

ServeRDU Prayer Walking Guide

Why Prayer Walk

Jesus said, “I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5) **Prayer is the primary critical success factor for the advancement of God’s Kingdom in this world;** therefore everything we do is contingent upon prayer! And that’s why we are kicking off the week of ServeRDU by coming together to pray and then literally taking our prayers to our city as we pray on location throughout the week. We are hoping that our organized prayer efforts will result in an amazing transformation of our city and a great harvest of souls.

As part of ServeRDU, we are going to engage in intercessory prayer that is going to involve prayer walking together to or near particular places identified as strategic places of influence where we want God to work. Being close to a location will allow us to **pray clearer as we pray nearer**. These prayer walks will range from short walks in neighborhoods, parks and schools to long stretches across college campuses or downtown.

The idea behind prayer walking is **using all of our senses to increase our understanding of what we need to pray for**. For example, if we walk through our neighborhood looking for things to pray about, we might come across a yard that is unkempt and a house in need of repair, this will prompt us to pray for both the physical and spiritual health of the those who live there. As we walk on school grounds, this prompts us to pray for the faculty, teachers, students and parents who attend that particular school. As we walk through the community, we want to be aware of what we see and let that inform our prayers. **We gain insight by being on site.**¹ We are hoping that prayer walking will help us as a church recognize the importance of praying before, during and after outreach events such as ServeRDU.

Introduction to Prayer Walking²

By spending a substantial length of time slowly passing through an area while remaining in God’s presence,

¹ John E. Fuder, *Neighborhood Mapping: How to Make Your Church Invaluable to the Community*

² Adapted from *Global Gates Short Term Trip Guide: Prayer Walking* (p.13-15), 2016.

<http://www.globalgates.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Short-Term-Study-Guide-2015.pdf>

you begin to see it through His eyes. You will develop a greater understanding of the place - what its real needs are and what God could do in that situation. By physically placing yourself in a place, you are likely to become more aware of the specific things that you should be praying for. Issues that probably would never have occurred to you if you'd been sitting at home with your eyes closed!

Prayer walking is an act of confidence in God's power over a particular situation. You are acting out everything that you hoped, believed, prayed and petitioned for in that place. You yourself may feel small and useless, but your physical presence in a situation or place displays the exact opposite.

Whether or not people understand exactly what you are doing, few can fail to be affected by the simple fact that you not only have noticed them, but also that you care for them.

Finally, the action of prayer walking inevitably stretches your faith, encouraging you to be more confident and aware of God's leading. Not only this, but many people who go prayer-walking describe powerful examples of God's love in action as they learn how to pray more effectively by actually doing it, strengthening their faith even further.

How to Prayer Walk

- Divide into groups of 2 or 3, so there are enough in a group to support each other (remember that prayer is fortified by agreement), but not too many so that some people are unable to hear or participate properly. Make sure everyone in your team gets to know each other properly before you begin, so that you are all familiar and comfortable with each other. Make sure that confident or experienced prayer walkers are split up between the groups.
- Decide on a route that will cover all the areas that you feel need prayer, for whatever reason. Different groups can walk in different directions and may take longer over certain parts than others. Give enough structure that groups do not get lost, but not so much that excessive time is taken over figuring out directions. Decide how much spontaneity you want to allow groups to have, dependent on how well they know the area.
- How long are you going to spend? Make sure that all the groups know when they should return, but be flexible in the timing. One or two hours is usually what is recommended initially.

- Most importantly, make sure that you take time to define the purpose of the prayer walk beforehand. What is it you want God to achieve in that place? Dedicate yourself and the next few hours to God and concentrate on Him.
- Pray as you walk, out loud, eyes open. Pray shorter prayers. Pass it back and forth. Play off each others' prayer-focus on a specific need/opportunity, continue on a prayer theme. Don't quit your prayer-walking effort too quickly. Persevere in prayer!
- During prayer walks, when talking to people and explaining what you are doing, just tell them you are followers of Jesus who are visiting (or live in) the community, meeting new people, and praying for God's blessings for them. You believe in the power of prayer, and ask people if they need prayer.
- One of the awesome things that happens in the hearts of those who consistently prayer-walk their campus or community is that they find their heart becomes committed to the places for which they have prayed.

