

join us in prayer

#cdnmbpray



PHOTO: Jon Goings, Bread We Break

# Week of Prayer 2017

As a young buck, I attended the Lausanne II International Congress on World Evangelization in Manila. This gathering's purpose statement was "the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world." Similarly motivated, this prayer guide brings challenges from men and women across Canada who are pursuing Jesus on mission in a variety of settings.

You'll read reflections from the front lines of church planting and stories of innovative gospel expressions. Don't be fooled into thinking that faith sharing, healing and evangelism belong only to the life of a church planter. It is God's desire and design that we're all involved in "taking the whole gospel to the whole world." We are called to follow Jesus into the Canadian mission fields. We are to tell the world about Jesus!

Prior to his ascension, Jesus addressed his early followers. His distracted disciples were engaging in adventures in missing the point. Despite Jesus' Kingdom refresher course (Acts 1:3), the disciples had lingering confusion about the nature of God's Kingdom (Acts 1:6). Jesus directs them beyond their personal agendas and nationalistic exclusivism with a commission.

**"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**

My friends, this booklet invites your response to Jesus' pivotal words. Think, pray and live out Jesus' startling words in your postal code or at the other end of the planet.

Jesus speaks of one mission: local, regional, national and global. However, to get the job done we can't rely on our own strength, talent, ingenuity or game plan. Before they were dispatched as gospel torchbearers, those early believers were set alight by the Spirit. Jesus declares that our witness will overflow from the activity of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Prior to becoming a gospel movement, Jesus followers were commanded to "stay" (Luke 24:49) and to "wait" (Acts 1:4) until they were "baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5).

"Whatever one may call it and however one may enter it," says Sri Lankan Youth for Christ leader Ajith Fernando, "what is important is for all Christians to experience what the baptism with the Holy Spirit implies: the fullness of God's Spirit and power in witness."

We are promised power to live on mission. Are you enjoying the anointing, presence and energy of the Holy Spirit?

I trust that this devotional will not only prompt your prayers, but fuel a fresh pursuit of Holy Spirit life and a greater measure of God's empowering presence in your own life and witness.



**Bill Hogg** is national missiologist with the C2C Network.



WEEK OF PRAYER 2017

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. And you will be My witnesses, first here in Jerusalem, then beyond to Judea and Samaria, and finally to the farthest places on earth" (Acts 1:8, The Voice).

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## Prayer at a Starbucks counter

### REFLECT

“Is there anything in your life that I can pray for you about?” Most Christians would hesitate to ask this question to a person they don’t know, or who they don’t perceive to be interested in God. Yet, in my experience, it is a great way to witness and engage your hurting Jerusalem.

When I asked this question of a woman working at a Starbucks, she stopped what she was doing.

“Really?”

When she realized I was serious, she explained that she and her husband were having marital problems and she could use all the help she could get.

We prayed. She needed a minute to gather herself. The Holy Spirit touched her heart and she began to weep.

What did she need? “Hope” – and here God cared enough about her to send someone to pray with her and offer it. She was going to go back now to the church she grew up in, she said, to reconnect with God.

Have you seen the power of the Holy Spirit in your life? Do you believe that Acts 1:8 speaks about your life, your witness?

Bringing people to Jesus changes everything. It is not our power that changes lives, but the power of the Holy Spirit.

A simple question is a great place to start a spiritual conversation with a hurting person, to reach out to a family, city and the world.



**Paul Winter** is pastor at Living Word Temple, a North End Winnipeg church in partnership with Soul Sanctuary and C2C Network. He is also on staff with E3 Partners/I Am Second, taking part in overseas ministry and travelling to First Nations reserves in northern Manitoba.

### ACTIVATE

1. Ask God to put people in your path who need prayer. Ask God for boldness to pray for the hurting in this world, and then watch as the power God promised touches lives through you.
2. Engage in prayer for the people in your life – and those you know don’t have a relationship with God. Ask people how you can pray for them. Not all will say yes, but you will be surprised at how many do.
3. Widen your gaze: ask God where your Judea and Samaria are. Pray for the people there, and then bring your witness to the ends of the earth.





## DAY 2



# Turn on the power source

## REFLECT

This past Thanksgiving, there was a storm and we lost power to our house due to fallen trees! Thankfully, we had just finished cooking and eating our big turkey dinner and were about to start into dessert. We quickly lit the candles, scrambled for flashlights and dug out the Coleman stove to make tea to accompany our pumpkin pie.

