

THE BAPTIST WOMEN PRAYER NETWORK

women equipped to cover their
communities in prayer



*“May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice.”
Psalm 141:2 (NIV)*

Paul asked for prayer from the Romans (15:13), the Ephesians (6:19–20), the Colossians (4:3), and others. He commended Epaphras for ‘wrestling in prayer’ for the church (Col. 4:12 NIV). God is so interested in working with us and through us that He often waits for us. That means prayer makes a huge difference. In prayer we sow seeds that can yield one-hundred-fold for the Kingdom and for those around us.

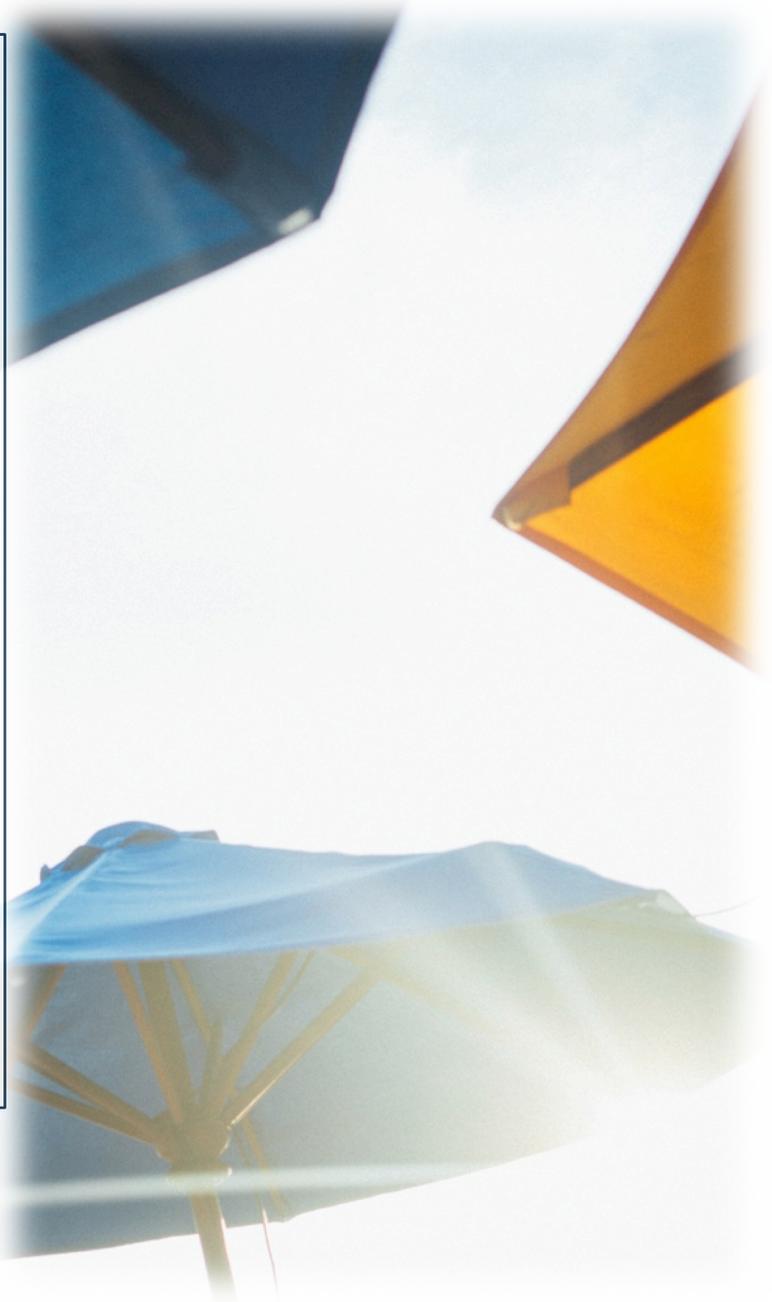
You are invited to create a prayer team and join our Baptist Women Prayer Network!

THE VISION

This isn’t another prayer meeting.

- Once you are set up, you do not have to get together. Each person can pray individually, or you can divide in pairs and phone each other to pray.
- Choose a team leader to stay in touch with everyone. (Perhaps God is calling you to lead. It’s not hard, and we will help.)
- Baptist Women will regularly produce extra prayer resources and ideas.
- One help will be Prayer Network coordinators. Periodically, the Prayer Network coordinators will connect with prayer team leaders to answer any questions and offer support. They will be praying regularly for your team.

Our dream is to have a network of equipped women, discerning the leading of God and covering their communities in prayer.



