

# National Family Prayer Month

## 30-Day Family Prayer Guide

*nationalfamilyprayermonth.org*

### **INTRODUCTION: Establishing a Family Prayer Time**

When families pray together, things change for eternity. Taking the time to pray alongside your family not only invites God's peace, joy, and presence into your home, but it creates powerful waves of change in the world around you! Establishing a family prayer time will set an example for your children—demonstrating to them that faith, family, and unity are cornerstones of life.

Whether you are choosing to pray daily at a set time with your family, or are simply looking for a casual guide to follow, these themes and action steps will get you praying with each other and for each other. Be creative! You don't have to be all sitting down together, face to face. You may be in the car on your way to soccer practice. One of you may be out of town and Skyping or Face-timing in to join the others. Praying together can happen so many different ways.

We have provided sample prayers for you to go with each day's prayer prompt, but these are only suggestions. Use your own words. Draw your prayers. Sing your prayers. Children may even want to dance along with their prayers (yes, they did that in the Bible sometimes!). Make your prayers uniquely your own.

Just begin this guide with expectant hearts, and see the spiritual climate in your home transform!

### **WEEK ONE – Praying for Our Family**

#### **Day 1 – Dedicating Our Year to the Lord**

*“Sing a new song to the Lord . . .” Psalm 98:1 (NLT)*

The beginning of a new year is a good time to slow down, rest, and set our focus on the Lord. Realigning our priorities with God's heart and making time to listen to His voice are important activities that often take a back burner in our busy lives. That's why, as a family, it's good to set aside a time to review and reflect, and to dedicate the year to the Lord.

For a visual aid as you dedicate your family's year to the Lord, hold open a blank calendar of the new year in front of you. Ask God to fill each month of the year with His presence, provision, protection, and direction. Each person can declare out loud that he or she is giving this year to God, to follow and serve Him. Close with someone praying a prayer of blessing and dedication over the family, and over all the activities and happenings that will occur this coming year. If there are specific events already on the calendar for this year, such as starting a new job or school, a graduation or wedding, you may want to pray over those even now in advance.

*Lord, we invite and welcome Your powerful presence into our lives this year. Thank You for making all things new! Come fill the atmosphere of our home with Your life-giving Spirit—Your peace, Your joy, Your righteousness. We pray that our every activity, every event, will honor you. We declare that this year our family will be marked by an attitude of victorious living—alive with God’s voice, presence and promises. We pledge to You as a family that daily we will extend Your compassion, forgiveness and patience to one another. We declare that in our home everyone will feel valued, connected, and supported because You live in us.*

## **Day 2 – Keeping a Family Prayer Journal**

*“The Lord has done great things for us and we are filled with joy!” Psalm 126:3 (NIV)*

Whether you are just beginning your journey of praying together as a family or it’s something you’ve been doing for a long time, prayer journaling is an important and exciting practice. In Deuteronomy 6:7, God instructed the Israelites to remember the things He had done for them, and to share them with their children. That’s what a prayer journal can do for your family, as you look back and see how He answers your prayers.

Here’s how: in a notebook or journal, or on your computer, create columns on the pages. Write across the top of each page: Date, Request, and Answer. In the date column, write the date on which you record your need. In the request column, describe what you are asking of the Lord. In the answer column, when your prayer request is answered, write the date and what you saw God do for you. Ask each person in the family to share something they want to pray about and add them to the prayer journal along with that day’s date. Then take time to pray together for each other. This is something you can do all year long—and will be a wonderful treasure to reflect on when you get to the end of the year.

*Lord, we ask You to help us make praying together as a family a lifelong tradition, one that our children can pass down to their children and them to their children. Thank You for Your promise that if we ask, You will answer, if we seek, we will find You, if we knock You will open Heaven’s door. We hold this prayer journal before You, that will be filled with prayer requests and answers to prayer. With it, we begin a new adventure with You!*

## **Day 3 – Praying Blessings for One Another**

*“One day some parents brought their children to Jesus so he could lay his hands on them and pray for them . . . Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me. Don’t stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children.” And he placed his hands on their heads and blessed them.” Matthew 19:13-15 (NLT)*

A blessing is a prayer or spoken words of affirmation, encouragement, favor, and hope for the future. Because God is the source of all blessing, when we bless someone, we come into partnership with God and His power. When we pray or speak a blessing over someone, in Jesus’ name, our words become a channel through which God’s power can flow. While parents are most often the ones who pray blessings over their children, children can also pray blessings over their siblings, friends, and their parents.

Parents can go first by praying the model prayer below or a blessing in their own words, from their heart, over each member of the family. As each person receives the blessing, the rest of the family can gather around and lay hands on him/her as a sign of agreement.

If you have adult children or grandchildren, consider gathering for a time of praying blessings over them the next time they come for a visit. Birthdays, graduations, and births are special occasions where most everyone is open to praying and receiving prayers of blessing.

*Heavenly Father, we bless \_\_\_\_\_ today with favor, strength, health, wisdom, courage, and direction. Thank you that his/her name means \_\_\_\_\_ (such as grace or light bearer) and he/she is that to our family and to this world. We know You have a special plan and destiny for \_\_\_\_\_. Thank You that You empower him/her to succeed in all his/her day-to-day assignments and in his/her future callings. Today we pray that Your blessings would overflow \_\_\_\_\_ in the areas of his/her life where he/she needs it most, in the powerful name of Jesus Christ.*

#### **Day 4 – Praying for God’s Peace and Protection**

*“But the Lord is faithful, He will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one.”  
2 Thessalonians 3:3 (NIV)*

God’s Word instructs us to never fear, for God is with us now and forever. His Word also says that God is our sword and our shield—He protects us and fights for us. However, there are still a lot of things going on in this world that can make us feel afraid and anxious. This is where prayer comes in and invites God’s peace to replace any fear.

