

# **Look on the Fields**

A Prayer Guide

For Associations Engaged in Strategic Planning

This prayer guide is based on a resource for Guided Prayer Times, available at:

[www.smalltownbaptist.net](http://www.smalltownbaptist.net)

By permission, this material has been adapted and modified  
for use by Baptist associations engaged in strategic planning.

Its purpose to assist the member congregations as they take a fresh look  
at their area and prayerfully consider how God might use them  
to reach new pockets of people and minister to their needs.

# Look on the Fields

## A Prayer Guide

For Associations Engaged in Strategic Planning

*“Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.” — John 4:35*

Sometimes, we church members can live in our own little worlds. We may forget what it was like before we came to know the Lord. Or we may have grown up in the church and lived in a tight-knit circle of Christians our whole lives. Over time, we can become out of touch with our communities and our opportunities to represent Christ. Even entire congregations can become “ingrown.” We simply fail to see the people who need us.

Jesus tells us to look up — it’s all around us. He says to look on the fields, that there are more people ripe and ready to receive the gospel than we may have realized!

Our communities are multi-faceted, even the smallest towns. There are various pockets of people and numerous types of needs. This prayer guide is designed to help you *think through* your community as well as to *pray through* your community.

As you think and pray, look on the fields. Ask the Lord to show you the opportunities for ministry for your church. Ask God to show you the people your church could reach. Ask God to show you what the Lord would do if you partnered with other churches to represent his Kingdom.

## Day 1

Check when done

### **Praying for Our Baptist Association:**

Our Association is currently engaged in a process to consider ways our churches can work together to more effectively reach people for Christ and develop disciples.

- Pray for our Associational Missionary Strategist (Director of Missions).
- Ask God to guide the Planning Team as they study and bring recommendations to the member churches.
- Pray for the Lord to direct each church as we implement the plan.
- Pray for the churches which have not been actively involved in working with the Association.
- Pray that as a result of this process, we will all make more new disciples.

## Day 2

Check when done

### **Praying for Ministry Advance in Our Church:**

- A church thinks either strategically or selfishly; ask the Holy Spirit to work in the hearts and minds of our congregation to make strategic, evangelistic choices.
- Ask the Lord to direct our steps in determining a path forward for effective ministry and outreach in this community.
- Ask God to give us eyes to see the lost we are supposed to reach.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit will show us where to start.

**Day 3**

Check when done

### **Praying for Members of Law Enforcement:**

- Ask God to protect them and keep them safe.
- Ask the God to give them wisdom and quick judgment.
- Pray for officers who have been deeply affected from having seen things no one should have to see.
- Ask the Father to guide the Sherriff / Chief in directing officers.
- Pray for officers to be effective at identifying, locating, and capturing criminals who need to be taken off the street.
- Ask the Spirit to empower the Christian influence of believing officers as they relate with fellow officers who don't yet know the Lord.
- Pray for officers who don't yet know the Lord to come to Christ.

**Day 4**

Check when done

### **Praying for the Holy Spirit to Work in the Hearts of the Lost:**

- Pray that the Holy Spirit will place Christian witnesses in their paths.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit will cause people to understand the Gospel.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit will make people feel the need of Jesus.
- Ask the Father to attract people to Jesus.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to enable people to respond to Jesus, empowering saving faith and repentance.

**Day 5**

Check when done

### **Praying for Marriages in Our Community:**

- Ask the Father to protect and nurture those in marriages which are strong and happy.
- Ask God to intervene in marriages that are in a crisis and in peril.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit will work in that spouse who is holding out, to be willing to make the corrections needed to repair the relationship.
- Pray for salvation of the lost spouse, whose salvation would fix everything.
- Pray that the Lord will remind couples why they married each other in the first place.
- Pray that God will grant repentance to people who have poisoned their marriage with ungodly lives and values.

**Day 6**

Check when done

### **Praying for Christian Students at the Middle and High Schools:**

- Pray that the Holy Spirit will lead Christian students to network together to reach their lost classmates and friends.
- Ask the Lord to send them encouragement from Christian members of the faculty.
- Pray for them to learn skills in evangelism and prayer that will help them serve the Lord as adults.
- Pray for a spiritual movement of God in the Middle and High Schools that will impact the community.

