaire was developed for members of the intercessory prayer ministry (see Appendixes E and F).

Once these questionnaires were completed, a date for the first phase of the project, “Prayer Seminar and Training,” was set for January 2000. Because of adverse weather conditions involving storms, rain, and snow, the date was changed. The training, therefore, was rescheduled to begin March 25, 2000 and end on April 15, 2000.

**Implementing the Model**

**Phase One: Prayer Seminar and Training**

The Butler Street CME Church held the prayer seminar and training in the conference room of Phillips School of Theology on the campus of Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, Georgia on Saturday, March 25, 2000 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. There was a total of 23 participants present—nineteen women and four men. Sixteen registered members were not
present because they had traveled with the youth of the church to attend a youth retreat. These persons were later trained during intercessory prayer meetings for three weeks.

The seminar held on March 25, 2000 was opened with morning meditation led by Sister Barbara P. Carpenter. The group was led in singing, Bible reading, meditation, and prayer.

The seminar focused on two areas. The first area was led by the researcher in addressing the purpose and objective of the seminar: "What is a prayer ministry and why is prayer important in individual lives as well as in the church?" The second area involved participants in group discussions centered on answering various questions/issues on prayer. Participants were divided into five groups. Each group had a leader and was asked to address one question/issue on prayer.

Group I was led by Sister Eloise Walker and addressed the question: "Why should we pray?"

Group II was led by Sister Nola Walker and addressed the question: "What should we pray for?"

Group III was led by Rev. Valencia Jackson and focused on "How to pray and receive answers."

Group IV was led by Brother Leo Pinkett and focused on "Hindrances to prayer."

Group V, led by Sister Gladys Thornton, discussed "When and where to pray."
To help in group discussions, each group was assigned to a special location within the conference room and given copies of the paper on prayer developed by the writer to guide them in their study and discussions. The purpose of this process was to help participants identify a scriptural basis for prayer and to share their prayer experiences with each other. The process was also designed to help them come to a common conclusion and provide examples of biblical justification for praying. Each group was asked to give a report to the larger group of participants concerning their assigned question/issue. To help clarify any misunderstandings or questions on prayer, a period was provided for “questions and answers.” Lastly, an intercessory prayer was offered for participants, their families, their church members, leaders, and the community. Following the announcements, the benediction was pronounced to close the seminar.

**Summary of the Content of the Prayer Seminar**

The purpose of the seminar was to involve participants in studying the biblical justification for having an intercessory prayer ministry. To achieve this, the writer helped participants to reflect on the theology of prayer, analyze its practical application, examine obstacles to an effective prayer life, and explained what is intercessory prayer. The objective was to equip participants for an effective prayer ministry.

The participants were instructed to keep a personal journal to record their learning and practical experiences of prayer for reflection. All participants were pre-tested in order to discover their spiritual maturity level at the beginning of the
project, and were reminded that there would be a post-testing at the end of the project to determine, in addition to other evaluation processes, the effectiveness of the project.

Speaking on the importance of prayer, the researcher explained that there are many reasons why we should pray, but the most important reason is that God insistently commands it in the Bible. When we pray for ourselves and for others, our spiritual life is strengthened and power is set loose in the lives of those for whom we pray. Praying creates in us an awareness of God's continuing presence in our lives and creates in us an attitude of praying without ceasing and listening to God without ceasing.

Using the Gospel According to Luke, the researcher was able to show the participants how every moment of Jesus's ministry was marked by prayer. In fact, Jesus's teachings about prayer were a central part of his ministry. Participants were helped to understand that in prayer we change our posture from reasoning to trusting, from thinking to conversing, from self-oriented meditation to communicating with God, from self-reliance to trusting in God, from me-centered to God-centered. This means that in prayer we are linked to God through the Holy Spirit; thus we reach beyond our own power and spiritual possibilities open up. This is why intercessory prayer is very important. The Bible teaches that profound prayer for others has great power (James 5: 13-18). This is the reason for the prayer ministry: to pray for others including our church members and anyone in need of prayer.
The researcher reminded the participants about the historical fact about prayer as recorded in the Bible.

Prayer has already divided seas and rolled up flowing rivers, it has made flinty rocks gush into fountains, it has quenched flames of fire, it has muzzled lions, disarmed vipers and poisons, it has burst iron gates and recalled souls from eternity. Prayer has bridled and chained the raging passions of men and destroyed vast armies of proud, daring, blustering atheists. Prayer has brought one man from the bottom of the sea and carried another in a chariot of fire to heaven.¹

He encouraged each participant to become a faithful prayer intercessor. A brief evaluation of the seminar showed that it was very effective and highly successful. Each participant departed revived and joyful. During the next three weeks the researcher met the participants in the sanctuary to reinforce what was learned, and to train those who could not attend this seminar.

**Phase Two: Practical Involvement in Intercessory Prayer**

The second phase of the project dealt with the practical involvement of each member of the prayer ministry in intercessory prayer. The duration was five weeks. It began on Thursday, April 20, 2000 and ended on Thursday, May 25, 2000. The objective of this phase of the project was to enhance the spirituality and prayer life of the group and to measure the impact of the prayer ministry on the life of the church.

**Procedure for Practical Involvement**

The practical involvement of each member of the prayer ministry was on three levels. Members of the ministry were divided into five groups of seven members each. Each group was assigned a prayer captain as well as an assistant captain by the researcher. The captains were instructed to be in touch with members in their group, encourage them to pray always about assigned topics, relay to members of the group any emergency prayer request received, and to encourage each group member to attend prayer meetings at church as well as prayer retreats. In addition, each prayer ministry group was assigned a special focus to pray for in addition to other prayer requests that might be sent to them by their captain. The following are the various groups, captains, and prayer focus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP I</th>
<th>PRAYER FOCUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nola Walker, captain</td>
<td>The pastor, ministerial staff, church officers, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson Yenn-Batah, assistant captain</td>
<td>church families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wandra Adderley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celestine Adderley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger Walker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joyce Johnson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leo Pinkett</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP II</th>
<th>PRAYER FOCUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jean Lynn, captain</td>
<td>The sick and shut-in, the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Grier, assistant captain</td>
<td>elderly, children, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie Mae Bennett</td>
<td>youth of the church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte Yenn-Batah</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esther Stovall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gladys Thornton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leola Lynn-Hatcher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GROUP III
Janett Murray, captain
Lillian Wright, assistant captain
Debra G. Alford
Valencia Jackson
Audria Meredith
Adesina Tewogbade
Joan Sims

GROUP IV
Barbara P. Carpenter, captain
Anita Wright, assistant captain
Helen Morgan
Mildred Greenhill
Celestine Cooper
Mary Turntine
Sylvia Roberts

GROUP V
Eloise Walker, captain
Sallie Anderson, assistant captain
Irene Wooten
Emma Hobbs
Sam Hobbs
Dorothy Pinkett
Forrest Stovall

The Practicality of the Prayer Ministry

Earlier the researcher mentioned how each member of the prayer ministry functions in the ministry. The researcher said members were involved on three levels. The first level of their practical involvement in the intercessory prayer ministry is on the personal level. On this level, we encouraged each member to have personal meditation at home in the morning, in the evening to study the Bible, and to intercede in prayer for the church, the sick, and to focus on their group’s assigned prayer topics. We pointed out that they could do this alone or with
members of their families at home. The purpose was to encourage each member to have an ongoing prayer life at home.

The second level involved sub-group participation by each member of the prayer ministry. This meant that each of the five groups met to pray and to share fellowship with each other. Each prayer group functioned as a prayer cell and allowed group members to come together and pray. This level of participation was led by the prayer captains.

The third level of participation brought all of the five group members together on the second and fourth Thursday of each month to pray together in the temple. This level was always led by the director of the prayer ministry, the researcher. The prayer ministry met from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. to pray. During such meetings testimonies and praise reports were shared; prayer requests as well as names of the sick and shut-in needing prayer were highlighted and prayed for.

Prior to such meetings there was always a weekly prayer list compiled from prayer requests placed in the prayer request receptacles. This list was faxed or mailed to the prayer captains who, in turn, shared it with their group members. Thus, before members of the prayer ministry met each was aware of sensitive and urgent prayer requests needing their attention.