Take some time to read Psalm 71 (a psalm of protection) together as a family. You could choose one individual to read it out loud, or you could take turns reading it in sections. Once you have completed reading the chapter, discuss it with your family members. How does hearing those words make you feel? What are the things you feel God has protected you from? What are some things you would like to pray for protection over? At what times do you feel the most peace?

As a family, take some time to ask God for His peace to flood your home. As a symbol of unity, hold hands with each other as you pray for physical protection (from violence, sickness, crime, accidents, injury) and spiritual protection (from temptation, spiritual attacks, etc. ). If any individual members have an issue or fear that is causing anxiety, take a moment to pray over that specific fear and replace it with God’s peace.

*Dear God, thank you for being our protector. Thank You for rescuing us from the evil one and setting us apart as Your children. In You, we find comfort, peace, and refuge. We pray that Your overwhelming peace would have a tangible presence in our home, and it would be felt by others when they step foot in our door. We pray that Your peace and protection would cover us throughout our daily lives—at work, at school, and when we’re out with friends.*

#### **Day 5 – Praying for Our Needs**

*“... in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” Philippians 4:6 (NIV)*

Do you ever feel a pit in your stomach when you realize it's yet another month where you don't know how you'll make ends meet financially? Or do you ever feel frustrated that you can't be two places at once, because there are simply not enough hours in the day to check everything off your to-do list? Maybe your source of frustration is your health, and you are tired of not feeling well and not experiencing any relief.

Although these are all tough situations for anyone to deal with, the good news is this: You can bring your needs to Jesus. Whether your needs are financial, health-related, or you simply need God to stretch your time—He cares. In fact, the Bible tells us to bring ALL of our needs to Jesus, and He will always provide. Isn't that amazing?

Assign one member of your family to be the "recorder." Then, give each person an opportunity to share a current need they are experiencing, while the recorder writes it down in your prayer journal. Once each person has shared a need, as a family, go through the list and pray for each individual need. In your mind's eye, picture handing over the need to God, placing it in His capable hands, and trusting Him to deal with it.

*Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for being concerned about the things that concern us. We know You are a God who provides! Right now, we lift up \_\_\_\_\_ in prayer, and ask You to answer her prayer for \_\_\_\_\_ (name specifics here). We know that You are a good and gracious God, and we thank You for Your constant care and presence in our lives.*

## **Day 6 - Praying about Our Family Brand**

*"Choose a good reputation over great riches; being held in high esteem is better than silver or gold." Proverbs 22:1 (NLT)*

What do Nike, Google, Whirlpool, and Disney all have in common? Any guesses? They are all **brands**. Did you know that your family has its own brand, too? Your family brand is what you stand for, what you value, and what sets you apart from other families. Just like God has created each of us differently as individuals, He has also created each family differently—with unique dynamics, relationships, gifts, and ways of doing things.

When you think about your immediate family and what you stand for, what words come to mind? Are you givers of your time and resources—always hoping to serve others? Maybe you are all musically inclined, and love to praise God through music and song as a family. What are words that you'd hope others (friends, neighbors, coworkers, etc.) would use to describe you?

Together as a family, discuss some words you think best fit your family, (joyful, generous, devoted, helpful, forgiving, etc.), as well as attributes/traits you hope will describe your family one day. Write them in your prayer journal and take turns praying for each trait. Ask God to help you apply that word or attribute to your lives. (Younger children may enjoy making a "word picture" with the attribute they have chosen, either coloring in the letters or cutting and pasting them from a magazine or newspaper.)

*Dear God, we thank You for giving us our wonderful family. Being a part of this family is a blessing, and we are thankful for each other and the relationships we share with You. God, though we are a work in progress, we want our family to honor You in all that we do. Today we*

ask that we would be a family marked by \_\_\_\_\_ (you may want to list several things) \_\_\_\_\_. Please help us apply this attribute/attributes to our daily lives. We declare in Jesus' name that we will be a family that represents You in all we do. God, we pray that when others see us, they would know by our \_\_\_\_\_ (trait you're praying for) we love and serve You.

## **Day 7 – What's Your Story?**

*“We will not hide these truths from our children; we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the Lord, about his power and his mighty wonders ... so the next generation might know them—even the children not yet born—and they in turn will teach their own children. So each generation should set its hope anew on God, not forgetting his glorious miracles and obeying his commands.” Psalm 78:4-7 (NLT, condensed)*

Parents, are there parts of your testimony you haven't shared with your children? Do you have stories of God's amazing love and faithfulness—ways He's saved you, provided for you, or taught you an important lesson? Kids, have you had some awe-inspiring Holy Spirit moments that you have yet to tell your parents about? Now is the time to open up and share them!

When we know God is working in the lives of people we love, it warms our heart and reminds us of what a real presence He is in our lives. Hearing of these miraculous stories and/or provisions will tell your children that the God they hear about at church—the One who parted seas, flooded the earth, and turned water into wine—is still alive and working in us today.

Take a few moments to talk about what things, however small they may be, God did in your life today (or in the past). How did He use you to bless another person, or use another person to bless you? What did He say to you? How did He provide for a need?

*Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for being a real, active presence in our lives. Thank You for being a God who still performs miracles, teaches lessons, and speaks to His people. Help us be a family who remembers and focuses on the things You do; let us never take You for granted. We want to make sharing our stories of Your provision and power a part of our daily lives, as these stories bless and uplift the people around us (and each other). Thank You for reminding us to share the stories of your faithfulness together, stirring our hearts and renewing our faith every day!*

## WEEK TWO – Praying for Our Community

### Day 8 – Praying for Our Neighborhood

*“Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don’t believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. They don’t understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.” 2 Corinthians 4:4 (NLT)*

Imagine a world in which your neighbors came to your home and knocked on your door, excitedly asking you to tell them about Jesus. Imagine chatting with one of your neighbors out walking his dog, and your conversation turning to prayer for each other. Wouldn’t that be an amazing community to be a part of? Here’s the best part...

