

# FIFTH BIRTHDAY

## PRAYER

### EASTVIEW FAMILY RESOURCES



[www.eastview.church](http://www.eastview.church) | 1500 N. Airport Rd. | Normal, IL 61761 | 309.451.5000





## THIS YEAR AT A GLANCE...

One of the greatest things you can do as a parent is to help your child develop a relationship with God through prayer. You will nurture your child's faith by praying together as a family and by guiding them in the practice of praying individually. This year's focus is teaching and modeling prayer. This booklet has some practical advice on how to teach and practice prayer as a family.

### HERE'S WHAT YOU'LL FIND INSIDE:

- **Letter from Mike Baker** Senior Pastor of Eastview.
- **A Letter To Your Child** A guide to writing a letter to your child with memories and affirmations
- **"Prayer" Overview** An overview of teaching your child how to pray and the importance of prayer.
- **Family Prayer Ideas** Creative ideas to make your family prayer time engaging for your family.
- **Parenting Resources** Eastview has a number of ministries to help your family.
- **This Year's Parenting Plan Checklist** A summary of this year's focus with an easy checklist.
- **Marriage Plan** Follow this simple plan to keep your family healthy beginning with your marriage.
- **Digital Resources** The Parent Cue App and RightNowMedia are two digital resources we highly recommend.



**A**ccording to our records, you are celebrating a birthday in your family this month! As you celebrate your child's birth, we want to provide this booklet to help you as you guide your child on a spiritual journey to know, love and follow Jesus. This year's focus is: PRAYER.

At Eastview, we believe that God designed the home to be the primary place for discipleship in a child's life. It is our privilege to come alongside you as you raise your child in the ways of the Lord. We offer this Family Ministry Map as a guide to help you raise your child one step at a time — with one annual focus each year. This certainly isn't the only parenting plan you could follow, but over the 18 years of your child's life, you will have followed a fairly comprehensive plan to raise your child in the faith.

These booklets are not intended to cover all there is to know about each topic. Sometimes parents feel overwhelmed with the responsibility of raising their child to know the Lord, and aren't sure where to start. So we have created simple steps to

get you started. We also include recommended resources to help you in your parenting journey. Visit our Family Resource Center and Eastview Bookstore where our staff and volunteers can help you with other topics and resources.

During the time that your child is in our early childhood programs here at church, we will be focusing on:

SEEING ME IN GOD'S STORY

KNOWING GOD'S GRACE

CHOOSING TO FOLLOW JESUS

We are committed to being a faithful partner to you and your family. Our staff is praying for your child by name this month. If you have any questions about your booklet, stop by the Family Resource Center or email our Family Pastor, Jason Smith at [jsmith@eastview.church](mailto:jsmith@eastview.church).

Love ya,  
Mike Baker, *Senior Pastor*



# MY LETTER TO YOU FOR YOUR 5TH BIRTHDAY

**E**ach year throughout the parenting plan, take time to write your child a letter. Below are some ideas of things to include that will speak life and love into your child, as well as give them an invaluable collection of insights into their upbringing and a storyline of memories to be cherished for the rest of their lives. You can write them all in a journal or write each letter as a separate piece of paper.

1. Things I've loved about you this year...
2. Important memories from this past year...
3. Some of my favorite time with you is when we...
4. Our favorite book to read together is...
5. Our favorite song to sing together is...
6. Your favorite toy this year is...
7. Things that make you smile and laugh...
8. Your favorite food this year...
9. I've been praying about this for you this year...
10. I've been praying about this for me as a parent this year...
11. What I want for you in life...
12. A scripture verse I have picked out for you this year...

**Include a photo of your family with the letter to give a year by year collection of memories all in one place.  
Each year after giving your child the letter, get it back and keep them all somewhere safe.  
You will give them all to your child in the 18th year for LAUNCH.**

## FIFTH BIRTHDAY: PRAYER

**TEACH YOUR CHILDREN TO PRAY** One of the greatest things you can do as a parent is to help your child develop a relationship with God through prayer. You will nurture your child's faith by praying together as a family and by guiding them in the practice of praying individually. This year, we want to challenge you to focus on prayer as a family.