HOW TO START

- 1) Give this booklet to your pastor and ask for their blessing.
- 2) Pray and talk to a number of women you know. They don't have to be part of a Baptist Women group. Make some general announcements in church to gather a group of women who want to pray in new ways.
- 3) Get together to organize:
 - Pray
 - Hand out copies of this booklet to all participants
 - Decide how often each person will pray.
 - Will you each pray once a week? Or on certain days? Or daily?
 - Begin a prayer list:
 - Write down the prayer team members.
 - Add your spiritual leaders and their families (e.g. pastor, pastor's wife, pastor's children, head of deacons/elders, other leaders).
 - Add a few requests for the team's family members.
 - Add needs in your neighbourhood.
 - Divide your list so each person has at least one spiritual leader, one family/family member, and one neighbourhood need to pray for.
 - Decide if you want to rotate praying through the church on Sundays (see **OPTIONAL GROUP ACTIVITIES**).
 - Remind each other of how essential it is to maintain confidentiality. Do not share anything without express permission. Do not hint or give anything away. Trust is very hard-won, but so easily broken.
 - Decide on a team leader. (You could have two people share the lead.)
 - See if there are any questions. Feel free to contact Renee James or the Network coordinators, if anything comes up you are unsure of.
 - Close by dividing into pairs to pray for each other.
 - Confirm how each woman will receive her list of prayer items.
 - Contact Renee James at rsejames@gmail.com to give us contact information for your group.

LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Set up and maintain list of prayer team members.
- Regularly contact your pastor for prayer requests.
- Communicate requests and answers to team (as long as they are not confidential).
- Stay in regular touch with team members to encourage them.
- Forward prayer resources from CBWOQ to team members.
- Pray for the team.
- Periodically invite new members—both personally and through public announcements in church.

TEAM MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Call the people you have been assigned.
 - Explain that you are part of a prayer team and would like to start praying regularly for them.
 - Ask if they have any specific requests for themselves or their family.
 - Ask which requests they would like you to share with the team leader or with the team, and which they would prefer you keep completely to yourself. Assure them that you are committed to keeping their confidences.
 - Offer to pray with them right then.
- Faithfully pray for their requests. You can also choose from the **BONUS IDEAS** below.
- Pray for the person above and below you on your prayer team list.
- Stay in touch with your team leader. Share requests and answers to prayer when you have permission.
- Share what you have been hearing from God with other team members as appropriate.

**For more information on how to share what you've been hearing from God with others,
see *Soul Sisters 2*.**

PRAYER PROMPTS

Now that you have the basics, here are optional extras you may want to try.

Church

Pray for the pastor(s) of your church.
Pray for the leaders of your church (you could include deacons, board, youth and kid's leaders, treasurer, AV people, and others).
Pray for upcoming events in the church.
Pray for unity, growth, ability to hear from God individually and discern as a group.

Family

Make a combined list of relatives not walking with God; divide it between your team.

Bless your community

Pray for jobs, businesses, your environment, needs around you, other churches and ministries.

Baptist Women

We would love to have you pray for us: pray for leaders, events, programs, finances, staff.

How to pray for your leaders*

Personal Needs:

Humility: a servant's heart, a teachable attitude, and reliance on God

Wisdom: Sensitive to the leading of God

Positive relationships

Fruit of the Spirit

Family needs:

That they would prioritize their family; spend enough time with them; minister to them

Ask God to provide for them.

Spiritual needs:

Time alone with God

Anointing by the Holy Spirit

Integrity: Leaders struggle with sin like everyone else.

Pray that they would walk in holiness.

Protection in spiritual warfare

How to pray for others*

Pray that they know God's will for their lives (Col 1:9).

Pray that they would do God's will in their lives (Col 1:10a).

Pray that their lives would be fruitful (Col 1:10b).

Pray that they would have a growing relationship with God (Col 1:10).

Pray that they would experience God's power in their lives (Col 1:11).

Praying for yourself*

Confession

Be sure to confess all sin as soon as the Spirit points it out. Don't wait until you are in church or even until your prayer time. Sin creates a barrier between you and God, making other prayers ineffective. Worse yet, when sin is tolerated it increases. Like a seed planted in the ground, it grows and spreads.

Meditation

Sometimes you may want to add a brief scripture reading to your prayer time. Read that over and ask God to show you what He wants you to see that day. Pay attention to any word or phrase that stands out.

"The step that helps bridge the gap between reading and acting is meditation, because it helps us understand Scripture and apply it to our lives." (Maxwell, 41)

Application Response

God may point out something he wants you to do in your prayer time. You can keep a notebook with you when you pray so you can jot that down. It could be someone he wants you to call, or to pray for, or to spend time with.

*Adapted from *Partners in Prayer*

John Maxwell, Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1996.

TRY DIFFERENT FORMS OF PRAYER

SILENCE AND LISTENING PRAYER

Intercession is also about listening to God.