Even though the duration of this aspect of the project lasted five weeks, it was a joy to note that there is now an ongoing prayer ministry at Butler Street CME Church involving the pastoral, lay leadership, and members of the church.
Phase Three: Increase Participation in the Intercessory Prayer Ministry

The last phase of the prayer ministry project was aimed at increasing participation by other members of the church—the rest of the congregation—within three weeks, beginning June 1, 2000 and ending June 22, 2000. The question that we tried to address was how to get the total congregation of Butler Street CME Church to participate in the ongoing intercessory prayer ministry of the church. To achieve this, the researcher trained registered members who were unable to attend the prayer seminar, organized on March 25, 2000, from April 6-20, 2000, and integrated them into the prayer ministry. Secondly, we asked members of the prayer ministry to invite their friends, relatives, co-workers, and neighbors to join us in our bi-monthly prayer meeting. Thirdly, we encouraged members of the prayer ministry to visit the sick and shut-in, send cards, flowers, and call by phone those who are sick and pray with them. Above all, the pastor of the church, Reverend Dr. Anthony M. Alford, involved the prayer ministry in what he called PENTECOST 2000 WEEK OF FASTING AND PRAYER.

This Pentecost 2000 Week of Fasting and Prayer was a church-wide celebration of Pentecost through a week of fasting and praying for the Butler Street family. It was begun in 1999 and this was the second year it was being celebrated. To help the congregation join in celebrating the week, June 4 - 11, 2000, a prayer booklet was developed. The twelve-page booklet addressed the issues of fasting and prayer. It described "fasting as laying aside of food for a period of time when the believer is seeking to know God in a deeper experience (Isaiah 58; Zechariah
7:5)," and gave biblical foundation for prayer. Each day that fasting was done, there was a prayer object to pray about. Day One, for example, had a prayer objective of “Glorifying God.” Day Two, “Knowing God’s Will,” Day Three, “Revival,” etc. The congregation was to begin fasting at 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 4 and conclude it on Sunday, June 11 at 1:00 p.m. The prayer ministry was invited to take leadership for this program. This gave the prayer ministry the opportunity to involve all of the Butler Street family in a week of fasting and prayer. On Thursday, June 8, 2000 members of the prayer ministry came together with the church family to pray collectively.

The week of fasting and prayer proved very successful. Rev. Alford informed the prayer director that the next Pentecost Fasting and Prayer Week will be organized by the prayer ministry on behalf of the church in the year 2001. This was good news because not only did it affirm the positive impact that the ministry was having on the church, but it also gave the ministry the confidence to continue to involve the congregation in this special ministry. Nevertheless, the question that remains to be answered is: “Can Butler Street CME Church sustain such an ongoing prayer ministry to support the other ministries of the church?” The evaluation process should help in answering this question.

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CHAPTER VII

RESULTS AND EVALUATION OF MODEL

In developing this model, the researcher identified the ministry issue and raised the question: "How can the pastoral and lay leadership of Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church develop and implement an intercessory prayer ministry which supports the other active ministries of the Church?" The researcher set out to investigate whether there is a correlation between a strong intercessory prayer ministry involving the pastoral and lay leadership of the church and the success of the ministries undertaken by the church. The investigation involved the development and implementation of an active intercessory prayer ministry involving the pastoral and lay leadership of the church.

This chapter highlights the results of the model of prayer ministry that was developed and implemented at the Butler Street CME Church between March 25, 2000 and July 25, 2000. The methods for evaluation that were used were survey questionnaire, direct observation, testimonies from participants and church members, focus group interview, and personal interviews.
Evaluation Methods

Survey Questionnaire

The first survey questionnaire administered was titled “Confidential Spiritual Life Questionnaire for Members of the Intercessory Prayer Ministry” (see Appendix F). This questionnaire was to help discover the participants’ personal devotion and spiritual maturity level before entering the program and after the program. The questionnaire was administered at the beginning and at the end of the project. The second survey questionnaire administered (see Appendix G) was the evaluation of the prayer ministry itself. Questions such as: “How has the prayer ministry affected your personal, family, and church life?” were asked. In addition, we asked the question: “What in your opinion has been the impact of the intercessory prayer ministry on the congregation of the church?” with the purpose of determining how the intercessory prayer ministry had impacted individual lives, the ministries in the church, and the community at-large.

Direct Observation and Testimonies

Participants in the program were given notebooks, file folders, and pens. They were asked to keep a diary and record whatever new experiences they observed which affected their lives as they participated in the prayer ministry, and to share their experiences with members of the prayer ministry. In addition, it was stressed that each member should listen and record testimonies given by members of the prayer ministry as well as church members. Above all, each member was
asked to observe how the prayer ministry was affecting the life of other ministries of the church whether positively or negatively.

**Focus Group Interviews**

Members of the prayer ministry were divided into five active groups of seven members each. Each group had a prayer captain and a prayer focus topic about which to pray other than emergency prayer requests that were received daily or weekly. To evaluate the effectiveness of each prayer group, the focus group interview method was used in order to have a feel of how members of the intercessory prayer ministry interacted and experienced each other in the sub-group and to determine how this strengthened or weakened the model.

**Personal Interviews**

The researcher used the personal interview method not only to hear what members of the prayer ministry had to say about the strengths and weaknesses of the model, but also how the model impacted the active ministries of the church. Using personal interviews also as part of the evaluation process enabled the researcher to learn from members and leaders of the active ministries of the church whether the prayer ministry helped in anyway to strengthen their ministries.

After the evaluation process, the results of the findings were categorized into three headings:

1. The effects of the prayer ministry on the lives of individual and family members of the church.

2. The effects of the prayer ministry on the active ministries of the church.
3. The effects of the prayer ministry on the lives of people living in the community.

The Effects of the Prayer Ministry on the Lives of Individuals and Family Members of the Church

The intercessory prayer ministry was made up of thirty-five (35) active members of the church. Eighty-four percent (84%) were women and sixteen percent (16%) were men. The average age of the group was 45 years old. The youngest member of the group was 35 years old, and the oldest member was 81 years old. The majority of the members were college-educated and earned an average income of over $50,000 per year. Many of them have served in the church for over ten years and have family members who have been in the church for more than twenty years.

In addition, every member of the prayer ministry held a particular position in the church and participated actively in one or more ministries of the church. For example, the choir, the Women’s Missionary Society, the cancer ministry, the Balm Counseling ministry, the Board of Trustees, the Board of Stewardesses, the Sunday school, the Board of Christian Education, and the ministerial team. They were part of the most active and committed members of the church seeking to strengthen their lives through prayers and to transform the church through the power of prayer.

When the answers to how the prayer ministry had affected their personal and family lives were tabulated, almost every member had a positive response. All
the participants answered that the prayer ministry had improved their prayer lives, strengthened their faith, and blessed their families through answered prayers. They also pointed out that the ministry had helped to bind members of the ministry together and made them more sensitive to the needs of others, both within and outside of the church. One member of the prayer ministry reported that, "The prayer ministry of Butler Street CME Church has affected my personal, family, and church life in a variety of ways. In my personal life, I can tell that I am growing stronger and feel more competent in my prayer life. My family life has become a great deal stronger. My husband and I turn off the television and pray together each night before retiring. Before our involvement in the prayer ministry, we did not do that together. In my church life, I feel more comfortable engaging in corporate prayer and a closer relationship to my Lord and master."\(^1\)

The most fascinating answers that were received in response to the same question—how the prayer ministry has affected the lives of the member of the church—had to do with healing in the church. Every member of the ministry had something to say about the tremendous answers to prayers that had been witnessed in the life of members of the church. There were healings of broken lives, healing from sickness, such as strokes, heart by-pass surgeries, deliverance from death through serious car accidents, deliverance from drug abuse, healing from breast

\(^1\)Jackson Yenn-Batah, *Prayer Ministry Evaluation* (Atlanta: Butler Street CME Church, 2000), 1. See Appendix G.
cancer, financial blessings, new jobs, and peace of mind. Sample testimonies received from participants are found in the Appendix.