In his book, [Prayer – What Difference Does It Make?](#) (Zondervan, 2006), Philip Yancey encourages us to build an authentic and uncomplicated life of prayer by summarizing Jesus' teaching on prayer with these simple principles:

### KEEP IT HONEST • KEEP IT SIMPLE • KEEP IT UP

**MODEL PRAYER:** As you spend this year teaching your child about prayer, make a commitment to teach and model a natural, authentic and intimate prayer life that is about spending meaningful time with God. We are working more on fostering a relationship this year, than learning religious behavior.

**FAMILY ROUTINE:** Making prayer a regular part of your family culture will help make it a normal part of your child's life. Consider how you can have a set family time during the normal rhythms of your day.

### Here are a few suggestions:

- **Mealtime:** Briefly give thanks before you eat, and then wait until everyone has finished to have a longer time of prayer.
- **Bedtime:** When the first person in the family goes to bed (usually the youngest), have everyone gather on mom and dad's bed, in the family room or in the youngest one's room.
- **Drive time:** As you start the engine, take time to pray together, maybe even inviting everyone to pray a sentence prayer of gratitude or for any concern about the upcoming activities of the day. This is a great routine to begin as you drive to school in the morning, or a way to kick off a road trip.
- **Walks:** Taking a walk together is another good time to pray. Teach them how they don't always pray with their head bowed and eyes closed. You can talk about how God used to come and walk with Adam and Eve in the garden during the "cool of the day." Maybe your child opens up on walks and you can finish up each walk praying about what they brought up as you talked together on your walk.

**JUMP START PRAYERS:** Use these ideas to help start prayer time with your child.

**Sentence Prayers:** Take turns allowing each person who is comfortable doing so to pray a very short, one sentence prayer. It can be as simple as “Please heal Uncle Paul.” “Thank you for giving Ethan a new friend.” or “I’m sorry for losing my temper with everyone earlier today.”

**Fill-in-the-Blank Prayers:** Guide prayer times by using the following starter lines:

- God, I love you because...
- Thank you God for...
- God, please help...
- God, I’m sorry for...

### PRAYER TOOLS AND IDEAS:

**Prayer Board:** Use a dry erase board to keep a list of requests the family is praying for together. Put it somewhere you will see it each day to help you remember to pray for certain things.

**Prayer Journal:** Consider purchasing a journal for your child to start recording prayers and how God answers them.



**Fishbowl Prayers:** Keep a fishbowl in the kitchen and fill it with slips of paper that have people or ministries written on them that you would like to pray for. Have someone draw one each night, and pray for that person together. This is a great way to teach your child the many things they could pray about, including missionaries, the sick, the lost, their relatives, our country’s leaders, etc.

**STOP, DROP & PRAY:** Teach your family to stop and pray for things in the moment. For example, if your child is talking to you about a problem, stop and pray about it right then. If your family just received bad news, stop and pray about it together. If your child is struggling with their behavior, stop and ask God to help him. Sometimes when we don’t stop right in the moment, we forget to pray about it later. This can also teach your child that he can pray throughout the entire day with small simple prayers.



# FAMILY PRAYER TIME IDEAS

**JESUS MODEL PRAYER:** While we spend this year teaching our children to pray, we want to caution you about making it complicated. When his disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, he gave them a simple prayer as a model in Luke 11:2-4. On the left is the text from the Bible, and on the right is what you can teach your kids to pray about. Jesus didn't intend to create a pattern for prayer that was inflexible and formulaic, and we need to make sure we don't do that either.

## JESUS PRAYED

Father, may your name be honored .....  
May your Kingdom come .....  
Give us each day our daily bread .....  
Forgive us of our sins .....  
As we also forgive everyone who sins against us .....  
Keep us from falling into sin when we are tempted .....

## WE CAN PRAY

Praise God  
Pray for his work in this world  
Ask for what they need for each day  
Ask for forgiveness  
Ask for help to forgive others.  
Pray for strength to do the right thing today.

**MORE RESOURCES AVAILABLE:** Some great resources for this year's theme are available online or through our Eastview Bookstore.

- [Power of a Praying Kid](#) by Stormie Omartian
- [Creative Family Prayer Times](#) by Mike and Amy Nappa
- [What Happens When I Talk to God](#) by Stormie Omartian
- [Pray Big for Your Child](#) by Will Davis, Jr.

*For a sneak peek at this book, search YouTube for the video where Will outlines how to pray for your child using Psalm 119.*



## **PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES AT EASTVIEW:**

**Prayer Campaigns** - Each year, we have at least one prayer campaign where we are challenged to come to the church to do a prayer tour around the building individually or with our small groups - usually in preparation for Imagine (Christmas) or Easter. Even if one isn't planned or it's a long way off, you can do this any time of the year on your own.

