

## HOW AND WHERE IT BEGAN

In the fall of 1984, a number of mothers with teenagers in a Canadian school were concerned about the negative influences their children were facing. Convinced about the power of prayer, they began interceding for their children and the school environment.

As God did miraculous things in answer to prayer, the vision was born to have an intercessory prayer group for every school in Canada. The vision spread to the United States and then further afield.

Initially called "Moms In Touch", the ministry is now known as "Mothers Who Care", a name that not only translates better into foreign languages but more clearly communicates the heartbeat of this intercessory prayer ministry.

When the ministry reached South Africa, the name "Mothers Who Care" was used. However, in some schools, it was felt that this did not describe accurately what the groups were called to do. "Mums Who Pray" began to be used in individual schools. As dads joined some groups, the name "Parents Who Pray" was offered as a means of extending the membership to all parents.

God continues today to raise women (and men) around our nation who are willing to stand in the gap for their children, their schools and the communities in which they live.

Our prayer is that you will understand this calling, be filled with His Spirit, actively trust Him and that His will is done in your children's lives, their schools and the communities in which you live.

## VISION AND MISSION

*We aim to develop groups of praying parents in every school in South Africa.*

*We want to develop and maintain these groups as a unified network in Christ.*

*We hope to provide structure and guidance to help each group maintain a*

*Godly standard of prayer in perpetuity through the generations*

## GOALS

*To pray for God's direction to potential leaders and contacts in each area and school.*

*To facilitate the formation of school prayer groups, made up of Christian parents at each school using MWC guidelines*

*To meet in each school once a week to pray for that school as the Holy Spirit leads, including:*

*To pray that our children receive Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour, then in turn stand boldly in their faith.*

*To pray that other students, teachers and other staff come to faith in Christ.*

*To pray for Christian teachers and professors in schools*

*To pray that high moral standards and biblical perspectives be reflected in our schools*

*To be a positive, supportive influence in our schools*

*To pray that each school in the country would have a Mothers Who Care group and covered in prayer.*

*To establish and maintain a connection between each group and the general body of Mothers Who Care.*

*To discern appropriate structures, roles and guidelines to facilitate effective connection and communication*

*To draw up working documents to inform and provide godly, biblical perspectives on challenging situations that may confront groups.*

*To arrange meetings every year nationally, provincially and locally for the purpose of seeking God together, fellowship, encouragement and teaching.*

*To pray for discernment and wisdom for the leaders in MWC (local, regional, provincial and national)*

*To communicate effectively the benefits of MWC to the wider body of MWC, including that:-*

- *In Christ - We are stronger together*
- *We are blessed by God when united as His body.*
- *The older women can teach the younger women*

The Mothers Who Care mandate (including those groups called Mums Who Pray and Parents Who Pray) does not include lobbying, protesting or pressuring, regardless of the worth of the cause. Participation in issues of concern must be done on an individual basis, not in conjunction with the name "Mothers Who Care" nor "Mums Who Pray or "Parents Who Pray".

## MEETING GUIDELINES

As the ministry has developed, the following guidelines have been proven invaluable:

- Come prepared to pray having spent time with God in prayer and devotion beforehand
- Your weekly meetings should be a maximum of one hour long. Make sure the group commits itself to pray for at least 45 minutes of that hour
- Start and finish on time. If some mothers care to stay longer for fellowship and sharing, they should do so following the prayer time
- Do not serve refreshments. This could be a distraction for your group and an unnecessary burden for the hostess
- When meeting, ask all the ladies to turn their phones on silent and not to take calls during the meeting
- Ask a group member to be the school liaison, to contact the school and collect the prayer requests
- Ask another member to be the timekeeper and order-keeper. Put prayer requests onto the group message system for those that cannot be there
- Babysitting options for young mums should be considered if possible
- Ask members to bring their Bibles so that prayers can be done in accordance with Scripture
- Have a notebook for recording Praise items and Prayer requests, as well as answered prayers
- Use A.C.T.S. as a useful structure for the hour
- Pray conversationally – making room for others to add to the prayer point
- Do not be alarmed if you do not get through all the prayer requests in one hour
- Try not to get side-tracked into talking about your requests more than praying about them
- Confidentiality is of utmost importance. No-one should discuss prayer requests with those outside the group

*"Now we can come fearlessly right into God's presence, assured of His glad welcome when we come with Christ and trust in Him." Ephesians 2:13*

## PRAYER GUIDELINES

When you meet it is helpful to use an outline like ACTS (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication). Everyone focuses on one subject at a time as introduced by the group leader or a member of the group. More than one mother can pray on each subject, in fact each mother's prayer can be likened to building a prayer paragraph, with the individual prayers representing the sentences.

