THE SCHOLARS PRAYER GROUP

The APU Scholars Prayer Group is a voluntary gathering of Christian faculty who recognize the importance of prayer in their scholarly pursuits and wish to pray for and encourage one another’s research and creative activities. At the institutional level, the group also prays for the advancement of Azusa Pacific University’s scholarly mission in research and artistic expression and for wise policies and ample resources to achieve its full potential in the Kingdom of God.

This group was founded on the premise that prayer is one way faculty experience the insight and direction of the Holy Spirit in their scholarly and creative endeavors. Through prayer we can support and encourage one another in our daily struggles for the inspiration, time, and focus so necessary to scholarly and creative work. For those seeking to integrate faith overtly and explicitly in their scholarship, prayer seems all the more essential, particularly as they often encounter resistance within their own largely secular disciplines. A community of like-minded scholars can offer the fellowship, advice, encouragement, and prayer support necessary to sustain our work through what otherwise might be very difficult and lonely times.

The format of the Scholars Prayer Group is simple: a brief meditation led by one of the group members, some sharing of needs, and a time of prayer, followed by food and fellowship. All prayer concerns are welcome. Although the attendance on a given night is rarely more than ten people, this bimonthly gathering has involved more than 25 faculty members from at least 15 disciplines since its inception in September 2007. As a consequence, faculty have been supported by prayer, friendships and scholarly interactions across disciplines that extend beyond the group’s regular meeting times.

Most who attend agree that finding time is the greatest hindrance to regular participation. However, as someone once said, we all have enough time, even the most frazzled among us; what we lack are clear priorities and the ability to let our “yes be yes” and our “no be no.” Those who attend regularly, including the hosts, would agree there is no more reliable way to get our priorities straight than prayer!

_Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated to you; and then use us, we pray, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. (Book of Common Prayer)_

Emily and Don Griesinger host the Scholar’s Prayer Group. Emily Griesinger, Ph.D., is Professor of English at APU and Don Griesinger, Ph.D., is Professor Emeritus at Claremont Graduate University.