



**PRAYUSA EVENT FACILITATED BY LEGISLATORS FOR PASTORS
PROGRAM AGENDA AND SCRIPT**

PROGRAM AGENDA

Welcome	Legislator
Opening Prayer	Legislator
Pledge of Allegiance [OPT]	Legislator
National Anthem [OPT]	
Remarks - General	Legislator(s)
Remarks - PrayUSA	Legislator
PrayUSA Video	
Read the Proclamation:	Legislator
Signing Ceremony	
Call to Action to Pastors	Legislator
Closing Prayer	Legislator

COLLATERAL: (Located at www.PrayUSA.com)

3-minute PrayUSA video

8.5 x 5.5 PrayUSA flyer (bulletin insert)

11 x 17 Proclamation (*We recommend printing several Proclamations based on the size of the congregation, and placing signing tables either at communion stations, in the back of the church or in the foyer. The goal is to have enough signing stations so that people don't have to wait in a long line and not too many that we have Proclamations with only a few signatures.*)

Promotion POST-event:

#PrayUSA

Post pictures and details to church Facebook page

Send pictures/video/details to CPCF:

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PROGRAM SCRIPT

ACTION: [LEGISLATOR 1] steps to the mic to begin meeting

LEGISLATOR 1:

Welcome remarks to pastors in attendance. [Introduce government leaders who are in attendance.]

We would like to open with a prayer. Our opening prayer will be offered by [LEGISLATOR].

ACTION: [LEGISLATOR} steps to mic.

LEGISLATOR 2:

Prayer to be delivered by [LEGISLATOR]

ACTION: [LEGISLATOR 1] returns to mic.

LEGISLATOR 1:

Thank you [LEGISLATOR]. Now I will call on [LEGISLATOR], another member of the Legislative Prayer Caucus to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ACTION: [LEGISLATOR] steps to the mic.

LEGISLATOR 3:

[LEGISLATOR] leads Pledge of Allegiance

ACTION: [LEGISLATOR 1] returns to the mic.

LEGISLATOR 1:

Thank you [LEGISLATOR].

There is a concerted effort to remove even the mention of the word “God,” from the public arena. People of faith are losing their businesses, their livelihood, and are being pushed to the fringes of society for simply standing for their deeply held convictions. These actions go far beyond any effort to separate church and state—arguments crafted by revisionists who aggressively seek to censor the rich heritage of faith America has enjoyed since her founding. We are here to reaffirm our Judeo-Christian heritage and seek God for His divine intervention for healing of this Land; that we may remain One Nation Under God.

In 2005, a group of legislators in the United States Congress came together to form the bipartisan, and now bicameral, Congressional Prayer Caucus. Their goal was simple: to defend the right of Americans to pray and to stand against the attacks on faith across our land. With now nearly 100 members, their success has been extraordinary. They have inspired the formation of similar caucuses in state legislatures across the country.

In [STATE] we have formed a Legislative Prayer Caucus with [insert #] members. We have come here tonight to ask you to join us in a very important initiative, PrayUSA: Government Leaders Calling the Nation to Prayer.

Before we discuss the details I would like to invite [LEGISLATOR] to come share a few remarks with you...

ACTION: [LEGISLATOR] steps to mic.

LEGISLATOR 4:

Suggested talking points include;

- The importance of prayer in general; importance throughout America's history; prayer valued by our leaders (See Addendum A)
- Increasing attacks on Christianity and faith in America (cite specific examples – contact CPCF if specifics are needed)
- Importance of pastors and the church in protecting religious freedom and America's Judeo-Christian heritage
- Truth about Separation of Church and State (See Addendum B)
- Give testimony of how the leadership of {STATE} goes to God for guidance.

ACTION: [LEGISLATOR 1] returns to the mic.

LEGISLATOR 1

Thank you [LEGISLATOR]. Now I would like to invite [LEGISLATOR] to tell you about an unprecedented opportunity for all of us to work together to call God's people to prayer for this nation.

But before (s)he comes, please direct your attention to this short video about PrayUSA.

ACTION: PLAY 3-minute PrayUSA Video

ACTION: [LEGISLATOR] steps to the mic.