What to Pray For

- Prayer strengthens Christians and it brings evangelists to a neighborhood as we pray for the Lord to send "laborers into his harvest." Many walks concentrate on an issue e.g. praying for God's presence in a particular area, such as a university campus or neighborhood.
- Pray scripture. Carry a copy of God's Word with you (or have it on your phone) as you prayer-walk. Read it out loud. You can take turns, one reading a verse and then another prayer-walker praying a pray based on the content of that verse. Then proceed on to the next verse and so on. Base your petitions and praise on selected passages.
- Pray in obedience to the Spirit's leading. Learn to recognize and respond to His voice as you prayer walk. God's Spirit may even direct you with ideas of specific prayers. Pray for God to give insight into his specific kingdom plans and purposes for this community/city.
- Pray for God to give you harvest eyes and a spirit of grace and supplication. Ask for boldness and open doors to this city, community. Confess fears, weaknesses, lack of concern for those "outside."

- Pray for the Christians and churches in the community/area you are walking in. Pray that our homes/church would be “ministry centers” of the church in our community.
- Pray for the critical needs in the neighborhood you are walking — social, economic, spiritual, etc. Pray for specific streets/houses/people you meet. Hit the critical intersections and nerve centers with specific prayer.

Where to Prayer Walk

If you need a little inspiration for how to pray here are some examples to get you started:

Neighborhoods³

- Pray that the Gospel would be boldly and unashamedly proclaimed and that our church would be places for the broken, unwanted and hurting. Pray That Christ will be offered as the only remedy for the very thing we cannot do, make our selves better or save ourselves.
- Pray that Romans 8:35-39 would become a reality. Pray for yourself, for your family, for your pastors, for your church. That our hope would be found in Christ and in Christ alone and that his hope would produce Gospel boldness in our lives.
- Pray Matthew 6:10 over your city. Spend this day replacing the word “earth” with the name of your city... “In _____as it is in heaven”.
- Pray that the Spirit would weed out the sin in your life that has kept you from living a life on mission. That He would open up opportunities for you to be present and intentional with the gospel in your neighborhood. Pray for your neighbors by name.
- Pray boldly Psalms 33:8 over your city. The the people would stand in awe before Him.
- Pray Habakkuk 3:2 over your city. That the Lord’s love, wrath, justice and mercy would be made known in the City.

³ “How to Pray For Your City”, <https://blogs.thegospelcoalition.org/trevinwax/2013/07/15/how-to-pray-for-your-city/>
 Recommend: *The Art of Neighboring: Building Genuine Relationships Right Outside Your Door* by Jay Pathak

- Pray that the Lord would increase our burden for our city. That our love and growth in the Gospel would produce a desire to see others saved, and grow in their love and understanding of who God is, what He has done and what He is doing.

Local Schools and Universities

- Administrators— Pray that the administrators would be given wisdom and guidance to make the best decisions possible. “Lord, I pray the students in this school would show proper respect for the authorities you have placed over them and recognize all authority comes from you. Help them to speak and act in a way that is respectful of all teachers, administrators, and other school staff.” (Romans 13:1-5)
- Teachers—Pray that teachers would be able to teach in a way that produces understanding. Pray for God to give them peace and strength as they deal with the increased needs and demands of the classroom.
- Support Staff-Pray that the support staff would be treated with gratitude and are able to see the difference they make in students’ lives. Pray that they would have the resources necessary to complete their job efficiently and effectively.
- Students— Pray that God would grant students knowledge and understanding. Pray that they would have perseverance to finish strong and that their great needs, both tangible and intangible, would be met. “Almighty God, You have given these kids all the talents, abilities, and spiritual gifts they need to follow Your plan for their lives. Lord, help them use those gifts to serve You first and others second, so that Your will is accomplished in their lives. Lord, fill their lives with trusted teachers and advisers who can lead them toward You and Your promises. Help them turn to you as they learn and grow so they can lead fruitful and prosperous lives. Amen.”
- Christ Represented-Pray that there would be a strong representation of Christ’s love on this campus. Pray for Christian students, faculty, staff, and outside ministries to be beacons of light who would draw others to Him. (In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us. Titus 2:7) “Almighty God, because we love these children, because our hearts yearn for their schools, we cannot remain silent. We will not stop praying until their righteousness shines like the dawn, and their salvation blazes like a burning torch. May they be called the Holy People and

