

Prayer Ripples:

A mobilization prayer model for mobilizers, missionaries, and network leaders

What are Prayer Ripples?

Prayer Ripples are a way to rapidly engage your members, partner organizations, field teams, and mobilizers in a multiplying mobilization prayer movement for the nations and a great harvest of believers.

We have many church planting, discipleship, and mobilization models, but how many models do we have for multiplying prayer movements? When we look to Jesus' multiplication model we see that He:

1. Prayerfully selected who He would invest in.
2. Planned for each of them to reproduce and teach others to reproduce.
3. Engaged them in reproducing what they were seeing Him do.

The multiplication model in Prayer Ripples intentionally reproduces these dynamics:

1. The initiator and participants agree in prayer on a commitment to each other.
2. Participants understand from the outset that they are to start their own Prayer Ripple.
3. Recruits practice and work at reproducing what they are participating in.

Grounded in proven principles of church multiplication and discipleship, the Prayer Ripple model seeks to bear the following fruit in accordance with God's word:

1. Obedience to Jesus' twice-recorded command to **beg** the Lord of the Harvest to thrust out laborers into His harvest field (Mt 9:38 and Lk 10:2),
2. Mutual prayer for the nations, mobilization and network ministry, and personal needs, and
3. Deepening relationships and collaboration

The Vision behind Prayer Ripples

Prayer Ripples were started by Robby Butler, a mission strategist with a passion for mobilization, effective evangelism, and reproducing church planting and discipleship movements.

Seeing prayer as a vital quality of any sustainable, God-birthed movement, he realized that prayer also needs to be mobilized and unleashed.

Through multiple iterations over three years, he and a team of prayer mobilizers developed and refined the Prayer Ripple model into its current form.

The Prayer Ripple Model

The Prayer Ripple model seeks to find that fine balance between simplicity and structure.

At its simplest, Prayer Ripples consist of 3 to 4 participants who have made two commitments to each other:

1. To meet for once a month to pray together with a strategic focus on:
 - worshipping God,
 - praying for the world, the harvest and the unreached,
 - praying for mobilizers, strategic networks, and ministry leaders, and
 - praying for each other's ministry and personal requests
2. To start their own Prayer Ripple within three to six months.

At a deeper level, it is a prayer model intentionally designed for replication with a minimum of oversight, maintenance, and administration. Thus, while easy to implement, its structure, and practices are intentional and purposeful.

Recommended Structure

1. **Frequency:**

We recommend meeting monthly. We have found that meeting too frequently creates an obstacle to starting new child ripples and can be hard to fit into busy schedules. Meeting less than once a month reduces momentum and the sense of connection between participants.

2. **Meeting Duration:** One hour (depending on the group size)

We suggest keeping the meetings to one hour. One hour seems to strike the right balance. It is easier to schedule. It gives participants the flexibility to emphasize a specific aspect of their prayer time or group needs without feeling too hurried.

3. **Type of Connection:**

While meeting together in person is ideal, we have found that most Prayer Ripples take place via video conference, audio conference, or group phone calls. There are many conferencing tools available.

4. **Ripple Size:**

We recommend keeping the Prayer Ripple small and having no more than 3 to 4 participants. It is easier to schedule, and gives participants more opportunity for prayer and personal engagement.

5. **Ripple Roles:**

There are two roles in this model. The first role is the “**convener**”. This person is responsible for starting the ripple, inviting participants, keeping the rhythm of monthly meetings, and maintaining the goal of creating new ripples. The second role is the “**repeater**”. These are the other 2-3 participants who join with the desire to start their own ripples.

6. **Meeting Facilitation:**

We recommend that the convener facilitate the first 2 sessions so that the other participants of the ripple can become familiar with the agenda. Beyond the first couple meetings, we recommend rotating the meeting facilitation responsibilities among each participant. This allows each of the repeaters to understand the model and become comfortable leading the prayer time. This will help them prepare to start their own Prayer Ripples.

7. **Ripple Agenda:**

To provide the necessary focus and structure for your time together, we strongly suggest using the provided meeting structure. We have found – through much iteration – that this set of prayer topics, their sequence, and the amount of time allocated to each area is the most effective.

However, we invite the meeting facilitator to adapt the amount of time spent around each topic to the monthly needs of the group. For example, some months, you might choose to add more time in one area depending on what is happening in the world or in your own ministries and personal lives.

8. **Length of Commitment:**

We suggest inviting participants to try it out for 3 months. This trial period makes it much easier to get started, sort out the team dynamics of praying together, and yet not feel like a huge commitment. It also allows someone who is a poor fit for the group to more easily move on. Once involved, our experience has been that most people want to continue.

