

**A Simple Rhythm for
the Easter Season**

EASTER

for everyone

MARCH 8 - APRIL 30

THIS EASTER, we are celebrating Jesus' invitation to start again. Starting again could look like placing one's faith in Jesus for the very first time, repenting of sin, or coming to a new understanding of what it means to follow Jesus.

Following Jesus requires us to lift our gaze from ourselves to those around us. One way we can "start again" this Easter is by discovering (or rediscovering) God's plan for us to intentionally engage with those around us. This is a season to open ourselves to God and to open our lives to others.

In this season, we want to prioritize intentionally connecting with others. Specifically, we are inviting you to create space to include those in your life who don't yet know Jesus. It might look like a dinner, a coffee conversation, a walk, a game night, or a willingness to simply linger in conversation.

Connecting is about shared joy, presence, and gratitude. It could involve food, but it doesn't have to. Remember, God delights in joy, meals, and relationships, and He created us to delight in these things, too.





FAST
WEEKLY



PRAY
DAILY



INVITE
NATURALLY



CONNECT
INTENTIONALLY

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

START WITH THE *PLAN YOUR RHYTHM* SECTION.

Use it to build a simple, intentional plan for how you will participate this season. You'll find a section for Individuals and Couples that can be used by anyone and a section for Kids and Families designed to help you engage children who are still in your home.

MOVE TO THE *CHALLENGES TO CONSIDER* SECTION.

Choose a suggested challenge — or create your own for this season. What commitment is God inviting you to make? Consider involving friends or family in your choice and inviting them to provide support and accountability.

LOOK AHEAD WITH THE *NEXT STEPS* SECTION.

Begin to imagine how faithfulness in this season could lead to continued faithfulness after Easter. Consider taking one additional step of connection before the end of April.

RETURN REGULARLY TO THE *WEEKLY PRAYER GUIDE*.

Let it shape and focus your prayers throughout the season. We will also use these prompts during our Friday morning prayer gatherings at 6:30 AM in the Chapel (March 13, 20, 27, and April 3).

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PLAN YOUR RHYTHM

Fast to open yourself to God. **Pray** to open your heart to hear and respond. **Invite** to open your calendar to others. **Connect** to open yourself and your home to others.

Trust that God is at work in each.



PLAN YOUR RHYTHM

FAST WEEKLY

Each week, choose one simple fast. The purpose of fasting is to create space for prayer, open yourself to God, grow in dependence on God, and focus your heart on praying for others.

INDIVIDUALS AND COUPLES

- Skip one meal.
- Fast from sweets or snacks.
- Cook at home instead of eating out.
- Take a break from social media or TV.

KIDS AND FAMILIES

- Fast from dessert one night each week.
- Fast from a favorite snack for the week.
- Fast from screens (including phones) for an evening each week. (Mom and Dad, this means you, too!)
- Fast from digital background noise (music, podcasts, TV, etc.).

The purpose of fasting is to create space for prayer, open yourself to God, grow in dependence on God, and focus your heart on praying for others.



PLAN YOUR RHYTHM

PRAY DAILY

Each day, set aside intentional time to lift specific people before God. Let the Weekly Prayer Guide anchor your prayers and create space throughout the week to pay attention to the ways God is prompting you to reach out.

INDIVIDUALS AND COUPLES

- Pray for one person or family in your life.
- Pray for opportunities for meaningful conversation.
- Pray for someone who needs encouragement.
- Pray for a chance and the courage to invite a friend or neighbor to a connection opportunity (See ideas on page 10.)

KIDS AND FAMILIES

- Pray at a time when your family is naturally gathered together (meal time, car time, bedtime, etc.).
- Pray for a friend at school.
- Pray for a neighbor.

List five people who you want to experience Jesus the way you have. Need a place to start? Look through your phone or social media contacts.

Jesus often stepped away from the 99 (His community of followers) to pursue relationships with the “ones” (those who didn’t yet know Him).



PLAN YOUR RHYTHM INVITE NATURALLY

Throughout the month, look for a natural opportunity to invite someone to connect. The goal is not a presentation or impressing others. The goal is presence and conversation.

INDIVIDUALS AND COUPLES

- “We’re having a few people over for dinner—want to come?”
- “Want to grab coffee this week?”
- “Join us for pizza night on Friday.”
- “Do you have plans for Easter? Would you be interested in joining me?”

KIDS AND FAMILIES

Let kids help invite:

- A friend from school.
- A neighbor.
- Another family.
- A teammate.
- A family member.
- A coworker.

Clear three events from your calendar to make space for others.



PLAN YOUR RHYTHM

CONNECT INTENTIONALLY

Throughout the month, intentionally create space to be with others. You can plan multiple points of engagement or you can plan one intentional meal or experience. Think specifically about how to include those for whom you are praying. Consider partnering with others who have different gifts; connection is not a solo sport.