LEGISLATOR 5

An extraordinary, nationwide prayer initiative was birthed on March 7, 2015 at the historic LIFFT America Religious Liberty Summit in Charlotte, North Carolina, convened by the Congressional Prayer Caucus Foundation, along with Congressman J. Randy Forbes and Senator James Lankford, co-chairs of the Congressional Prayer Caucus. Sixteen members of congress and thirty-six state legislators -representing 25 states – gathered to coordinate a tactical strategy to effectively challenge the growing anti-faith movement in our Country.

The consensus among participants was that people of faith can no longer sit idly by and passively watch as our nation's history, and Judeo-Christian heritage are being rewritten with a false narrative. As the first unified step together, these government leaders are passionately calling on God's people to unify with *one heart and one voice* to pray and take action for the United States and those who lead her. In a solemn and historic ceremony, all who were present signed a *Call to Prayer for America Proclamation*.

We are setting an example for the rest of the nation as we publicly declare our commitment to prayer and our conviction that "blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." We look to Him for our strength, our wisdom, and our direction. We resolve to stand firm against any and all threats to the right of Americans to call upon His Name in the public arena.

Hundreds of government leaders and thousands of citizens have already answered the call and signed the *Prayer for America Proclamation*. But that is just the first step, we are asking Pastors to join us in this PrayUSA initiative by scheduling time on a Sunday morning to have an elected official read this Proclamation, play the 3-minute PrayUSA video you just viewed, and allow your congregation to sign the Proclamation.

Let us be as bold, let us be as committed, and let us pray that God will continue to bless STATE and this nation we all love so much.

I would now like to call upon one of the members of the STATE Legislative Prayer Caucus, [LEGISLATOR] to read the Call to Prayer for America.

ACTION: [LEGISLATOR] comes to the mic.

LEGISLATOR 6

A Call to Prayer for America

"Throughout the history of the United States, its citizens and inhabitants have drawn strength, hope, and guidance from prayer. From the very first Continental Congress through every form of adversity and blessing, Americans have fallen to their knees and implored God Almighty to protect their families and to heal their land.

The freedom upon which America is founded affords the right to any individual to decline to pray if he or she so desires. However, that same freedom allows those who believe in the power of prayer to utilize that great opportunity to ask God to bless and sustain our nation.

That freedom is not diminished merely because one is elected to public office. Quite the contrary, the cloak of authority placed upon the shoulders of a public servant should be an inspiration for those who believe in the power of prayer to use that great power to ask God to bless and sustain the nation they love and serve.

Centuries ago, the Bible records in 2 Chronicles 7:14 that God told King Solomon:

“If my people who are called by my Name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

On the 7th day of March, 2015, members of Congress and State Legislators from all across America gathered for the purpose of calling the nation back to prayer. They realized the need to call America back to prayer, not for a single day or a single month, but to pray “without ceasing.” Accordingly, this day we respectfully and humbly issue this “Call to Prayer for America” and invite you to join us in this call by adding your name, and further join us by praying for God’s continued blessing on this country.

Thank you for your faithfulness and for standing with us. It is our sincere belief that God will hear the prayers of His people and heal this land. May God bless you and may He continue to bless and sustain the United States of America.”

We would like to invite you right now to join us in signing the Proclamation. I am going to invite all of the government leaders to come first and sign it, then everyone please join us here at the front and sign the Call to Prayer for America.

ACTION: Legislators sign the Proclamation and everyone else lines up and signs the Proclamation.

ACTION: [LEGISLATOR 1] returns to the mic.

LEGISLATOR 1

We are asking each of you to join us in this PrayUSA initiative. Would you commit to bringing this to your church? All of the information you need is at www.PrayUSA.com. A downloadable church kit is available with bulletin inserts, posters, link to the PrayUSA video, and more.

Invite a government leader to read this Proclamation, and let’s break the back of the lie of separation of church and state, not only by Proclamation but also by demonstration. Lets stand together and call the church to pray just like God tells us in 2 Chron 7:14.

Now I would like to invite [LEGISLATOR] to the podium to lead us in our closing prayer.

ACTION: [LEGISLATOR 7] steps to the mic.