There were deaths in the church. Each death challenged the participants to trust more in the Lord and to pray more fervently for the sick, the elderly, and the ministries of the church. Above all, each death brought the bereaved family and the members of the prayer ministry together in a very special way. They had shared visits to the hospital beds of the sick together, and ministered to the sick and shut-in through their gifts, cards, flowers, and prayers. These acts were indeed a great source of strength to the bereaved families for which they were very grateful.

It is indeed heartening to know that the intercessory prayer ministry of Butler Street CME Church has helped to strengthen the prayer lives of individuals and families in the church. This ministry has also created an opportunity for members of the church to bring their prayer requests to the church and to know that there are people praying faithfully for their needs. The prayer ministry brought a powerful connectedness in the church between members of the ministry and the families of the church.

**The Effects of the Prayer Ministry on the Active Ministries of the Church**

This section of the evaluation process was the core reason for this research. The ministry issue that was investigated was: *How can the development and implementation of an intercessory prayer ministry involving the pastoral and lay leadership of the church, who come together regularly under the power of the Holy*
Spirit in prayer of petition and intercession, impact the life of the Butler Street CME Church and its ministries? It was mentioned earlier that the aim for designing this model of ministry was to help encourage the clergy and laity to develop their spirituality through prayers against those forces, powers, and principalities which stifle the church from within, and to use intercessory prayer as a means to transform, liberate, and give personal empowerment to the leaders of the church to actualize their optimum potential and realize human wholeness. To this end was the interest in discovering whether there is a correlation between a strong intercessory prayer ministry involving the pastoral and lay leadership of the church, and the success of the ministries undertaken by the church.

The findings suggest that indeed a strong intercessory prayer ministry does affect the success of the ministries of the church. A summary from our evaluation process shows that the impact of the intercessory prayer ministry on the congregation at Butler Street CME Church has been one that has helped in the church's total Christian conduct. The congregation shows more love for one another and there is a new level of connectedness not known before. The prayer ministry has helped the congregation become more spiritual and this is reflected in the strengthening of the other ministries of the church. Where there was discord, the prayer ministry through prayers for all the ministries of the church has brought harmony. “The prayer ministry,” according to Nola Walker, who serves both on the ministerial staff and the Board of Christian Education, “has strengthened not only the ministerial staff but also the Board of Christian Education in aiding us in our
daily walk with the Lord. We have learned to pray fervently with the assurance that our Heavenly Father hears and answers prayers.\(^2\)

Another member, Barbara Grier, who is a choir member, wrote: “Being a choir member, I find that many of the members of the choir have joined the prayer ministry as we feel that it has strengthened our relationship to each other. We pray together as well as sing together. We visit the sick and pray for them as a choir. We always open and close choir rehearsals with prayer.”\(^3\)

The church secretary, Anita Wright, who is also a member of the prayer ministry, had this to say: “I feel that some ministries have been strengthened; the choir and the cancer ministry. I believe that others have also been strengthened through the prayer ministry as well as the entire church.”\(^4\)

In addition to these testimonies, the researcher observed that other ministries such as the youth ministry, the Balm counseling ministry, the disciple Bible study classes, and the van ministry, have all been impacted by the intercessory prayer ministry. For example, members in the intercessory prayer ministry are always notified to pray for the ministries listed above; for example, for traveling mercies and protection when persons in these ministries are attending conferences, or holding seminars, or when they attend weekend retreats. Because there are

\(^2\)Ibid.

\(^3\)Ibid.

\(^4\)Ibid.
members from these ministries who are part of the prayer ministry, they understand the importance of being supported by prayers in their various ministries and so consistently seek the support of the prayer ministry.

When asked the question: “What do you think are the major strengths and weaknesses of the prayer ministry?”, the following short answers were given:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Strengths</strong></th>
<th><strong>Weaknesses</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The prayer ministry has taught many of us how to pray.</td>
<td>1. The time spent together in prayer, which is twice a month for one hour, is too short.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. It has made us more comfortable to pray aloud.</td>
<td>2. The ministry has not attracted any of the church’s young adults.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. It has enhanced our beliefs in the power of prayer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. It has proved to us that intercessory prayer works.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. It has provided us the channel to pray diligently for one another.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. It has shown that members of the prayer ministry care about others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. It has demonstrated love and care for others through consistent prayers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. It has bonded members of the ministry in true fellowship and love.</td>
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In the evaluation questionnaire, participants were asked to suggest what they thought must be done to strengthen the prayer ministry in the future. The following suggestions were given:

1. The prayer ministry must continue to consistently address the needs of others through prayers.
2. The prayer ministry should organize a prayer ministry for children, youth, and young adults to help enrich their ability to pray.
3. The prayer ministry should organize monthly prayer services in the church where all members of the congregation can attend to pray, give testimonies, and seek healing through prayers.
4. The prayer ministry must continue to have regular prayer retreats for members to renew their spirits and engage in spiritual meditations and the study of the word of God.

Lastly, when members of the prayer ministry were asked whether they would like to continue to be members of the ministry, all participants answered "Yes." Some explained that they need the prayers of others and that others need their prayers. Others said the church needs prayers and it is their duty to pray for the church. One response was: "I want to continue to be a member because I feel that corporate prayer is useful to the membership, the ministerial staff, the preacher, the community at-large and to me."

Another member responded: "Yes, I would like very much to continue to be a member of the prayer ministry because I realize the importance of a strong prayer
life. Prayer enables us to be in communication and in right relationship with God. This relationship is vital to our spiritual well-being. We must continue to pray if God is to deliver us from hurt, harm, and danger. Our prayer life determines everything.”

In the light of this evaluation, the researcher concluded that the effects of the prayer ministry on the active ministries of the church have been positive. Efforts must be made to continue to nurture the partnership existing between the intercessory prayer ministry and the other ministries of the church so as to carry it to a higher level of service to the church and the community.

**The Effects of the Prayer Ministry on the Lives of People in the Community**

During the week-to-week operation of the prayer ministry, prayer concerns came in as church members were encouraged to use the prayer request cards in the pews. They used these cards for their own prayer needs and for the needs of others—friends, relatives, neighbors, and especially the unsaved. Some members gave blank prayer request cards to persons outside the church membership so that they could send in their own prayer requests. As a result, the prayer ministry was connected to persons in the community.

As the requests were received, the intercessors prayed for the needs on the prayer request cards. They began with crisis needs and then moved on to the church's leaders and ministries, the city, and so on. The intercessors understood that “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39) applies to neighbors of all
shapes and kinds and that God places us next to these persons so that we can show
God’s overpowering love to them and pray for their needs—spiritual and physical.
Therefore, the intercessors prayed faithfully and consistently for the neighbors on
their streets, in their apartments, and in the workplaces. For example, members of
the prayer ministry visited both the Hughes Spalding Children’s Hospital and Grady
Memorial Hospital to pray for the sick. They also visited the Edgewood House
where people with HIV/AIDS live and prayed for them and gave them food. Above
all, members of the prayer ministry prayed for and with their coworkers. Some
specific examples of prayer requests received from neighbors and people outside
of the church had to do with sickness, death in families, marital problems, drug
addiction, loss of jobs, harassment on jobs, domestic violence, and financial crisis.

As the intercessors prayed for the people facing these crises, the power of
God manifested in these circumstances. Some of those prayed for received healing
in the body, some found new jobs, bereaved families received comfort and strength,
and tranquility was restored in troubled marriages.

On Friday, July 28, 2000 the researcher took the prayer lists that were made,
reviewed them and placed them in two categories: “Prayer Answered” and “Prayer
Not Answered.” It was discovered that at least 80% of the original problems
submitted for prayers had been favorably resolved. An example of this was a man
who had suffered two strokes and could not walk for months. He was a neighbor
of the prayer director. His name was submitted to the prayer ministry to receive
prayer. Gradually he received healing and could walk again. At first, he walked
slowly, step by step. He continued to improve and eventually was able to drive again. The members of the prayer ministry who knew him only by name were surprised one Sunday when he came to Butler Street to thank the members of the intercessory prayer ministry for their faithful prayers. It was a joy to see someone from the community come to church to testify about the goodness of God in his life and to acknowledge that his healing came through sincere prayers offered by the prayer ministry on his behalf. This is just one example of how the ministry impacted the life of someone in the community.

