

BLESS Austin
PASTORS' GUIDE



TABLE OF CONTENTS

2

A WORD FOR
PASTORS

3

OVERVIEW

4

BLESS STRATEGY

5

STEPS TO
IMPLEMENT

7

APP & DASHBOARD

8

RESOURCES

15

PARTNERS



DEAR PASTOR:

Every one of the 2.2 million people in Greater Austin was created by God in His image and has a story, a purpose, and a destiny. Jesus loves them, died for them, and calls them by name. He wants us to care about them enough to get to know them and pray for them by name.

Our vision is daunting—pray for every person in Greater Austin by name, care for them, and share Jesus with them—but it's also doable. Every believer, young and old, can take a few minutes a day and pray by name for five neighbors, friends, family members, classmates, coworkers, or teammates.

Our strategy is simple. Pray for 5 people and **BLESS** 5 people. **BLESS** stands for: **B**egin with prayer, **L**isten to them, **E**at with them, **S**erve them, and **S**hare Jesus with them. This is a simple, doable, and scalable strategy to change our city.

Let's unite together to mobilize believers to **BLESS** and transform our city.

In Christ,

Tim Hawks, John Burke, Trey Kent, and Brian Alarid



BLESS AUSTIN OVERVIEW

OUR VISION

Our vision is to pray for every person in Greater Austin by name, care for them, and share Jesus with them.

WHO WE ARE

BLESS Austin is part of Pray Beyond, a global initiative to pray for every person in the world by name, care for them and share Jesus with them. BLESS Austin is not an organization—it is a partnership of many believers, churches, ministries, networks, and businesses who are collaborating to fulfill the Great Commission in our city. Similar initiatives are being pioneered by Pray Beyond in other cities and countries.

BIBLICAL MANDATE

1 Timothy 2:1-5. *“I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for **all people**...this is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth...”* God desires every human being to be prayed for because He wants them to be saved. God knows every person by name, and He wants us to pray for them by name (Isa. 43:1; Jn. 10:3; Lk. 10:20).

OUR STRATEGY

Jesus taught us to love our neighbors as ourselves. Every person can love their neighbors and friends using the **B.L.E.S.S.** acrostic:

- **B**egin with prayer
- **L**isten to them
- **E**at with them
- **S**erve them
- **S**hare Jesus with them

PRAY FOR 5 | BLESS 5

Every child, youth, and adult in our churches can take five minutes every day and pray by name for five neighbors, friends, family, classmates, or co-workers. It's a simple, doable, and scaleable strategy.



**Everybody
can pray for
somebody and
together we
can pray for
everybody.**

THE B.L.E.S.S. STRATEGY



BEGIN WITH PRAYER

The first step in making disciples is to pray for people far from God. Talk to Jesus about your friends before you talk to your friends about Jesus. When you pray for people by name, God moves on your heart to love them, and He begins to open their hearts to the Gospel. Jesus knows everyone's name, and He wants us to care enough to get to know their names (Isaiah 43:1).



LISTEN TO THEM

The key to successful evangelism is authentic relationships, and relationships are built one conversation at a time. Listen to them with compassion and empathy. Take a genuine interest in their lives, ask good questions, and get to know their story, their passion, their dreams, and their fears, doubts, and pain.



EAT WITH THEM

In his book, *A Meal with Jesus*, Tim Chester notes that Jesus did evangelism and discipleship “round a table with some grilled fish, a loaf of bread, and a pitcher of wine.” Food has the innate ability to break down barriers between people. Hospitality opens people's hearts to know and be known. You eat about 21 meals a week—could you share one of those meals with someone far from God? You can invite them to your home or meet at a restaurant, a coffee shop, or a park.



SERVE THEM

You've heard the saying, “People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.” Serving people in practical and meaningful ways shows them you care about them and are invested in the relationship. Simple acts of kindness deepen our relationships with people and confirm our message about Jesus, who said, “the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28).



SHARE JESUS

Evangelism is an overflow of our love relationship with Jesus. The more we love Jesus, the more we will want to tell others about Him. But if you aren't madly in love with Jesus, evangelism will always feel like a program. Sharing Jesus is as easy as telling people about your spiritual journey: Your life before Jesus, how you met Jesus, and your life since you've met Jesus (Acts 22).





