

*Pray for Columbus*



# 40 Days of Citywide Prayer

**2016 Prayer Devotional**

Week 1: October 3 - October 9, 2016

[PrayForColumbus.org](http://PrayForColumbus.org)  
*a Catalyst Initiative*

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40 DAYS OF CITYWIDE PRAYER

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## Welcome Letter

Dear Praying Friends,

We invite you to join us for a special season of prayer for our city beginning Monday, October 3rd. Each week, we'll focus on a particular region of the city with devotionals authored by leadership from that region. Sent as daily devotionals, we focus our prayers on the topics of salvation, community, discipleship and transformation.

The city of Columbus is in desperate need of God's intervention! Our condition is truly beyond human remedy. Jesus Himself often asserted that He could do nothing of His own accord (John 5:19,30; 8:28; 12:49). As we pray, we humbly acknowledge this truth. Looking to our Redeemer and Deliverer, the Lord God Almighty, we are reminded that He is the mighty warrior who saves, (Zephaniah 3:17) blessed are all who trust in Him (Jeremiah 17:7).

We can take encouragement from the assurance that "the prayers of the righteous avail much." (James 5:16). Along with our fervent prayers, we are assured that there is tremendous power in agreement. This season of city-wide prayer provides us the opportunity to agree in prayer with our brothers and sisters in Christ across Columbus. In Matthew 18:19 we read "Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven."

On behalf of Pray for Columbus and the more than 30 pastors and ministry leaders represented in the devotionals, we invite you to pray with us for our city, for the lost, for unity in the body of Christ, for ministries that serve the most vulnerable, for discipleship, and for radical transformation in Columbus that can only be explained by the hand of God answering the humble prayers of His saints.

Thank you for partnering with us in prayer for our city! We joyfully anticipate with you the fruit of our prayers. To God be the glory!

With grateful hearts,

*Your Friends at Pray for Columbus*



**salvation**



**community**



**discipleship**



**transformation**

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*“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to every-one who believes...”*

Romans 1:16, NIV

A 2014 National Science Foundation study reported that 1 out of 4 Americans are lonely. A quarter of our population feels they have no one with whom they can talk to about personal troubles or triumphs. Also in 2014, the Barna Group disclosed that our young adults are looking for connection, relevancy and authenticity in our churches. They want to encounter real people, who will transparently share how they’re applying God’s Word to real problems. These reports reveal the human condition here in Columbus as well. People are searching for meaningful relationships, a place to belong and a sense of community.

As believers, we have the answers they seek. Paul writes, “He has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.” (2 Corinthians 5:19,20)

We know the cure for loneliness. In fact, we have the cure for all that ails humanity. We possess the ultimate connection with the Creator, Sustainer and Ruler of the universe. We know who we are and whose we are and yet we often keep it to ourselves. We shy away from sharing the gospel, God’s message of salvation, because it may result in tension, or even worse, rejection. Our flesh convinces us to avoid uncomfortable situations that make us vulnerable. But so many around us are just hoping that someone will risk being vulnerable to connect with them.

As believers, we can introduce them to Jesus, the Lamb of God, who knows them fully and loves them unconditionally. What a privilege! The man sitting next to you on the bus, the grocery store clerk, even your co-worker may be searching for connection, relevancy and authenticity. Are we willing to extend ourselves to find out? Will we risk our comfort and introduce the lost and lonely around us to Jesus?

If every one out of four people is longing for connection, chances are you will encounter someone today who is searching for a real person willing to share how God’s Word applies to real problems. He sent you, His ambassador, in their path.



*Father, open our eyes to the hurting, lonely world around us. Give us your words of truth and life to share freely with others. Let us love those you place in our path today. May transparency and honesty be our companions. Don’t let us be comfortable with keeping Jesus to ourselves. Expand our love for you and for the world so we risk being comfortable to be your ambassadors.*

**DAY 1: October 3, 2016**

## Prayer Focus: salvation



## Prayer Region: downtown

- Pray for church partners for **Arts Impact Middle School and Betty Park Elementary**
- Pray for Christ-followers to boldly proclaim the gospel. (Romans 1:16)
- Ask the Holy Spirit to draw unbelievers to the Father.
- Pray for the lost to receive Christ

### Featured Contributor:

**Christine Mallory** is the wife of Scott and mother of three young men. She is a Teaching Leader for a Columbus women’s class of the global ministry Bible Study Fellowship.