**Day 7**

Check when done

### **Praying for Our Local Fire Department:**

- Ask God to see that each department has the equipment it needs to do its job and save lives.
- Ask God to protect them and keep them safe.
- Ask the God to give them wisdom and quick judgment.
- Pray for firefighters who have been deeply affected from having seen things no one should have to see.
- Ask the Spirit to empower the Christian influence of believers as they relate with fellow firefighters who don't yet know the Lord.
- Pray for firefighters who don't yet know the Lord to be saved.

**Day 8**

Check when done

### **Praying for Those Working to Dig Out of Poverty:**

- Pray for the talented student in school, who swims upstream (against pressure of his family and peers) to study hard and to succeed.
- Pray for the parents who are trying to train their children to live a better, more responsible life.
- Pray for those with dreams, but not the skills, to be connected with those who can help them develop the skills they need.
- Ask God to show them a clear path forward.
- Pray for those who succeed to not learn the wrong lesson from that experience – of self-reliance – but rather of dependence upon the Lord.

**Day 9**

Check when done

### **Praying for Senior Adults in Our Community:**

- Pray for the recently widowed. Pray for their comfort.
- Pray for those who are homebound with no family to check on them or whose families neglect them.
- Ask the Father to sustain those who are his people, but lonely.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to prompt Christian neighbors when they need to minister and show them how to do so.
- Pray that Christian retirees, who still have their health, will make these years count for Christ.
- Pray for those who are lost, with little time left, to be saved.

**Day 10**

Check when done

### **Praying for Believers in Our Area (Regardless of Church):**

- Pray that God will work in each believer to be faithful in supporting their churches in attendance, giving, and spiritually.
- Ask God to give each Christian the desire to get into the Word.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit will work in those who merely attend church – that He will prompt them to become involved in the mission of the church.
- Pray for more and more church members to become Christian witnesses.
- Ask the Lord to put fresh fire into the hearts of believers so, that as they go to church, they bring the fire into the room with them.



**Day 11**

Check when done

### **Praying for the County Commission:**

- Pray for God to raise up wise and godly people to run for office and to win the seats where that is not the case.
- Pray for the commissioners to work well together.
- Pray that God will guide the Commissioners in getting the most efficient services with limited funding and resources.
- Ask God to protect elected officials and county employees from temptation, including in areas of corruption.
- Pray that the Lord will show them how to make our county attractive to the right businesses and to new residents.
- Ask God to guide them to creative solutions as needed.

**Day 12**

Check when done

### **Praying for Christian Benevolence Ministries in Our Area:**

- Ask God to bless the work of those involved in community food banks and clothes closets in the community.
- Ask the Lord to guide the leaders and volunteers in knowing how to help people, but without enabling them to continue in a life of dependency.
- Pray for the clients of these organizations, that God will awaken in them a desire for a more responsible lifestyle, when needed.
- Some people have merely hit a rare rough patch. They work hard, but circumstances hit them suddenly and hard. Ask God to help them to know it's OK to accept this assistance.
- Ask God to provide the resources to help everyone who truly needs it.
- Pray for the workers to be empowered as loving witnesses for Christ.

**Day 13**

Check when done

### **Praying for Single Mothers:**

- Pray for single mothers who feel like they are drowning as they work and take care of their children. Ask the Father to give them wisdom.
- If there is an estranged husband whose repentance could improve the situation, pray that the Lord will work powerfully in him. Otherwise, ask the Lord would send godly men as a good influence in the lives of her children.
- Some will be tempted to settle for any man who can take some of that pressure off of her. Ask God to protect her from the temptation to “settle.”
- Pray she will not feel so overwhelmed that she won’t seek first the Kingdom.
- Pray that the Lord would provide the needs of her family.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit would guide her in planning finances and meals and getting each child where that child needs to be.