The other interesting impact of the ministry was the interest expressed by the pastor of the College Park Christian Methodist Episcopal Church to have such an ongoing prayer ministry established in his church. The pastor, Dr. Thomas L. Brown Sr., who is also administrative dean of Phillips School of Theology, expressed interest in the project that the researcher was undertaking at Butler Street CME Church. As the researcher kept Dr. Brown updated on the progress of the project, he became convinced that it was something needed in College Park CME Church. The researcher was invited to give a presentation at the church on Saturday, June 17, 2000. The presentation was well received and it was decided that the researcher should assist the leaders in establishing a strong and purposeful intercessory prayer ministry in the church. This project is still ongoing and should be completed by the end of December 2000.

The College Park CME Church is one of our connectional churches organized in 1982. The first congregational service was held at Laurel Hill Elementary School
with Reverend John Pace as pastor. There were five members present. Services were held at Love T. Nolan Elementary School from 1986 until 1988 with Reverend Fabian Jenkins as pastor. Church services were discontinued until 1991 when the present structure was erected under the leadership of the late Bishop Joseph C. Coles Jr. Under the leadership of several outstanding pastors, the church grew to become one of the leading CME churches in Georgia. Church membership has continued to grow under the present pastor, Dr. Thomas L. Brown Sr.

The College Park CME Church believes firmly in a strong teaching ministry, a ministry of praise, evangelism, preaching, and a ministry of service to the community. The church anticipates that this new intercessory prayer ministry will empower the church to do effective ministry both within and outside the Church.

The effects, therefore, of the Intercessory Prayer Ministry at the Butler Street CME Church on the lives of people in the community, as we have discussed, have been very positive. Underlying this is the power of prayer. It is clear that the church's greatest deficiency today is not in programs, strategies, ideas, or materials, but in power through the Holy Spirit to do the work of God. And power for ministry can be released only through prayer. When Jesus told his disciples, "Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father" (John 14:12, NRSV), the disciples were astounded until Jesus explained. "I will do

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5Thomas L. Brown Sr., interview by Jackson Yenn-Batah, 17 June 2000, College Park CME Church, College Park, Georgia.
whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (John 14:13, NRSV). It seems clear that Christ meant prayer to be the great power by which his church should do its work. There is no doubt that an intercessory prayer ministry can serve as a vehicle for receiving such power for ministry.
CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary of the Problem

At the beginning of this research, the problem was highlighted. There was no prayer ministry team at Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church to support not only the active ministries of the church but also the members through strong group intercessory prayer. The question was raised: “How can the development and implementation of an intercessory prayer ministry involving the pastoral and lay leadership of the church, who come together regularly under the power of the Holy Spirit in prayer of petition and intercession, impact the life of Butler Street CME Church and its ministries?”

In response to this question, the vision was formulated to the effect that Butler Street CME Church would have constantly operative a dynamic prayer dimension in the church to support the pastor, leaders, and members, and the larger needs of the community and the world. To achieve this, our mission was to establish an intercessory prayer ministry and provide biblical teaching on prayer to help members of the prayer ministry form the habit of daily Bible study and prayer; and to empower them to grow spiritually and become effective disciples of Jesus Christ. Specifically, this program was limited to the pastoral and lay leadership of
the church. An anticipated result was that these persons would be involved in leading effective ministry within and outside the church. Through the pastoral and lay leadership of the church, it was expected that this ministry would create a special bonding and spiritual awareness necessary to effect positive changes in the ministries of the church. We also hoped to bring healing in the church; transform, liberate, and give personal empowerment to the leaders of the church; bring about harmony and spiritual growth; help leaders conquer any egotistical self-realization that they cherish and lead them to self-denial. Above all, it was hoped that the prayer ministry would show that we care for the members of the church and community as we pray for each other and for the community.

Indeed, we were convinced that beginning a prayer ministry at Butler Street CME Church would be a wonderful way to use members who have spiritual gifts of intercession, healing, faith, discernment, and encouragement to strengthen the body of Christ and to reach out to the unchurched and unbelieving. This was our major motivation for undertaking this project. After developing and implementing the project, we evaluated the process.

**Evaluation of the Process**

The ministry project was divided into three phases: developing the model, implementing the model, and evaluating the model. In the first phase, developing the model, the pastoral and lay leadership of the church were invited to form an intercessory prayer ministry. They were trained by sharing the biblical and theological bases for intercessory prayer ministry in the church and they were
taught what is an intercessory prayer. This was done in the context of a “Prayer Seminar and Training” held on Saturday, March 25, 2000 in the conference room of Phillips School of Theology on the campus of Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, Georgia, with sixteen registered members.

The second phase of the project, implementing the model, dealt with the practical involvement of each member of the prayer ministry in intercessory prayer for five weeks, beginning Thursday, April 20, 2000 and ending on Thursday, May 25, 2000 at the Butler Street CME Church. The details of this part of the project were discussed earlier in the body of this dissertation.

The third phase of the project dealt with the evaluation of the model. The evaluation process involved pre-survey and post-survey of the participants. The following evaluation methods were used: survey questionnaire, focus group interview, testimonies from participants, direct observation, and interviews.

The results of the project were very encouraging and positive. We observed from our study that the project positively affected the personal lives of the participants, members of the Butler Street CME Church, and the lives of people in the community. Below are some of the results of the project as it affected the participants, the church, and the community.

**The Prayer Ministry and Participants**

1. The prayer ministry allowed participants to develop stronger individual and family prayer lives.
2. It created a special bonding and spiritual awareness among the participants necessary to effect positive changes in the ministries of the church.

3. Participants developed a firm understanding of the place that God intended prayer to have in the church and in the Christian life.

4. Participants developed a sensitivity to people's needs, a compassion that reaches out to them, and a willingness to serve them in prayer.

5. They developed the willingness to support team members in the prayer ministry by putting aside personal differences in order to do God's work together.

6. The participants also developed the ability to keep confidences because those who asked for prayer often unburdened their hearts of their deepest and most well-kept secrets.

**The Prayer Ministry and the Church**

1. The intercessors prayed for each of the church's ministries and for the people who work in these ministries.

2. They prayed for the pastor and leaders of the church.

3. The church experienced the power of God's Spirit at work in the church as healings took place and lives were changed.

4. People were set free from sin, from hurtful memories, from bondage to temptation or weakness, and from illness.

5. The ministry helped to create within the church a great openness to the Holy Spirit and to the Spirit's healing work.

6. The prayer ministry gave the congregation concrete experience of love in the community of Christ.

7. The ministry helped to marshal members who have spiritual gifts of intercession, healing, faith, discernment, and encouragement to do ministry.

8. The prayer ministry helped to bring about harmony and spiritual growth in the church.
9. The prayer ministry supported other ministries through prayers and by participating fully in their program.

**The Prayer Ministry and the Community**

1. Reports from members of the ministry and personal testimonies by the sick in the community showed that praying faithfully and consistently for the government, the city, our neighbors, co-workers, friends, and the sick in the community, the ministry was able to draw people's attention to the programs of the church.

2. The ministry helped to narrow the gap between the church and the community in which we serve. Both became partners in solving some of the needs of the community.

3. The ministry also became a vehicle for evangelism in the community. As members of the ministry visited the sick and shut-in; as they ministered to the homeless who sat on the steps of the church, and testified about the love of God through the death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to these people, the ministry was able to turn some of them to Christ.

4. Some of the participants who attended our "Prayer Seminar and Training," such as Gloria Appinger, Carolyn L. White, and Gwendolyn Haynes, were members of other denominations. By training them, it provided an opportunity for the establishment and development of an intercessory prayer ministry in their churches. This is an impact worth noting. In a way, God's spirit was weaving the efforts of this prayer ministry to transcend denominational boundaries.

5. Lastly, because the prayer ministry attracted the attention of our sister church, College Park CME Church, we were able to cooperate with them in establishing a similar prayer ministry in that church. Hopefully, this cooperation will grow to embrace other CME churches and denominations.

**Implications for Butler Street CME Church**

The intercessory prayer ministry that was developed and implemented in the Butler Street CME Church was effected to meet a need in the church. The need of
every church is to give prayer high priority in the church’s life and ministry. Jesus made prayer a high priority in his life. Clearly Jesus is our example of how prayer should be the top priority in our life.