A community like this isn’t an impossibility. In fact, living a life of evangelism and fellowship with (and toward) the people around us is exactly God’s design for community!

If you’re wondering how you can make your neighborhood a place like this, the answer is simple: **before you talk to your neighborhood about God, talk to God about your neighborhood.**

As a family, spend some time praying for the households in your vicinity. Take out some pens or crayons and make a map of your neighborhood in your prayer journal, filling in the names of the families, if you know them. If you’re able, take it a step further and go on a prayer walk together. As you walk through your neighborhood, pray out loud for the people who live there.

*Dear Lord, we lift up our neighbors to you—those we know, and those we’ve never met. We ask that You would show Yourself to them; let them know and feel Your love, peace, and presence. If they do not know You, give them the faith to recognize You and reach out. Prepare their hearts to hear and receive the Good News and give our family the opportunity to share it with them. We pray our neighbors will respond in faith and become a part of Your Kingdom.*

### Day 9 – Praying for Our Church

*“With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may bring to fruition your every desire for goodness and your every deed prompted by faith.” 2 Thessalonians 1:11 (NIV)*

It’s usually pretty easy to pray for the people we are close to—we know them and what they are going through. It’s even easier to pray for ourselves (and if we’re honest, that’s usually whom we pray for the most). However, have you ever thought to pray about your church family—even the church members you’ve never met? What about your church leaders—including pastors, worship leaders, etc.? The members of your church family—leadership included—are your brothers and sisters in Christ and together, you have a joint mission: to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

Tonight before dinner, take a few moments to lift your church up in prayer. (If you are not a part of a church, then choose one in your neighborhood and lift them before the Lord.) Here are some specific things you can pray for:

- that church members would be bold and fearless in sharing the gospel (1 Peter 3:15)
- that church members would reach out to those in the community and care for them as Jesus would (James 1:27)
- that church members would continue to feel God’s love in new ways every day (Ephesians 3:17-19)
- that church leaders would have godly wisdom and discernment as they lead (James 1:5)
- that church leaders would listen to God’s voice and follow His plan and vision for the church

And, if you are not a part of a church, you may also want to use this time to ask the Lord to direct you to a church that is right for you.

*Dear Lord, thank you for placing our family at our church, \_\_\_\_\_. We know you have surrounded us with our church family for a specific purpose—to do Your kingdom work here on Earth. We thank you for them, our brothers and sisters in Christ, and ask that they would feel Your presence in their lives in an even greater way (name some specific people with special needs who come to mind or ask God to show you someone who might need your prayer.) We pray for our pastors and other church leaders too, that You would give them boldness, wisdom, joy, strength, and peace.*

## **Day 10– Praying for Our Schools and Teachers**

*“But Jesus said, ‘Let the children come to me. Don’t stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children.’” Matthew 19:14 (NLT)*

Schools play a huge role in our communities. And, when you think about it, the overall “mood” or “feeling” of a school can have an impact on thousands of people—students, teachers, and parents. The hallways can be filled with joy and laughter, the stadiums can be filled with proud parents cheering their children on, and the gymnasium can be filled with unity and encouragement as the community participates in school events.

However, school can also be a place of stress, peer bullying, loneliness, rejection, and pressure. This is why praying for our schools is crucial.

Praying over a school can impact the lives of countless children and teachers. It can cover children in peace and love, wrapping them in the Father’s warm embrace. Through our prayers, God can provide the teachers with patience, understanding, and wisdom. When a school (and everyone inside of it) is healthy, the community is healthy, too.

If you have children or grandchildren who attend school, pray for their school together aloud. This could happen on your way to (or on the way home from) school one day. If you are able, and/or have permission, enter the building and pray for the school, its staff, and its students as you walk down the hallways. Ask the Lord for His presence, protection, and favor to be released there.

Younger children may enjoy coloring a picture or card to give to a teacher or administrator to tell them, “I’m praying for you!”

*God, we dedicate \_\_\_\_\_ school to You (be specific for your child’s school or one in the neighborhood), for Your purposes. We dedicate every classroom and hallway, and all the people*

*and activities in it. We lift every student, teacher, volunteer, and staff member. (Pray for your child's or grandchild's teacher(s) by name.) We ask that Your holy power and tangible presence would be felt by each one. Lord, today we pray our children will experience school as a place of safety, security, and personal growth, with excellent and godly education.*

## **Day 11 – Praying for Our Friends**

*“So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better.” –Colossians 1:9-10 (NLT)*

Did you know God wants every single one of us—the entire population of the world—to know Him? He loves us and is beckoning for us to come participate in a friendship with Him. And do you know when people are most likely to come to Christ? When people have been praying for them!

The prayers of God's people prepare the way for Him to work in the lives of others. Your prayer is a vessel for God to work through, and it's an imperative part of His work in the hearts of others. Your family can be a part of His work in bringing your friends and family members to salvation through Him, and to experience His power and presence in their lives! A significant part of your role is to pray.

As a family, ask the Lord to point out the people in your lives for whom He would want you to pray, that they would come to know Him and/or experience a touch from Him. Maybe they already know Him, but there is a physical, financial, or emotional need—a “burden” you can bear for them through prayer. To help you remember, make a list of “Our Family's 10 Most Wanted” (friends to know/experience Jesus, that is!) on a special page in your family's prayer journal.

*Lord, we lift up \_\_\_\_\_, and ask You to please open their heart to You. Show them that You are real, alive, and love them. We ask that they would hear Your voice and feel Your presence in all circumstances of their life. God, reveal Yourself to them as their friend, their protector, their provider, their healer, and most importantly, their savior. We ask that You would give them the faith and courage to say Yes to a life of following You. Lord, please help us be the answer to our own prayers by being willing to share the Good News with \_\_\_\_\_ or anyone else You put in our path.*

## **Day 12 - Praying for First Responders**

*“God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble.” Psalm 46:1 (NLT)*

While God is the God of peace, we live in a world in which bad things can happen sometimes. As we wait for the day of peace to come, we need to give thanks for the brave men and women

who serve our communities by responding first to scenes of crime and emergency. It's important to remember their sacrifice of personal safety in order to care for, protect, and serve us.

