

“We’re here to help.”



Global Prayer Connection

Internet Development Strategy—www.globalprayerconnection.com

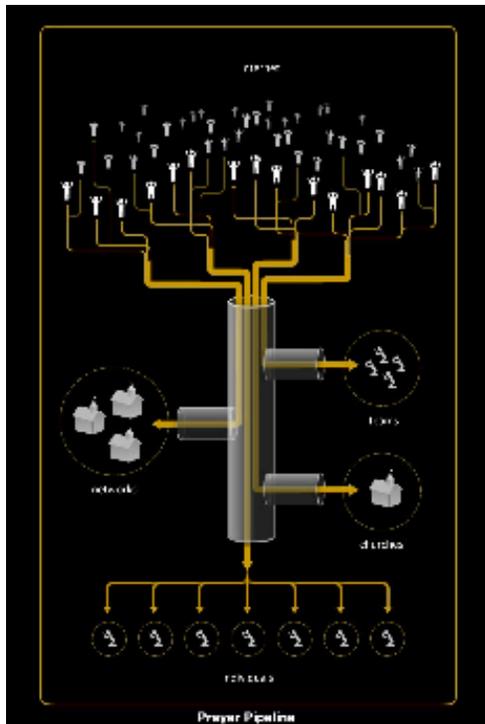
By Simon Solutions

Introduction

New Internet technology offers the Church unprecedented opportunity to unite and mobilize praying people worldwide. A prayer network that brings together **people** and **prayer** at local, national, and global levels of participation can easily become a sustainable reality with amazing results.

We envision a simple way that links together individual intercessors, groups, and organizations. We define the technology tool that connects and empowers this as the **Global Prayer Connection—an organic network of relationships and resources**. Everyone can easily tap into the network for an unlimited supply of encouragement, empowerment, and education.

Global Prayer Connection serves as an international channel for intercessors to stay well connected, informed, and engaged in a safe and secure environment. This creates vantage points of cooperation that leverage social networking for collective action.



Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days per year, the prayer network constantly flows with prayers, testimonies, and resources—available *on demand*. Unrestricted by geography or costly expense, people enjoy fast and easy access to communication and information that’s vital for strategic prayer networking and mobilization.

We recommend the network be an *organic social networking infrastructure* that’s decentralized, flexible, and scalable. We want to make sure that people can comfortably gather in a caring environment to talk about things that really matter.

People will invite their friends and family to join with them in online prayer communities for a more frequent exchange of conversations and shared experiences. As these webs of relationships strengthen among intercessors, a path is paved for organic growth of collaborative prayer communities.

The network is a relational prayer community built by intercessors for people who pray.

Global Prayer Connection is a means to an end, and not an end in itself. Rather than draw exclusive focus to itself, it is a tool that helps people and organizations create their own

prayer networks, customized to their needs. It helps strengthen relational communities, empowering them to grow and multiply. It also enables different distributed networks to easily connect and collaborate with one another for a greater focused impact.

No one person, group, or organization should claim exclusive rights to the network. Of course, building and maintaining the network will require international collaboration. This can easily happen if people and organizations are willing to partner together for the greater good—a chance for *everyone* to tap into the power of fervent prayer and witness what God is doing in transforming people’s lives.

Why build it?

We believe now is the time for the Church to grab hold of the power of the Internet for prayer mobilization. The enormous popularity, economical cost, and global connectivity of the Internet offers the Church huge opportunity to elevate prayer to critical mass, worldwide. Imagine what would happen if *millions* of people, from different countries all around the world, were simultaneously united together in prayer, around the clock. The result would be beyond our imagination!

First, we need a simple way for people in need of prayer to connect with those who pray. We need to identify intercessors within a community and connect them with others who pray for people's needs on a regular basis. We need to provide a two-way avenue for prayers and testimonies that everyone can see and draw hope from.



Second, we need to engage more people in prayer by helping them grow in their knowledge and understanding of the power of prayer. They need easy access to mentors and resources whenever they want. All of this should happen at local, national, and global levels.

Another good reason to build Global Prayer Connection is simply this: because *we can*, right now! We have technology blueprints, the right tools, and skilled craftsmen who are ready to go to work.

What are the benefits?

The network engages more people, in more opportunities to participate in life-changing ministry. It gives people immediate access to vital information and valuable resources. Armies of intercessors can instantly be mobilized across cultural landscapes. The network serves as a revolutionary ministry tool that unleashes the power of connectivity, collaboration, and community.