This year, bring your family in, though you will probably need to shorten the tour based on the age of your kids. Have your children pray over their classrooms, for their teachers and pastors, and for the new kids who don't know Jesus yet. Take them to specific places around the church like the sanctuary, the baptismal tanks, or the Family Room and have them pray for the people who will be using those.

Another idea is to have a child pick a seat in the Worship Center. Those seats are numbered. Have them memorize "their seat" number and pray for the person who will sit in that seat that next Sunday. But also encourage them to pray for that seat throughout their time growing up at Eastview. How amazing would it be to think that your child helped people they may never meet just by praying for God to work in the heart of the person who will seat in "their seat."

**The Missions Kiosk** - Located on the upper level of the atrium, you will find information about the missions work that Eastview

Partners with. There is an interactive screen there with a kids section on it. Spend some time there and close out your time by praying for God's work in this world.

**FAMILY PRAYER WALKS:** Sometime throughout this year, try a prayer walk with your family. See how it goes. Some prayer walks engage the people in those areas asking what they would like prayer for. Some are prayers offered silently as you walk through different locations.

- **Neighborhood Walk:** Either walk quietly praying silently for each house as you walk by, or pause and pray as a family. Or...visit your neighbors and ask if there is anything you can pray for them about.
- **Church Walk:** Go into the auditorium during the week and pray over some seats for those who will be sitting in them that Sunday. Or take a drive and go to another church in town and pray as a family for their ministry in the community.
- **School Walk:** Go to your child's school and walk to different parts of the school to pray. It will still work if the school is locked. Pray for the teachers and the principal. Pray over the playground. Pray for the special needs programs. Pray for protection. Pray that your child and other Christian children will be light and love in this school.



# THIS YEAR'S PARENTING PLAN SUMMARY/CHECKLIST

**WEEKS TO GRADUATION: 676 and counting**  
**PHASE PARENTING PHRASE: ENGAGE their interests**

**Teach your child the importance of prayer... and how to do it.**  
**Pray together as a family and encourage them to pray privately on their own.**  
**Teach them that they pray to a loving Heavenly Father who has asked us to pray to Him.**  
**Remember Philip Yancy's simple phrases for prayer:**  
**KEEP IT HONEST • KEEP IT SIMPLE • KEEP IT UP**

- Read the contents of this booklet and the Phase Summary (tri-fold) that comes with this booklet.
- Write a letter to my child.
- Build a consistent family prayer time into your daily rhythm. Experiment to find the best time for your family.
- Check out the recommended resources for ideas to learn more about teaching your child to pray.
- Choose a special prayer outing this year from the list of ideas in this booklet.
- Follow This Year's Marriage Plan below. (We know not every parent is married. *We don't mean to offend by including this segment.*)

# THIS YEAR'S MARRIAGE PLAN

**E**ach year we want to encourage you to make a plan to keep your marriage healthy. One of the most important gifts you'll give to your child is the love you give to your spouse. When mom and dad love each other and demonstrate the traits of a healthy (NOT PERFECT!) marriage, it not only sets a good example of a godly marriage, but gives them a greater sense of security and well-being. Andy Stanley in [The Principle of the Path](#) writes "We don't drift to good places." (Thomas Nelson, 2008). Good marriages require intentionality. Use the plan below to make an intentional effort in your marriage this year. Read [The Best Us](#) by Ted Lowe (©MarriedPeople 2016) for a full explanation of Have Serious Fun! Love God First; Respect and Love; Practice Your Promise.

**Have Serious Fun! Date Night Scheduling:** Grab your calendars and mark at least TWO date nights for each month and PROTECT those dates. Remember that you were boyfriend and girlfriend before you were dad and mom, and have fun together! No family administration discussions! For extra fun, watch for sponsored "Date Nights" by Eastview's Marriage Ministry. Each date night, you swing by the church to receive your plans for the evening.

**Love God First - Faith Practices 101:** Research finds that couples who pray together at least twice a week have a divorce rate of less than 1% (HomePointe). Commit to praying as a couple at least twice a week. Plan which worship service the two of you will attend together each week – don't "divide and conquer" in order to volunteer.

**Love and Respect - Write an Annual Letter:** Write a letter to your spouse for your anniversary this year, much like the one in this booklet that you will write to your child. Write a letter of memories from this past year, affirmations, prayers and promises to each other.