First responders often have the life of others within their hands, so more than anything, they need God's infinite wisdom, strength, and discernment present in their daily lives. They also need God's physical, emotional, and spiritual protection as they navigate some pretty grave and dangerous situations. We can pray that God helps them through the physical hardships and covers them in a blanket of safety.

As a family, pray for the fire fighters, police officers, and paramedics in your community. If you can, take a moment to all hop in the car and drive by your local fire station or police station. Reach your hands toward the station as you pass it, in a symbol of agreement, as you pray for them. You may even want to drop off a batch of cookies with an encouraging note: "Thanks for all you do for our community. We're praying for you!" (If you know a member of law enforcement or fire fighter personally, pray for them and their family by name.)

*Almighty God, we pray for the men and women who serve as our community's first responders. May they know You as their refuge and strength. We pray that You will give them Your wisdom, discernment, and strength as they deal with difficult and sometimes dangerous situations. God, we ask that Your hands would be upon them and You would keep them safe as they keep us safe. Thank you for placing noble and brave first responders in our community who guard and protect us with integrity, and for the families who send their loved ones out the door, knowing they face dangerous situations every day.*

### **Day 13 – Praying for Our Community Leaders**

*"Greet all your leaders and all the Lord's people." Hebrews 13:24 (NIV)*

Our local leaders—the politicians, school district superintendents, school board members, pastors, business leaders, and judges—are the cornerstones of our communities. The decisions they make have a trickle-down effect that can impact hundreds, if not thousands of people every day. They have big jobs with big responsibilities . . . and they need to be covered in prayer.

As a family, take a few moments to brainstorm some of the specific leaders in your community. Write their names (or titles, if you don't know their names) in your prayer journal. Take turns praying for each one, and ask the Lord to blanket them with wisdom, peace, strength, and righteousness. Ask that they would be marked by integrity and honesty, and they would champion justice and truth within your community. Most importantly, pray each one would come to know the truth and love of Jesus Christ. (Suggestion: choose one leader you know and pray for him or her by name.)

*Dear Heavenly Father, we know that You orchestrate all things, and You have placed our community leaders in their positions for a specific purpose. We lift up our leaders (name them here) in Jesus' name, and ask that You use them for Your glory and raise them up as pillars of Your truth and light in our community. Help them make a difference. Give them boldness to be a voice for the voiceless, and give them strength and courage to use their power to do Your work.*

## Day 14 – Praying for the Homeless and Needy

*“Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.” –Proverbs 14:31 (NIV)*

Some of us may live in areas where we don’t normally see poor and homeless people. For others, homelessness and poverty might be part of everyday life. Regardless of our circumstances, God calls us to help the people who have less than we do. In fact, one of our primary charges as followers of Jesus is to care for those in need.

A difficult part of caring for the poor and homeless is knowing the best way to help them. Should you give money to those holding up signs at freeway off-ramps or busy intersections? Should you buy a meal for the homeless man you see at the park? We may not always know *how* or even *whom* to serve, but we know that prayer is a powerful means of serving those in need.

**We also know that prayer is transformational. It changes things!**

Begin by asking God to specifically bring to mind people you can help. Are there any people you pass in your car, or any shelters that come to mind? Are there tangible ways you can help, as well as pray? Pray aloud together for the needs of the poor and homeless in your area. Ask God to watch over them and impress upon people (maybe even your own family) how best to help them. Then, look for ways He might use you to be the answer to your own prayers! Ask the Lord to show you someone who has a need you can meet. Does someone need a winter coat, school supplies, or help with paying an electric bill?

*God, You are a God of compassion; You love the poor and the homeless so much that You came to Earth as a poor child and lived as a homeless man. We are astounded by Your grace and humility, and we ask You to give us that same heart for the needy in our own community. We pray for all the poor and homeless who may be around us; open our eyes to ways we can help. We ask You to draw near to the needy and comfort them, and bless them with work, shelter, food, and friendship.*

## WEEK THREE – Praying for Our Nation

### Day 15 - Praying for Our Government Leaders

*“Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.” Romans 13:1 (NIV)*

As believers, it’s part of our “job” to lift up our government leaders in prayer, asking for wisdom and strength on their behalf. They have some of the hardest jobs in the world! We are to even pray for the government officials we may not agree with politically.

As our country is faced with terrorist threats, natural disasters, wars in other countries, trade issues, economy changes, and so much more, our leaders must navigate these issues and create laws and solutions for each of them. It’s a big responsibility to bear, and they need to be covered in prayer.

With your family, name some of the government leaders you can think of (e.g., President, Vice President, cabinet members, congress, etc.). Then, ask God to surround these leaders with godly counsel, and fill each and every one of them up with His wisdom, discernment, and justice.

You can look up contact information for public figures on the internet with a Google search. Your family could write a letter or send an email. You can let them know, “We’re praying for you!” (Suggestion: ask the Lord if there is someone He would have you pray for regularly as a family, and write his or her name in your prayer journal.)