It is important to keep in mind the following guidelines:

1. Make sure that your prayer is brief and to the point
2. Talk to God as you would a friend present in the group. Practice experiencing the presence of God and sharing the things that are on your heart with Him.
3. Speak in conversational language. The more naturally you pray, the more you are able to relate to God and others can agree with you in prayer.
4. Avoid making a "prayer speech" or "preach" aimed at others during your prayer.
5. Pray as often as you wish, but avoid monopolising the time. It is not necessary to pray around the circle.
6. Experienced pray-ers, keep your prayers short and simple. You may struggle to be simple as much as the beginner struggles to verbalise. This will enhance the rapport and help prevent the inexperienced pray-er from being intimidated.
7. Keep your prayer style neutral, and allow different types of prayer styles e.g. more emotional, less emotional, other languages, in various body postures. Speaking in tongues is welcome, but should be quiet and not compete with prayers spoken in known languages.

As your group becomes more familiar with praying in one accord, you will experience a spirit of power and unity. Instead of thinking ahead to the next request, you will be joining in prayer with one another and allowing the Holy Spirit to direct you.

As mentioned earlier, the ACTS outline provides a good format for the meeting and could be used in the following manner:

### Adoration:

The beginning of the meeting should be a time of adoration and praise. When we focus our attention on the One who can meet our needs, it takes our eyes off circumstances and allows us to experience God's sufficiency and peace. When we praise God, we express our faith in Him. We are affirming, "God, I believe you are who You claim to be." When we demonstrate faith, it pleases Him (Hebrews 11:6)

One way to praise God is to pray Scriptures back to Him. To do this, simply choose a passage of praise from God's Word and read it aloud:

"...for your love and kindness are better to me than life itself. How I praise you."  
Psalm 63:3

The group leader might begin by praying, "My Heavenly Father, each day You seem to show me Your love in new and fresh ways. Thank You for the security I have because You love me."

Another mother might continue, "God, I praise You for Your lovingkindness towards me, that even when I was a sinner, You loved me and died for me."

### Confession:

Following your time of adoration, you might want to lead the group into a time of personal reflection and confession where God may reveal to each mum some areas of her life that are not pleasing to Him. Take a few minutes silently to confess those sins. Isaiah 59:2 tells us, "But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear." Therefore, it is imperative that your fellowship with God be restored if you expect Him to answer your prayers.

Remind the group that if the Holy Spirit reveals sin in her life, she must name that sin specifically. Repent of that sin. This involves a change in her attitude and an active move on her part to no longer indulge in that sin. Sometimes confession involves restitution or making things right with a brother or a sister one might have offended. As the Holy Spirit reveals the way forward to the individual mum, urge her to not hesitate to obey.

Then thank God for forgiving the sin on the basis of His promise in 1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins He is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness".

It might be necessary to read the Scriptures above out as you take the group through the process.

Finally, ask God to fill (control and empower) each group member by His Holy Spirit.

### Thanksgiving

Another important aspect of a Mothers Who Care meeting is thanking God for answered prayers. 1 Thessalonians 5:18 exhorts, "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." And in Psalm 50:23 we are told that when we give thanks, we honour Him, "He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honours Me."

Share items of thanksgiving and make a note of them in your prayer notebook. The other mothers can join in thanking God with you as you all pray in one accord.

### Supplication

In this final section we come to God to intercede for our children and their school, remembering the Lord has promised to supply all our needs (Philippians 4:13;

Matthew 6:33), and "No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly", Psalm 84:11.

If you have a large group, it would be best if you divided the ladies into smaller groups of 2-3 mothers. This enables you to cover more requests. Record all the prayer requests/items in your prayer notebook.

*"Now Glory be to God who by His mighty power at work within us is able to do far more than we would ever dare to ask or even dream of – infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts or hopes." Ephesians 3:20*

[www.motherswhocare.co.za](http://www.motherswhocare.co.za)

## SCRIPTURES FOR PRAYER

We can use a portion of Scripture as a foundation for prayer for our children.

For example, one mother may read Colossians 1:10 (AMP) "That you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him and desiring to please Him in all things, bearing fruit in every good work and steadily growing and increasing in knowledge of God, with fuller, deeper and clearer insight, acquaintance and recognition, " and then pray,

"Dear Heavenly Father, I pray that [Tim] would desire to please You in everything he does."