BLESS Austin

STEPS TO
IMPLEMENT
THE BLESS
STRATEGY IN
YOUR CHURCH



01

SIGN UP YOUR CHURCH & BROWSE OUR RESOURCES

Go to BLESSAustin.com and sign up your church to participate in BLESS Austin. Review the many resources available on our website for pastors, churches, and believers. The *BLESS Austin Church Setup for Pastors* gives step-by-step instructions on how to sign up.

02

DOWNLOAD AND USE THE APP YOURSELF

Lead by example and begin using the app to pray for and bless the lost. The Bless Every Home App is available on Android and Apple Stores. Spend time with unbelievers every week.

03

SHARE THE STRATEGY WITH YOUR LEADERSHIP & STAFF

Ask them to download the app and bless their unsaved neighbors and friends. Your leadership team has to buy into this strategy for it to be successful at your church.

04

APPOINT SOMEONE TO LEAD THIS INITIATIVE

Choose a member of your staff or a volunteer to give leadership to the BLESS Initiative.

05

SHARE THE STRATEGY WITH YOUR VOLUNTEERS

Once your leadership team and staff are using the app, invite volunteers to download the app and bless their unsaved friends and neighbors.

06

SHARE THE STRATEGY WITH YOUR SMALL GROUPS

Ask small group leaders to take 15 minutes at the start of every meeting to pray for unsaved friends and neighbors and ask members to share testimonies. Create the expectation that healthy Christians regularly pray for and bless their neighbors and friends.

07

LAUNCH BLESS AUSTIN ON A SUNDAY AND KEEP IT FRONT & CENTER

Share the strategy with your church during a Sunday service and ask every adult, teen, and child to begin BLESSing their unsaved neighbors, family members, and friends. Every Sunday after that, take two minutes in service to pray together for the lost. At least once a month, share a testimony of people praying for and sharing the Gospel with others.

08

CONSTANTLY EMPHASIZE PRAYER & EVANGELISM

Talk about prayer and evangelism in church services, staff meetings, new members' classes, and new believers' classes. Ask leaders and volunteers to share Pray for 5 and BLESS 5 with their circles of influence. Create a BLESS culture at your church by celebrating and modeling these values.

APP & DASHBOARD



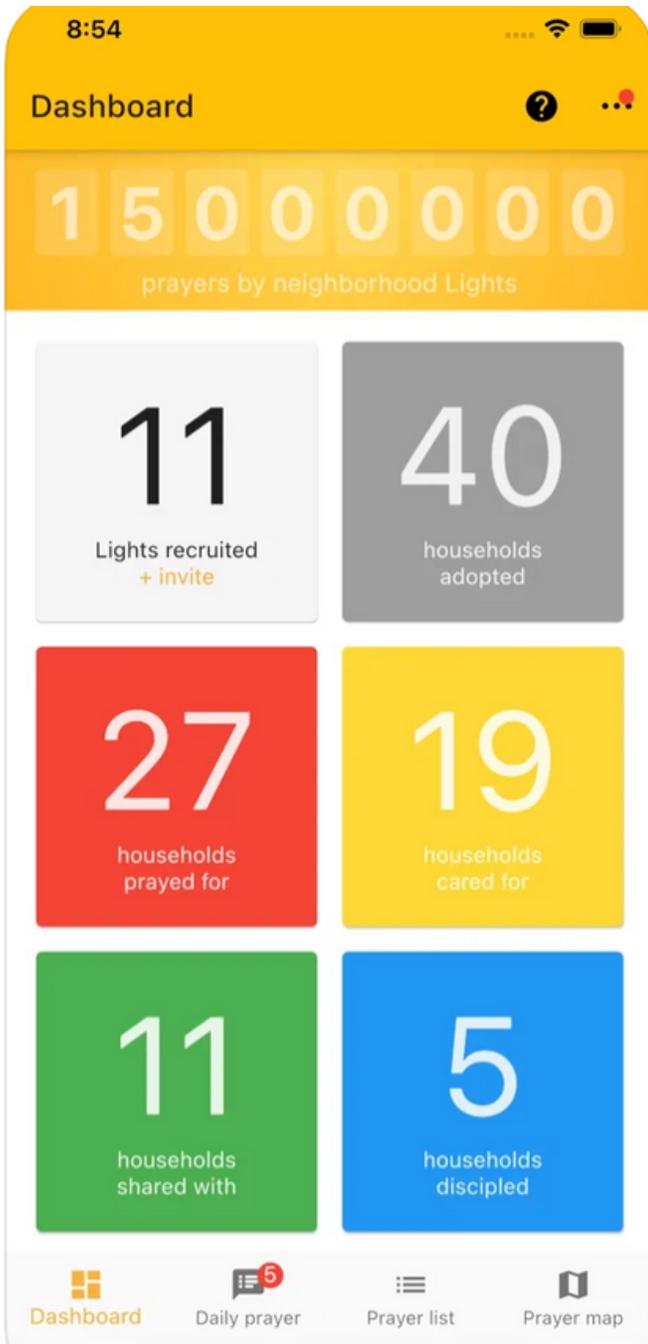
Our partner, Bless Every Home, provides every church with a customized dashboard that allows pastors and leaders to monitor the impact of its members in the community. To create your dashboard, go to https://blesseveryhome.com/signup/?onb=11726&utm_source=convention&utm_medium=leaflet&utm_campaign=austin