Connectivity...implies constant connection and streamlined communication. The network leverages the power of communication, which is vital in building trusting relationships. This enhances partnerships and opens an international gateway to **Church without walls**.

Collaboration...implies working together for synergistic results. Collaboration helps us *get on the same page*. It reduces complexity and increases partnered solutions for complex challenges. Not bound by time or space, people can use the network to join forces in advancing the Kingdom of God.

Community...implies sharing life together. Millions of Christians, all around the world, spend hours on the Internet each week. They are looking for a place to belong, engage in meaningful conversation, and meet new friends. The network supports their purposeful desires to integrate their online world with everyday living and enhances the care and support found in their face-to-face relationships.



Everyone, regardless of age or experience, benefits from the network. Young people who are deeply entrenched in social networking can reach out in loving care to friends and family. Intercessors can connect with others who share like-passions and similar prayer assignments. Prayer teams can stay up-to-date on the needs of their church family and community. Consider other useful benefits of the network:

- Keeps intercessors well connected, informed, and engaged around the clock.
- Provides multiple levels of secure interaction: public, semi-private, and private.
- Makes prayer collaboration and partnering simple and cost-effective.
- Enables dispersed individuals and prayer groups to work together, simultaneously.
- Facilitates unlimited development of small groups with shared interactive tools.
- Broadcasts area-wide bulletins and alerts instantly via email and cell phones.

All of this helps in creating a culture that supports building capacity for greater intercession, sustainable prayer communities, and strategic mobilization for greater impact.

What about security?

More than *one billion* people are online; that is, 1 out of every 6 people on the planet. With so many people online, security is very important. The network must be safe and secure, and accessible to both youth and adults. We also need to take into consideration those intercessors who need highly secure interaction based upon their culture and geographic location in the world.

We can easily put into place secure measures that protect people's identity and safeguard their communication. We can use the same online security protocols that financial institutions use everyday to safeguard transactions and protect people's personal information.

We can also implement permission-based security features that only allow access to certain communication and information-sharing on a *need-to-know* basis. This will help define public and private channels for interactive dialogue. We can do this for small communities with public access, and for secure private groups for added safety.

How much time will it take to construct the network?

A number of factors contribute to the development of the network. Construction speed and productivity largely depend upon the leadership skills, project management skills, and influence of a visionary leadership team who facilitates the development of the network. I am thankful to say that collaborative dialogue between international prayer leaders and experienced web developers is already set in motion.

Collaboration includes representatives from International Prayer Council, America's National Prayer Committee, Mission America, Call2All, Campus Crusade for Christ, Global Day of Prayer, Lausanne Movement, Simon Solutions, 3Z, and Liquidus Tech. We envision more representatives from international organizations partnering with us in project development. We believe that working together will maximize our potential and produce mutual beneficial results.

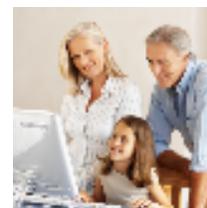
We already have a remarkable technology team with proven track records for creating user-friendly global communication and information-sharing networks. We have built a solid technology infrastructure upon which modular applications can easily be added on-demand and integrated for seamless compatibility. This infrastructure is flexible and scalable for future design.

The technology materials needed to construct this infrastructure are already in place and widely used by millions of online users for many different useful applications. There's no need to re-invent the wheel. With a small number of resources, network construction can begin immediately. A simple beta version can be put into people's hands in a *few weeks*. Interactive prayer mobilization can become a reality for local, national, and global communities in a *few months*.

What should Global Prayer Connection look like?

Building the most sophisticated prayer network with lots of bells and whistles will not guarantee that most people will like it...or use it. People need time to warm up to new things, especially new technology. We have learned that putting the right tools into the right hands at the right time will boost acceptance.

We suggest that the look and feel of the network be customizable—according to user's needs and comfort level of participation. Some people will only need simple, basic functionality; others will want more advanced features. Some will only want to connect with others within their local church or neighborhood. Others will want connectivity on a city-wide or regional level. And still others will want national and international connectivity with multiple interactive features.



We recommend starting with a simple graphic user interface (GUI) that requires little or no training to use. Depending upon needs and web experience, users can drill down into deeper levels of advanced functionality. If more training is needed, we can use online video tutorials, FAQs (frequently asked questions), forums, and online coaches.

Beta testing at different stages of development will be most important. This will help define the network's user-friendliness, acceptance, and performance. Our goal is to create a tool that most everyone will enjoy using and will gladly encourage their friends, family, and colleagues to use it as well.