*Dear God, we pray now, in Jesus’ name, that our nation’s leaders (name specific one/ones) would know You, Your truth, and Your love. We pray You would cover them in peace and strength. Let them hear Your voice in difficult situations, and their make decisions based on the wisdom You have given them. Surround them with godly counsel, and let them always feel Your presence of peace and love as they lead our country. Mark them as leaders of integrity, lovers of the truth, and champions of justice. Above all, we pray their hearts will be sensitive to You and Your voice.*

## **Day 16 – Praying over News Headlines**

*“We are human, but we don’t wage war as humans do. We use God’s mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God.”*  
2 Corinthians 10:3-5a (NLT)

How many times has your heart sunk when flipping through the newspaper or scrolling through news headlines on social media? How many times have you thought to yourself, *What is our world coming to?* Oftentimes, the things going on in the news can be pretty staggering. But even when national (and world) events can leave us feeling confused, hopeless, angry, or heartbroken, one thing is for certain: God is powerful, loving, and able to answer our prayers. He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. NOTHING takes our God by surprise—not even today’s or yesterday’s appalling news headline.

Look through the headlines in a print newspaper, or on social media or an online news outlet. Pick out some headlines that especially move you (be alert to the age and sensitivity levels of your children when choosing appropriate headlines to pray over). Taking turns, lift up to God these news stories and events, asking Him to bring a solution. If there are particular people mentioned in the article, name them aloud in your prayers and ask God to touch, lead, and help them.

Younger children may enjoy cutting or printing out headlines they can relate to (and any photos associated with them), things like families who lost their home in a hurricane, etc. They can paste their headlines and pictures collage-style onto a piece of paper, and hang them on the refrigerator or a bulletin board as a visual prayer reminder.

*Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for being sovereign and powerful. We know that You work all things together for Your good, and nothing in this world takes You by surprise. God, sometimes what we see in the news breaks our hearts. We mourn as we witness the violence, deceit, hatred, and injustice that occurs daily. Right now, we specifically pray over the headlines*

about \_\_\_\_\_. We ask that Your hand would guide those involved in this situation and Your presence would be felt by all. We ask that You would cover them with Your protection, protection, peace, and truth, and bring justice.

## **Day 17 – Praying for Those Who Are New to Our Country**

*“He ensures that orphans and widows receive justice. He shows love to the foreigners living among you and gives them food and clothing. So you, too, must show love to foreigners, for you yourselves were once foreigners in the land of Egypt.” Deuteronomy 10:18-19 (NLT)*

Many times, people from other nations around the world come to our country because they are escaping poverty, oppression, hunger, violence, or persecution. They may come seeking protection, refuge, and solace after living amongst war or famine. Sometimes they are simply seeking a better life and better opportunities for their families. Or, perhaps a job brought them to America. Regardless, as Jesus’ hands and feet, we are to love them and pray for them. God’s Word says that we are to treat the traveler (or “sojourner”) as if they were a native-born, and to love them as we would love ourselves.

Lift up our nation’s immigrants and refugees in prayer. Declare God’s protection over them, and ask that He would shepherd them and guide them to green pastures of safety. Pray they would learn English, be able to communicate, and would quickly feel at home. Ask God would keep your hearts sensitive to those who may feel awkward and alone in a new culture, and lead you toward any ways your own family can serve, bless, and provide for them.

*Dear Lord and Heavenly Father, we ask that You would help those who are new to our country to feel at home here. Grant them healing and hope where they have been wounded or afraid. Wrap them in Your loving embrace, and show them a peace they have never known. Cover them in protection and provision. We pray You would lead our family and show us how to welcome those who may seem so very different from us. Show us ways to love and serve them, just as You would.*

## **Day 18 – Praying for the Entertainment & Sports World**

*“Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers, but they delight in the law of the Lord . . .” Psalm 1:1-2 (NLT)*

It’s fun to watch movies and TV shows, listen to music on our iPhones, and watch championship football games and other pro sports. Each week, millions and millions of people are engaged in these activities. But sometimes, these things can become too important. And sometimes, if they go too far, they can take people—and anyone watching them—far from God’s path and His truth. Other times, God can use these things to reach people for His Kingdom! It all depends on how we approach them.

What might happen if we prayed for the people who bring us our entertainments and sports? We can pray they will have the courage to stand up for what is right, and to not participate in things that are wrong. If they don’t know Jesus, we can pray they come to know

Him! If they do know Him, we can pray they will stand strong and use their platform to point people to God.

Have each person in your family pick a favorite entertainer or professional athlete. Say what you like about that celebrity and why, and how you are going to pray for him/her. Take turns praying sentence prayers for the celebrities you've chosen. You may even want to print out a picture of them and hang it somewhere to remind you to continue praying for them. You never know what long-term impact your prayers might have!

*God, we lift up to You the people who bring us our entertainment—whether it's through music, shows, movies, or sports. We pray You would protect them from all the temptations that go with fame. We ask you to guard them from making choices that would lead them far away from You. If they already know You, help them use their platform for Your glory. If they don't, please show Yourself to them! And give us discernment as we make choices about who and what we watch; help us to please You with our choices.*

## **Day 19 – Praying for Spiritual Awakening in America**

*Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land. 2 Chronicles 7:14 (NLT)*

Imagine living in a world filled with vigilantes, bandits, and outlaws. Picture a scenario in which corruption is so widespread, the courts have closed their doors! Envision our great Christian universities filled with students rioting and burning their Bibles. Believe it or not, these are not shocking scenes from a Wild West or post-apocalyptic Hollywood movie. These are things that took place in our country before the First and Second Great Awakenings!

More than once, this nation has sunk into social depravity and spiritual deception. Yet every time, God was merciful and mighty, and He raised up a remnant of faithful people who prayed fervently for revival. Through this prayer and intercession, He led our country to spiritual awakenings, times when people repented of their sins, turned to God, and changed the direction of the nation.

Today, we again find ourselves in a place where our country has turned away from God and evil and darkness run rampant. What must we do? Unite and fervently pray.

With your family, begin by asking God for forgiveness for any ways you personally (and as a family) have been lukewarm in your love for Him. Then, cry out to God for spiritual awakening on our country's behalf. God can change the world, and it starts by moving hearts in one house, one community, and one nation at a time.