A second mother might add, "Yes, Lord, help [Tim] to stand strong for You even though the peer pressure is really tough."

Others may add to the prayer or add prayer for another child or group of children.

### Scriptures to Pray for our children:

1 Chronicle 28:9

Proverbs 2

John 17:11, 22, 23

Romans 12:2

Ephesians 1: 17-19

Ephesians 3: 16-21

Ephesians 4: 1,2,31,32

Philippians 3:8-10

Colossians 1:9-12

Colossians 2: 6-8

Colossians 3: 1,2,5

2 Timothy 2: 15-16

1 Thessalonians 4:3,4,7

James 4: 7,8a

**Add your own:**

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## Scriptures for praise:

Deuteronomy 7:9 *"Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God..."*

1 Chronicles 16: 31,34,36 *"Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; and let them say among the nations, 'The Lord reigns.' O give thanks to the Lord for He is good; for His lovingkindness is everlasting. Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting even to everlasting. Then all the people said, 'Amen,' and praised the Lord"*

1 Chronicles 29:11-13 *"Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendour, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honour come from you; you are the ruler over all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. Now, our God, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name."*

Psalm 28:6-7 *"Blessed be the Lord, because He has heard the voice of my supplication. The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart exults, and with my song I shall thank Him"*

Psalm 34:1-3 *"I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; the humble shall hear it and rejoice. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together"*

Psalm 56:10-12 *"In God whose Word I praise, in the Lord, whose Word I praise, in God I have put my trust, I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me? Thy vows are binding upon me, O God; I will render thank offerings to You."*

Psalm 63: 3-6 *"Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips will praise You. So I will bless You as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth offers praises with joyful lips. When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches."*

Psalm 106:1 *"Praise the Lord! Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His lovingkindness is everlasting."*

Psalm 107:8-9 *"Let them give thanks to the Lord for His lovingkindness, and for His wonders to the sons of men! For He has satisfied the thirsty soul, and the hungry soul He has filled with what is good."*

Psalm 116:12,17 *"What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me? To You I shall offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and call upon the name of the Lord."*

Jeremiah 32: 17 *"Ah, Sovereign Lord, you made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you."*

I Corinthians 15:57 *"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Ephesians 3:20 *"Not to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."*

Revelation 15:3b,4a *"Great and marvellous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages. Who will not fear you, O Lord, and b church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."*

How to Pray for Christian students:

Add your own:

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Pray that:-

1. They will be teachable and yet discerning in relating the principles of God's Word to what they are hearing
2. They will establish wholesome friendships
3. Their faith will be strengthened and reinforced as they encounter pressure from their peers and teachers
4. They will have wisdom in confronting things they believe are wrong so that their opposition will be shared in a loving manner
5. Their witness for Christ would be vibrant
6. They will reflect godly characteristics such as:
  - a. A clear focus on Jesus Christ
  - b. Self-discipline
  - c. Enthusiasm for worthwhile activities and pursuits
  - d. Endurance
  - e. Boldness
7. New converts at the school will grow in their faith

## How to pray for Christian Teachers:

1. Pray that they would be wise in their use of time
2. Pray that they would understand and obey God's will and reflect their convictions through godly character and holiness of life
3. Pray that they will be filled with the Holy Spirit daily
4. Pray that the teachers would be a testimony in their interaction with students and staff and have boldness in sharing the truth
5. Pray that they would exhibit a spirit of thanksgiving to God in every circumstance

**"For the scriptures tell us that no one who believes in Christ will ever be disappointed." Romans 10:11**

## How to pray for the lost:

1. Know that Satan is deceiving them by filling their minds and hearts with doubt, fear, bitterness and wrong ideas about the gospel (2 Timothy 2: 25, 26) and blinding them to the truth (1 Corinthians 2:14)
2. Know your authority as a believer. You possess spiritual weapons that can tear down the works of the enemy (2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Luke 10:19,20)
3. Pray, believing in the name of the Lord Jesus and claiming God's promises (2 Corinthians 1:20)

e.g. Mother 1: "Dear Father, I lift Mr Smith to You in the name of Jesus Christ. I claim the tearing down of Satan's works such as false doctrine, atheistic teaching and hatred, which have been building up in his thinking."

The apostle Paul tells us in Romans 10 that his prayer for Israel is for their salvation. We need to be in prayer for those in our schools who do not yet know Christ as their Saviour and Lord. Keep a list of those you are praying for, recording any breakthroughs for your encouragement.

Here are some key thoughts to keep in mind when praying for the lost:

Mother 2: "I agree with that, Father, and I pray that his very thoughts will be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."