LEGISLATOR 7

Prayer is offered by [LEGISLATOR]

Thank you all for coming tonight.

ACTION: HAND Out PrayUSA 8.5 x 5.5 flyers on way out of event

ADDENDUM A: History of Prayer

The first presidential call to prayer was issued by George Washington on October 3, 1789. He wrote, "It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor." Since then, there have been over 130 presidential calls to prayer, and in 1952 President Harry Truman signed a law making the National Day of Prayer an annual event. After the American Revolution, our nation's leaders were deeply divided over the way in which this new experiment in democracy should be governed. A first attempt at forming a civil structure under the Articles of Confederation was failing and a convention was called to address the problem.

Though they all had fought for the shared ideal of freedom in the Revolution, the delegates at the Constitutional Convention agreed very little about what structure of government would best preserve their hard-won freedom. Disagreements and bickering threatened to undermine the new nation almost as soon as it had begun. Amidst the controversy, Benjamin Franklin urged that the delegates appoint religious leaders to open each session with prayer. Franklin noted in his appeal that, during the war with Britain, they had prayed daily for protection, and yet in a time of peace they had forgotten the need to seek such protection and wisdom.

As our nation was on the verge of splitting in half in 1863, President Lincoln proclaimed a national day of prayer, that "the united cry of the nation will be heard on high and answered with blessings no less than the pardon of our national sins and the restoration of our now divided and suffering country to its former happy condition of unity and peace." Despite our disagreements, we can be one voice, united in prayer as we strive to overcome the challenges that lie before us.

On the eve of D-Day in 1944 as General Eisenhower and his troops carried out the perilous invasion of Normandy, President Franklin D. Roosevelt led the nation in prayer. He prayed, "As we rise to each new day, and again when each day is spent, let words of prayer be on our lips, invoking Thy help to our efforts."

Corporate prayer unifies by reminding us that, while we may disagree about what paths or policies will best continue to support and secure our freedoms, we must recognize where we have shared motivations to preserve that freedom. Despite our disagreements, we can be one voice, united in prayer as we strive to overcome the challenges that lie before us.

Opening legislative sessions with prayer is a tradition with a rich history in America dating back to a prayer given before the First Continental Congress on September 7, 1774. In keeping with a long-embraced and protected tradition, both chambers of the United States Congress — the House and Senate — begin their legislative sessions each day with a prayer. This prayer is offered either by the House or Senate Chaplain, or by a guest chaplain that has been nominated by a Member of Congress.

*This rich tradition was recently reinforced by the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of *Town of Greece v. Galloway*, and we encourage you to read for yourself the strong words of support that the Court had for this tradition.*

For years, the town of Greece, N.Y., had opened its meetings in prayer. But in 2008, two local residents filed suit challenging the town's practice as unconstitutional. Even though people of all faiths or no faith were welcome to volunteer to give a prayer, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit held that the policy was unconstitutional because the prayers being offered were predominantly Christian. In response, 85 members of the House of Representatives, 34 senators, and the Department of Justice filed friend-of-the-court briefs defending the town and our nation's long tradition of legislative prayer.

In its decision, the Supreme Court reversed the Second Circuit's opinion and concluded that what mattered was the inclusivity of the volunteer policy, and not the resulting theological variety of the prayers. Looking to the example of legislative prayer in Congress, the Court noted that Congress acknowledges our religious diversity by welcoming ministers of many creeds, not by regulating the content of the prayer. Once the government has invited public prayer, it must leave the prayer giver free to pray by his or her conscience.

This landmark decision from the Court affirmed two crucial truths. First, the Establishment Clause does not require the scrubbing of sectarian references or religious traditions from public view. The Court noted that "our tradition assumes that adult citizens, firm in their own beliefs, can tolerate and perhaps appreciate a ceremonial prayer delivered by a person of a different faith."

Second, after decades of confusing and unworkable legal tests, the Court clearly acknowledged that the crucial question pertaining to the separation of church and state is whether or not an individual has been compelled by the government to hold a particular religious belief. The Court further wrote that "offense . . . does not equate to coercion. . . . An Establishment Clause violation is not made out any time a person experiences a sense of affront from the expression of contrary religious views in a legislative forum."