*Lord, hear our prayer for our country. Bring conviction to our hearts; show us how far we've fallen from You. We pray that each person in our neighborhood, community, state, and nation would want to know You and walk with You. God, we know You are a big God, and you can lead this nation back to Your will and Your ways. We believe in Jesus' name that Your revival will spread like fire—from the poorest family to the highest leader!*

## Day 20—Praying for Our New President (An Inauguration Day prayer)

*“He controls the course of world events; he removes kings and sets up other kings. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the scholars. He reveals deep and mysterious things and knows what lies hidden in darkness, though he is surrounded by light.” Daniel 2:21 (NLT)*

There is no better time to renew our commitment to praying for our government and its leaders than the start of a new presidential administration. And today (if you started this guide on January 1<sup>st</sup>) is Inauguration Day! A new president can mean a lot of big changes are in store for our country, so it’s more important than ever to cover our nation, its people, the government, the president, and his cabinet in our prayers.

Our president makes decisions every day that impact millions of people—**so praying for godly wisdom is of utmost importance**. Here are some other things you can pray for as our new president begins his administration, that he would:

- be brave and courageous, doing what is right no matter the consequence
- seek God’s wisdom in decision making
- walk in humility, favor and protection
- seek justice, and would represent those who have no voice
- surround himself with wise and godly advisors
- be selfless, always seeking out our country’s best interest above self-interest

*Dear God, we know this is a big day for our country. As our President Trump begins his administration, we ask for Your hand to be upon him and our country. God, we know You have a plan, and You are faithful to fulfill all of Your promises. Please guide our new president and his advisors. Help him heal a divided nation, and be able to work with those of differing views. Speak to him, and help him be attentive to the whispers of Your Spirit. Heavenly Father, we pray that President Trump would know You and follow Your voice. We ask that he would be open to know Your will. And God, above all else, give our new president wisdom. Help him make the right decisions at the right time. Surround him with peace and protection.*

## Day 21—Praying for the Military and Their Families

*“So be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid and do not panic before them. For the Lord your God will personally go ahead of you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you.” Deuteronomy 31:6 (NLT)*

Every day around the world, there are men and women in the US military who put their lives on the line to protect us and to serve the nations of the world. When someone in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, or National Guard gets sent to live, work, train, or fight in another country, we say they are being “deployed.” When they are deployed, they may be in situations that are dangerous or, at the very least, uncomfortable. Many times, they leave families behind for months (or even years!) at a time while they serve our country. Military families give up a lot to keep our country safe. They need our prayers! Your family can pray:

- for courage, wisdom and discernment, especially when they are in dangerous situations
- for protection from loneliness while they are away from their families
- that their families would be comforted while they are away
- that they represent our country well
- that they know Jesus, and feel His presence and power with them wherever they are
- safety from all harm, emotionally as well as physically
- for them to find community and encouragement with other believers

(Do you know someone in the military personally? Write his or her name, and maybe even include a picture of him or her, in your prayer journal.) *God, thank You for the brave men and women who have made it their life work to defend our country, and to stand up for what is right in the world. Please give them strength and courage when they need it most. Protect them from danger. Give them wisdom to make right decisions in their personal lives and on the job. Comfort them when they are lonely. Also, be with their families while they are away. Encourage them and help them find ways to stay in touch, and keep their hearts connected to You and to each other.*

## WEEK FOUR – Praying for Our World

### Day 22 – Praising God for Creation

*Come, let us sing to the LORD. Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come to him with thanksgiving. Let us sing psalms of praise to him. Psalm 95:1-2 (NLT)*

God created everything in this world—the trees and plants in your backyard, the beautiful scenery at your local park, every mountain, every valley, and the most exquisite rain forests. He designed and spoke into being every animal—from the gazelles to the jellyfish to your family pet. He is creative and magnificent. As the Master Creator of all things—He is worthy of praise.

As a family, get out of doors and into nature. Whether you go into your backyard, a small courtyard, the waterfront, or a park in your neighborhood—the choice is yours. What matters is that you expose yourselves to the vast richness and diversity of God’s beautiful creation. Then, praise Him for all that He has done and who He is. Thank Him for surrounding You with such beautiful evidence of His majesty. One by one, take turns praising God as you stand in awe of His creation. You may even want to collect some mementos of God’s handiwork—a pretty rock, leaf, or seashell, for example—and bring them into your home as a reminder to praise Him every day! (Or, if you can’t get outdoors today, find a beautiful picture of a sunrise, sunset, or snow-capped mountain.)

*Father God, You are worthy of our praise and worship. We thank You and praise You for making this stunning earth—the mountains, the night sky, the lakes, the fields of wild flowers, and even the nature in our own backyard. Everywhere we go, we are reminded of how creative, powerful, and majestic You are. God, we know we were created to worship You. So, right now, we praise*

*You with all of our hearts. We worship You with our entire beings—we want everything we do to bring glory and honor to Your name.*

## **Day 23 – Praying the Lord’s Prayer**

*“Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us today the food we need, and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.” Matthew 6:9-13 (NLT)*

With your family, pray through “the Lord’s Prayer” together, stopping along the way to personalize it. Or, you can write your own prayer, based on the components of the Lord’s Prayer:

*Our Father* – acknowledge that God is your Heavenly Father

*May your name be kept holy* – worship and praise Him. Choose one of God’s attributes and thank Him for being that to you.

*May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven* – invite His power and presence into your life and home.

*Give us today the food we need* – ask God for what you need. Present your day to Him, telling the Lord you are dependent upon Him—that you need Him—that you can’t do life without Him.

*Forgive us our sins as we have forgiven those who sin against us* – Confess your sins and ask for forgiveness for those things you’ve done, said, or not done that you know have grieved Him; then forgive anyone who has offended, hurt, or betrayed you. (This doesn’t mean you are saying it’s okay; you are simply releasing the debt to God instead of hanging on to it yourself.)