INDIVIDUALS AND COUPLES

Connection can look like:

- Dinner at home
- Coffee or dessert
- Lunch at work
- A walk around the neighborhood
- A game night
- An intentional conversation

Good questions for connection

Try moving beyond small talk. Ask one or two of the following:

- What's something that brought you joy this week?
- What are you looking forward to?
- What would you like to see change in your life over the next eighteen months?
- What's been challenging for you lately?
- What's something you're grateful for?

KIDS AND FAMILIES

Plan a simple, fun meal or connection opportunity:

- Taco night, breakfast for dinner, or pizza night
- Ice cream outing
- Game night or movie night
- Easter egg hunt for your neighborhood
- Easter basket or care package for a new neighbor, a shut-in, or someone in a care facility
- Play date
- Kids playing together while parents talk

Family meal ideas

- Have everyone share one thing they're grateful for.
- Let kids choose the menu or dessert.
- Let kids help cook, set the table, or serve the meal.
- Play a simple game after the meal (matching game, Uno, or one of your other favorite games).
- Let kids ask the guests questions.
Scan this QR code for a list of questions.



The goal is not a formal meal. The goal is to share joyful, intentional presence.

CHALLENGES TO CONSIDER

The following challenges represent creative ways to engage with those for whom you're praying. Choose one or more that feel right for you or your family.

Need help or resources for a specific challenge? Let us know by scanning this code.



CHALLENGE 1: BEGINNER

BE INTENTIONAL TO BE PRESENT

OPTION A: YARD TO STREET INDIVIDUAL OR COUPLE

GOAL: Learn a neighbor's or coworker's name and begin praying for them daily.

WHO IT'S FOR: Anyone who doesn't currently have a "one" they are praying for.

HOW TO BEGIN:

- Take a short prayer walk around your neighborhood or workplace.
- Learn the name of at least one neighbor or coworker.
- Start praying for them each day.
- (Optional) Place an "Easter at Crossroads" yard sign as a simple, visible invitation.

OPTION B: FAMILY PRAYER WALK FAMILY WITH KIDS

GOAL: Help your family notice and pray for the people around you.

WHO IT'S FOR: Families who want to take a simple first step together.

HOW TO BEGIN:

- Take a short walk as a family around your block or a local park.
- Learn or remember the names of neighbors, classmates, or teammates.
- Let each family member choose one person to pray for during the Easter season.
- Pray together at meals or bedtime for the people around you.

CHALLENGE 2: INTERMEDIATE

MAKE TIME & SPACE TO ENGAGE WITH SOMEONE

OPTION A: COFFEE OR MEAL WITH YOUR "ONE" INDIVIDUAL OR COUPLE

GOAL: Share a meal or coffee with someone to deepen your relationship.

WHO IT'S FOR: Anyone who already has a "one" they want to know better.

HOW TO BEGIN:

- Set a time for coffee, lunch, or dinner.
- Prepare 1-3 meaningful questions you'd be willing to answer yourself.
- Focus on listening and learning, not fixing or persuading.
- Pray for them before and after your time together.
- Intentionally follow up thanking them for the time together.

OPTION B: FAMILY TABLE NIGHT FAMILY WITH KIDS



GOAL: Invite another family or individual into your home or out for a meal.

WHO IT'S FOR: Families ready to share time and space with others.

HOW TO BEGIN:

- Choose a simple, low-pressure meal (pizza, tacos, breakfast, etc.).
- Invite a neighbor, classmate's family, or teammate.
- Keep the focus on fun, conversation, and connection.
(Scan QR code for a list of questions!)
- Pray together as a family before or after the gathering.

CHALLENGE 3: INTERMEDIATE

EXTEND A PERSONAL INVITATION

OPTION A: SIT-WITH-ME INVITATION INDIVIDUAL OR COUPLE

GOAL: Invite your “one” to sit with you on Easter Sunday.

WHO IT’S FOR: Anyone who has begun building a relationship with a “one.”

HOW TO BEGIN:

- Pray for them specifically.
- Personally invite them to sit with you.
- Make a plan: meet in the parking lot, at the entrance, or pick them up.
- Sit together during the service.
- Include them in a simple meal, dessert, or activity afterward.
- Follow up with a thank-you note or message.

OPTION B: EASTER TOGETHER FAMILY WITH KIDS



GOAL: Experience Easter with another family or individual.

WHO IT’S FOR: Families ready to include others in their Easter plans.