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*"Then he said to me, 'Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words.'" Daniel 10:12, ESV*

There are times when risk seems beyond dumb. The easy way looks to be less messy and without any unnecessary roadblocks. But, what is faith without risk? I mean, what would be the need? If we don't risk our vulnerability, we risk never meeting Christ as who He really is.. To meet him requires faith. It takes risk to penetrate our pride and move toward Him in faith.

I left a cushy ministry job with no plan. None. Married with four kids. Big risk. As time progressed God revealed a plan. Make coffee, save lives. Leverage what people love; coffee. A coffee shop. Then with love build a community to gather around saving the lives of people suffering from hunger, unclean water, and enslavement. That was the idea. But, hour after hour, day after day, month after month, it just seemed too big. Was God really in this?

"Fear not, Kenny, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words."

The byproduct of having the faith to risk is God's faithfulness. It is when The Lord spoke this verse to me that he affirmed that the coffee shop would build community. It would unify all walks of life. And lives would be saved. Fear not.....



*Lord, help us to have faith to risk. Help us to be confident that in those moments you are leading us to a plan greater than ourselves. Cast away our doubts so we don't lose sight of your faithfulness along the way. Amen.*

**DAY 2:** October 4, 2016

## Prayer Focus: **community**



## Prayer Region: **downtown**

- Pray for a church partner for **Columbus Africentric Early College K-8, Columbus City Preparatory School for Girls, Columbus Downtown High School and East Columbus Elementary School**
- Pray for pastors in the Downtown area

### Featured Contributor:

**Kenny Sipes** was a youth pastor at Jersey Baptist Church for ten years. He left in 2013 to launch a non-profit social enterprise coffee shop. The Roosevelt Coffee-house opened its' doors in 2015 to fight the injustices of hunger, unclean water, and human trafficking. He is husband to Lori and father to four children.

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*“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*

Ephesians 2:10, NIV

During the church business meeting, the pastor appealed to the congregation for a volunteer to paint the front wall of the sanctuary. Bob, the big-hearted deacon on the front row, volunteered. The congregation applauded Bob’s generous gift of his time. Bob began work immediately and gave the project his all.

Two years later, exhausted and embarrassed that he was unable to finish the job, Bob resigned as deacon and left the church. The congregation was upset at the lack of progress on the project and also had become distracted from its calling.

Often, lack of unity is caused by a misunderstanding of our gifting and calling. You see, Bob was an artist and he used small paint brushes, while Jim, who sat on the back row quiet and disengaged, was a paintroller. What could have been accomplished for the Kingdom if all involved had understood Bob’s and Jim’s gifting and worked toward alignment with their unique spiritual calling?

Each of us should be committed to understanding his or her God-given Ephesians 2:10 purpose, accelerating (walking) in it and fully experiencing the abundant John 10:10 life that Jesus wants for each of us. As we disciple, let us be committed to helping those we are discipling to understand the complex intermingling of spiritual gifts, strengths, life experience and work experience which constitute the unique spiritual DNA God has given each of us.

What would happen if every roller rolled and every artist put on the finishing touches? What if we “walked” in God’s pre-ordained good works under His power instead of trying to go it alone in our will, under our power? I believe that our City could be transformed for Christ if we each understand and operate within our “sweet spot”. Joyful living is the natural outpouring of a life lived within God’s will and under His power. Disciple with this intention. Be disciplined with spiritual eyes and ears open to the leading of the Holy Spirit so that you might “stir up the gift of God which is in you”.

The result will be Christians who will be very attractive to those who do not know our Jesus. Let’s be committed to intentionally raising up a generation of disciples who can succinctly answer the questions: “Who am I?”, “Why do I live?”, and “How do I live?”

*Holy Father, give us holy ambition. Make us ambitious for Your agenda and Your glory. Use us to bring hope and life and relief from suffering. Throughout this journey do a deep work within our hearts. Sanctify us. Grant us pure motives. Help us to align ourselves with our God ordained Ephesians 2:10 purposes. Grant us disciples with whom our hearts will easily be knit. We ask for supernatural understanding of Your gifting, so that we may live and disciple exactly as You planned when you knit us together.*



DAY 3: October 5, 2016

## Prayer Focus: discipleship



## Prayer Region: downtown

- Pray for church partners for: **Forest Park Elementary, Fort Hayes Arts & Academic High School, Fort Hayes Career Center, Lincoln Park Elementary and Livingston Elementary School**
- Pray for every new believer to have someone to disciple them

### Featured Contributor:

**Sam Koon** is a marketplace missionary, working in the real estate appraisal, consulting and brokerage fields. He is a lay leader at Jersey Baptist Church and he facilitates PrimeMovers groups. He enjoys discipling tomorrow’s leaders. Sam is husband to Sharon and father to four adult children.