Luke tells us that Jesus “would withdraw to deserted places and pray” (Luke 5:16). Mark reports that “in the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed” (Mark 1:35). On occasions he even “spent the night in prayer to God” (Luke 6:12).

The New Testament church gave prayer that same high priority. When the leaders of the church were threatened by the Sanhedrin, “they raised their voices together to God” and after they had prayed, “the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the Word of God with boldness” (Acts 4: 24, 31).

When Peter was in prison and scheduled to die, “the church prayed fervently to God for him” and that very night he was delivered by an angel from prison (Acts 11: 5-11). How can we explain the power and effectiveness of the New Testament church without reference to prayer?

The problem we have today is that many leaders in the church are not, by biblical standards, praying leaders. The Bible sets high standards for church leaders. Moses, David, Elijah, Daniel and many other Old Testament leaders were devoted to prayer. Jesus, who is our leader, gave prayer high priority in his ministry and so must we, his followers. We can do this by having the right thinking about prayer. If we understand how prayer fits into God’s claim on our lives, we
would more likely give prayer its rightful place. This is what we have sought to do with the prayer ministry at Butler Street CME Church—to equip our leaders to pray and to make prayer our top priority. After all, any ministry without prayer is work in the flesh and prayer without ministry is complacent Christianity.

The implications, therefore, of this ministry for the Butler Street CME Church are that:

1. The church must continue to teach the congregation to have appropriate thinking about prayer. A powerful, faithful, and effective prayer must be built on a correct mind-set about prayer.

2. The church must link prayer to ministry. Often times, it is possible for believers to use prayer for selfish reasons. But God has called us to pray not only so that we may obtain a blessing, but also that we may be a blessing. If our church is to be strong, it will need to pray not only for its own needs but also for the needs of its community and for its efforts to reach the unsaved. In the prayer ministry, the ability to link prayer with ministry was demonstrated. The church must continue to do so.

3. The church must continue to make times, ways, and places for people to pray together. Because God has chosen prayer as the key by which his church does its work, we must impact the world for God through prayer. This means the church must encourage consistency in prayer, help people to pray with others in order to expand their prayer lives; encourage people to pray together to strengthen their faith; encourage them to have personal as well as family devotions; and equip them with resources necessary to improve their prayer life. It is our hope that as the church grows strong in prayer, it will experience the release of God’s power for dynamic ministry.

Future Implications for Ministry

In this study, so far, we have looked at prayer in a general sense, and intercessory prayer in particular. We have attempted to answer the questions: “What can the church do to grow strong in prayer?” and “Why should we make
intercessory prayer a priority in the church’s ministry?” In answering these questions, we looked at the theological understanding of prayer and pointed out that Christ actually meant that prayer should be the great power by which the church must do its work.

To demonstrate how this power could be attained and used in ministry, we developed and implemented an intercessory prayer ministry project at Butler Street CME Church in Atlanta, Georgia. At the end of the project we conducted an evaluation and concluded that involving people in an intercessory prayer ministry allows people to have a transcendent worldview. This means that prayer puts us in contact with our transcendent God and brings God’s resources into play to impact the circumstances and realities that surround us every day. We discovered that through prayer power is gained for witness; prayer helps church leaders to understand their role in the church; prayer unites members of our congregations to work in partnership; and prayer brings healing and reconciliation in the church.

The question, then, is “What are the future implications of intercessory prayer for ministry?” The answer points to three areas of importance: prayer and the reality of the conflict, prayer and mission, and prayer and hope.

**Prayer and the Reality of the Conflict**

The church needs to recognize that no matter what ministry the church is involved in, there is the need to be constantly aware of the ongoing conflict between God and the evil one (Ephesians 6: 10-12). That reality is present everywhere. In this context of living at the heart of a spiritual battle against
principalities and powers, prayer and for that matter intercessory prayer, must gain its full stature. The authority provided by Jesus Christ must be exercised. The church must therefore raise prayer ministry teams which will meet regularly to pray with others for inner healing, physical and spiritual healing, for deliverance from Satan's oppression, for guidance and spiritual blessings. Such ministry teams should be committed to praying for and with hurting people within and outside the church. They should be available to go out and pray with the sick and those who are homebound, with people in the hospital, and with families in times of crisis. In addition to the prayer ministry teams, the church needs to have prayer groups for missions. If the church's mission work is to be fruitful, it must have a group of people who are committed to praying daily for a missionary, a mission cause, or a specific mission field. This group must be aware of the specific needs on the mission field for which they pray as a group, and they must be willing to pay the price of faithful intercession. Jesus reminds us in Matthew 9: 37-38 that “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore, ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Above all, the church must raise evangelism prayer groups, church support groups, and intercessors to stand in the gap for God. So long as the church is aware of the reality of the conflict between God and the evil one, it must be prepared to do spiritual battle on all fronts in order to advance the cause of righteousness, justice, peace, and love through prayer warriors in the church.
Prayer and Mission

Often times it is sad to observe that when it comes to doing mission work, everything related to mission is done at the expense of prayer. The church forgets that prayer is more vital than funds and personnel. The church needs to remember that prayer groups provide the spiritual power for changing people’s hearts. Prayer is no doubt vital to missionary success in the spiritual warfare that takes place on the mission field.

In the parable of the sower (Mark 4: 1-9; Matthew 13: 1-9; Luke 8: 4-8), Jesus reminds us of the reality of the conflict. The seed, which is the word of God, sometimes falls on places where there are forces at work to impede growth and fruitfulness. There are hard places along the road where Satan is able to take away the seed. This proves that part of the resistance to the message of the kingdom is supernatural and demonic in nature. Therefore, there is the need to counteract the forces of evil through prayer. Christians who are sowers of the seed (word) need to understand that the gospel does not always encounter an easy reception. The result is that Christians always face difficulty in fulfilling the task of mission.

For example, one of the prominent themes of the New Testament is persecution. In John’s gospel, Jesus states that believers can expect persecution because He experienced the same as He fulfilled His mission (John 15: 18-21). Jesus’ suffering is a preview of the type of difficulty His followers will encounter in the world. He teaches that there is a cost for following Him, which involves the

Jesus also predicts that some will be arrested, beaten, and put to death because of their testimony and identification with Christ (Matthew 24: 9-14; Mark 13: 9-13; Luke 21: 12-17). Indeed, Paul proves his apostleship to the Corinthians by cataloging his imprisonments, beatings, difficulties, and hardship (2 Corinthians 11: 21-28). Even the witness of believers in the book of Acts often takes place in the context of opposition and adversity (cf. Acts 4: 1-22). Yet one of the manifestations of the Spirit’s power in the believers is that they were able to speak the word with boldness in the midst of threatening circumstances (Acts 4: 23-31).

What was behind this boldness? The Holy Spirit gave them boldness as a result of prayer. “When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:31).

Throughout the New Testament we see the reality of resistance to mission. The book of Revelation presents mission in the context of the conflict between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of this world. This conflict involves real persecution for believers with real martyrs (Revelation 2:10; 6: 9-11). In the light of these examples, the church must surround, permeate, and energize its efforts with the power God has in store for God’s praying people. The church must pay the price of faithful intercession if mission work is to be successful.
Prayer and Hope

Finally, the church must come to the realization that there is hope in prayer. Christians, no doubt, are people of hope. We anticipate the future when we shall see Jesus. In prayer, we articulate our despair with the present world and anticipate the coming kingdom. Prayer throws us upon the promises of God because we have nothing else.

The hope, therefore, of our prayer is that the kingdom of the enemy will fall, and its false pride and tricks be exposed. To this effect, prayer gives us hope that we have a God who listens to our prayers and answers us beyond our wildest imagination. It is He who says: “If my people, who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face... I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14. NRSV). Must the church doubt that there is hope in prayer and forget that Jesus said “I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that my Father may be glorified in the son” (John 14:13)? The answer is definitely “No.” The church must “pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5: 17). It can do so through a powerful intercessory prayer ministry in the church.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that there is a need for an intercessory prayer ministry in the church and that involving the pastoral and lay leadership of the church is one of the most effective ways for transforming the prayer life of the church and its ministries. Our study has further emphasized that praying leaders
help others to grow more and more in the knowledge and love of God. To support this statement, we have shown through the implementation of the project how participants set aside regular times of prayer, both as individuals and as a group to pray, thus showing that they live by the example of the leaders of the early church who gave “attention to prayer and ministry of the word” (Acts 6:4).

