

Prayer Points for Church Leaders

These prayer points are for the people who lead in a local church beyond the pulpit: elders and deacons, ministry and small group leaders, church staff and the volunteers who run teams. They begin with the character Paul describes in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, then cover wisdom for decisions, unity among leaders, shepherding people well, protection from burnout and temptation, and their homes and families. There is a separate list for pastors.

But it shall not be this way among you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be the slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

Mark 10:43-45 (BSB)

An elder board or leadership team can open a meeting with one section; prayer teams can work through a section each week; anyone can pray for a leader by name. Let one person read the verse and another pray, then add what you know of the load they carry. A short note telling a leader you prayed for them goes a long way. Verses are from the Berean Standard Bible.

Character that is above reproach

1 Elders who are above reproach

Lord, keep our elders above reproach: temperate, self-controlled, respectable and hospitable, able to teach, gentle and peaceable, free of the love of money. Guard their private lives, so that their public leadership rests on something true.

An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not dependent on wine, not violent but gentle, peaceable, and free of the love of money.

1 Timothy 3:2-3 (BSB)

2 Deacons who are tested and trustworthy

Father, make our deacons dignified and sincere, never double-tongued or greedy for money. Help them hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience, and let years of quiet, practical service prove them faithful.

Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued or given to much wine or greedy for money. They must hold to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. Additionally, they must first be tested. Then, if they are above reproach, let them serve as deacons.

1 Timothy 3:8-10 (BSB)

3 Not self-willed or quick-tempered

God, our leaders are Your stewards. Keep them from being self-willed or quick-tempered, and make them hospitable lovers of good, upright, holy and disciplined, in a heated meeting as much as on a calm Sunday morning.

As God's steward, an overseer must be above reproach—not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not greedy for money. Instead, he must be hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.

Titus 1:7-8 (BSB)

4 Holding firmly to the faithful word

Lord, help everyone who teaches in our church, from the elder board to the third-grade classroom, hold firmly to Your faithful word as it was taught. Let them encourage others with sound teaching and answer error with patience and clarity.

He must hold firmly to the faithful word as it was taught, so that he can encourage others by sound teaching and refute those who contradict it.

Titus 1:9 (BSB)

Wisdom for decisions

5 Seeking the Spirit's mind together

Holy Spirit, the apostles and elders in Jerusalem could say a decision seemed good to You and to them. Give our leaders that kind of unhurried listening: Scripture open, prayer first, and the humility to wait until they have clarity.

It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond these essential requirements:

Acts 15:28 (BSB)

6 Many wise advisers

Lord, plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed. Keep our leaders from deciding alone or in a rush. Give them the humility to ask for input, listen to the congregation and change course when they are wrong.

Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.

Proverbs 15:22 (BSB)

7 Money handled in the open

Father, everything given to our church is given to You. Help those who handle budgets and offerings take great care to do what is right in Your eyes and in the eyes of people: clear records, honest reports and no shortcuts.

We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this generous gift. For we are taking great care to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord, but also in the eyes of men.

2 Corinthians 8:20-21 (BSB)

8 Choosing new leaders

Lord, when the apostles needed help, the church chose seven who were full of the Spirit and wisdom, and the apostles gave themselves to prayer and the word. Guide us as we choose deacons and leaders, and free each one to focus on their own calling.

Therefore, brothers, select from among you seven men confirmed to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will assign this responsibility to them and will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

Acts 6:3-4 (BSB)

Unity among leaders

9 Living together in harmony

LORD, You call it good and pleasant when brothers live in harmony. Give our leadership team real friendship, not just shared meetings. Let them pray together, eat together and trust one another.

A song of ascents. Of David. Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in harmony!

Psalms 133:1 (BSB)

10 One in spirit and purpose

Lord Jesus, by the encouragement we have in You and the fellowship of the Spirit, make our leaders one in mind, one in love, one in spirit and purpose. Let no rivalry between ministries pull them apart.

Therefore if you have any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort from His love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being united in spirit and purpose.

Philippians 2:1-2 (BSB)

11 Disagreements handled face to face

Lord Jesus, when one leader wrongs another, give them the courage to go and talk privately instead of complaining to others. Keep gossip, side-taking and silent resentment out of our leadership, and let honest conversations win them back to each other.

If your brother sins against you, go and confront him privately. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.

Matthew 18:15 (BSB) ·

12 Different roles, one body

Father, our staff and volunteer leaders have different roles, but in Christ we are one body and belong to one another. Free them from comparing ministries, competing for volunteers or guarding turf, and help them cheer each other on.