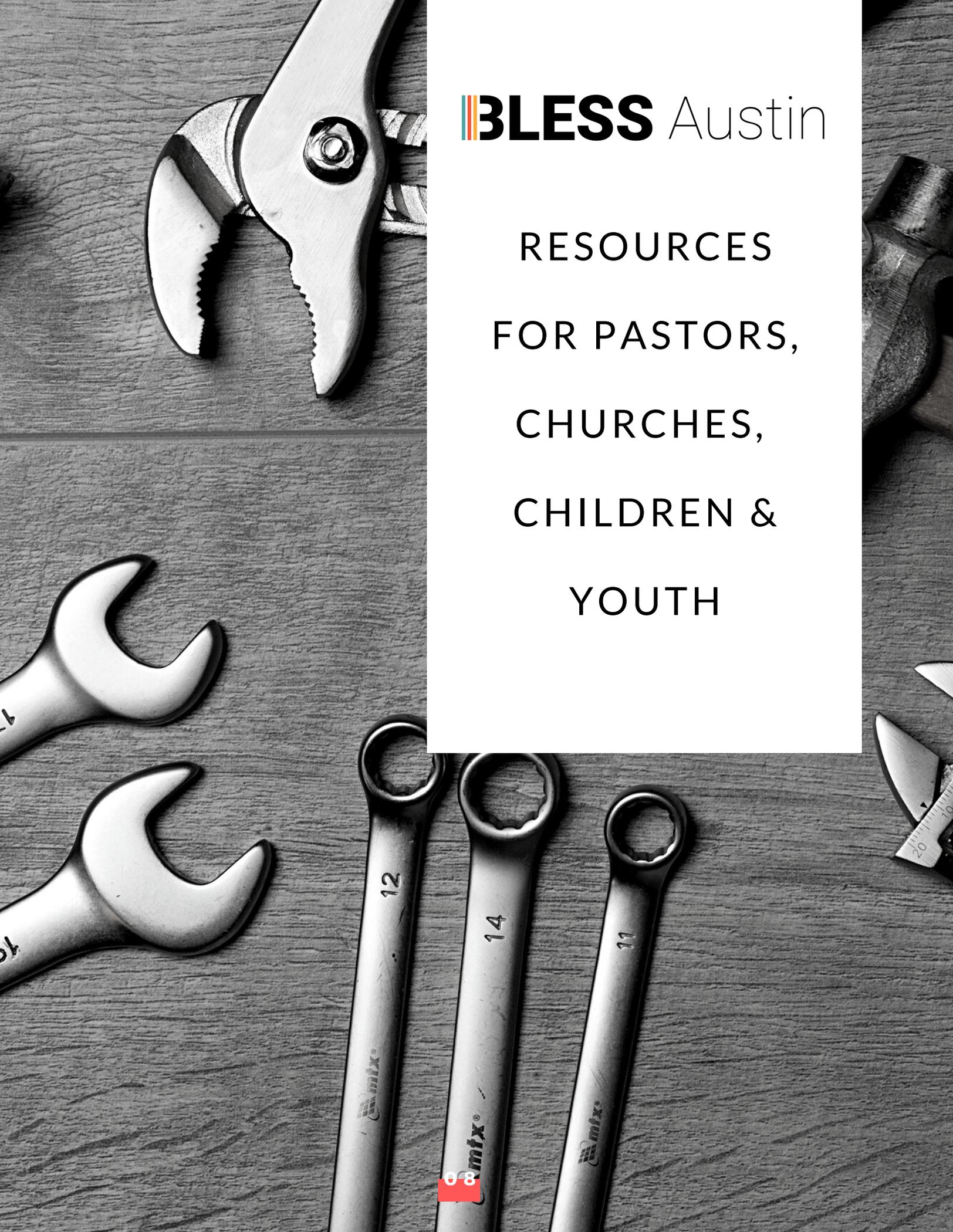
Every person who downloads the Bless Every Home app will receive a free personalized and customizable list of their neighbors so they can pray for them and share God's love with them.