HOW TO BEGIN:

- Pray for them specifically.
- Invite someone to attend Easter with your family.
- Make a plan: meet in the parking lot, at the entrance, or pick them up.
- Use the QR code to help them pre-register their kids.
- Sit together during the service.
- Include them in a simple meal, dessert, or activity afterward.
- Let your kids help welcome and include their guests.
- Follow up with a thank-you note or message.

CHALLENGE 4: ADVANCED

CREATE SPACE FOR COMMUNITY

OPTION A: HOST A MEAL INDIVIDUAL OR COUPLE

GOAL: Gather a mix of friends—some who follow Jesus and some who don't.

WHO IT'S FOR: Anyone ready to host a small gathering.

HOW TO BEGIN:

- Choose a simple meal and set a date.
- Invite a small, diverse group of people.
- Keep the environment relaxed and welcoming.
- Look for natural opportunities to follow up after the meal.
- Pray for each guest before and after the gathering.

OPTION B: NEIGHBORHOOD OR TEAM GATHERING FAMILY WITH KIDS

GOAL: Create a fun, welcoming event for a group of families.

WHO IT'S FOR: Families who want to engage a broader circle.

HOW TO BEGIN:

- Host an Easter egg hunt, park play date, dessert night, cookout, or team party.
- Invite neighbors, classmates, or teammates.
- Keep it simple and joyful.
- Look for natural opportunities to follow up after the event.
- Pray for each guest before and after the gathering.

NEXT STEP

The goal of this season isn't a full Worship Center on Easter Sunday; it's deeper relationships and open doors for honest, faith-centered conversations. What's an intentional next step you could take by April 30 to continue growing a relationship?

NEXT STEPS FOR ANYONE

CONTINUE THE RHYTHM:

FAST → PRAY → CONNECT → INVITE.

What will it look like to keep living in this rhythm? Think about what needs to happen for you to continue engaging with the people around you. Consider what practices help you stay open to God and others. This doesn't have to be complicated; just take the next step.

INVITE YOUR “ONE(S)” TO LEARN WITH YOU.

The 4-week Wednesday night class, *Winning the War in Your Mind*, begins Wednesday, April 8, 6:00-7:30 PM. A meal and childcare are provided. Make it easy by offering to register together.



INVITE YOUR “ONE(S)” TO SERVE ALONGSIDE YOU.

The upcoming “Love Our City” opportunity is Saturday, April 25. Serving together creates natural space for meaningful conversation.



INVITE YOUR “ONE(S)” TO SIT WITH YOU.

The next sermon series, *What Are You Thinking?*, begins Sunday, April 12. Let those who come know you're interested in what they think. Schedule lunch or coffee to talk about what they heard.

Intentionally put your next step on your April calendar!

NEXT STEPS

FOR “ONE(S)” WITH KIDS

INVITE YOUR “ONE(S)” TO CAMP ALIVE.

Consider inviting their family to attend Camp Alive, June 1-5. After dropping off the kids, meet at a coffee shop for intentional conversation. You can also serve at Camp Alive. Your presence may help them feel more comfortable having their kids attend.



INVITE YOUR “ONE(S)” TO SIT WITH YOU.

The upcoming sermon series for families, *A Family that _____*, begins Sunday, May 10. This series will highlight spiritual practices and simple action steps for families to experience together.

Continue to invite families to future events and opportunities to become more biblically-rooted and resilient.

WEEKLY PRAYER GUIDE

We will gather each Friday at 6:30 AM in the Chapel (March 13, 20, 27, and April 3), to reflect on scripture and pray for the people God has placed on our hearts.

WEEK 1

MARCH 8-14

LUKE 14:1, 7, 12-24

One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully watched.

When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable:

...“When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, “Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God.”

Jesus replied: “A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’

“But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, ‘I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.’

“Another said, ‘I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I’m on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.’

“Still another said, ‘I just got married, so I can’t come.’

“The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.’

“‘Sir,’ the servant said, ‘what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.’

“Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full. I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.’”

REFLECT

While eating with the Pharisees, Jesus noticed that they were very concerned with their status as righteous and religious people who (they thought) would surely have an honored place at the celebration feast in the kingdom of God because of how well they followed the religious law. Jesus told this parable to show them that the kingdom of God is for people they were excluding (the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind). The kingdom of God is for anyone who chooses to follow Jesus and place their trust in Him, regardless of their social status. Our hospitality on earth is a mirror of the feast in the kingdom of God—a feast marked by joy, delight, and abundance.

PRAY

LISTEN AND CONFESS: Ask God, “Are there any excuses that are keeping me from experiencing Your delight and abundance right now in my life?” Pause to listen, paying attention to anything that comes to mind. Remember, the Holy Spirit speaks in conviction (showing a way to restoration) not condemnation (feeling that your identity is bad and there is no hope). Confess anything that comes to mind and receive God’s forgiveness. You can say, “Father God, please forgive me for _____. I don’t want to miss out on Your delight and abundance! Thank You for Your promise to forgive us. I receive Your forgiveness! Please let me experience Your joy, delight, and abundance now!”