**Practice Your Promise - Personal Growth:** Set a "secret goal" to grow as a spouse, such as "listening better," "praising her in public," or "initiating romance." Write it down and seal it in an envelope or save it on your phone. When you receive next year's booklet, open the envelope or file and assess your progress.

**Invest In Your Marriage:** Join an email blog like [lesandleslie.com](#), choose one book to read this year, or choose a small group study on marriage. The Eastview Family Resource Center, Eastview Marriage Ministry and RightNow Media have many helpful events and resources.




# EASTVIEW RESOURCES

WE BELIEVE THAT EVERY PARENT  
WANTS TO BE A GOOD PARENT.  
WE CAN HELP YOU TAKE THE NEXT STEP.

**STEP-BY-STEP PLAN:** As a part of our Eastview Church Family, we never want you to feel like you have to parent alone. We want to come alongside you in your parenting journey and provide resources and relationships that can help you along the way. While this is certainly not the ONLY Christian parenting plan out there, and probably not even the best one, it is a way to raise your children in the faith over the years, with one specific focus a year.

**FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER & EASTVIEW BOOKSTORE:** However, you will have specific needs along the way that we do not cover in these booklets. You might have a child with special needs, or your child might be dealing with a specific issue, or you might need more creative ideas for family times together... whatever it is, we will do our best to offer helpful resources. Stop by our Family Resource Center on the lower level of the atrium. We can point you to great organizations like Focus on the Family ([focusonthefamily.com](http://focusonthefamily.com)) and others that give expert advice on all things family. We have topical cards that give you some quick advice on a variety of topics with recommended resources and next steps to take at Eastview. We highlight various books and resources to help with different aspects and seasons of parenting and marriage. Our Bookstore is also a wonderful resource for us at Eastview. Sure, you can buy books on Amazon, but at our bookstore, all of the books have been recommended by Eastview Staff and leaders and our helpful staff and volunteers are able to help you find the just right resource.



**MEMBER CARE:** At Eastview, we believe that the care of our members is very important. Because of this, we have different areas where we can assist our members needs, whether that be counseling referrals, help needs and family journeys.

- **CARE APPOINTMENTS:** We know that connecting to others for prayer and encouragement is a necessary part of our spiritual formation, especially in times of need. Care Appointments are scheduled times we have set aside to meet with you for pastoral care. We would like to hear your story, pray with you, and offer guidance on your next steps. To sign up for a care appointment visit [eastview.church/membercare](http://eastview.church/membercare).
- **COUNSELING REFERRALS:** We want to help people connect to Christian Counselors when professional services are needed for healing and growth. For information on counselors in our area contact: Sara Thompson [sthompson@eastview.church](mailto:sthompson@eastview.church) or 309.451.5057.
- **HELPS MINISTRY:** We depend on our small groups to help support one another and take care of one another's needs. For our church members that are not already in a small group, we can utilize our helps ministry team. This team can assist with meals, and limited transportation to our Sunday services during times of illness, hospitalization, new baby, or other life interruptions. For more information, please contact Nicki Green at [ngreen@eastview.church](mailto:ngreen@eastview.church) or 309.451.5033.
- **CARE GROUP:** Eastview Care Groups range from support groups for parents with kids with autism to men's sexual integrity groups to divorce care to single moms groups and more. We keep a list of them at the Family Resource Center, or you can learn more about them at [www.eastview.church/caregroups](http://www.eastview.church/caregroups). For specific information, contact Jason Sniff at [jsniff@eastview.church](mailto:jsniff@eastview.church).
- **THE FAMILY ROOM:** Open on Sundays before, after and during services, our family room is a place to connect with caring staff and volunteers for prayer and encouragement.



## DOWNLOAD THE PARENT CUE APP

As a parent, some of the most important things you do for your child don't happen in a single day. You make small deposits in their life week after week - over time. That's why the Parent Cue App gives weekly cues to help you make the most of the time you spend with your kid or teenager. This app is brought to us by The ReThink Group, producers of the Phase Summaries that come with these booklets, as well as the curriculum we use for our 4th & 5th Grade Ministry at ECC.



Easy encouragements to help your child start their day.



Ideas for meaningful talks on the way to soccer practice.



Conversation starters while grabbing drive thru tacos or sitting around the table.



Great reminders for ways to end the day on a great note.



Timely help for those moments that take you by surprise.

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