It is good to begin a prayer time with a few minutes of silence. Invite the presence of God and then deliberately relax and slow down. Don't pray yet, just come to a full stop where you are able to hear His still small voice. This is especially important when we are under stress. It is almost impossible to hear God when we are angry or fearful. Instead of living in faith, we are tossed on the waves (James 1:6).

Perhaps a thought, verse, memory or picture will come to mind. If so, take time to consider if it could be God speaking to you. Remember, He always brings a good message. He never accuses (that part is played by someone else.) He never contradicts what He has already said in Scripture

Once you've fully connected with God, it's time to start interceding. Continue to be sensitive to God's leading while you pray. It is more effective to slowly and sensitively pray about fewer things than to just name a large number of people and requests.

“Prayer is not a matter of my calling in an attempt to get God's attention, but of my finally listening to the call of God. In relationship to God, I am not the initiator, the one who loves more greatly.”

(Selected excerpts from *Speech, Silence, Action!* By Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, quoted in *A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants*, 104.)

For more information

On silence, see *Soul Sisters 1*.

On hearing God, see live March/April 2019.

Our book list also includes *Whisper: How to Hear the Voice of God* by Mark Batterson, available at READOn bookstore and other outlets.

On listening prayer, see *live* May/June 2019.

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

As you begin praying for your assigned people, perhaps a **scripture will come to mind** that is a promise or speaks hope to their situation. Write that down and return to it regularly. Read it and use it to inspire prayer.

Scripture helps us pray big prayers for people. Instead of praying they have a good day, we pray that they would know the depth of God's love and be filled with His fullness (Ephesians 3:19). It protects us from slipping into criticism and instead inspires prayers of blessing. It helps us pray in faith because we know these requests are His will.

You can use prayers from Scripture (Paul often starts his letters that way), or Psalms. There are many passages in Isaiah from Chapter 40 onwards that could form beautiful prayers of blessing.

You can download a selection of prayer scriptures from baptistwomen.com/resources

EXTENDED WORSHIP

Sometimes it is good to spend time just praising God and not asking Him for anything. Go into a private space, put on some worship music and sing, pray, kneel, as you feel led. Close the curtains and dance if you feel called 😊

Baptist Women has a list of songs that relate our new theme **Chosen | Holy | Called . . . declaring the goodness of God**. It comes complete with YouTube links you can simply click on. Download the list at baptistwomen.com/resources.

OPTIONAL GROUP ACTIVITIES

You may want to periodically gather together as a prayer team. This is a great time to learn a new prayer form, spend time in worship, and pray for each other. Here are some sample group activities.

SESSION 1

Introduce praying in location.

Have one or more people arrive early at church. (You can set up a rotation if you want). Walk through the church, stopping to pray in strategic spots such as the sanctuary, Sunday School rooms, nursery, etc.

During the service, have the team spread out in the sanctuary. Pray for those leading and for the people sitting near you. Try sitting in a different spot each week.

SESSION 2

Pray for other churches nearby.

Make a list of churches near you. Divide the names and pray for them while you are together. Find out the name of the pastor(s) for the church you are covering.

During the week, call the pastors of those other churches, explain your group is praying for other churches in the city, and ask for prayer requests. (Each person could take one pastor.) Ask if the requests are for you alone or if they would like you to share them with the rest of the prayer team.

SESSION 3

Pray for your neighbourhood 1.

Make a list of different social services/helping agencies in your community.

Make a list of what other churches are already doing in your community. Do you notice any gaps? Are there any needs or groups of people that are being missed or underserved?

Divide into pairs and pray for the people and organizations already helping your community.

SESSION 4

Pray for your neighbourhood 2.

Make a diagram of the streets around your church and mark the businesses and services there. Then pray for them.

Walk or drive around your neighbourhood. Each group of women or each carload can take a different direction. Frequently stop (when it is safe to do so) and pray blessings for the people living there, and for the businesses.

For more information on prayer walking:

- See *live* May/June 2019
- See the *Prayer Walking Guide*
- Look for additional reading materials at baptistwomen.com/resources

3 tips when doing a prayer walk or drive

1. Your group needs a degree of unity in the belief that God can, and will, bless people you've never met . . . through your prayers.

2. Be observant to every detail as you walk slowly through the neighbourhood: houses, toys in the yard, the number of cars parked outside, government agencies, community centres. Ask the Lord to give you imagination beyond what is in your immediate visual field.

3. At the end of the walk, after you have asked the Lord to bless the community in which you've walked with salvation and for people to become disciples of Jesus, take time to write down all the ideas that come to you.

Our thanks to Cathie Phillips of Heron Park Baptist for these ideas.