**Day 14**

Check when done

### **Praying for Spiritual Growth of Christians in Our Community:**

- Pray that each believer will have a strong devotional life with Bible study and prayer that “fills their tank.” Pray that those who don’t have a good devotional life will be prompted to get started in Bible study and prayer.
- Pray that more and more believers in our community will be filled with the Holy Spirit.
- Pray that believers will discover their spiritual gifts and will use them to help strengthen their churches.
- Ask God to open doors for believers to witness and prompt them when the opportunities come.

**Day 15**

Check when done

### **Praying for School Teachers in Our Community:**

- Ask God to lead each teacher to rely on him to empower them in being the best teacher they can be.
- There are students who suffer at home; ask God to prompt the teachers to pick up on it and to know the appropriate response.
- Ask God to lead the believing teachers in being a witness to those teachers who don't yet know the Lord.
- Pray that teachers to be enabled to build up students who are "beat-down" and how to give them dreams for a better future.
- There are students with learning disabilities or who are delayed in their development. Ask God to guide the teachers in knowing how to help each individual student.

**Day 16**

Check when done

### **Praying for Large Extended Families in the Community:**

Some large extended families are like an unreached people group. The culture is very secular. They may be a close family, but family values for them is only about family. A gospel movement in this family would impact a lot of people in the community.

- Pray for the patriarch or matriarch, who has the most influence, to come to Christ.
- Ask God to be working ahead, preparing hearts to hear the gospel.
- Ask God to show off his great power by bringing people to Christ from this resistant group.
- Pray that the gospel will begin to spread through this family, and from them to others.

**Day 17**

Check when done

### **Praying for Children with No Christian Influence at Home:**

These are children for whom Sunday is just another day to play. They know few Bible stories. They don't know the gospel. Many are "raising themselves."

- What you grow up with is what you think is normal. Pray the Lord will work in their lives in such a way that they will grow up knowing that the secular home they came from is abnormal.
- Ask God to place Christian friends in their lives to be a positive influence.
- Pray that the Spirit will prompt their classmates to invite them to attend Christian events such as church like Vacation Bible School, Wednesday night Youth Bible Study, etc..
- Pray the Holy Spirit will work in these children's hearts, creating a desire to know Him and to walk with Him.

**Day 18**

Check when done

### **Praying for Local Christian Business Owners:**

- Pray for hard-working, small business owners, trying to provide a service for their community and to make a better life for their children.
- Ask the Father to guide them in making sound business decisions.
- Ask the Father to send them reliable and honest employees.
- Pray that their every honest business venture will be blessed with a fair profit. These are the businesses we need to succeed.
- Pray that the Christian businesses will be a blessing in the community.
- Pray for Christian business owners to use their influence for Christ.

**Praying for Those Who Work in EMS:**

- This is stressful work. Pray that God will prompt them to rest in Him.
- Sometimes, they have to evaluate a situation and think very fast; ask God to guide them and enable them to quickly remember their training quickly.
- Pray for those who are deeply affected from having seen things no one should have to see.
- Ask God to keep them safe when they are responding to accidents on the road.
- Ask God to give them the right words to show comfort or speaking with someone who is afraid or dying.
- Ask God to save those EMS workers who need Christ.

**Praying for the Local Hospital:**

Local hospitals are a significant factor in the economy of their towns and as an employer — in addition to taking care of their patients' health needs. However, many struggle due to changes in government policy.

- County hospitals face many challenges. Pray for the hospitals to find ways to thrive with the limited resources they have.
- Ask God to enable local hospitals in recruiting the doctors they need to serve the community. Sometimes, these are hard to find for small towns.
- Pray for the Christians who serve as doctors, nurses, administrators, staff, and board members to be empowered in a special way to think creatively and to overcome challenges. Ask God to anoint their efforts.
- Ask God to bless our local hospital and to make it a blessing.

**Day 21**

Check when done

### **Praying for Hurting Children:**

- Pray for those children who are being neglected due to their parents being addicted to drugs or alcohol.
- Pray for children who don't get enough to eat at home.
- Pray for children who are being abused – violently, sexually, or verbally.
- Ask the Father to send Christians into the paths of these children who will show them godly love and concern.
- Pray that the Spirit will prompt Christian neighbors and school teachers when they need to say or do something.
- Ask the Father to send law enforcement to intervene when needed.
- Ask the Father to give these children a clear picture of Himself and of the gospel – in spite of everything that has happened to them – so they will come to Christ.