In the study, we focused our attention on the leadership of the church because we believe that prayer is vital to spiritual leadership. Without prayer, it is impossible for church leaders to accomplish anything. Our example is the leaders of the early church who recognized this and therefore gave themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word. The powerful role prayer played in the lives and ministries of the Lord Jesus Christ and Paul also speaks volumes to us. Jesus taught his followers that prayer was his vital link with the Father. He often withdrew to quiet places to pray when faced with challenging issues. Not only did he teach his disciples how to pray, but he also reminded his followers that prayer was an essential gift from God and that God would certainly hear and answer prayers spoken in his name, according to God’s will.

In the letters of Paul the Apostle, we see that they were interwoven with prayers for the early church and with pleas that church members pray for his ministry. Paul, knowing that true power comes from God, constantly urged the young churches to lay hold of God’s power through prayer. Even the book of Acts records the miraculous answers that came in response to the apostles’ prayers.
These prayers affirm that church leaders who are strongly committed to prayer convey more to their congregation about the power and reality of prayer than anything else. The reason is clear: praying leaders communicate love and concern to the people they shepherd; praying leaders bear one another's burdens and find encouragement and support in each other's struggles; praying leaders grow in the knowledge that they are protected from Satan's attacks since prayer is the most powerful weapon God has given us against the evil one. Therefore, the intercessory prayer ministry that we developed and implemented at the Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal Church demonstrates that if we must have victory in prayer, we must not short circuit prayer in the church. To do so is to lose the power and victory that God gives us in prayer and our ability to do ministry effectively. Our project has also demonstrated that an intercessory prayer ministry is one way of fostering organizational nurture and unity in the life of a congregation. Praying together helps to bring unity into the body of Christ, to nurture the congregation through the study of the Word of God, and to inspire the congregation to identify their gifts and talents for use in the body of Christ. Clearly, therefore, this study has demonstrated that one of the best ways for addressing the problems of disunity, lack of vision and direction in the church, is through the ministry of prayer.

In view of this, the challenge facing the church in the future is the need to lay more emphasis on the development and implementation of intercessory prayer ministry in local churches. There is also the need for research and documentation
in this area. When this is done, it will help not only the leaders of the church but also all believers who want to see the power of God at work in their lives through prayer.
APPENDIXES
APPENDIX A

PRAYER MINISTRY

Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
23 Butler Street, SE
Atlanta, Georgia  30303

VISION

Through this Prayer Fellowship, Butler Street will have constantly operative a dynamic prayer dimension in the church to support the pastor, leaders and members, and the larger prayer needs of the community and the world.

MISSION

To provide biblical teachings on prayer that will help members form the habit of daily Bible study and prayer

To empower them to grow spiritually and become effective disciples of Jesus Christ
Dear Sister/Brother in Christ,

The Butler CME Church is planning to develop and implement an intercessory prayer ministry involving the pastoral and lay leadership of the church. This prayer ministry is designed to support the ministries and members of this church in prayer.

We are appealing to all the pastoral and lay officers of the church to become a member of this powerful group of intercessors. Please become a partner in prayer by completing the form below and returning it to the secretary of the Church not later than Monday, December 9, 1999.

Sincerely,

Rev. Jackson Yenn-Batah
Associate Pastor

Name ____________________________________________
Address _________________________________________
Telephone Number Work __________________ Home __________
Days Available for Prayer __________________________
Time Available for Prayer __________________________
APPENDIX C

PRAYER MINISTRY

Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
23 Butler Street, SE
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

A. INTRODUCTION

We cannot overemphasize the importance of prayer in our lives. Paul in the letter to the Ephesians 6:18 puts the tremendous importance of prayer into focus with startling and overwhelming force. "Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints."

The purpose of this document is to guide you through a very simple teaching on prayer with the hope that after this, you will be inspired to take prayer seriously in your life and become a victorious Christian in your daily walk with the Lord.

B. WHAT IS PRAYER?

Prayer is described as fellowship with God in which we give to Him that which is His due, receive Him and His gifts into our lives, and cooperate with Him for the fulfillment of His purposes in the world.

In the widest sense, prayer is a personal response to the felt presence of God in an effort to intensify that presence as a significant force in human existence. As a result, every Christian needs to be instructed on prayer. The instruction to pray comes from the Bible. One of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray as John taught his disciples" (Luke 11:1).

C. WHY SHOULD WE PRAY?

There are many reasons why we should pray:

1. God insistently commands it in the Bible. 
   Luke 18:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Matthew 26:41

2. God hears and answers prayer. 
   Psalm 65:2; Psalm 34:6

3. It is God's appointed way for Christians to get what they need from God. 
   James 4:2
4. It is the way out of all troubles; the cure for all worry and anxiety.  
   Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Peter 5:7; Psalm 55:22

5. It is God's way for Christians to have fullness of joy.  
   John 16:24; Proverbs 10:22 Psalm 16:11

6. An answered prayer is the only answered argument against skepticism, unbelief, modernism, and infidelity.  
   1 Kings 18:36-38; Judges 6: 12-13

7. Prayer is the only way to have the power of the Holy Spirit for God's work.  

8. Prayer is the means to salvation because whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.  
   Romans 10:13

**D. WHAT SHOULD WE PRAY FOR?**

1. We should pray for ourselves.  
   1 Chronicles 4:10; Psalm 106:4-5; 2 Corinthians 12:7-8; Hebrews 5:7; John 17:1

2. We should pray for one another.  
   James 5:16; Romans 1:9

3. We should pray for ministers of the Word.  
   Ephesians 6:19-20; Colossians 4:3; 2 Thessalonians 3: 1-2; Acts 13: 2-3; Matthew 9:38

4. We should pray for sick sisters and brothers.  
   James 5:14-16

5. We should pray for all saints.  
   Ephesians 6:18; John 17: 9, 20

6. We should pray for our children.  
   1 Chronicles 29:19

7. We should pray for our rulers.  
   1 Timothy 2:2-3; 1 Peter 2:17

8. We should pray for the city where we live.  
   Jeremiah 29:7
9. We should pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us.  
   Luke 6:28; Matthew 5:44

10. We should pray for everybody.  
    1 Timothy 2:1

11. We should pray for anything we want.  
    Mark 11:24; John 15:7;  
    Philippians 4:6

E. **HOW TO PRAY AND RECEIVE ANSWERS**

1. We should pray in the Name of Jesus Christ.  
   John 14:13-14; John 15:16

2. We should pray to God with all our hearts and and all our soul.  
   Jeremiah 29:12-13;  
   Deuteronomy 4:29

3. We should pray earnestly and intensely.  
   Acts 12:5; Hebrews 5:7;  
   Romans 15:30

4. We should pray with steadfast continuance--perseverance.  
   Romans 12:12; Colossians 4:2;  
   Luke 18:18

5. We should not use vain repetitions. Be definite. Let your prayers be specific.  
   Mark 11:24; Matthew 6:11;  
   Luke 11:5; John 11:4;  
   Matthew 6:7

6. We should sometimes pray with fasting.  
   Daniel 9:3; Acts 14:23; Acts 13:2-3

7. We should pray with thanksgiving.  
   Philippians 4:6; Colossians 4:2

8. We should pray in union with others.  
   Matthew 18:19-20

9. We should pray believing--unwavering expectations of getting the things we ask.  
   Matthew 21:22; Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:23

10. We should pray in the Holy Spirit.  
    Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20

11. We should study the Word of God and stand on it in prayer.  
    Proverbs 28:9
F. SOME HINDRANCES TO PRAYER

1. Prayer is unanswered because sin separates the one who prays and the God to whom he prays. Isaiah 59:1-2

2. Prayer is often unanswered because it is offered from a selfish purpose. James 4:3

3. Prayer is unanswered because we do not forgive those against whom we have something. Mark 11:25-26

4. Prayers are unanswered because of our unbelief, i.e., because we question whether we shall receive that which God has promised. James 1:5-7; Mark 11:22-24

5. Prayers are unanswered because of wrong relationship between husband and wife. 1 Peter 3:7

6. Prayers are unanswered because of lack of liberality toward the poor and toward God's work. Luke 6:38; 1 John 3:22; Proverbs 21:13

7. Prayers are unanswered because we keep idols in our hearts. Idols in our hearts will cause God to refuse to listen to our prayers. Ezekiel 14:3

G. WHEN SHOULD WE PRAY?

I think we should follow the prayer life of our Lord Jesus.