OPTIONAL GROUP ACTIVITIES

PRAYER SUNDAY

- First, find team members who want to commit to extra prayer for one week.
- Ask your pastor's permission to have a prayer request Sunday.
- Set up a prayer request box in the sanctuary before the service.
- That Sunday, give people a slip of paper as they enter the sanctuary. Invite them to write a prayer request (anonymous or not) to drop in the box after the service.
 - The team leader gathers the requests afterwards and divides them between those who are going to pray.
 - Cover those requests each day that week.
 - Optional: If the person included their name, call and thank them for putting in their request. Ask how the week has gone. Offer to pray with them.

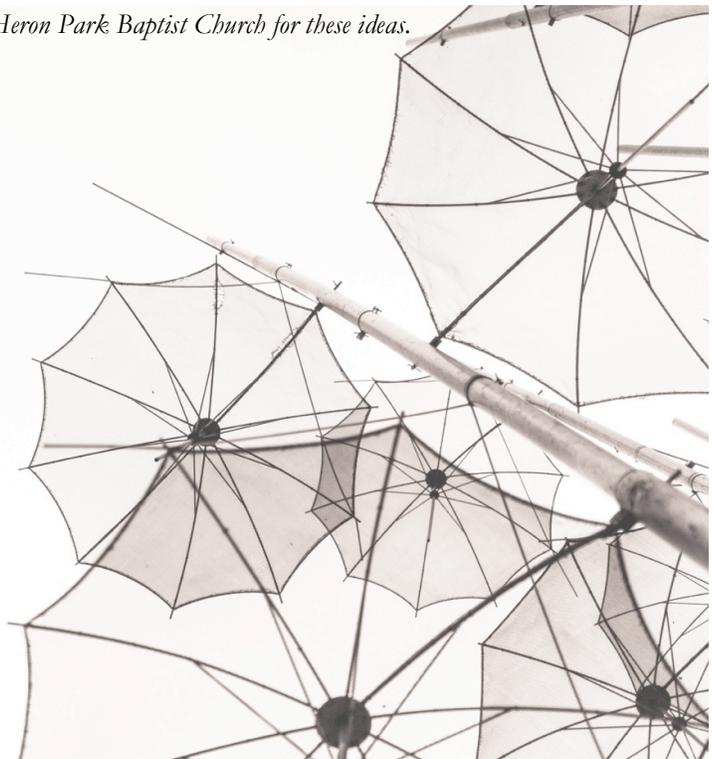
FOR ADDITIONAL PRAYER SUNDAYS

Have a temporary team of Men, Youth, Young Adults be the intercessors

- Ask the pastor's permission, and then announce in advance that you would like to have the next Prayer Sunday covered by men (or youth, deacons, Sunday School teachers, Bible Study groups, etc.).
- Recruit volunteers in advance, create a members list, and give them a copy of Team Member Responsibilities (from this booklet).
- On the appointed Sunday follow the steps for a Prayer Sunday but divide the requests between the volunteers.

IMPORTANT: Have the regular prayer team members cover the volunteers in prayer. Have regular team members phone the volunteers towards the beginning of the week to thank them and explain that team members cover each other in prayer, so you are praying for them this week.

Our thanks to Kay Derby from Heron Park Baptist Church for these ideas.



HOW TO SET UP AN INTERCESSORY PRAYER TEAM FOR AN EVENT

As the team grows in praying for others, with others, you may want to come together to pray on location for an event . . . while that event takes place. This is a great opportunity to spend extended time together in worship and focused prayer.

BEFORE THE EVENT

Ask the team to pray and discern whether to offer intercessory prayer at the event or not.

If the answer is yes, approach event leadership to see if they would like to have a prayer team on site. If their answer is positive then:

Meet with event leadership and decide:

- Who will be the leader of the prayer team?
- Where will you pray? If possible, have a dedicated space that is fairly quiet.
- Will you also spread out during sessions? How will you stay in touch with each other?
- Ask leadership for specific prayer requests. Invite them to continue forwarding requests as they come up (even during the event).

Discern who could be part of the prayer team. Invite them and explain expectations.

EVENT DAY

- Walk and pray through the event venue before people arrive, specifically the rooms where plenary sessions, worship and breakout sessions will happen.
- Pray! The leader can begin with scripture, or the theme of the event, or something worship-related to begin the team's time of prayer.
- Give people the freedom to be themselves. Some may be silent the whole time – but they're great listeners. Others will find Scripture immediately. Don't be afraid of silence.
- Ask periodically: What are you sensing from God? Pray accordingly.

Our thanks to Barb Boyt for these ideas on praying for an event.

STAY RESOURCED!

- 1) There are free resources on prayer, fasting, how to set up an interactive prayer room and more at baptistwoemn.com/resources. We will add resources throughout the year.
- 2) We want to network different groups together for training and support. Please send u contact information for your group to Renee James at rsejames@gmail.com.

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”

(Ephesians 3: 20, 21, NIV)

