



MISSION ILLINOIS OFFERING & WEEK OF PRAYER

SEPTEMBER 17-24

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2023 Prayer Guide

DAY 1: Church Revitalization

Each of the nearly 900 Southern Baptist congregations in Illinois represents a people and a place consecrated for God's glory. With as many as 60-80% of churches nationwide in decline, renewed vitality is needed so they can deliver the light of Jesus to their neighborhoods.

Pray for **Scott Foshie** as he leads IBSA's church revitalization efforts to help churches across Illinois find renewed hope and a new future.

DAY 2: Churches in transition

At any given time, approximately 10% of churches are without pastors. It can be challenging to remain unified and missions focused while also prayerfully searching for a new shepherd who is the right fit for the church.

Pray for churches currently seeking their next pastor, and for **Mark Emerson** who leads IBSA's work in consulting with pastor search teams and pastorless churches.

DAY 3: Spanish speaking churches

Many continue to come to Illinois seeking opportunity and refuge. The majority of these speak Spanish. Immersed in a different culture and a new language, they often face loneliness and isolation. Spanish speaking churches can reach these immigrants through their heart language and culture.

Pray for ethnic language churches and pastors, like **Jonathan de la O**, as they lead churches reaching refugees and immigrants.

DAY 4: IBSA Evangelism & Missions

Evangelism and missions consultations provide encouragement, ideas, and a spark. After pastors at Alpha Baptist talked through evangelism strategies, they decided to engage the men of their community in new ways, using their love of cars and barbecue to connect.

Pray for IBSA's **Scott Harris** and **Shannon Ford** as they lead missions and evangelism consultations to help existing churches serve their neighborhoods and reach the lost in their communities.

DAY 5: A new generation of pastors

Statistics show that as the previous generation of pastors retires or passes away there are not enough new pastors to replace them. IBSA's Growth Team is working to help local churches and associations see more respond to calls to ministry and receive training, whether they are current students or recent retirees.

Pray for God to raise up new pastors, like **Blake Harding**, who will follow His leading into pastoral ministry here in Illinois.

DAY 6: Camp ministries

Year after year, Lake Sallateeska and Streator Baptist Camps serve as special places where children and students hear God's word and commit their lives to following Jesus. These rural retreat centers provide a place far from the distractions of a noisy world.

Pray that young people would continue to hear God's call in the special environment of camps, and pray for camp directors **Brock Vandever** and **Jacob Kimbrough** as they serve the thousands who come each year.

DAY 7: IBSA Zone Consultants

Illinois is a big, diverse state. From rural Shawnee hills and river towns, to vast fields and farming communities, to bustling urban cities. Illinois churches take on the personalities of their diverse settings. Zone Consultants who know the local culture serve as a nearby resource for churches and leaders.

Pray for Zone Consultants like **Cliff Woodman**, as they encourage pastors and connect churches to resources and trainings.

DAY 8: Illinois Church Planting

Every year, IBSA helps to plant 10-20 new churches across the state. Church planters like **Maurice Gaitor** do the spiritually and physically challenging work of starting a church from scratch. Starting new churches is a vital part of reaching people in changing neighborhoods.

Pray for church planters like Gaitor and IBSA Church Planting's **Kevin Jones** and **John Yi** as they recruit, train, and support new churches and planters.