LISTEN: Ask God, “Is there anyone who isn’t currently at my table or in my life whom You would like me to include?” Pause to listen for a few moments. Note anyone who comes to mind.

ASK: Pray for the church to beautifully reflect the kingdom of God in how it includes both those who are religious and those who are on the margins. Pray that this would be true in your home, at Crossroads, and in every church in our community, country, and globally.

WEEK 2

MARCH 15-21

MATTHEW 13:1-9, 18-23

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. Then he told them many things in parables, saying:

“A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear.”

“Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

REFLECT

This parable describes the different ways people responded to Jesus when He was on earth, and the ways people still respond today. While there are still people who reject Jesus or fall away, we can use the parable of the four soils to guide our prayers for the people we are praying for who do not know Jesus yet.

PRAY

THANKSGIVING: Reflect on all the ways God's word has made a difference in your life, both the written word and other ways God has spoken to you (through other believers, the Holy Spirit, creation, dreams, etc). Spend a few moments thanking God for the gift of His word and the difference it has made in your life.

SEED ALONG THE PATH (has the word snatched away by the evil one)

ASK: God, please protect Your word sown into the hearts of _____. Please open their hearts and minds to understand Your word.

SEED ON ROCKY PLACE (receives the word with joy, but has no root)

MEDITATE AND ASK: Think about what helps our spiritual roots grow deep, even in the midst of trouble and persecution. Are there any verses or Bible stories that you can think of that instruct us in how to persevere in trouble? Pray that these things would be present in your friend's life to help them learn to follow Jesus in joy and not fall away.

SEED AMONG THORNS (hears the word, but worry and wealth keep it from bearing fruit)

ASK: Think about the opposites of the worries of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth (thankfulness, trust, contentment, generosity, etc.). Pray that these good things would be present in your friend's life. Pray that they would receive God's word and grow to bear fruit.

SEED ON GOOD SOIL (hears the word and understands it)

ASK: Pray for your friend to have good soil; to hear God's word and understand it. Pray that they would produce a good crop, even producing a crop that will sow into others' lives in the future!

WEEK 3

MARCH 22-28

PSALM 67

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us—so that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations.

May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you. May the nations be glad and sing for

joy, for you rule the peoples with equity and guide the nations of the earth. May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you. The land yields its harvest; God, our God, blesses us. May God bless us still, so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.

REFLECT

It's easy to enjoy the good things God has given us as if they are gifts just for us. But Scripture shows us that God's blessings to us are also ways that He reveals Himself to people who do not know Him yet.

PRAY

THANKSGIVING: Consider the blessings God has given you in your life right now, being as specific as possible. Spend a few moments thanking God for these things.

LISTEN: Ask God, "How can these blessings You've given me help others connect with You?" Pause for a few moments and note anything that comes to mind.

ASK: Pray for the opportunity, courage, direction, etc. to allow God's blessings in your life to bless others, connecting them to God. Pray for people around you to know God and come to praise Him because of the blessings you've received and shared.

WEEK 4

MARCH 29-APRIL 4
ACTS 26:17-18

'I am sending you... to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

REFLECT

When Jesus met Paul on the road to Damascus, he told him, "I am sending you to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light..."

PRAY

LISTEN: Think about the person or people you've been praying for over the past few weeks. What might be blinding their eyes, preventing them from seeing the truth about Jesus? Ask God, "What may be obscuring their vision and keeping them in darkness?" Pause for a few moments and note anything that comes to mind.

IMAGINE AND ASK: Ask God to open the eyes of the person or people you're praying for. Picture those blinders coming off and light flooding in. Ask Jesus to reveal Himself as Truth and Light. Ask Jesus to soften their hearts to receive forgiveness and place their faith in Him.

LISTEN AND ASK: Ask God, "Is there any part You want me to play in opening their eyes and bringing light?" It might be explaining scripture, honoring their questions, performing an act of kindness, extending an invitation to connect, or something else. Pause to listen to what God might be saying, then ask Him to give you the opportunity and courage to follow through.

SHORT ON TIME?

EASY WAYS TO ENGAGE

1. GATHER ON FRIDAYS

Gather with others each Friday at 6:30 AM in the Chapel for Scripture and prayer (March 13, 20, 27, and April 3).

2. PRAY DAILY

Take time each day to lift specific people before God.

3. FAST WEEKLY

Choose a simple way to fast during this season.

4. HAVE ONE MEANINGFUL CONVERSATION

Ask a deeper question and share part of your story.

5. CONNECT AFTER EASTER

Take one next step in April to help deepen a relationship.



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