



Intentional Neighboring

Session 2: June 14, 2026

Who Is My Neighbor?

Luke 10:25-29, 36-37 | Matthew 5:43-48 | Matthew 9:35-38 | Acts 17:26-27

OUR MISSION

We exist to glorify God by making disciples of Jesus Christ who obey the Great Commandments and fulfill the Great Commission.

Neighboring According to Jesus

1. Jesus said loving your neighbor is one of the two greatest _____.
2. The Great Commandment is not a suggestion -- it is an act of _____.
3. Neighboring is not a program -- it is a _____ of life.
4. The primary visible evidence of our love for God is our love for _____.
5. Jesus said, "Do this and you will _____."

Why We "Neighbor"

Neighboring is not primarily about getting people to come to church. Our goal is to be the best neighbor our neighbors have ever had. We love them because Jesus told us to -- and obedience is enough. When we love well, doors will open. And when they don't, we keep loving anyway. We don't force it. We follow the Holy Spirit's lead.

"We should go in thinking of neighboring as an act of obedience, which Jesus accepts as love to him." -- Rick Rusaw, The Neighboring Church, p. 48

The Neighboring Church: Getting Better at What Jesus Said Matters Most
By: Rick Rusaw & Brian Mavis

The Art of Neighboring: Building Genuine Relationships Right Outside Your Door
By: Jay Pathak & Dave Runyon

Mapping Your Neighbors

Draw a simple map of your home and the houses or units immediately surrounding it. Write the name of each neighbor. Then note what you know about them.

A. B. C. D.	A. B. C. D.	A. B. C. D.
A. B. C. D.		A. B. C. D.
A. B. C. D.	A. B. C. D.	A. B. C. D.

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBORS

Imagine that the middle box on the chart is your home and the surrounding boxes represent the 8 households and businesses near you.

1. Write your name and address in the box at the center of the chart.
2. Next to the letter "a" in each box, write the name of your neighbors and any kids.
3. Next to the letter "b" in each box, write something you have in common, a mutual interest.
4. Next to the letter "c" in each box, write down any in-depth information, including a need or challenge they face that you could pray for and serve.
5. Next to letter "d" in each box, write down what you learn about their spiritual story.

For each neighbor ask:

- What is their name?
- What do I know about them -- family, job, how long they have lived there?
- Do I know any hurt, hope, or dream they carry?

Report Back

- What was the most surprising thing your group discovered about your neighbors?
- Which neighbor in your group presents the biggest challenge?
- Which neighbor are you most motivated to pursue -- and what is one thing you could do this week?
- Did anyone in your group discover a neighbor going through something hard right now?
- Who in your group has the longest relationship with a neighbor they still don't really know?

GOALS FOR THE COMING WEEK

- Finish your neighbor map if you didn't complete it today
- Pray over each neighbor by name
- Ask the Lord: who are You nudging me toward?
- Pray for divine appointments with your neighbors
- Pray that you will recognize a divine appointment when you are in one
- Pray for boldness -- to speak, to invite, to ask a question, to love on someone
- Don't force it -- be as obedient as the Holy Spirit makes you

HELPFUL TIPS

- Smile and make eye contact -- stop and look someone in the eye
- Use their name -- people feel seen when you remember it
- Ask questions and actually listen -- don't fill every silence
- Remember details -- follow up on what they told you last time
- Don't have an agenda in the moment -- just be present
- Show up in ordinary moments -- wave, stop, linger a little
- Bring something -- food is hard to be suspicious of
- Celebrate their wins -- notice and say something
- People are watching how you live, how you speak, and how you treat others. Make sure your conduct aligns with your testimony. If you've failed, don't defend yourself—apologize. Humility often speaks louder than explanations.

Who Lives Around Us?

1 Mile Radius of 1515 Clermont Road, Durham, NC

Estimated Population: 8,100 Residents

WHAT THEY'RE FACING: A YEAR IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

The numbers below are estimates for the 8,100 people living within one mile of Parkside Baptist Church. They are not abstract data points. They represent what is about to happen — or is already happening — in the lives of people you can walk to.

The estimates are divided into two frames:

This Year

Events that will occur between now and this time next year — life transitions, losses, and crises that open doors for ministry.

Right Now, Today

Ongoing conditions that exist in our neighborhood at this moment — people who are already in the middle of something hard.

THIS YEAR — Events That Will Happen in Our Neighborhood

Spiritual Need

People who will not attend church on a typical Sunday	5,670
People who are regular church attenders	2,430

Life & Death

Babies born in our neighborhood	81–90
Deaths in our neighborhood	72–81
Hospitalizations	630–810

Every birth is a family in transition. Every death leaves people who need to grieve. Every hospitalization is a household in fear.

Marriage & Family — Transitions This Year

Marriages	45–54
Divorces	22–27
Marital separations	27–45
Births to unmarried mothers	27–36

Each of these is a turning point. Marriages and divorces both bring neighbors to their knees — often for the first time.