*Don’t let us yield to temptation, but deliver us from the evil one* – ask for the Lord’s protection against all the schemes and temptations of the devil, who is real and always plotting against God’s people.

Prayer, like any other conversation, is both talking and listening. At some point, it’s good to stop talking and listen to what the other person has to say. That’s true in prayer, too; God has things He wants to say to our families and to us!

*God, You are a good, good Father! We acknowledge You are God of our home, of this world, and of the whole universe! But you care about the small details of our life, too—like what we eat, and how we forgive others when our feelings are hurt, and how we choose right over wrong, even in the little things. Thanks for letting us talk to you about everything, big and small, and for Your answers.*

## **Day 24 –God’s Kingdom on Earth**

*“The Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Romans 14:17 (NIV)*

You might be wondering what it means that Jesus taught us to pray for “God’s Kingdom on Earth.” Just like any king, God’s kingdom is the place where He rules and reigns. The beginning of His kingdom on earth is when Jesus is invited to come to rule and reign in our hearts. In the

same way, we can invite Him into our home and family to rule and reign there. From there, we can invite Him into other places where we have influence, like school, work, or our community.

When we pray for God’s Kingdom on Earth (“Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven . . .”) we are actually praying for His influence upon hearts and minds. Every place Christ is invited in, He brings righteousness, peace, and joy.

Ask God to provide your family with tangible ways that you can advance His Kingdom. Ask Him to impress on your hearts any way you can be the hands and feet of Jesus—whether it’s starting a Bible club at school, inviting the soccer team to pray together before a game, praying for healing for someone who is ill, or sharing the Good News with the neighbor across the street. He may even want to use you to solve a big problem at your job or in your community in the same way He used men in the Bible like Joseph, Daniel, and Nehemiah. God may call you to fight against some injustice you see in the world. Every one of us can promote His love, justice, mercy, and peace, here and now on earth, today. Write these ideas down in your family prayer journal, and keep track of how God answers your prayers. Know that you can help advance God’s Kingdom without even leaving your own zip code!

*“Our Father, in Heaven, we want to see Your Kingdom come to Earth, and Your will be done here as it is in Heaven! God, we know that while we are citizens of this world, we are also citizens of Your Kingdom. Lord, rule and reign in my heart and in each member of our family. Wherever we go, let us become an influence of your character, spreading Your love, goodness and justice. Give us opportunities to represent and promote Your kingdom in tangible ways where we live, work, and play.*

## **Day 25 – Praying for Missionaries**

*“Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20 (NLT)*

A “missionary” is someone who travels away from their home, usually to another country, to share God’s love and Good News with the people there. Sometimes they do this through teaching and preaching. Or, they may be doctors, nurses, scientists, translators, agricultural workers, and more! International missionaries are incredibly brave people. Many of them are putting their life on the line (and all of them are sacrificing the comforts of home) to serve and bring the Good News of Jesus to the world, just as He commanded. Their work is changing our world and expanding the Kingdom of God.

If you personally know a missionary family, lift them up in prayer. Perhaps your church supports one. If not, you can pray generally for missionaries who are serving God around the world. You can pray for:

- their safety, that God would surround them with a hedge of protection
- the hearts of those they are ministering to be softened and ready to hear the whisper of God’s Spirit.

- God to provide for their needs
- encouragement, that they would not grow lonely or discouraged and lose heart
- their children to make good friends where they are, and that they would feel an important part of the work their family is doing there

*Dear Lord and Father, right now we lift up the missionaries \_\_\_\_\_ to You. (Be specific with a name and location if you know one.) We ask in Jesus' name that You would guard them and cover them in a hedge of protection as they advance Your Kingdom on the mission field. Please give them boldness and courage—they have a hard job! Lord Jesus, please open all the right doors for these missionaries. Allow them to meet the right people and form the right connections in order to give them favor in that country. God, we also ask You to give them rest, and a sense of peace that only comes from You. As a family, we ask You to speak to us and show us any way that we can support this family, beyond prayer. We want to help spread Your Word to the rest of the world!*

## **Day 26 – Praying for Nations/People Experiencing War**

*“No longer will violence be heard in your land, nor ruin or destruction within your borders, but you will call your walls Salvation and your gates Praise.” Isaiah 60:18 (NIV)*

Nothing brings more torment, fear, chaos, darkness, and death than war. War destroys families, devastates entire cities, and disenfranchises thousands who flee their homeland in terror. And for those of us living in the comfort of the United States, we truly have no grasp of what others around the world are experiencing on a daily basis. Their daily reality is our worst nightmare.

That's why it's crucial that we are *constantly* praying for God's peace to come upon those war-torn countries. Although they are, in fact, fighting horrific enemies (actual “flesh and blood”), we know, from a Biblical point of view, they also are fighting a *spiritual* battle with unseen enemies. Our prayer can have a powerful, infinite impact upon these devastating situations (see Ephesians 6:10-18).

You may be asking, “How do I pray for such an enormous problem as a war torn nation?” The answer is simple: Pray for God's love to be shown, His peace to be felt, His provision to be experienced, and His swift justice to be carried out.

Nothing is too hard for God, and remember He has us joining hands with millions around the world who are asking Him for the same thing...PEACE. It is His will to bring peace on Earth and be known to all people everywhere.