Just as each of us has one body with many members, and not all members have the same function, so in Christ we who are many are one body, and each member belongs to one another.

Romans 12:4-5 (BSB)

Shepherding and serving people

13 Leaders who refresh others

Lord, thank You for leaders whose love has refreshed so many of us: the deacon who fixes what is broken, the leader who texts when we are missing, the volunteer who has served for twenty years. Refresh their hearts in return.

I take great joy and encouragement in your love, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints.

Philemon 1:7 (BSB)

14 Small group leaders who share their lives

Father, Paul and his companions shared not only the gospel but their own lives with the believers they loved. Give our small group and Bible study leaders that kind of gentle, open-home care, and free them from feeling they must have every answer.

On the contrary, we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother caring for her children. We cared so deeply that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God, but our own lives as well. That is how beloved you have become to us.

1 Thessalonians 2:7-8 (BSB)

15 Weeping and rejoicing with people

Lord, help those who care for our people share their joy and their tears, at weddings and hospital beds, births and funerals. Keep their hearts soft after years of carrying other people's joys and griefs.

Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep.

Romans 12:15 (BSB)

16 Restoring gently

Holy Spirit, when someone in our church is caught in sin, give our elders and leaders a spirit of gentleness to restore them, without harshness and without looking away. Keep them watchful over their own hearts as they do it.

Brothers, if someone is caught in a trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him with a spirit of gentleness. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

Galatians 6:1 (BSB)

17 Training those who come next

Lord, You told Moses to commission Joshua, to encourage him and strengthen him. Show our leaders whom to train, and give them joy in raising up people who may one day do the work better than they did.

But commission Joshua, encourage him, and strengthen him, for he will cross over ahead of the people and enable them to inherit the land that you will see.”

Deuteronomy 3:28 (BSB)

Protection from burnout and temptation

18 Not carrying it alone

Lord, Jethro warned Moses that the task was too heavy for him to handle alone. Show our leaders when they are wearing themselves out, give them the humility to share the load, and raise up others to carry it with them.

But Moses’ father-in-law said to him, “What you are doing is not good. Surely you and these people with you will wear yourselves out, because the task is too heavy for you. You cannot handle it alone.

Exodus 18:17-18 (BSB)

19 Bread and sleep for the weary

God, when Elijah was spent, You let him sleep, fed him twice and warned him that the road ahead was too long to walk without food. Care for our worn-out leaders the same way: sleep, meals, a real break and gentle care.

Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said, “Get up and eat.” And he looked around, and there by his head was a cake of bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank and lay down again. A second time the angel of the LORD returned and touched him, saying, “Get up and eat, or the journey will be too much for you.”

1 Kings 19:5-7 (BSB) ·

20 Careful not to fall

Lord, the one who thinks he is standing firm should be careful not to fall. Keep our leaders humble and alert, never trusting their gifts or their years of service to keep them safe from pride, lust or the love of money.

So the one who thinks he is standing firm should be careful not to fall.

1 Corinthians 10:12 (BSB)

21 Confessing to one another

Father, give each of our leaders at least one person they can be fully honest with. Help them confess sin to one another and pray for one another, so that nothing stays hidden long enough to do great harm.

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man has great power to prevail.

James 5:16 (BSB) ·

Their homes and families

22 Integrity at home

Lord, help every leader in our church walk in their own house with integrity of heart. Let the patience, honesty and kindness people see at church be even more true at their own kitchen table.

I will ponder the way that is blameless—when will You come to me? I will walk in my house with integrity of heart.

Psalms 101:2 (BSB)

23 One handful with tranquility

Lord, better one handful with tranquility than two handfuls of toil. Protect our leaders' families from being crowded out by meetings and messages. Give them evenings at home without guilt, and help our church guard those evenings for them.

Better one handful with tranquility than two handfuls with toil and pursuit of the wind.

Ecclesiastes 4:6 (BSB)

24 A blessing on their families

LORD, bless and keep the spouses and children of our leaders. Make Your face shine on them and be gracious to them, turn Your face toward them and give them peace, and help us thank them for all they have shared with the church.

'May the LORD bless you and keep you; may the LORD cause His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; may the LORD lift up His countenance toward you and give you peace.'

Numbers 6:24-26 (BSB) ·

A closing prayer

Lord Jesus, You came not to be served but to serve. Make the leaders of our church servants like You: above reproach, wise in their decisions, united with one another and gentle with Your people. Guard them from burnout, pride and temptation, and bless their homes. Raise up new leaders behind them, and help us follow gladly and pray for them often. For Your glory and the good of Your church, Amen.