Beyond three months, we suggest the Prayer Ripple establish a renewable, six month commitment. This gives members the flexibility of opting out if schedules or other demands become too great while providing stability and clear expectations of participation.

9. Child Ripples:

Each Repeater joins with the goal of starting another Ripple Prayer group within three to six months while they continue to attend their current Ripple. Repeaters may choose to continue attending the same Ripple group or stop attending when they start their own. This model enables Repeaters to become familiar with the practice, have a home group for community, encouragement, and support. It is one of the essential elements needed for multiplication to have. It also enriches the prayer with a bigger sense of purpose and importance.

Getting Started

1. Finding Prayer Partners:

The Prayer Ripple Convener prayerfully invites two other participants to form a Prayer Ripple with them. Usually, the initial invitation is for 3 months with the option of extending for six months and renewing every six months thereafter.

We recommend looking for other mobilizers, network leaders, etc. who have a heart for prayer and the world. Intentionally inviting a diverse range of international / ministry participants can greatly enrich the prayer time. For networks, engaging different network ministries and work team participants in Ripples could also be a powerful way to build bridges of trust and relationship.

2. Preparing to Meet:

The Convener sets up a date, time, and meeting method for the first Prayer Ripple. They send out email reminders containing the agenda, meeting details, and a request for prayer. Also ask the participants for their ministry and personal prayer requests. Send another email just before the Ripple with the prayer requests and meeting details attached.

3. Your First Prayer Ripple:

We recommend setting aside an hour and a half for the first meeting. This allows you to have a full Prayer Ripple experience, decide on logistics, and review the guidelines and Prayer Ripple agreement. Please take the time to read these guidelines aloud, discuss, and agree on any revisions. This facilitates everyone understanding and owning the model they are committing to. An extended time of sharing helps participants get to know each other.

Appendix:

Sample Agenda and Rationale

Welcome (5 min) Quick updates, choose next Ripple time

Worship (10 min) Spontaneous, as the Holy Spirit leads

World (10 min) Prayer for the Harvest (nations, people groups, or clusters)

- <http://joshuaproject.net/pray/unreachedoftheday>
- <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/index.php/issue/day/>

Workers (10 min) Mobilization Ministries or Events (for laborers). Give the assigned leader freedom and creativity in guiding this time but keep prayer suggestions brief so the focus remains on prayer and not talking about prayer.

We (15 min) Praise for answered prayers & prayer for each other's ministry needs. Two members of the Ripple pray for the third member. Then have the one prayed for start the prayer for another Ripple member. Continue until all are prayed for by all.

Waves (5 min) Quick report on efforts to replicate the ripples

Wrap up (5 min) Evaluation/thanksgiving

Tips for Agenda Preparation

1. Gather and circulate prayer requests in advance by email.
2. This keeps the focus on prayer instead of sharing needs.
3. To help participants prepare, include the following reminders in your email:
 - a brief passage of scripture to fuel worship,
 - brief requests for their personal needs,
 - brief requests for their Child Ripples,
 - an Unreached People Group for which they will pray, and
 - brief requests for their ministry and/or another mobilization effort or need.
4. Assign a time goal to each segment to facilitate good use of time.

Participant Commitments:

Each Convener commits to:

1. seeking the Lord's guidance regarding who to invite to their Ripple,
2. scheduling and facilitating effective prayer with those who accept,
3. limiting their Ripple's size to maintain a high level of participation,
4. privately coaching any whose behavior detracts from the Ripple's purposes, and
5. working with and urging Repeaters to form additional Ripples in 3 to 6 months

Each Repeater commits to:

1. seeking appropriate confirmation before joining, and
2. joining (with confirmation) for a trial period, by the end of which they will agree to extend their commitment and to form a new Ripple, or excuse themselves so another Repeater can be incorporated.

Shared Commitments

1. faithful participation (rescheduling the Ripple as necessary),
2. transparency and confidentiality (building trust relationships),
3. full involvement (no undisclosed multitasking during Ripple meetings),
4. effectiveness (addressing anything that detracts from Ripple meetings), and
5. courtesy (quickly explaining any unscheduled absences).

Template for a "Participants' Agreement"

For the glory of God among all nations, we covenant to pursue multiplying obedience to praying as commanded by Jesus in Mt 9:38 and Lk 10:2.

Having sought God's guidance and reviewed and discussed the Ripple Agreement and Guidelines, we commit ourselves to pray with and for one another, and to seek God's empowering for:

1. faithful participation in the times we schedule,
2. transparency with one another and confidentiality regarding what is shared,
3. full involvement without distraction during Ripples,
4. multiplication through each Repeater convening another Ripple, and
5. courtesy with one another whenever one is forced to be absent.