We suggest empowering the prayer network with a social networking platform that will enable intercessors to easily interact with one another and gather together in small groups based upon shared interests. This will help pave the way for strategic networking and collaborative partnerships that encourage intercessors to work together for collective action. This will also help in creating a culture that supports building capacity for community involvement and engagement.

We also suggest that the network integrate with other prayer networks—creating a web of relational connections that promote solidarity and common purpose in prayer mobilization. As noted earlier, the prayer network is a tool that intercessors will use to create new and exciting ways for people and prayer to connect. It will enhance the efforts of existing prayer networks and pave the way for the creation of new ones.



People and ministries, all over the world, will be able to customize the use of the network according to their purposes and mission.

Development of the network will require that a number of parallel processes be activated, simultaneously. These processes can be strategically integrated and aligned for common purposes. We can start small and then grow exponentially. While team members engage in on-going collaboration, construction can begin immediately. We recommend building the network in three phases.

Phase One of Construction:

We suggest putting into people's hands a very *simple-to-use* tool that most people will regard highly and encourage friends and family to use. The graphic user interface needs to be very user-friendly, able to work with all web browsers, while remaining aesthetically pleasing. We recommend simple integration without a lot of extra features at first. Additional features can be added later according to needs and popular acceptance.

We suggest building on an *organic social networking platform* with simple interactive and community-building features. After all, the whole idea about creating a global prayer network is about connecting people and prayer—which is all about good communication and meaningful relationships.

This phase of construction should be a beta version that a select group of people start using; and at the same time, give us feedback as to its user-friendly functionality. We will also need time to test the performance of the network and gauge how well it meets people's needs (in general and at specialized levels).



Phase Two of Construction:

Based upon information gathered from beta users in Phase One of Construction, we will need to collaborate to determine **best practices** for further development of the network. We can take lessons learned and apply them to upgrades that people want, according to their personal needs and level of participation. We can easily add modules or applications that do not clutter the graphic user interface. These can be turned on or off in an easy-to-use Feature Settings Panel.

Phase Three of Construction:

This involves taking into consideration new advances in Internet technology. The Internet will always be in a constant state of evolution, creating new and better ways for building central repositories for information-sharing and data collection. We will need to wait and see how this new technology unfolds over time; and then, customize our development according to the availability of new applications.

We will also need to wait and see how the network is impacting prayer mobilization. Measurable outcomes, creative ideas, and innovative strategies will certainly emerge that will help us define course changes in development. We will need to quickly adapt to people's needs and mobilization strategies.

Who should be involved in construction of the network?

We recommend assembling a team of Prayer Leaders and Web-based Technology Consultants to oversee the overall development of the network. Team members will need to have leadership skills, bias for action, credibility, communications ability, and analytical skills. They should be selected from a qualified group of technology practitioners and prayer leaders who truly value prayer mobilization. Team membership should evolve over time.

It is very important that team members help people see the urgent need for united intercessory prayer and the importance of acting immediately. They need to make sure that prayer and technology practitioners are empowered to act by removing as many barriers as possible so that those who want to make this vision a reality...can do so, right now.



Prayer Leadership Team:

- National and international prayer leaders with widely-distributed networking influence.
- International mission leaders who value prayer mobilization using technology.
- Prayer leaders who focus on the needs of children and young people.
- Christian business leaders who value prayer ministry and have fundraising influence.

Web-based Technology Leadership Team:

- Experts in best practices for web-based architecture, database management, and online security.
- Experienced graphic designers who truly understand user-friendly functionality.
- Developers experienced in mapping technology and people groups.
- Experts in hardware network systems design for hosting millions of Internet users.
- Developers with up-to-date knowledge and experience in online social networking, community development, and mass communications.

Team members will need to spend time in roundtable discussions—brainstorming and building upon creative ideas. Time will be needed to plan the work; and then, work the plan. This will be a perpetual process built upon a solid foundation of international collaboration for current and future development.

How much will it cost people to tap into Global Prayer Connection?

Absolutely nothing. This is a free service to everyone, everywhere. The hosting and maintenance of the network will be provided by sponsors who understand the value and mutual benefits of collaborative partnerships.

Links to valuable resources, including consultation and training materials, will be available from prayer leaders and organizations. These will be carefully pre-qualified by an International Prayer Resource Committee commissioned by the Prayer Network's project management team. We may consider securing a small percentage of resource sales for network hosting, maintenance, and future development costs.