Financial Crisis Events This Year

Personal bankruptcies	5–11
Vehicle repossessions	14–27
Home foreclosures	4–9

These events don't just affect finances. They shatter dignity, strain marriages, and isolate families. A neighbor in this moment rarely knocks on a door — but they will open one if you knock first.

⚠️ RIGHT NOW, TODAY — Conditions Already Present in Our Neighborhood

These are not things that will happen. They are already true of people who live within walking distance of our campus.

Mental Health & Emotional Struggle

Currently receiving counseling or therapy	810–900
Receiving some form of mental health treatment	1,350–1,530
Experiencing regular loneliness	2,430
Experiencing daily loneliness	810
Seriously considering suicide	270–450
Expected suicide deaths this year	2–4

810 people woke up today in daily loneliness. Some of them live next door. A conversation — a real one — may be the most significant thing that happens to them this week.

Alcohol & Drug Issues

Adults with alcohol use disorder	450–540
Adults with illicit drug use disorder	135–225
Families directly impacted by addiction	360–540

Addiction rarely stays hidden for long. It shows up in the yard, the schedule, the kids, and the silence. Neighbors see it. The question is whether they step toward it or look away.

Ongoing Financial Hardship

Households experiencing significant financial hardship	360–540
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Violence & Trauma

Residents currently experiencing domestic violence	180–360
Domestic violence incidents reported to police	27–54
Residents affected by violent crime	180+

Most domestic violence is never reported. The 27–54 police calls represent a fraction of what is actually happening behind closed doors in our neighborhood.

Family Hardship — Ongoing

Single-parent households	450–630
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Aging & Caregiving

Adults currently serving as caregivers	540–900
Seniors living alone	270–450
Families navigating dementia or Alzheimer's disease	54–108

Caregiving is exhausting and largely invisible. Seniors living alone are often the most isolated people in any neighborhood — and among the most responsive to genuine kindness.

WHAT THESE NUMBERS MEAN

These are not national averages about strangers. These are estimates for the 8,100 people living within one mile of where you worship. In the next twelve months, here is what is going to happen in your neighborhood — and what is already happening right now.



In Your Neighborhood

8,100 residents within 1 mile of Parkside Baptist Church

Did you know that over the next 12 months in your neighborhood there will be...

- ~85 babies born — families in transition, many anxious and wide open
- 30–40 pregnancies will end in abortion — women who are often frightened, pressured, or alone
- ~30 babies born to unmarried mothers — often young, often alone, often overwhelmed
- ~75 funerals — leaving behind grieving spouses, children, and parents
- 630–810 hospitalizations — a household in fear behind every one
- ~25 divorces filed — and likely as many separations that never get counted
- 27–54 domestic violence incidents reported to police — and far more never reported
- 270–450 neighbors will seriously consider taking their own life
- 2–4 of them won't be here next year

And right now, tonight:

- 810 people in your neighborhood are experiencing loneliness every single day
- 450–630 children are growing up in a single-parent home

Consider This...

None of these people are waiting for a program. Most of them are not going to walk through our doors.

But almost all of them are close enough to walk to.

The person who just got the foreclosure notice may live two streets over. The mother raising three kids alone may be across the street. The co-worker who lost someone to suicide is in the office you pass every morning. The teenager considering ending her life goes to school with your daughter.

Every one of them is a person Christ loves — and calls us to love as our neighbor.

“When He saw the crowds, He had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”

— Matthew 9:36

God has placed approximately 8,100 people within one mile of Parkside Baptist Church. The question is not whether God has assigned us a territory. The question is whether we will see it the way Jesus sees it.

Small Group Discussion Questions

Intentional Neighboring — Session 2: Responding to the Crises Around Us

The following questions move from awareness to action. Use them to help your group think not just about who is hurting near them, but how a faithful neighbor actually shows up.



Grief & Death

~75 deaths expected in our neighborhood this year | 630–810 hospitalizations

1. Most people who are grieving don't ask for help — they go quiet. What signals have you learned to recognize that tell you a neighbor is in the middle of grief, even when they haven't said so?
2. Showing up in the first week is easy. It's month three — when the casseroles stop and the world moves on — that most grieving people feel most alone. What does it look like to be a neighbor who stays?

This week: *Think of one person in your neighborhood or circle who has experienced a loss in the past year. What is one concrete thing you could do this week to let them know they haven't been forgotten?*



Divorce & Family Breakdown

~25 divorces and ~27–45 separations expected this year | 450–630 single-parent homes right now

1. Divorce is one of the loneliest experiences a person can go through — and one of the most stigmatized inside the church. How do we love a neighbor through a divorce without communicating judgment or taking sides?
2. Single parents are often the most overwhelmed and least visible people in a neighborhood. What are practical, low-pressure ways to come alongside a single mom or dad — not as a project, but as a neighbor?

