

## ***Walking the Neighborhood — A Missional Practice***

*Missional practices: cultivating new understandings, ways of being, and living Christ's mission.*

**Purpose:** For people, as individuals or in pairs, to walk their congregational or personal neighborhoods to sense where God is active, enter opportunities for conversation, and offer blessings through silent prayer. By learning to listen and pay attention to what is happening in the lives of people new understandings, ways of being and living Christ's mission are gained.

The Worth of All Persons and the Blessings of Community, two of the church's enduring principles help us to understand that our only motive for this missional practice is to be open to God's presence in and desires for any resulting relationship.

### **Steps:**

1. Step out in faith as you offer the *Mission Prayer* and reflect on the counsel found in Doctrine and Covenants 161:3 and 4. (See the following page.)
2. Take a family member or go with a friend and begin walking in your home neighborhood or in the neighborhood around your church. As you walk, pray for God's guidance and offer God's blessing on each home and the people who live there. If people are out in their yards or on their porch, greet them and wish them a good day.
3. As you become a regular presence in the neighborhood, begin conversations with neighbors. Ask God to lead you to the people with whom God wants you to share in conversation. Listen for where God is moving in their lives. Consider offering this prayer: *God, who do you want me to meet and form a caring relationship with today?*

### **Tips for the Process:**

This missional practice requires genuine investment in forming relationships and takes time. This is not designed to simply, "invite people to church." This missional practice helps us understand what God is up to in the lives of people in our neighborhoods by being present where we live and worship. Between walks share with your partner in prayer and conversation about the people you meet and where God may be leading you in mission. Be creative – bring some cookies to offer to people on your walk, or some freshly picked vegetables—anything you can offer them as a way of sharing God's love in a practical way.

### **Mission Prayer**

*God, where will your Spirit lead today?*

*Help me be fully awake and ready to respond.*

*Grant me courage to risk something new  
and become a blessing of your love and peace.*

*Amen.*

### **Doctrine and Covenants 161:3 and 4**

3a. Open your hearts and feel the yearnings of your brothers and sisters who are lonely, despised, fearful, neglected, unloved. Reach out in understanding, clasp their hands, and invite all to share in the blessings of community created in the name of the One who suffered on behalf of all.

b. Do not be fearful of one another. Respect each life journey, even in its brokenness and uncertainty, for each person has walked alone at times. Be ready to listen and slow to criticize, lest judgments be unrighteous and unredemptive.

c. Be patient with one another, for creating sacred community is arduous and even painful. But it is to loving community such as this that each is called. Be courageous and visionary, believing in the power of just a few vibrant witnesses to transform the world. Be assured that love will overcome the voices of fear, division, and deceit.

d. Understand that the road to transformation travels both inward and outward. The road to transformation is the path of the disciple.

4a. Do not neglect the smallest among you, for even the least of these are treasures in God's sight. Receive the giftedness and energy of children and youth, listening to understand their questions and their wisdom. Respond to their need to be loved and nurtured as they grow.

b. Be mindful of the changing of life's seasons, of the passage from the springtime of childhood and youth to the winter years of life. Embrace the blessing of your many differences. Be tender and caring. Be reminded once again that the gifts of all are necessary in order that divine purposes may be accomplished.