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*“From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.” Acts 17:26, NIV*

The apostle Paul declares to the Athenians in Acts 17:26 that; our geographical locations have divine origin, purpose and limitations or boundaries. With this in mind, our ministry location, regardless of the community’s profile is a divine placement with divine purpose.

It has been said that urban ministry is done incarnationally. The ultimate model is God enclosing Himself in humanity through the Virgin Mary in the birth of Jesus Christ. He is called Immanuel “God with us- incarnated.” It conveys the idea that we are not interested in communicating the gospel message “just standing outside,” but being the gospel, becoming part of the community through interaction. Using a military expression, by becoming “boots on the ground.” Being active in the communities we’re placed to serve. We earn people’s trust by being present to serve for the long-term and not abandon them when things get difficult. We don’t leave when the communities experience social hiccups and disturbing bumps.

Lets pray and thank God for our locations and ask Him to help us become incarnational, refreshed and energized to be the gospel and serve where we are. Take great pride wherever God has assigned you.



*Lord, we confess that many times we do not see our locations and communities as a divine assignment with purpose. We repent of our short sightedness. Renew our vision of your assignment for us and revitalize the sense of its divine purpose. Make us the incarnated gospel to our communities for your global purpose.  
Amen*

**DAY 4:** October 6, 2016

## Prayer Focus: **transformation**



## Prayer Region: **downtown**

- Pray for church partnerships with **Siebert Elementary** and **Oakmont Elementary School**

### Featured Contributor:

**Dr. Jerry Fryar** is the Senior Pastor and Founder of Gospel Lighthouse Church, a non-denominational ministry with a focus on reaching people from all walks of life with the message of “Restoration.” Dr. Fryar is also President and Founder of the Gospel Lighthouse School of Ministry. He and his wife Melvina are the proud parents of Delendo and Regina and have four grandsons and six great grandchildren.

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*“He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many.” 2 Corinthians 1:10-11, NIV*

My unbelieving friends often ask others to “send good thoughts their way” when needs arise. Every time I hear it, I feel my eyes involuntarily roll back at that common-but-stubborn approach at blindly seeking mysterious help and support without admitting hope in prayer.

But, the truth is, much of my praying life has felt like my prayers for people really have the same effect as “sending good thoughts their way”. Deep within, I have valued the exercise for ability to say “I care for you and am thinking about you” by mentioning my prayer for them.

In these past years God has been kind to correct my thinking and belief about this. He has assured me of His Fatherly love for me because I have been made into a son by the Son. He loves me with the same love with which He loves Jesus (John 17:23). It is such a strong statement. I still cringe in saying it. It just seems like too much love and attention!

Because I am loved now by my Father and He has put His Spirit in me to guide my heart and mind into what to pray now (Romans 8), something powerful has happened. What I ask rightly in prayer is amazingly meaningful to the Father. He hears it. He understands it. He feels the issue and need more strongly than we feel it. My prayers matter. As His sons and daughters, all of our prayers really matter!

Consider how the Spirit made Paul to see the place of “little Christian’s” prayers in his ministry.

“I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf,” (Romans 15:30)

“You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.”(2 Corinthians 1:11)

“for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance,”(Philippians 1:19)



***Father, thank you for hearing and answering prayer. Correct our thinking and belief about prayer. Increase our faith to pray with expectancy and with perseverance. Raise up a mighty army of intercessors all accross Columbus who know their identity as sons and daughters of God. Help us to pray faithfully by the power of Your Holy Spirit.***

**DAY 5: October 7, 2016**

Prayer Focus:  
**prayer**



Prayer Region:  
**downtown**

- Pray for partnerships with **Southwood Elementary, Starling STEM PK-8, East Linden Elementary and Sullivant Elementary**
- Ask God to mobilize a prayer army all across Columbus

### **Featured Contributor:**

**Scott Burns** is one of the planting pastors of Cross City Church in German Village. His core passion is loving God and helping others live gospel centered lives as spiritual families of missionaries who make disciples who make disciples.