This week: *Is there a family in transition near you right now — a divorce, a separation, a blended family adjusting? What is one thing you could offer that would actually help them this week?*



Loneliness & Mental Health

810 neighbors in daily loneliness right now | 1,350–1,530 in some form of mental health treatment

1. Loneliness is called an epidemic, but it thrives in silence. What makes it hard for people — and for us — to admit we are lonely or struggling? What does it cost someone to say, "I'm not okay"?
2. You cannot fix someone's depression or anxiety — but you can be present. What is the difference between trying to solve a neighbor's mental health struggle and simply staying close to them in it? Which comes more naturally to you?
3. The church has sometimes communicated — unintentionally or not — that struggling emotionally is a sign of weak faith. How do we create space in our neighboring relationships where people feel safe enough to be honest about what's actually happening inside them?

This week: *Who in your neighborhood do you suspect is lonely or struggling but would never say so? What is one small, non-threatening thing you could do this week to let them know someone sees them?*

Suicide

270–450 neighbors seriously considering suicide | 2–4 expected deaths by suicide this year

1. Most people who are considering suicide give signals beforehand — withdrawal, giving things away, saying goodbye in unusual ways. Have you ever recognized those signals in someone? What did you do, or wish you had done?
2. There is a common fear that asking someone directly — “Are you thinking about ending your life?” — will plant the idea. Research consistently says the opposite. What makes it hard to ask that question, and what would make it easier?
3. Suicide leaves survivors — family members, friends, neighbors — with a specific kind of grief that is often isolating and full of guilt. How do we show up for someone who has lost someone to suicide in a way that doesn’t minimize their loss or rush their grief?

This week: If someone in your life said “I’ve been thinking about not being here anymore,” would you know what to say next? Consider looking into QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) training — it’s a one-hour course that gives you the words.

Addiction

450–540 adults with alcohol use disorder | 360–540 families directly impacted by addiction

1. Addiction rarely stays inside one person — it reshapes the whole household. When a neighbor’s addiction is visible — in how the yard looks, how the kids seem, how the schedule runs — what keeps us from stepping toward it rather than away from it?
2. People in active addiction often feel profound shame. People loving someone in active addiction often feel profound exhaustion. How do we love a neighbor who is in one of those two places without either enabling the behavior or abandoning the person?

This week: Think of a family near you that may be affected by addiction. You don’t have to address it directly to begin. What is one way you could simply be a consistent, non-judgmental presence in their life this week?

Domestic Violence

180–360 residents experiencing domestic violence right now | Most incidents never reported

1. Domestic violence is one of the most hidden crises in any neighborhood — and one of the most dangerous to address poorly. What do you actually do if you suspect a neighbor is being abused? What should you not do?
2. Survivors of domestic violence often stay in dangerous situations because they feel they have nowhere safe to go and no one who will believe them. What does it look like to be a neighbor who is genuinely safe — someone a person in that situation would feel they could trust?

This week: Know the number: The National Domestic Violence Hotline is 1-800-799-7233. You don’t have to have all the answers — but knowing where to point someone is an act of neighboring.



Financial Crisis

360–540 households in significant financial hardship | Foreclosures, repossessions, and bankruptcies happening now

1. Financial hardship carries enormous shame — especially in neighborhoods where others appear to be doing fine. What makes it hard for someone to admit they are struggling financially? And what makes it hard for us to ask?
2. Practical help — a meal, a referral, quietly covering a need — can open a door that no amount of conversation can. Have you ever had an opportunity to meet a financial need for a neighbor? What happened, or what held you back?

This week: Do you know what local resources exist for neighbors in financial crisis — food pantries, emergency assistance, utility help? Consider learning two or three resources you could confidently share with a neighbor in need.



Aging & Caregiving

270–450 seniors living alone | 540–900 adults serving as caregivers right now

1. Seniors living alone are among the most isolated people in any neighborhood — and often the most grateful for a simple, consistent presence. Who are the older neighbors in your area? When did you last speak with one of them?
2. Caregiving — for an aging parent, a spouse with dementia, a disabled child — is exhausting, invisible, and relentless. The caregiver rarely asks for help because they feel they have no right to need it. What does neighboring look like toward someone in that season?

This week: Name one senior neighbor or one caregiver in your neighborhood or circle. What is one thing — a visit, a meal, an errand, a phone call — you could do this week that would tell them they are not invisible?

The Thread Running Through All of It

Every category above has one thing in common: the people in it are rarely the ones who walk through a church door and ask for help. They are the ones who are quietly managing, slowly drowning, or simply surviving — right outside yours.

The Good Samaritan didn't wait for the man in the ditch to find him. He crossed the road. He got close enough to see what was actually wrong. He used what he had.

That is what we are asking you to do — not as a program, not on a schedule, but as a way of life.

“Do this and you will live.”

— Luke 10:28