

PRAYER IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



A GUIDE TO PRAYING TOGETHER,
IN AND AROUND YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD.

YOUR PEOPLE & PLACE

Think of your neighbourhood. What are the good things that you love about it? What would you love to see change? Who are your neighbours? Who could you pray with?

Each neighbourhood – the people and the place that they share – is unique. And isn't that a good thing! God longs for all neighbourhoods to know the love and transformation of Jesus. To be people connected to God and to each other. To be places where people belong and glimpses of God's kingdom are seen. To be redemptive communities.

And Jesus is at work bringing these communities to life! Slowly moving us and our neighbours and our neighbourhoods towards God. The good news is that everyone can follow Jesus and be a part of this movement in our neighbourhoods. ***God is asking us to take slow deliberate steps towards deeper engagement with a people and place.***

Prayer is where we start this journey. And it's the constant foundation we return to as we go along. Prayer is powerful! It redirects our eyes to God so that we may see how God is already at work in our neighbourhoods. It transforms us. And ***it transforms our neighbourhoods.***

THIS GUIDE:

This guide is designed to help you reflect and pray with others over and through your neighbourhood.

Whether you get out and about on the streets, or gather together around a map, prayer is a good time. Hopefully this helps you together develop a neighbourhood prayer rhythm.

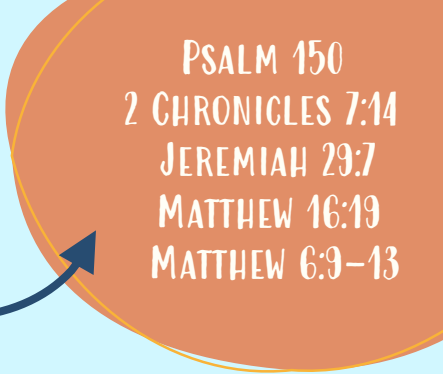
VIRTUAL PRAYER WALK

If you're unable to get out and about in your neighbourhood, you can still use this guide to pray for your neighbourhood! Instead of walking you could print out a map and trace over the streets and places with a pencil. Or you could try the full digital option and use Google street view to 'walk' around your streets. Or perhaps you might have photos of particular people and places that are significant to you in your neighbourhood.

However you do it, bring your attention to the place where you live and the people that you share it with. As you do so, consider what Jesus is doing, listen to what God is saying, reflect on what the Good News is, and perhaps, make a plan for what you might do about it.

1. BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING

Before you step out onto your streets or engage in prayer for your neighbourhood, take time to centre yourself upon God and what the Holy Spirit might be saying. Here are some verses you can read through together.



PSALM 150
2 CHRONICLES 7:14
JEREMIAH 29:7
MATTHEW 16:19
MATTHEW 6:9-13

2. MAP YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Look at a map of your neighbourhood. Printing one out can be handy as you can write any notes directly onto it, but opening google maps on your phone, tablet or computer works just as well.

In your neighbourhood, do you have any of the following places? Where are they? If you know anything about them, jot down some notes. Many heads brainstorming together is great! You can share and learn together.

- 💡 Schools
- 💡 Kindergartens
- 💡 Local shops
- 💡 Parks or recreational areas
- 💡 Local politicians, community boards etc
- 💡 Community groups
- 💡 Religious groups
- 💡 Cafes and restaurants
- 💡 Dairies and bakeries
- 💡 Healthcare centres (doctors, rest-homes, addiction services etc)
- 💡 Community bumping spaces: Where are the places where people naturally gravitate to? Where do people hang out at?

What other places are in your neighbourhood?

Who's around your neighbourhood?

Take time to think about who you've all seen around your neighbourhood. Families? Young adults? Kids? Do they bike, walk or drive? What languages do they speak? Each person is unique, and the diversity people bring is cause for celebration!

Healthy relationships between neighbours bring a lot of good to the 'hood – more support, friendship, increased resilience and even better wellbeing outcomes.

WHO IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD MIGHT GOD BE PROMPTING YOU TO PRAY FOR?

3. THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE STEPPING OUTSIDE

Here are a few practical things to keep in mind as you prayer walk:

- 💡 **Stay connected.** Pray for guidance before you walk and as you go. You are seeking to be led by the Holy Spirit.
- 💡 **Be aware of your surroundings.** Large groups can be conspicuous and may distract. So go in pairs or with just a few. You're observing, not drawing a crowd.
- 💡 **Talk it through.** There may be things – pictures, words, issues etc. - which pop up which you're not sure about. That's okay. It can be a good idea to take these to someone wise to chat and pray it through.
- 💡 **Share.** Praying together is a good time. What are other ways you can be praying together? Liturgy is a good inclusive prayer practice. There's many styles to try.

4. PRAYERS AND PROMPTS

As your relationships deepen with your people and place, God will be speaking to you about how to pray for these. Here are some general prayer prompts to begin with as you pray in and around your neighbourhood. These prompts are centred around the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13).

- 💡 That people will find their **IDENTITY** in God. That they will know the goodness and love of God.
- 💡 That the **KINGDOM** will come in your neighbourhood. Acknowledge that often our neighbourhoods are not in alignment with God's kingdom.
- 💡 Pray for **PROVISION**. For those who are struggling to make ends meet. For the provision of good relationships, justice and mercy. And for all, the provision of God's scandalous grace.
- 💡 We all need **FORGIVENESS**. Pray for spaces for grace to be reflected, given and received.
- 💡 For **GUIDANCE** – that God will show you and your neighbourhood where God is at work. Jesus is at work in our neighbourhoods and we are invited into partnership with God.
- 💡 Pray for **PROTECTION**. From systems of oppression, hate and hurt. From lies and anger. From spiritual darkness.

TAKE SOME TIME TO REFLECT

After you have spent time praying, take some time to reflect together.

Perhaps write down or find some way to capture your answers to these questions so that you can remember them.

1. **What did you notice?**
2. **Where is the good news in this?**
3. **How will you respond?**