Acts 1:8 reminds me of our spiritual power source. Everything we are commissioned to do on this earth as Christians is to be done in and through a power source given by Jesus. This is the power of the Holy Spirit!

You see, it is one thing to be on mission in our towns and cities with the gospel, but it is another thing to be on that mission empowered by the source: plugged in, connected!

Often, I find myself on mission with the lights off. Trying to do it on my own. Fumbling in the dark. Frustrated when I don't see Kingdom results. But Jesus has left us a power source. We just need to flip the switch and receive the ultimate power that is waiting to be used!



**Chad MacDonald** is C2C Network regional director for Atlantic Canada.

## ACTIVATE

1. Are you living life on mission empowered by the Holy Spirit?
2. Do you listen for the Holy Spirit to speak to you and guide you in life and on mission?
3. Do you make room for the Holy Spirit to take up more and more residence in you? If so, what does this look like? If not, what keeps you from living in step with God?

# DAY 3



PHOTO: Iwan Bergen, King Road Church

## Witness along your way

### REFLECT

When God called us to plant City Church, I had a limited view of what it means to be a “witness” (even though we studied Acts 1:8 for a whole semester in seminary!). God’s been teaching me that it’s the slow, steady effort of making myself available, creating margin in the midst of my everyday life. In order to witness to the people in my city, I actually have to know some people who are not Christians in my city. And they need to know me.

Instead of adding new activities, we are learning to do our normal activities with greater intentionality. So, I’ve volunteered for the home and school board for the past five years at my sons’ school around the corner from our house.

We have organized two summer block parties with our next-door neighbours (whose family now comes to church!) and gathered for pizza on the patio with several neighbourhood families while our kids played together.

Since our boys love sports, we coach or manage their baseball and hockey team, go to games as a family, and cultivate relationships there.

The way we parent our children and show love to our spouses can be a witness to God’s transformation in our lives.

The excellence and consistency of our work can speak for us.

We can witness in how we talk about others and how we go out of our way to help, encourage and support the community.



I am learning that we simply need to show up, to be involved, to be deliberate. When people wonder why, show them Jesus.

**Yanci Yarbrough McGregor** is a church planter in Montreal with her husband, Chris.

### ACTIVATE

1. Ask God to show you one specific thing you can do with intentionality to know and be known in your neighbourhood.
2. Pray about how you can create more margin for others in the midst of everything you have going on in your life.
3. Go and do it! Sign up today for the committee. Ring the doorbell and make a dinner invitation. Set a lunch meeting with a colleague.
4. Before and after you take action, remind yourself that you go with the Holy Spirit. As a follower of Jesus, you walk around with the living power of God inside you. Just by breathing, you are witnessing!





## DAY 4



# The Holy Spirit in the grocery aisle

## REFLECT

When Jesus says, “God so loved the world” (John 3:16), he means the regular one we drift through every day.

Jesus commissions his followers as living branches on his vine (John 15:5), the place where the invisible becomes visible (Colossians 1:15), where God is still giving his Son to love others (John 3:16). The mailbox, the coffee room, the grocery store: these are holy places because Christ lives within us.

An aisle in the grocery store is where I met Jay, a young man dragging his left leg towards the fresh fruit.

Deep compassion welled up in me and I knew I couldn't leave without praying for him. I followed him to the blueberries, where I pretended to look at grapes until he turned around.

“Hey, I noticed your leg. It looks painful.”

“Yeah. I hurt my back with heavy lifting.” He was unable to work because of the pain.

“Oh man, so sorry. Can I pray for you?”

He agreed, and I prayed right there in the name of Jesus, with a dozen people milling around us. He was completely healed and started walking without a limp, doing deep knee bends and testing his new freedom.

“How did you do that?!” he gasped.

“I didn't,” I answered. “Jesus did. He loves you so much! You are loved.”

God so loved that he gave us Jesus – and kept on giving.

**Brad Huebert** is pastor and planter of *Manifest, Calgary*.



## ACTIVATE

When you hear the call to be Christ's witness (Acts 1:8), do you think of being filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit? Or do you worry about working up the nerve to talk about Jesus? To remind yourself who you are in Christ and what he can do through you, here's a prayer that may put you in the right frame of mind and spirit:

Lord Jesus, thank you for raising me to new life and seating me with you in the heavenly places as your beloved child. Thank you for filling me with your Spirit and making me a branch on your vine, a place where heavenly realities can manifest in life-changing ways in people's lives around me. Thank you for loving me; now help me to love the people you're calling me to reach. In Jesus' name, amen.