*(Choose one country or war-torn area of the world.) King of Kings, Lord of Lords, our heart's cry for this war torn country is that You bring Your peace (introduce every man, woman and child to the Prince of Peace...Jesus Christ, our Lord). Heavenly Father, bring Your salvation to their land. We know that You desire that none perish but all would come to the salvation of Your Son (see 2 Peter 3:9; 1 Tim 2:3-4). We call out to You, that Your presence would be made known in that country. We ask that You would remove the grip of the evil one—that Your light would diminish all darkness there. God, You are a God of peace, justice, and mercy. We ask You to*

*reveal Yourself to these people in the midst of their pain and their need. Let them find You, God, as their Father, Savior, Deliverer, Comforter, and Helper.*

## **Day 27 – Praying for the World’s Leaders**

*“... pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity.” 1 Timothy 2:1-2 (NLT)*

God uses government leaders—good and bad—to accomplish His purposes on Earth. When leaders are bad, we may feel we don’t want to pray for them—but the opposite is true! We can pray their hearts will be softened, and that God will be able to use them in ways we might not see or understand. Even though the Apostle Paul was mistreated by government leaders, he asked Christians to pray for them. Our families can be a source of blessing to the world by praying for its leaders. We can pray:

- that God will give them wisdom to govern well
- that they, their families, and their staff would know Jesus as their Savior
- that they would be surrounded by wise voices and godly counsel
- that if they have made it difficult for people in their countries to follow Jesus, that their hearts would be softened

(Discuss as a family how to pray for a world leader, and what he/she may need. Put a name or names specifically into your prayer.) *God, Your Word says the hearts of kings are in Your hands (Prov. 21:1). We ask You to lead and direct the hearts of the men and women who are leading the nations of this world (if you have any in mind, name them). Give them the wisdom and strength they need to lead well. Protect them from being corrupted by the love of power and money, and influenced by people who have wrong motives. Help them seek Your approval and not the approval of public opinion. Help them be a force for good in this world, as Your appointed agents.*

## **Day 28 – Praying for Nations/People that Need Food and Water**

*“For he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.” Psalm 107:9 (NLT)*

All around the world, there are people—including children—who don’t have enough food to eat or water to drink. There are places where children are living and foraging for food in garbage dumps, or where they have to walk miles and miles just to get enough water for their household for a single day. We can help by sending money and supplies, but even more importantly, we can help by praying for them!

Write the following scenarios on slips of paper or index cards and place them in a bowl or basket:

- children who can’t go to school because they need to work to support their families
- children who must look for food in a garbage dump
- families who must walk miles and miles to find water every day
- families who live on the streets or in cars

- communities that don't have clean, safe water
- communities that have been destroyed by natural disasters like earthquakes, floods, famines, and storms
- children who have diseases in their bodies caused by malnutrition

Children may want to incorporate drawing into this prayer. Using paper and pencils, crayons, or markers, draw a sketch of a scenario that comes to mind as you read the above list. Each person can pray a brief prayer for people who are going through that particular situation. Example: *Dear God, I pray for children in \_\_\_\_\_ (name a place, if desired) who have to live on the streets, without a home. Give them a place to live and someone to love and feed them.*"

*Dear God, thank You that You see all Your children, wherever they are. You promise to provide food for the hungry and water for the thirsty. We pray for families around the world who don't have enough food to eat right now, or enough water for their households. We pray you would show them where to look. Send organizations that dig wells and provide for clean water. We pray You would surprise them with extra food and new ways to find water. We pray you would help their leaders find ways for their communities to thrive. We pray for the money they need, to provide for all their needs, and that they would see that it comes from You, because You are a loving Father.*

## **Day 29 – Praying for Unreached People Groups**

*"But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?" Romans 10:14 (NLT)*

Did you know there are people around the world who have never even heard about the One True God, and about Jesus, His Son? These people are called "unreached people groups." Many of these people live in countries found in the territories between the 10 and 40-degree latitude lines on the globe (if you have a globe or atlas, you can look these up, or do a Google search online). Many of the poorest people in the world live in this "10/40 window." It is also the home of some of the major world religions like Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism.

We may never get to visit the "10/40 window," but one of the most important things we can do is pray for the people who live there. We can ask God to send Christians to them to show them who He is, and share the Good News and love of Jesus to them. We can pray that their eyes and hearts will be opened so they can understand how much God loves them and wants to be Lord and Father in their lives.

On a map or globe, or on your computer or table screen if you search for it online, put your finger on the 10/40 window as you pray something like this:

*Lord, we are thankful we live in a place where it is easy to hear and learn about You. We pray for the people in the world who live in places where it is not so easy, where they may never even have heard about the One True God who loves them and sent His own Son to Earth to help us know Him. God, we pray You would open their spiritual eyes. Where there is darkness, let there*

*be light. We pray some of their people would receive Jesus and then teach others, and that Your Kingdom would grow and grow through them.*

## CONCLUSION

### Day 30 – A Prayer of Thanksgiving

*“Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart.” Colossians 4:2 (NLT)*

We are called to give thanks to God, thanking Him for all He has done for us and inviting Him to be a daily part of our lives. We are to give thanks in all that we do—even during times of trouble or suffering. Let’s remember to take time every day to thank God for who He is and how He has provided for us—not just this month when we’re praying through a “30-Day Prayer Guide.”

Praising and thanking God attracts His presence into our lives and homes. The Psalmist said, “But you are holy, you who inhabit the praises of Israel.” That’s like one of us saying, “Hey God, You love to hang out with people who are thankful to You!” (Psalm 22:3, WEB).

Finish out your 30-Day prayer adventure with prayers of thanksgiving to God for all He has done, all you have learned, and all you have experienced of Him as you have made prayer more and more a part of your “family brand.” Commit together before Him to always, as the Scripture says, “devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart!”

**(Optional):** Families with young children may want to add some color to their prayers. Have each person draw or color things that they are thankful for. This is a great way to engage children that can’t write – older children and adults may enjoy this too. You can display the “prayer pictures” as a reminder to give thanks every day.

*Dear Lord, we praise You for who You are. Thank You for being a God who is loving, gracious, and merciful. Thank You for Your faithfulness to us. Thank You for all Your blessings to us. Your Word says that You will provide for all of our needs, and we are so grateful for that promise. We also thank you for . . . (pray through your family’s own list).*

© BridgeBuilders International Leadership Network, Phoenix, Arizona, 2016.