**Day 22**

Check when done

### **Praying for Sister Churches in our Association:**

- Ask God to guide each Southern Baptist church in Kingdom ministry.
- Pray for the churches that are located in communities with declining populations. Ask God to direct their steps.
- Evangelism is more challenging than it used to be. Ask God to guide each church in forming a clear strategy to reach people in their communities who don't know the Lord.
- There are some strong, vibrant churches that could be a great blessing to sister churches or a partner in a specific work. Ask the Lord to show them how and to make them generous.
- Some congregations need assistance. Ask God to impart the humility to accept input from the Association or help from a sister church.

**Day 23**

Check when done

### **Praying for Youth League Sports in Our Community:**

Baseball, softball, soccer, travel ball, etc. For some, this becomes a replacement for the fellowship of their church.

- Pray for the coaches who have so much influence in the lives of the players. Ask God to make them the right kind of influence.
- Pray that Christian parents will show the kind of commitment to Christ that sets a good tone in the group and sets a good example.
- Pray for players who are Christians, that they will influence their teammates toward Christ.
- Pray for the boards of each sport, that in scheduling practice and game times they will show respect for the church and for that which is sacred.

**Day 24**

Check when done

### **Praying for those in our Community Who Hinder the Gospel and Hurt the Spiritual Climate:**

- Ask God to work in the hearts and minds of those who:
  - ◇ Are involved in the occult.
  - ◇ Homes without fathers.
  - ◇ Those trapped in substance abuse.
  - ◇ Those in sexual addition of some form.
  - ◇ Those in who abuse their children in some way.
  - ◇ People with explosive anger issues.
  - ◇ Those who are hard-hearted rebels against God.
- Ask God to deliver them by the power of the blood of Jesus.

**Day 25**

Check when done

### **Praying for Grandparents Rearing Grandchildren:**

Grandparents may have to rear their grandchildren for various reasons: Perhaps, their children are incapable of parenting due to an addiction. Sometimes, the grandparents are helping a working single mother.

- Pray for these grandparents to have the physical energy needed for this.
- Ask God to guide them as issues arise with their grandchildren.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to work in their “adult” children engaged in irresponsible lifestyles — that He would cause them to step up and do the right thing.
- Ask God to provide their needs, considering the extra expenses this incurs.
- Some of these grandparents aren’t believers. Ask God to work in their minds to show them how Christ and his church can make a difference.

**Day 26**

Check when done

### **Praying for People Who Think of Themselves as Christians or as Spiritual, Though Without a Vital Connection to Christ:**

- Pray for people in our community, who would tell you they are a very spiritual person, they just don’t believe in organized religion. Ask the Holy Spirit to meet them in their thoughts and reason with them.
- Pray for people who have attended church and have professed faith in Jesus Christ, but they are not in church and they don’t read their Bibles. Ask the Lord to wake up those who are “professors without being possessors.”
- Ask God to work in such people, awakening a desire within them to see what the Bible really says, instead of hiding behind religious-sounding excuses.
- Ask God to cause them to understand that the church is the body of Christ and you can’t experience the best of one without the other.



**Day 27**

Check when done

### **Praying for the City Government:**

- Pray for the mayor and for the council members by name. Ask God to guide them in working together.
- Pray for the employees at City Hall, in utility services, etc.
- Pray for the Police and Fire Departments, and their chiefs.
- Ask God to guide them in doing all they can do with the available resources.
- Pray that God will send the city honest and conscientious employees as hiring needs arise.
- Ask God to create such a good spirit in our town that it will make it an even better place to live.

**Day 28**

Check when done

### **Praying for Our Local High School:**

For a large percentage of the town's population, the high school sets the tone and the calendar.

- Pray for the superintendent and school board to keep the "weird stuff" out of our high school.
- Pray for them as, each year, they hire new teachers.
- Pray that the superintendent and school board will hire the right people as coaches and leaders of extra-curricular activities such as choirs.
- Pray for the Christian members of the faculty to set the predominate tone and to have the greatest influence.
- Pray that many students, during these young years, will be open to the gospel and will come to Christ.

