

# *Just* Neighbors

## HOW TO: Host a House of Prayer

*Use this as a guide if needed it, not a prescription.*

A **House of Prayer** serves as a means to guide individuals, families and homeowners in incorporating prayer into their homes, while also giving opportunity to establish New Covenants on properties. Similar to a dedication for one's home, it's a starting point for sustained prayer and worship within our homes and a commitment to use our properties for the kingdom of God. As Christians, we believe in the spiritual as much as the physical, half of healing injustice will be with tangible actions and spiritual battles. Houses of Prayer are gatherings that foster a culture of prayer and worship in local neighborhoods, pushing back against the negative impacts of division, racism and hatred in our communities.

In **Houses of Prayer**, we come before God, asking him to heal our land (2 Chronicles 7:4). We seek his leading to become better disciples (i.e., just neighbors). We pray for transformation in our community, and for hearts that are open to pursuing justice and righteousness in our neighborhoods, schools, and cities. Through prayer, we seek Jesus' transformational power to align our lives with His will.

To prepare, please read Solomon's dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem, as described in 2 Chronicles 6 & 7, where he sought God's blessings not just for his household but for the entire kingdom and God was pleased. Similarly, in Daniel 9, we see Daniel offering a prayer of repentance on behalf of all of Israel, and God was pleased with it.

### What You Could Include in a **House of Prayer**:

- Have your New Inclusive Covenant ready – [click here](#) to learn more about Inclusive Covenants.
- Invite friends, small group, family and/or curious neighbors.
- Read Daniel 9: 1-23 in light of injustice perpetuated by redlining and restrictive covenants.

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- This is Daniel's prayer of confession and repentance for himself and the entire nation of Israel, past and present. After the prayer the angel Gabriel appears to him and tells him that he's highly esteemed by God. God delights in our personal and corporate confession.
- Pray
- Sing songs of worship
  - or you can listen to Spotify playlist here:
    - [Modern Worship](#)
- Read aloud your New Inclusive Covenant.
- Pray some more, this time throughout your home.
  - *What do you want your house to be about? What do you want God to do through your home and you/your family?*
  - *How do you want him to use you to bring healing to your neighborhood and our region.*
  - *Pray through what you need God to do for you and/or your family.*
- In a sense, this is a new house. Conclude by reading Liturgy for A New House from Every Moment Holy:

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### **Every Moment Holy: A New House**

*We thank you for this new home, O Lord, for the shelter it will provide, for the moments of life that will be shared within it.*

*We thank you for this our new home and we welcome you here.*

*Dwell with us in this place, O Lord.*

*Dwell among us in these spaces, in these rooms.*

*Be present at this table as we eat together.*

*Be present as we rise in the morning and lie down at night.*

*Be present in our work here.*

*Be present in our play.*

*May your Spirit inhabit this home, making of it a sanctuary where hearts and lives are knit together, where bonds of love are strengthened, where mercy is learned and practiced.*

*May this our home be a harbor of anchorage and refuge, and a haven from which we journey forth to do your work in your world.*

*May it be a garden of nourishment in which our roots go deep that we might bear fruit for the nourishing of others.*

*May this our new home be a place of knowing and of being known, a place of shared tears and laughter; a place where forgiveness is easily asked and granted, and wounds are quickly healed; a place of meaningful conversation, of words not left unsaid;*

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*a place of joining, of becoming, of creating, and reflecting; a place where our diverse gifts  
are named and appreciated;  
where we learn to serve one another and to serve our neighbors as well;  
a place where our stories are forever twined by true affections.  
Grant also, O Lord, that our days lived gratefully within these temporary walls, enjoying these  
momentary fellowships, would serve to awaken within us a restless longing for our truer home.  
Incline our hearts ever toward the glories  
of that better city, built by you, O God—a city whose blessings are neverending, and whose  
fellowships are eternally unbroken.  
Amen.*

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### **Suggested Scripture Reading: DANIEL 9:1-23**

In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian<sup>[b]</sup> kingdom—<sup>2</sup> in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. <sup>3</sup> So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes.

<sup>4</sup> I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed:

“Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, <sup>5</sup> we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws. <sup>6</sup> We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes and our ancestors, and to all the people of the land.

<sup>7</sup> “Lord, you are righteous, but this day we are covered with shame—the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far, in all the countries where you have scattered us because of our unfaithfulness to you. <sup>8</sup> We and our kings, our princes and our ancestors are covered with shame, LORD, because we have sinned against you. <sup>9</sup> The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him; <sup>10</sup> we have not obeyed the LORD our God or kept the laws he gave us through his servants the prophets. <sup>11</sup> All Israel has transgressed your law and turned away, refusing to obey you.

“Therefore the curses and sworn judgments written in the Law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against you. <sup>12</sup> You have fulfilled the words spoken against us and against our rulers by bringing on us great disaster. Under the whole heaven nothing has ever been done like what has been done to Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come

on us, yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our sins and giving attention to your truth. <sup>14</sup>The LORD did not hesitate to bring the disaster on us, for the LORD our God is righteous in everything he does; yet we have not obeyed him.

<sup>15</sup>“Now, Lord our God, who brought your people out of Egypt with a mighty hand and who made for yourself a name that endures to this day, we have sinned, we have done wrong. <sup>16</sup>Lord, in keeping with all your righteous acts, turn away your anger and your wrath from Jerusalem, your city, your holy hill. Our sins and the iniquities of our ancestors have made Jerusalem and your people an object of scorn to all those around us.

<sup>17</sup>“Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant. For your sake, Lord, look with favor on your desolate sanctuary. <sup>18</sup>Give ear, our God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. <sup>19</sup>Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, hear and act! For your sake, my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name.”

<sup>20</sup> While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the LORD my God for his holy hill— <sup>21</sup> while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. <sup>22</sup> He instructed me and said to me, “Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. <sup>23</sup> As soon as you began to pray, a word went out, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed...

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