Mother 3: "I pray according to the authority of the name of the Lord Jesus and claim his deliverance from the power and persuasion of the evil one and from the love of the world and the lust of the flesh."

Mother 4: "May he listen and believe as he hears or reads the Word. I pray that his conscience would be convicted and that You bring him to the point of repentance."

Here are some suggested scriptures:

<p><b>Add your own:</b></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Matthew 9:37,38</p> <p>John 6:44</p> <p>John 14:13</p> <p>Romans 10:1</p> <p>Romans 10:13-15</p> <p>2 Corinthians 10:3-5</p> <p>Ephesians 2: 4-10</p> <p>1 Timothy 2: 4-6</p> <p>2 Timothy 2:25-26</p> <p>2 Peter 3:9</p>
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**"Don't be weary in prayer, keep at it, watch for God's answer and remember to be thankful when they come." Colossians 4:2**

4. Know that Christ died to redeem them (Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 1: 18,19)

## How to pray for the school:

These requests can be revised or adapted according to the type of school your children attend.

1. Pray that Jesus Christ will become a reality in the context of the school
2. Pray that Christian parents will take an active part to be able to give godly input and be alert for opportunities to share Christ.
3. Pray that the Christian students will have a positive impact in the school.
4. Pray for the Life Orientation programme in the school, that the school will choose a curriculum that promotes godly standards
5. Pray for the counselling / pastoral staff:
  - a. For a clear knowledge of their task
  - b. For high moral standards
  - c. For effective and wise counsel
  - d. For Christians to fulfil this role, and to have special wisdom and understanding in giving godly counsel
6. Pray for various support staff, including the administrative, kitchen, garden, security staff
7. Pray for the various committees, the board, parents' councils, governing body which run the school and for godly leaders for each one of them

## ENCOURAGING THE TEACHERS AND OTHER STAFF

A great way to demonstrate your care and concern for the school is to be involved in ministering to the teachers and administrative staff. Trust God to show you ways you can positively relate to your school. Be creative. Here are a few suggestions:-

1. Contact the Principal of the school and let him/her know that you and your group are praying for him and for the needs of the school.
2. Find a contact person in the school (chaplain, secretary, teacher) who will be able to give you specific issues to pray about
3. Obtain a list of the staff so you can pray for the teachers by name
4. Use special days (Christmas, Easter, birthdays) to minister to teachers and staff e.g. cookies wrapped with a special note reminding them that you are praying for them
5. Look for an opportunity to invite a teacher to a local outreach/church

Remember to keep the focus of the group on prayer, not on other activities unless God leads you clearly.

And do not forget that not all praying mums will have the means to support financially, or time-wise, so be gentle in how you ask the group to contribute to any group activities or outreaches.

## CONCLUSION

Your efforts in starting and leading a Mothers Who Care group will be greatly rewarded as you see God answer prayer week by week, transforming lives in your group, school and community.

Once a group is started, it is important to maintain that group for the next school year. Look ahead to when you will need to be replaced or in the instance that you are not able to continue to lead the group. Pray about who you can ask to help you lead the group, and appoint a co-leader. You will then have an opportunity to train another person, and allow them to lead the group several times a year, so that the group is not wholly dependent on you as the facilitator.

God bless you as you step out in faith on this journey with your Mothers Who Care prayer group.

**“This is what I have asked of God for you: that you will be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love, and that you will have the rich experience of knowing Christ with real certainty and clear understanding.” Colossians 2:2**



## HEALTH CHECK FOR GROUP LEADERS

*Every once in a while you may want to spend some time reflecting on how your group is doing. These questions below are a good way of directing your thoughts to be more constructive and helpful in examining your group and yourself:-*

- How regular and orderly are your meetings? Do you start on time, do you pray for the majority of the time? Do you have a quiet, private place to pray?
- Have you established a trusted connection with the school, which leads to prayer requests from the school?
- Do you feel that the prayers are Holy Spirit-led? Do you sense the unity developing between group members as you learn to pray together?
- How has the group grown together over time? Do you model care and kindness towards the members of your group? Do the ladies show care and concern about one another? Is the atmosphere warm and friendly?
- What is God showing you about your school or community? Is there anything that you might want to share with your area coordinator?
- What can you do to improve one aspect of your group's meetings?
- Personally, how is your relationship with the Lord? Are you spending time with Him daily and growing in His likeness? Have you checked your heart for the underlying motivations in fulfilling this role and brought these to the Lord in prayer?
- Do you pray for your group members too and their relationship with the Lord?
- What improvements can you suggest to help your area coordinator serve you better?