**Day 29**

Check when done

### **Praying for Families with a Family Member Who Has a Severe Physical or Learning Disability:**

- When a family has a member whose needs drains the efforts of all to take care of them, ask God to send inward renewal.
- Sometimes, this person may be an adult and their parents are concerned about how things will work out after they are gone. Ask God to help them form a good plan and, then, not to worry.
- Ask the Father to direct each family to the right available resources.
- Pray that churches will have the resources to help them – and they will find that church which is best for them.
- Pray that instead of this keeping them from Christ, this circumstance will draw them to Christ.

**Day 30**

Check when done

### **Praying for the Kingdom to Advance in Our Community:**

- Ask God to bring more people – in this community -- into his kingdom.  
“Thy kingdom come.”
- Ask God to promote a spirit within his people in the community that says:  
“Thy will be done.”
- Pray for those who fear what God would do if He were in control: Ask God to show them how their lives would be better with Him in control.
- Pray for those who love their sins and prefer their way to God’s way. Ask God to show them how His way is better.
- Pray for those who live self-determined lives —determined to be in charge of their own lives (even if in a moral and respectable way). Ask God to show them that He is the Creator and they are a creature and they have a duty to their Creator.

## **Prayer Meeting: Week One**

### **Praying for the Strategic Planning Process in Our Association:**

There is a planning team which is currently engaged in a process of taking a fresh look at the ministries of our Association, how we're doing, considering our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and any threats to our future. They will be making recommendations for more effective ministry .

- Ask God to guide each member of the team. Each is busy in his or her own church. Pray for each one to clearly hear the leading of God.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit will enable the team to see the needs in our area we are supposed to meet.
- Ask the Lord to lead them to a plan that will enable the Association to assist and resource our member churches better than ever before.

## **Prayer Meeting: Week Two**

### **Praying for Our Church's Part in Our Association:**

The Association is not a building nor the Associational Missionary. It's member churches make up the Association. It exists to resource and assist churches in fulfilling their missions, as each one fills its specific niche in the Kingdom of God.

- Ask God to guide us as we partner with sister churches in our association on specific ministry endeavors.
- Pray that God will show us how to be a blessing to sister churches in our association.
- Ask the Lord to show us how to best evangelize our community and our county (or associational area), and how He would have our church involved.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to create within us the humility that would enable us to receive blessing from our association.

## Prayer Meeting: Week Three

### Praying for Sister Churches in Our Association:

- Pray for the healthiest churches in our association, that their congregations would see opportunities to be a blessing to other churches and would want to do so generously.
- Pray for the churches in struggling situations, that they would be humble enough to accept help — in time for it to make a difference.
- Pray for churches in conflict, that the Lord would enable them to resolve their disputes.
- Ask God to show churches when they need to partner with others to start a new ministry or to plant a new church.
- Pray that the Spirit would lead each congregation to the best strategy for their church to have the greatest gospel impact in their community.

## Prayer Meeting: Week Four

### Praying for the Kingdom Partnerships in Our Association:

A partnership is when two or more churches or organizations work together to carry out a ministry or achieve a goal.

- Ask God to create a “partnering spirit” among the member churches of our Association.
- Ask God to show us if there is a pocket of people in our area we could reach by partnering with other congregations — perhaps by starting a new church to reach them.
- Pray for stronger churches to realize what they have to offer and for struggling churches to be willing to accept the help.
- Pray for the Association as it plans mission trips and ministries churches can do together.

## Prayer Meeting: Week Five

### Praying for Our Association and its Work:

- Ask God to guide our Associational Missionary and other leaders as they acquire or develop the best possible resources for our member churches.
- Pray for our Associational Missionary as he works with churches, each facing its own unique opportunities and challenges. Ask God to guide him in knowing how to assist each one.
- Pray that each congregation will see that our mission involves reaching the people in our associational area. This will involve individual churches engaging in various means of outreach. But it also will involve churches partnering together in some endeavors.
- Pray for the Lord to bless our Association in resourcing and assisting each church.