Color-coded tracking tools help them record their BLESS journey. They will receive daily emails with a prayer prompt and the names of five neighbors to pray for that day.

A private prayer journal helps them keep track of prayer requests and notable life events for each neighbor.

Your members can share their progress with you and see the church's progress across the city.





BLESS Austin

RESOURCES
FOR PASTORS,
CHURCHES,
CHILDREN &
YOUTH

RESOURCES FOR PASTORS

We know how valuable your time is, so we have developed resources that will make the planning and implementation of the BLESS Austin Strategy at your church easier, from sign-up to launch.



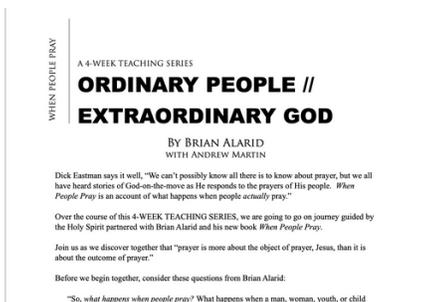
BLESS AUSTIN CHURCH SET-UP GUIDE

This is a step-by-step guide on how to sign up for BLESS Austin and set up your church's dashboard.



ALL PEOPLE MESSAGE POWERPOINT & NOTES

You can use this message to share the vision of BLESS Austin with your congregation.



4-WEEK PRAYER SERIES

This series, based on the book *When People Pray* by Brian Alarid, will encourage your church to develop a consistent prayer life and believe in God for extraordinary things.

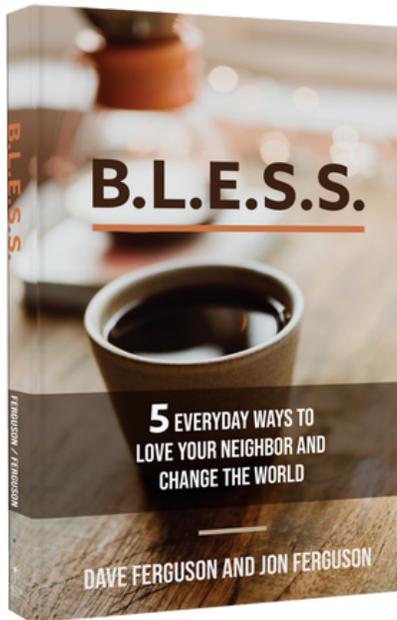


BLESS AUSTIN PASTORS' OVERVIEW

You can view this overview digitally and share it with other pastors and church leaders who will assist during the Implementation phase of BLESS Austin at your church.