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## Resistance on the road

### REFLECT

“Should I let my five-year-old start reading Harry Potter?” was the question that went out on Facebook. A friend from the neighbourhood was canvassing for advice.

“Yes, Harry Potter is fine. No problems there,” said everyone.

But Narnia, people warned – that series by author C.S. Lewis is a different matter. The classism is deplorable and the awful racism. The talking animals are cute, but the books are to be monitored with a discerning eye. The overwhelming Christianity in them is not good for young minds.

In the end, concerned moms agreed to hold off on Narnia until the kids are older; it’s safer that way.

If this is our “Jerusalem,” then how is it possible for us to be witnesses as Acts 1:8 commands? If the masterwork Narnia receives a cold shoulder and a plugged ear, how can we expect to receive anything less?

Rejection puts us in good company with our Saviour (John 15:18–20). But a testimony that is not accepted immediately is not a failed witness; it’s a seed planted.

Despite discouraging results, faithfully and joyfully plant seeds, trusting that God, in his goodness, will give the increase according to his plan.



**Dennis Wilkinson** is pastor of Meta Communities, a C2C church plant in the West End of Vancouver.

### ACTIVATE

1. God, help me not to resent those who oppose your people, even when I’m frustrated.
2. God, help me not to disappear into Christian caves where I feel comfortable and safe, but unchallenged.
3. God, help me to intentionally live out the good news in my neighbourhood through hospitality and generosity.







# The change equation

## REFLECT

“You will be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8). These parting words of Jesus to his disciples on earth were full of a deep love for our world. Jesus’ call to be witnesses is loaded with love, but also with access to the power to make it happen. The power of the Holy Spirit.

Love + Power = Transformation

As I serve students on a university campus, I am very aware of my need for both love and power. My deep desire is to see lives transformed and a culture changed. My heart breaks with an overwhelming love for students and the challenges they face.

Because of my love for this Jerusalem, I desire the power the Holy Spirit offers to work in and through me to bring about that transformation.

It begins with love.

I pray that God would give us a love for the people in our Jerusalem that is so great that we would earnestly desire the promise of power and access to gifts God offers through the Holy Spirit. I thank God not only for the ordinance of baptism where we proclaim our love for him, but also for baptism in the Holy Spirit who empowers us to share his love.



**Tammy Junghans** is co-pastor at Converge Community Church, a C2C Network plant, and leader of Segue campus ministry at the University of Manitoba.

## ACTIVATE

### 1. Read: John 3:16

God, please give me a deeper understanding of your love for the world today.

### 2. Read: Matthew 22:36–40

God, please renew my love for you and give me your love for the Jerusalem you have placed me in.

### 3. Read: 1 John 4

God, by your perfect love, reveal and drive out any fear that is in my heart.

### 4. Read: Acts 19:1–7

God, as your disciple, I ask that you would baptize me with your Holy Spirit. Bring about transformation in us, in our communities and our world. Thank you for including me in your plan.

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# A witness in our Jerusalem to the world

PHOTO: Carson Samson, MBCM

## REFLECT

Canadian cities and even rural communities are being given an exciting opportunity to become involved in world missions. Not only because we are called to go other places, but because the nations of the world are moving in next door.

God's hand is in this. God cares for each one; every person is made in his image.

Jesus is calling for us to respond.

Imagine if our churches reflected the growing diversity of our neighbourhoods. What would happen if we would care for one another in such remarkable ways that the love and unity we experience together were miraculous, a light to our nation?

This is how the early church multiplied.

Will our neighbours come to know the love of Jesus here in Canada? If they do, God's love will also become known in extended families in cities and villages in countries of origin.

Our churches will be mission centres that touch the world because God's Kingdom can move from anywhere to everywhere through the power of the saving love of Jesus.

Pray for the nations to come to know Jesus. Open your heart, your arms and your front door.

## ACTIVATE

1. Who do you encounter every day? Do you call on the Holy Spirit to empower you to shine Jesus' light to family and colleagues in every encounter?
2. Who are your neighbours? Are you praying that the Holy Spirit will guide you into spiritual conversations with them?
3. Would you ask the Holy Spirit to turn your church into a mission centre that spreads God's Kingdom from Canada to the corners of the world through your witness to the saving love of Jesus?



**Paul Kroeker** is national intercultural mobilizer for the C2C Network.