

PRAYER WALKS

Sunday, August 27th

Going with God.
Getting to know the
neighborhoods
around us.



“After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go.”

– Luke 10:1

WHAT IS A PRAYER WALK?

Simply stated, it is exactly what it sounds like: a walk filled with prayer. Prayer walks simply combine the physical act of walking with the spiritual act of praying. Prayer walks are a way to get out into the community and learn about your community. You invite God to go with you. And you invite God to show you the people, places, and spaces God wants you to see. Prayer walks helps us see the world around us through God’s eyes.

HOW DO WE PRAY AS WE WALK?

Do you have to pray aloud as you walk? No! This walk isn’t about praying complicated prayers, or long-winded prayers, or prayers calling on God to cast out “demons” or fight “demonic forces” in our community. No! This form of prayer is more contemplative. It’s about being in and recognizing God’s presence and listening to God rather than speaking to God. It’s about listening for God and God’s Spirit to reveal what God wants us to see.

Our intention is to walk through the neighborhood *with God* paying attention to what we see and what we notice and asking God, “What do you want me to see here? Who do you want me to meet? How might our church be a blessing to them? And how might they be a blessing to others?”

“For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

– Matthew 18:20 (NRSV)

“Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.”

– Genesis 12:1-2

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- Familiarize yourself with your group map, driving/walking directions, and observation/reflection questions.
- Determine how you will get to your starting location (who will drive and where you will park).
- Carry this guide with you along with a pen or pencil.
- Walk in a group of two or more and avoid casual conversations with other members of the group.
- Focus on prayer and listen for what God might be trying to show you about the neighborhood or its people.
- Be discrete in your prayers for the community. There is no need to be demonstrative.
- Do not loiter. Keep walking and listening and praying and blessing.
- Take notes on what you notice and what comes to mind.
- Be prepared to report back to the group what you see, experience, and notice.
- Return to the church by 1:00pm to share insights and for a large group debrief of the experience.

WAYS TO PRAY FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY

If you would like to pray for the neighborhood and community, you can pray for:

- Every home you walk by, asking God’s blessing for every person, home, and family.
- God’s Spirit to be present and active in the community, working on and in the hearts and minds of all.
- Compassion for those who are broken, hurting, lonely, depressed, isolated, or upset.
- God’s blessing on local businesses, schools (teachers, staff, administrators, and students), churches (pastors, staff and people), local government (administrators, social workers, and first responders).

WHAT IF I MEET SOMEONE ALONG THE WAY?

If you meet someone along the way, smile, wave, and say, “Hello.” If you are able to engage them in conversation, introduce yourself. Be friendly and show interest in who they are. Ask them about themselves. Ask: How long have you lived here? What can you tell me about the neighborhood and the people who live here? Do you have any special gifts, skills, or interests you would be willing to share with others? Is there something you’re good at or passionate about that you would be willing to teach to others?

WHAT MIGHT I SAY?

To those who ask who you are...

“We are from Community Presbyterian Church in Lombard. My name is... and this is... What is your name?”

To those who ask what you are doing...

“We are praying that God would bless the people of this neighborhood. Is there any specific way we might pray for you?”

To those who may be open to your offer to pray for them...

“We would be happy to pray for you now or, if you prefer, we would be happy to share your prayer request with the people of our church and add your requests to our Sunday morning prayers.”

To those who would like you to pray for them right then and there...

Pray: Loving God, you know our needs and you have the ability to bring goodness and wholeness to the people of this world. We pray your blessing on (insert name) and pray that you would show him/her your loving kindness. Be gracious to him/her and bring your goodness and wholeness into his/her midst that whatever needs he/she has will be met and he/she can find peace and rest in you. In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