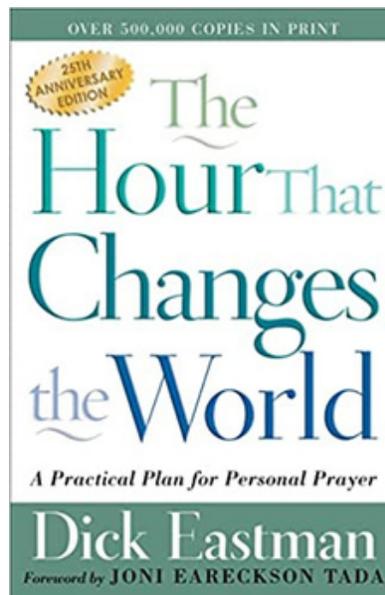
RESOURCES FOR PASTORS

We recommend reading the following books as you prepare to launch the BLESS Austin strategy at your church. These books will also equip your church to grow in prayer and live out the BLESS lifestyle.



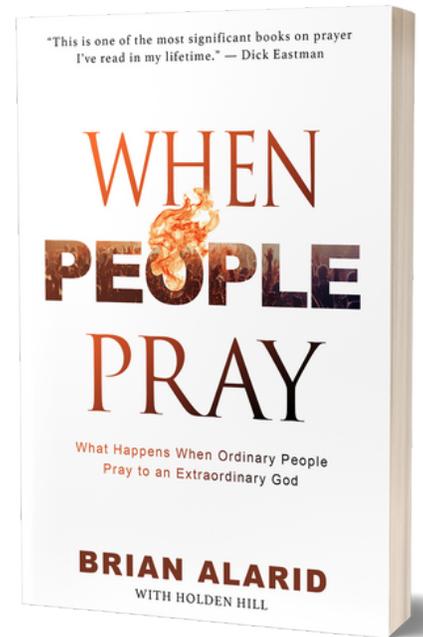
B.L.E.S.S. BY DAVE FERGUSON

Dave and Jon Ferguson have found five simple, straightforward practices that will allow any believer to share their faith with their neighbors, co-workers, and friends. And by consistently living them out, they can affect not just individual lives but their entire neighborhood and community—one person at a time.



THE HOUR THAT CHANGES THE WORLD BY DICK EASTMAN

A classic book with a 21st century challenge. More than two million Christians around the world have revitalized their prayer lives through the step-by-step plan of prayer outlined in this book. You'll be challenged to spend one hour each day in prayer by dividing the hour into twelve five-minute "points of focus," such as praise, waiting, confession, and Scripture praying.



WHEN PEOPLE PRAY BY BRIAN ALARID

In *When People Pray*, Brian Alarid takes us on the journey that led him to discover that everyone has a movement inside them, and that prayer is the spark that ignites it. Small prayers, bold prayers, sun-stand-still-prayers, and impossible prayers have one thing in common—they all find their answers in Jesus, who changes everything, especially us.

RESOURCES FOR CHURCHES

Your staff can take advantage of these resources to prepare for and promote the public launch of the BLESS Austin strategy in your church.



CHURCH SERVICE AIDES

Powerpoint presentations with announcement slides, printable program inserts, and helpful BLESS 5 flyers for children, youth and adults.



GRAPHICS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

You can use these graphics to encourage your people to sign up for BLESS Austin and download the app to begin praying for their neighbors and loved ones.



SMALL GROUP LAUNCH GUIDE

This is a step-by-step guide of how to launch and sustain the Bless Austin strategy within your small groups. It also contains helpful definitions about the Bless Every Home App that members will use.

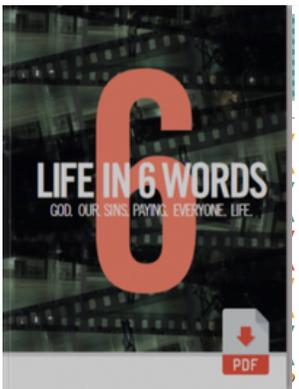


VIDEOS

Promo videos, short videos to assist church members in signing up and using the app, and a video for small groups are helpful tools before and during your public launch.

RESOURCES FOR YOUTH

We believe teenagers are ready for us to challenge them to pray for their friends and share the Gospel with them. These resources have been provided by our partners at Dare2Share, a leading voice in Gospel-centered ministry to youth.