1. Jesus chose the early morning hour for prayer. Mark 1:35

2. Jesus prayed all night. We might not be able to pray the entire night, but surely we can pray at night. Luke 6:12

3. Jesus prayed before all the great crises in His earthly life. Whenever any crisis of life is seen to be approaching, we should prepare for it by a season of definite prayer to God. Luke 9:18, 21-22; Mark 1:35-38; Luke 22: 39-46
4. Christ prayed before and after each crisis of life. So He went from victory to victory. Shouldn't we do the same? Matthew 14:23; John 6:15

5. Jesus Christ gave a special time to prayer when life was unusually busy. We must also find time in our busy schedule to pray. Luke 5:15-16; Mark 3:20; Mark 6: 31, 33, 46

6. Jesus Christ prayed before the great temptations of His life. Many temptations come upon us unaware and unannounced. Others we can see approaching from the distance. We need to pray always against all temptations. Matthew 26:36
APPENDIX D

PRAYER MINISTRY

Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
23 Butler Street, SE
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Questions and Answers

1. Question: What is a prayer group?
   Answer: A prayer group is a small, intimate comradeship, united in a common commitment which, through regular group discipline, seeks spiritual power and direction.

2. Question: What is intercessory prayer?
   Answer: An intercessory prayer is the act of interceding in prayer and petition on behalf of others. It is the means by which we present the needs of others to God.

3. Question: How can a prayer group be effective?
   Answers: a. All members of the fellowship must have a relationship of concern for one another.
   
   b. There must be mutual strengthening of each other.
   
   c. There must be mutual enlightening. We must share our experiences and wisdom together.
   
   d. There must be corporate inspiration. We must inspire each other to do his or her best.

4. Question: What are the characteristics of a sound prayer fellowship?
   Answers: a. There is an instant bond. The fellowship members share a secret. They know that their relationship is more than casual, it is deeper.
b. Group members learn what it means to bear one another's burdens, not with soft sentimentality and superficial sympathy, but prayerfully, believingly, and lovingly.

c. Group members come to understand more and more of what the Bible has to offer in the way of guidance and inspiration and power for living.

d. Group members learn from each other and from the Holy Spirit how to bear their own burdens with more courage and faith and selflessness.

e. Group members experience together the wonder of God's power at work in human life or situation in answer to prayer.

f. Group members should be giving--giving their children to God's work, tithing, and using their talents for God.

g. Group members should be learning to go over and above the call of duty, not only for one another but in response to human needs.

h. Lastly, group members should be discovering the wonder and rewards of worship. In learning to pray, group members learn the meaning of worship.

5. Question: Are there any strict disciplinary rules for members of the prayer group?

Answer: Yes. All members must agree to attend regular prayer meetings. Each member agrees to pray each day in one's own quiet time by name for each member of the group, and each person agrees to pray each day for the minister, congregation and the ministries of the church.

6. Question: Why do we need an intercessory ministry?

Answer: God seeks intercessors.
Ezekiel 22:30; Isaiah 59:16; Isaiah 62:6-7; 63:5; 64:7

7. Question: What is your response to God's call for you to become an intercessor?

Answer: YES or NO.
## APPENDIX E
### PRAYER MINISTRY

**Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal Church**  
23 Butler Street, SE  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT YOURSELF

1. **Gender:**  
   - [ ] Male  
   - [ ] Female

2. **Age:**  
   - [ ] Under 20  
   - [ ] 21-25  
   - [ ] 26-34  
   - [ ] 35-44  
   - [ ] 45-54  
   - [ ] 55-64  
   - [ ] 65-74  
   - [ ] 75 or over

3. **Race:**  
   - [ ] White  
   - [ ] Black  
   - [ ] Hispanic  
   - [ ] Other

4. **Marital Status:**  
   - [ ] Single, never married  
   - [ ] Married  
   - [ ] Separated or divorced  
   - [ ] Widowed

5. **Do you have children in any of the following groups?**
   - Birth - 4 years old:  
     - [ ] Yes  
     - [ ] No
   - 5 - 12 years old:  
     - [ ] Yes  
     - [ ] No
   - 13 - 17 years old:  
     - [ ] Yes  
     - [ ] No

6. **What is your highest level of formal education?**
   - [ ] Less than high school graduate  
   - [ ] High school graduate  
   - [ ] Some college, trade, or vocational school  
   - [ ] College degree  
   - [ ] Post graduate work or degree

7. **Are you (check one):**
   - [ ] Retired  
   - [ ] Employed part-time  
   - [ ] Full-time "houseperson" or student  
   - [ ] Employed full-time

7a. **If currently employed or retired, what is/was your occupation?**
(1) [ ] Service worker: policeperson, barber, janitor, beautician, porter, waiter, usher, etc.

(2) [ ] Clerical worker: bookkeeper, secretary, mail carrier, telephone operator, shipping clerk, ticket agents, etc.

(3) [ ] Farmer

(4) [ ] Operative or Laborer: semi-skilled and unskilled worker in construction and manufacturing, apprentice, teamster, stevedore, etc.

(5) [ ] Craftsman, foreman: tinsmith, baker, carpenter, mason, shoemaker, electrician, machinist, etc.

(6) [ ] Sales worker: salesman, insurance and real estate agent, broker, stock and bond salesperson, etc.

(7) [ ] Proprietor, manager, or official: public official, credit officer, buyer, floor manager, etc.

(8) [ ] Professional, technical: teacher, doctor, architect, accountant, artist, athlete, surveyor, etc.

(9) [ ] Other: ____________________________________________

7b. If married, is your spouse employed?

[ ] Yes, full-time
[ ] Yes, part-time
[ ] No

8. What is your household (family or single living alone) income range?

[ ] Under $7,500  [ ] $7,500 - 14,999  [ ] $15,000-24,999
[ ] $25,000-34,999  [ ] $35,000-49,999  [ ] $50,000-74,999
[ ] $75,000 or more

9. How many years have you lived in this general area?

[ ] One year or less  [ ] 2 - 4 years  [ ] 5 - 9 years
[ ] 10 - 19 years  [ ] 20 years or more
10. How likely is it that you might move out of this general area within the next few years?

[ ] Definitely will move
[ ] Might move (50/50 chance)
[ ] Very unlikely to move.

[ ] Probably will move
[ ] Probably will not move

YOUR CHURCH PARTICIPATION

1. How long have you been a member of this church?

[ ] Not a member
[ ] One year or less
[ ] 5 - 9 years
[ ] 20 or more years

[ ] 2 - 4 years
[ ] 10 - 19 years

2. How long does it usually take you to travel from home to church?

[ ] 5 minutes or less
[ ] 6 - 10 minutes
[ ] 16 - 30 minutes

[ ] 11 - 15 minutes
[ ] 31 - 44 minutes

[ ] 45 or more

3. On the average, about how many times have you attended church services during the past year?

[ ] None
[ ] About once a month
[ ] About two or three times a month
[ ] Once of twice every three months

[ ] Four times a month
[ ] About once or twice a year

4. In how many church organizations, committees, and groups do you hold membership (not counting congregational membership itself)?

[ ] None
[ ] One
[ ] Two
[ ] Three

[ ] Four or more

5. Has your involvement in the congregation increased, decreased, or remained about the same in the last few years?

[ ] Increased
[ ] Remained the same

[ ] Decreased
5a. If your participation has increased, which of the following are reasons for that: (check all that apply)?

[ ] More time available  [ ] Better health
[ ] Because of children  [ ] Stronger faith
[ ] Accepted office or other responsibility in the church
[ ] More positive attitude toward the church

5b. If your participation has decreased, which of the following are reasons for that (check all that apply)?