ADDENDUM B: Separation of Church and State

The simple phrase, “separation of church and state,” is often quoted by the anti-faith movement, used in legislative and legal challenges and frequently distorted in terms of its original intent. Though not found anywhere in our Founding Documents, these five words have been misconstrued and misused in a determined effort by secular and atheistic naysayers to convince an entire generation that God, biblical values and prayer should be completely excluded from anything related to government, leadership, business or matters related to life in the public square.

President Thomas Jefferson first coined the phrase in a letter written to the Danbury Baptists. However, contrary to the opinions of rogue demagogues, Jefferson was not seeking to limit the public expression of faith, but was in fact, deeply committed to religious freedom. Library of Congress records reveal the following, "...on Sundays in Washington during the administrations of Thomas Jefferson (1801-1809) and of James Madison (1809-1817), the state became the church. Within a year of his inauguration [after writing the letter to the Danbury Baptists], Jefferson began attending church services in the House of Representatives. Madison followed Jefferson's example....Throughout his administration, Jefferson permitted church services in executive branch buildings. The Gospel was also preached in the Supreme Court chambers." Sadly, in many ways, the very government that was established to protect and advocate for our religious freedoms, now too frequently allows the same spirit of intolerance, coercion and legislative bullying tactics that the Church of England was once known for. Can we believe it will require anything less than committed men and women of passion and determination to rise up together and once again make our voices heard within the halls of power? We the people—especially when armed with the truth supported by history’s validation—will always triumph if we stand together. Over the decades, many of our Presidents and leaders have believed that religion and morality were indispensable supports to a healthy and God-honoring Constitutional Republic. We agree. Therefore, the Congressional Prayer Caucus Foundation remains resolute in its commitment to restore, revitalize and champion America’s founding spirit and the principles related to faith and Judeo-Christian values in order to secure America’s future and freedom for all. For God and country! The true meaning and spirit of the separation of church and state does not mean a total divorce and disconnection between God and government. Rather, it explicitly limits and deters active interference by the government in dictating a person’s conscience in matters of faith and practice.

Other resources:

- Robert P. George, Professor at Princeton, on separation of church and state: https://youtu.be/K_WleE88CYs
- According to the Library of Congress, Thomas Jefferson attended church services in the Capitol. It was the national church up until the civil war. The state literally became the church.

"Thomas Jefferson believed strongly in religious freedom and the separation of church and state. While President, Jefferson was accused of being a non-believer and an atheist. Jefferson attended church services in the Capitol and on several occasions

expressed his beliefs including this letter explaining his constitutional view. 'I consider the government of the US. as interdicted by the constitution from intermeddling with religious institutions, their doctrines, discipline, or exercises. this results not only from the provision that no law shall be made respecting the establishment, or free exercise of religion, but from that also which reserves to the states the powers not delegated to the US.'" <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/jefferson/jefffed.html>

- "It is no exaggeration to say that on Sundays in Washington during the administrations of Thomas Jefferson (1801-1809) and of James Madison (1809-1817) the state became the church. Within a year of his inauguration, Jefferson began attending church services in the House of Representatives. Madison followed Jefferson's example, although unlike Jefferson, who rode on horseback to church in the Capitol, Madison came in a coach and four. Worship services in the House--a practice that continued until after the Civil War--were acceptable to Jefferson because they were nondiscriminatory and voluntary. Preachers of every Protestant denomination appeared. (Catholic priests began officiating in 1826.) As early as January 1806 a female evangelist, Dorothy Ripley, delivered a camp meeting-style exhortation in the House to Jefferson, Vice President Aaron Burr, and a "crowded audience." Throughout his administration Jefferson permitted church services in executive branch buildings. The Gospel was also preached in the Supreme Court chambers.

Jefferson's actions may seem surprising because his attitude toward the relation between religion and government is usually thought to have been embodied in his recommendation that there exist "a wall of separation between church and state." In that statement, Jefferson was apparently declaring his opposition, as Madison had done in introducing the Bill of Rights, to a "national" religion. In attending church services on public property, Jefferson and Madison consciously and deliberately were offering symbolic support to religion as a prop for republican government." <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/rel06-2.html>