



# HOW TO...

## pray for families in FTD

*becoming an FTD-Friendly Church*

Sikunye seeks to equip and support churches to care for families in the First Thousand Days (FTD). This reflection is part of a range of Lunchtime Conversations hosted by Sikunye, aimed at equipping churches to become FTD-Friendly.

Listen to audio recording [here](#)

Watch the video recording [here](#)

### Philippians 4:4-7

*“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”*

## how do you pray for families in the FTD in your church?

FTD-Friendly Churches are seeking to enable loving connections by praying for and with parents in the First Thousand Days. Prayer is one of the unique and key practices of the local church – as we pray to a living God – and it is a spiritual discipline that is the simplest, yet most powerful way to bless and encourage families. It also changes the hearts of the people praying. It is a gift that we can use in our churches to care for families and disciple congregants.



## how are you using prayer to discern your next steps in being a FTD-Friendly church?

One of the first steps in your journey as an FTD-Friendly church is to prayerfully discern how your church can be FTD-friendly. Your church is in a context, with unique strengths and opportunities. Becoming FTD-friendly will have different expressions in different churches. This step is all about prayerfully discerning, along with others in your church, what you can be and do to ensure loving connections are formed around families in FTD. We believe that God has gifted every church congregation with a range of spiritual gifts, empowering his body to further His mission.

Instead of looking at what you don't have, or wish you had, consider who is already in your congregation. As you pray with your church, what do you sense God leading you into? Pray through the six ways a church can be FTD-friendly, with your congregation and context in mind. This isn't about copying other churches but growing your sense that you are putting your best efforts into what God is leading you to.

## how is your church seeking ways to pray for families in FTD in your church?

- **WhatsApp Group of prayer warriors for FTD** who stand in prayer for family and pray specifically for births, and any other requests. They are a trusted group of people due to the confidentiality needed.
- **Praying into various parts of FTD** e.g., teen moms and dads, miscarriages, still births, fathers, single moms, nutrition, health, protection from harm, love in the home.
- Midweek **night prayer meeting** to pray into every element of family life.
- **In moms' groups** – using the opportunity **to pray for moms all along the journey; to pray for the unborn, for the children.**
- **Send voicenote prayers** to families.
- **Visit pregnant mom monthly** – seven months before birth and two months after birth, keeping a record and seeking professional help when needed; encouraging dad to join even if they do not live together; making sure there is no judgement of young girls who fall pregnant.
- **WhatsApp groups for moms or dads** to share requests.

## more platforms to pray for FTD

- Prayer meetings with agenda points and requests
- Prayer wall (or name boards) with children in FTD on for congregants to pray for
- During church services and moments like baby dedications or baptism
- Celebrations of Births and announcements of pregnancy
- Small groups / impact groups

## how can we encourage families to pray for their babies?

We pray to our Heavenly Father, God – and Jesus teaches us that we *“should always pray and not give up”* (Luke 18:1). When we talk to Him, God does answer — in His timing and according to His perfect will. God's part is to change hearts; our privilege and responsibility is to pray. The best investment. Our prayers live before God, and we're changed when we participate in His call to prayer. As mothers gather, we not only make a difference in the lives of the children, but we also reap immeasurable benefits:



- Our faith becomes stronger
- Our confidence in answered prayer increases
- Our hope is revived
- Friendships develop
- We realize we are not alone with our burdens
- We experience the presence of Jesus

Taken from:

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/pray-for-your-children/>



## resources:

- [Tips for a praying mom](#)
- [Why young children matter daily devotional](#)
- [A prayer for baby](#)
- [Mom's pregnancy journal & Pregnancy devotional \(facilitator group guide\)](#)
- [New mom's journal & New mom devotional \(facilitator group guide\)](#)
- [Prayers for children](#)

### Lamentations 2:19

*"Pour out your heart like water in the presence of the Lord. Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your children"*