[ ] Less time available  [ ] Health problems
[ ] Because of children  [ ] Decreased faith
[ ] Given up office or other responsibility in the church
[ ] More negative attitude toward the church

6. Approximately, how much does your family household contribute to your church per year? (If single or widowed, you as an individual.)

[ ] Under $200  [ ] $200-399  [ ] $400-599
[ ] $600-799  [ ] $800-999  [ ] $1000-1,499
[ ] $1,500-2,499  [ ] $2,000-3,499  [ ] Over $3,500

7. How many persons or families have you invited to visit or join your church in the past year?

[ ] None  [ ] One  [ ] Two - Four  [ ] Five or more

8. In what denomination were you raised? If you were involved with more than one denomination when you were growing up, with which did you have the greatest identification?

a. [ ] Baptist  b. [ ] Disciples of Christ
c. [ ] Episcopal  d. [ ] Lutheran
e. [ ] Methodist  f. [ ] Presbyterian
g. [ ] United Church of Christ  h. [ ] Unitarian/Universalist
i. [ ] Other Protestant
j. [ ] Roman Catholic  k. Other
l. [ ] None
APPENDIX F

PRAYER MINISTRY

Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
23 Butler Street, SE
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

CONFIDENTIAL SPIRITUAL LIFE QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR MEMBERS OF THE INTERCESSORY PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

Introduction

Gender:  [ ] Male  [ ] Female

1. Are you a Christian? ________ Comment on your answer.

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

2. Have you been baptized? _________ When? ________________
   Where? ____________________________________________

Personal Devotion

3. How meaningful is Sunday morning worship to you?

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

110
4. How meaningful is private worship to you?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

5. Do you feel you are becoming more acquainted with God? ______________

In what way(s)? _______________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

6. Is meditation a part of your spiritual walk? ______________ Describe:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

7. Are your doubts and questions being answered? ______________

If yes, how?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

8. Do you feel you know the Bible? __________ What help do you need?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

9. Do you understand basic concepts of theology such as justification, regeneration, sanctification, gifts of the Spirit, etc.? __________ What help do you need?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Spiritual Maturity Level

10. Do you feel you are a more accepting, forgiving, loving person than you have been?

11. Do you feel you are stronger against temptations (to be impatient, angry, greedy, lustful, etc.)? Explain.

12. Do you feel that your self-esteem is healthy? Explain.

13. Do you see yourself becoming more pure in motive, thoughts, and lifestyle?
14. Do you find yourself usually encouraging others or competing with others?  

__________________________________________________________________________  

__________________________________________________________________________  

__________________________________________________________________________  

15. Do you occasionally tear another person down in jest or in anger?  

What triggers this?  

__________________________________________________________________________  

__________________________________________________________________________  

__________________________________________________________________________  

16. How is the Holy Spirit helping you become whole?  

__________________________________________________________________________  

__________________________________________________________________________  

__________________________________________________________________________  

17. Have you found someone to help bear the burdens of life?  

Explain.  

__________________________________________________________________________  

__________________________________________________________________________  

__________________________________________________________________________  

18. Do you find you can share your inner joys, hopes, and dreams?  

Explain.  

__________________________________________________________________________  

__________________________________________________________________________  

__________________________________________________________________________
19. When someone in jest or in anger tears you down, how do you handle it?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

20. When you fail, what happens within you? _________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

21. When you succeed, what happens within you? ____________________________

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

22. Are you able to turn your finances over to God and tithe, trusting him to supply?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

23. Are you able to turn your vocation over to God to use you how and where God wants? ___________ Explain.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________


________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

25. Are you able to exercise your gifts within the body of Christ? ______________

What do you see as your gift(s)? _________________________________________
26. Are you able to explain to others in the community why you are a Christian?

___________________________________________________

Any problems here?

___________________________________________________

27. How much are you concerned for those who are less fortunate, wanting to share with them the gospel and the helping hand?

___________________________________________________

28. How concerned are you with injustices and other social evils?

___________________________________________________

29. Is your life balanced? How do you deal with pressure? Do you have regular time for family, recreation, personal growth, etc.?

___________________________________________________

30. Do you feel you have a balance of worship, study, and service to stay in good spirit?

___________________________________________________

___________________________________________________

N.B.: TO BE ADMINISTERED BEFORE AND AFTER THE PROJECT.
APPENDIX G

PRAYER MINISTRY

Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
23 Butler Street, SE
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

FINAL EVALUATION

1. How has the prayer ministry of Butler Street affected your personal, family, and church life?

2. What, in your opinion, has been the impact of the prayer ministry on the congregation at Butler Street CME Church?

3. In what ways do you think the prayer ministry has either strengthened or weakened the other ministries of the church? For example, the choir, the counseling ministry, the cancer ministry, the youth ministry, etc.
4. What do you think are the major strengths and weaknesses of the prayer ministry?

5. Suggest what you think must be done to strengthen this prayer ministry for effective ministry in the future?

6. Would you like to continue to be a member of this prayer ministry? If yes, explain.
APPENDIX H

PRAYER MINISTRY

Butler Street Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
23 Butler Street, SE
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

TESTIMONIES

Testimony by Barbara P. Carpenter

The Prayer Ministry of Butler Street CME Church is a vibrant, spirit-filled ministry composed of people who love the Lord and believe in the power of prayer. Under the leadership of the director, the members of the Prayer Ministry have prayed for members of Butler Street, their families, and people in the community. As a member of the Prayer Ministry, I have prayed for many people, and I have seen God answer our prayers.

Earlier this year, my mother, Mrs. Bernice H. Pearson, began experiencing serious medical problems related to her heart. She was experiencing shortness of breath, dizziness, and an overall sick feeling. At one of her regular medical visits, her doctors became so alarmed with her heart that they ordered immediate hospitalization. Apparently my mother’s heart was beating at a very irregular and erratic pace. Not knowing what was causing the arrhythmia, the doctors needed
medical tests performed to determine what was going on with her heart so
treatment could begin immediately.

My mother is a person of tremendous faith. She loves the Lord and has felt
His presence and power and experienced His love, grace, and mercy in her 79 years
of living. Widowed at 41 with six children to rear, she has learned to trust God,
knowing that God is a mighty God who hears and answers prayers. Life has been
a challenge for her, but she knows that it is by God’s grace and mercy that she and
her family have been able to endure and to enjoy life and God’s blessings.

When she was diagnosed with a serious heart arrhythmia, my mother
immediately started praying. She asked her pastor, church family, relatives, and
friends to pray for her healing. Knowing of my involvement in the Prayer Ministry
at Butler Street, she asked us to pray for her as well. The Prayer Ministry members
immediately began praying for my mother’s healing.

After many medical tests, procedures, medication, and much prayer, my
mother was able to leave the hospital after four days. With medication, diet,
exercise, and regular medical monitoring, the doctors felt that her prognosis was
good. It has taken a number of months for my mother to gain her strength and to
resume some of her activities. She also has experienced some serious side effects
of her medication, particularly the Coumadin. However, at her medical check-up
last week, she was told that her heart was okay, and the blood work tests indicated
no problems.
My mother continues to be a good, obedient patient; however, she states without equivocation that yes, she had wonderful, competent, and caring doctors, but it was the prayers of God's people that brought her through. God heard the prayers of His people and healed her body. She is grateful to God for his healing power, and His unfailing love, goodness, and mercy. She continues to pray that God will bless, keep, and strengthen her. We thank God for being an awesome God. Praise the Lord!!
Testimony by Gladys M. Thornton

The power of prayer is truly a thing of wonder. It works tremendously. As a member of the Butler Street CME Church Prayer Ministry, I knew Mr. Carlton Gannaway as my co-worker.

On April 19, 2000 he was diagnosed with a brain tumor, loss of coordination and numbness on his right side, unable even to write his name. His name was added to the church's prayer list and we began to pray for his recovery.

On August 2, 2000 Mr. Gannaway had surgery and after weeks of therapy, he took an MRI test. His doctor asked him if he prayed a lot. Mr. Gannaway said he was puzzled but answered "Yes." He said the doctor proceeded to tell him that the tumor was gone with no trace.

As of now, Mr. Gannaway can walk on his own, drive, and write with his right hand again. We have no doubt that prayer is powerful and that God answered our prayer.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