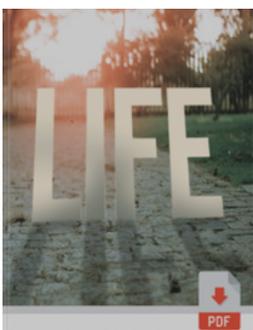
LEADER'S GUIDE (SERMON SERIES)

Each of the sessions in this sermon series unpacks the gospel message visually and viscerally, practically and powerfully, focusing on one word of Life in 6 Words. The series will prepare your students to use the Life In 6 Words App to share the Gospel with their friends.



LIFE IN 6 WORDS APP

this interactive, engaging, faith-sharing tool provides youth with a bridge for naturally initiating spiritual conversations. They can use it to walk someone through a clear, visually compelling explanation of the gospel and invite them to put their trust in Jesus.



YOUTH GROUP SERVICE AIDES

Youth pastors and leaders can access PowerPoint slides, interactive handouts, and printable invitations to use during the sermon series.



TEACHING VIDEOS

These videos set the stage for youth leaders to teach six vital truths about the Gospel and feature Greg Stier, founder of Dare2Share and Propaganda, the poet.

RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN

The idea of BLESSing neighbors and loved ones comes intuitively to children. We want to equip them to pray, care for others and share the good news of Jesus with them. Every child can pray for 5 people by name and share Jesus with them.



CONVERSATIONS WITH GOD

Our partners at OneHope, have created this fun and innovative resource especially for BLESS Austin. It guides parents, grandparents and guardians in teaching children what prayer is and how to pray. It can also be used In Kids Ministry and is suitable for 3rd-5th graders to study on their own if needed.



ABBA'S HOUSE

Our partners at College of Prayer International have created a short booklet for elementary kids that illustrates how to develop a friendship with God through prayer. A companion video teaching series is also available for those who wish to use it on Sundays in kids' ministry.



PRAYER COVENANT RESOURCES

These resources, created by our partners at The Prayer Covenant, help children and adults know and understand God's love for them and equip them to grow into a lifestyle of prayer and evangelism.



Blake Davenport
Church Coach for The Banquet Network

SHARING FAITH WITH CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

This video, shared with us by our partners at the Banquet Network, equips adults to share the Gospel with children with disabilities. People with disabilities are the largest unreached group in the world. More resources related to this subject are being developed.

RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

While you may launch the BLESS Austin strategy at church, the real ministry will be done by families in your church. We want to equip them with resources that will keep the BLESS lifestyle front and center and nurture their relationship with God and others.



CONVERSATIONS WITH GOD

We mentioned this resource under children's resources, but it also fits under this category because it is meant for families to go through it together and learn what prayer is, how to pray, when to pray, and what to do when God speaks to us to BLESS people around us.



BLESS 5 GUIDE

Our partners at America Prays have developed a guide that believers can refer to as they start BLESSing the people God puts in their path. It gives specific tips about praying for people, listening to them, hosting them for a meal, serving them and sharing the Gospel with them.



Additional resources are currently being developed by our partners to help every believer BLESS the people around them. We encourage you to check our website in the coming months for additional content. If your church develops helpful resources, we would love to share them with other churches in Austin and around the world.

PARTNERS

Our partners provide funding, staff, resources, technology and training to make BLESS Austin possible and help your church equip its members to pray, care and share their faith. These are some of our local and national core partners:



PARTNER WITH US

There are many ways to get involved:

- Pray by name for five neighbors and/or friends and love them using the B.L.E.S.S. strategy
- Mobilize your church to pray for people by name and share Jesus with them
- Give generously to expand the movement
- Become an ambassador and share the vision of BLESS Austin at meetings and events
- Volunteer and contribute your time and talents
- Provide or collaborate with us on tools to equip believers to pray and share Jesus with others



Scan this code to complete the online partnership form



Scan this code to GIVE
Select Bless Austin from the drop-down menu



You can give tax-deductible donations to BLESS Austin through America Prays, one of our major partners.

America Prays is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.



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