

Coronavirus

Prayer

Prayer Walking During a Pandemic

By Eliza Cortés Bast

What is prayer walking?

P rayer walking is a type of intercessory prayer—praying on behalf of others—that is typically done outside of a home or church. Small groups, families, or individuals spend time in their neighborhoods or surrounding areas, praying either aloud or silently, for both the observed needs and as the Spirit leads as they walk or

drive through an area. Prayer walking focuses on the transformation of a neighborhood, campus, or city. It helps people become more closely connected to their communities, see more opportunities for service, and be able to intentionally pray for those outside of the typical church walls.

Prayer walking and physical distancing

In this season of physical distancing, it is still possible to “prayer walk” from the comfort of your own home! Here are a few things to pray for in your local neighborhood, regardless of where you live:

Pray from home:

1. **Find a list of your local leaders:** This includes the school superintendents, local government, law enforcement, key community leaders. Take a “mental tour” of your city. Who is leading your community or city? What decisions are they needing to make in this moment? How can you be praying for them?
2. **Pray for those immediately around you:** The young couple in the apartment above you, or the next house across the field from your backyard—it is okay if you don’t know them by name. God knows who they are! And if you don’t know them yet, ask that God will open doors for you to meet them when the time is right.
3. **Pray for the essential workers in your community:** The delivery people, health care workers, first responders, grocery store workers, and food service people who are still heading to work outside of their homes every day—it doesn’t matter if you know their names! Pray intentionally for those in your community, for safety, for peace, and for hope.
4. **Pray for locally owned businesses.** As you drive to and from the grocery store or your essential appointments, slow down and notice all the locally owned businesses. How can you pray for those business owners? Their workers? How

might God want to use you, your church, or your community to help rebuild the strength of your local community in the future?

If you DO have to leave the house:

1. Make the most of every opportunity. If you are heading to the grocery store, getting medication, or checking in on a loved one, ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes and notice the world around you. What do you notice? Who do you see?
Pray.
2. If you are getting some fresh air outdoors, quiet your heart and mind. Ask God to help you see your community with fresh eyes. What are the concerns and hopes that keep your neighbors up at night? What are their dreams for this neighborhood? Their families? Then **pray.**
3. Put down the phone. Turn off the television and radio. Pause the podcast. Stop the noise of all the things competing for your attention. Take the time to see, really see, your community. As you drive by your neighbors and as you turn down the street, ask only for God to help you see what you have missed in your rush to get to the next place. And then **pray.**

Missing others?

Coordinate a group call. Miss your small group? Wanting to connect with your family? Use Zoom, FaceTime, or other mobile apps or devices to pray together. Have each person pray for their neighbors and neighborhood!

Praying has always brought us together as a people of faith. In this season of being physically separate, may we remember our practices of prayer to help us feel, and stay, connected to our communities.

About the author

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