Title: The Advent Toothbrush Challenge
A "copy and paste" way to engage your congregation in praying for your YMCA Around Christmas
A simple way to pull off helping your congregation engage missionally at your YMCA

Pastors…the holidays are coming. Perhaps you are both excited and battling through some angst about what it will take to thrive through the season. In your heart (and perhaps buried deeper than you want on your task list) is your desire to help your congregation engage missionally in and through your YMCA. The holidays seem like such a good time!

Well, here is a mercifully easy idea, leading up to Christmas, to help your congregation take a step to engage more in ministry at your local YMCA… **A YMCA Advent Prayer Calendar**.

Instructions:

- Copy/tweak/paste some of the YMCA Advent prayer requests below onto a simple half sheet (a prayer request per day of Advent). No need to make it fancy. A list with dates will work.
- Print and make the half sheets available to your people on the two Sundays leading up to Advent and throughout Advent
- During your Sunday services leading up to Christmas and throughout Advent (or any other way you wish)…take a minute or two to cast vision for the people of your church to not just utilize the YMCA, but to be engaged as a blessing and a missional presence to the people of the YMCA (the staff and the members who come through the doors).
- After some vision, invite your people to the **Advent Toothbrush Challenge**…
    - stick the half-sheet to their mirror and pray for that day's request while they brush their teeth. (If this isn't your style, challenge them to pray another time, but keep it simple and easy for them to be reminded).
    - If a person who works at the YMCA or is a member comes to mind, pray specifically for that person and reach out to let them know you prayed for them. You could also ask if they have any other specific requests. See where God leads these interactions.

Below is a list of prayer requests. You can copy and paste your favorite 24 onto your church's YMCA Advent prayer list. They aren't in a particular order. Mix them around. Repeat some for greater focus. Add in other ideas. If you already have an Advent prayer calendar, consider mixing some of these in. Do it however God leads, but it might be wise to keep it simple and to encourage your average-non-prayer-warrior-people to keep it in a place they spend time daily. And then pray that God moves your church's missional involvement in and through the YMCA another step…

1. Front desk workers
2. New members at the Y
3. CEO
4. Board of Directors

5. Executive level leadership
6. Membership team
7. Exercise class teachers
8. Exercise class participants
9. Workout facility monitors
10. Members who work out there regularly
11. Swim instructors
12. Kids in swim lessons and their parents
13. Swim team - coaches, swimmers and families
14. Creative Arts instructors
15. Maintenance staff
16. Childcare workers
17. Children who come to Y for childcare and their families
18. Child Watch workers and kids
19. Youth and Adult Sports Director
20. Kids who play league sports at the Y and their families
21. Adults who play league sports at the Y
22. Teens and adults who play pickup games at Y - basketball, pickleball, racquetball, tennis, soccer etc.
23. Gymnastics Instructors
24. Children and families who are involved in gymnastics
25. That God would protect the YMCA from slipping further from it's Christian mission and restore the YMCA in it's historical Christian mission - Google "Paris Basis"
26. For the movement of churches planting in YMCAs in the USA to be a blessing to their YMCAs and communities.
27. For the movement of churches planting in YMCAs internationally to be a blessing to their YMCAs and communities.
28. That our church would be a light to the YMCA staff
29. That our church would row together in ministering to our community in and through the YMCA
30. That the lost people associated with our YMCA would feel the God-shaped holes in their hearts and turn to God's Word and God's people for help to come to God.
31. That the Christian people associated with our YMCA would truly worship God around Christmas.