the People Redeemed by the Lord. And may their schools be known as the Desirable Place and the City No Longer Forsaken (Isaiah 62:1, 12). In Jesus' name, amen.”

- Safety– Pray for a hedge of protection to surround this campus. Whether it is bullying, abuse, illnesses, etc. pray that threats to the health and safety of the campus would be eliminated.

Government⁴

- Pray for elected and appointed officials (1 Tim 2:2). We talk and complain a lot about politicians, but do we pray as often as we should, as often as we are compelled to pray by scripture? We should pray, not only that our leaders would be use their power well on behalf of the people (Rom 13), but also for the well-being of their families. My suggestion is that pray for all leaders, not just the ones with whom you agree.
- Pray for candidates running for office (1 Tim 2:2). Regardless of your feelings about the candidates running for local, state and federal offices, you have to admire anyone who is willing to risk public criticism and humiliation in stepping forward. Running for office takes a toll on candidates' families, opens them up to unprecedentd scrutiny and enacts a physical and mental toll.
- Pray for public servants and first responders. Around the country, at this very moment, millions of men and women wear a uniform and have pledged to protect us from harm. Police officers, fire-fighters, paramedics, search and rescue teams and others put their lives on the line every day in an oft-thankless task. Pray for wisdom and discernment, pray they would use their power well, pray for the wives and husbands and children who kiss them goodbye, not knowing if their loved ones will return.
- Pray for racial justice. It is clear that there is still much work to be done in our country to heal from our racial wounds and to see more racial progress. We should pray for more unity in our communities and in our country and for leaders who unite, rather than divide. Pray for minority populations who continue to experience prejudice and injustice. Pray for just laws to address racial disparities. Pray that the church will lead the way, showing by its steps toward racial reconciliation, a glimpse of the kingdom, where God will gather every nation, tribe, and tongue.

⁴ “6 Ways You Can Pray for Your Country” by Daniel Darling <http://erlc.com/resource-library/articles/6-ways-you-can-pray-for-your-country>

- Pray for the recognition of human dignity. Everywhere we look, we see violations of human dignity, from abortion on demand, to the horrific rhetoric some leaders are using to talk about immigrants and refugees, to the violence erupting in the tough neighborhoods in our cities. Pray for laws that see value and worth in every human life, from conception to natural death.
- Pray for the church. The most powerful institution on earth is the church of Jesus Christ, made up of people from every nation, tribe and tongue. Pray for God's people to unite together around the good news of the gospel and to commit to living on mission for him in each community. Pray the church would embody the kind of other-worldly values of the Kingdom and point people to the hope found only in Christ. Pray for pastors to boldly preach and teach the word of God and to courageously call their people to Christlikeness.

"The greatest tragedy in life is prayers that go unanswered because they go unasked," -Mark Batterson

Recommended Reading on Prayer

Prayer by Tim Keller

Prone to Wonder by Barbar Duguid & Wayne Houk

Prayer the Real Battle by Brother Andrew

Praying the Bible by Donald Whitney

The Valley of Vision

A Call to Prayer by J.C. Ryle

Praying Backwards by Bryan Chapell

A Praying Life by Paul Miller

Too Busy Not to Pray by Bill Hybels

