

UPWARD BASKETBALL PRAYER GUIDE



The Power of Prayer and Evangelism

By Pat Medeiros, senior pastor

The 19th season of Upward Basketball is about to start. This is an amazing opportunity for us as a church family to invest the soul-saving Gospel message into players and their families. Fifty-one percent of the families registered are either unchurched or attend a non-evangelical church. The evangelism opportunity before us calls us to stand in the gap to pray. Pray that the spiritual darkness that blinds their hearts from believing upon the Lord Jesus Christ be consumed by the light of the Good News of Jesus Christ. Pray that through the ministry of Upward Basketball, they will encounter God's holy love. Pray for faith to come alive in every heart.

Praying for lost people is both a privilege and a responsibility. It is a privilege because our prayers can make a difference in people's lives for all eternity. It is a responsibility because our Savior calls us to this very task.

Upward Basketball is not about a great basketball program, it's about the Great Commission. It's not about the score, it's about the soul of every player and family member.

It is my desire to see everyone in our church family join the prayer team. You can pray for the players at home. You can pray for the players in your small group. You can pray for the players during Refuge Student Ministry. You can pray onsite on game days in our new PRAYER ROOM, Room 201. It would be awesome if we had prayer teams praying during each game hour. If you are interested in being a part of the game day prayer team, please select a time and date at greeceassembly.org/upwardprayerteam.

"Prayer is the lifeline of New Testament evangelism, the oxygen for its holy fire. The New Testament was born in prayer. It knows no evangelism without prayer, and no prayer which does not lead to evangelism." Those are the words of Armin Gesswein, a man God used to ignite a prayer movement in America and around the world. I am persuaded that his words are absolutely true. There is no evangelism without prayer and no prayer that does not lead to reaching the lost for Christ.

WHY PRAY FOR THE LOST?

First, we should pray for the lost because of God's heart. The greatest verse in the Bible assures us that God truly cares for those who don't know Him. *"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life"* (John 3:16).

Second, we should pray for the lost because of Christ's sacrifice. Christ came for the lost. *"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost"* (Luke 19:10). And He died to provide a way of salvation for the whole human race. *"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all men"* (I Timothy 2:5-6).

Third, we should pray for the lost because of Paul's example. In Romans 10:1, Paul reveals his heart for his Jewish friends, neighbors, and relatives: *"Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved."* Paul purposed in his heart to pray for his own people to be saved. As Christ followers, we should be motivated and moved to do the same.

Fourth, we should pray for the lost because of their condition. The New Testament in many places reveals to us how hopeless and helpless the lost are without Christ. They are ...

- Blind: *"The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God"* (II Corinthians 4:4).
- Captive to Satan: We should pray that Upward players and their families might *"escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will"* (II Timothy 2:26).
- Condemned: *"Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son"* (John 3:18).
- Dead: *"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins"* (Ephesians 2:1).

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- Heading towards God's judgement: "*Whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him*" (John 3:36b).
- Hopeless: "*Without hope and without God in the world*" (Ephesians 2:12).
- Without Understanding: "*The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned*" (1 Corinthians 2:14).

HOW TO PRAY:

Lord, I pray for the unbelieving Upward players and their families and ask that You would:

LEAD THEM TO REPENTANCE

God, You are gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in love and faithfulness. You don't wish for any of the Upward players and their families to perish, but for them to come to repentance. Yet we, like sheep, have gone astray. There is none righteous, nobody who understands or seeks after You, none who come to faith unless the Father draws them. So, I ask You to mercifully draw the Upward players and their families to Yourself, LORD. Grant them the humility they'll need to confess & turn away from their sin and to accept the forgiveness You so freely offer in Christ Jesus.

Psalm 86:15; 2 Peter 3:9; Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:10-11; John 6:44; 1 Peter 5:5; Acts 3:19

OPEN THEIR EYES TO YOUR GOODNESS

Lord Jesus, Light of the World, I pray that You would shine brightly upon the hearts and lives of the Upward players and their families. The heavens declare Your magnificent glory—please open their eyes to comprehend it. Allow them to taste and see that You are good. Let them observe Your goodness in the land of the living and help them to stop walking in the darkness. Deliver them from the power of sin and from the evil that threatens to overcome them. Plant Your Word in their heart & let them take hold of the wondrous truths in Your law (Word).

John 8:12; Psalm 19:1; Psalm 34:8; Psalm 27:13; John 3:19; Matthew 6:13; James 1:21; Psalm 119:18

SAVE THEM BY YOUR GRACE

Thank You, LORD, that You are mighty to save! Praise be to Jesus, who conquered death and the grave and grants eternal life to all who accept it by grace through faith! Please make that true of every Upward player and family. They are dead in their sin, just as I was before You changed my heart & granted me salvation. Please do the same for them: Lavish Your grace upon them & give them a deep longing to know You. May they place their full trust & confidence in Jesus Christ, not in their own works or righteousness, which is as filthy rags.

Zephaniah 3:17; I Corinthians 15:54-55; Ephesians 1:7-8; Ephesians 2:1-9; Galatians 6:14; Philippians 3:9-10; Isaiah 64:6

TRANSFORM THEM TO YOUR IMAGE

God, I pray you would not only save the Upward players and families, but that You would sanctify them, as well. Complete the good work You've begun in their hearts. Give them the mind of Christ & conform them to His image. Empower them to walk in the good works You've established beforehand for them to do. Develop in them the fruit of Your Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. May their redeemed lives accurately reflect Your character to others & bring glory to You.

John 17:17; Philippians 1:6; Romans 8:29; Romans 2:12; Ephesians 2:10; Galatians 5:22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; I Corinthians 10:31

Pray. Pray. Pray. Pray. Pray.

"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen"

Ephesians 2:20-21



PRAY for our **SEASON**

Upward Basketball is a ministry of Greece Assembly. The season starts January 12 and ends March 22. We have 385 participants this season. Our main goal is to reach them with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Through teaching them the game of basketball, we are able to show them the love of Christ, impart biblical principles into their lives, and share the gospel of Jesus Christ. We also share the gospel with families and friends during halftime of every game. We have the incredible opportunity to share the love of Jesus with so many!

Please join us in praying for the 2026 season!

Below are a few prayer points, and the following pages are season dates, as well as the names of coaches and participants you can be praying for throughout the season.

That the game weekends would run smoothly and bring glory to God in all aspects.

ROMANS 12:9-12

That coaches and volunteers would continue to serve joyfully.

COLOSSIANS 3:23-24

That coaches would have an extra measure of love.

1 CORINTHIANS 16:13-14

That participants would learn good sportsmanship.

PHILIPPIANS 2:3

That the Gospel would impact participants and their families in a powerful way.

1 CORINTHIANS 2:1-5

That unchurched families would find a home at Greece Assembly.

ACTS 2:46-47



Our **SEASON SCHEDULE**

THANK YOU for PRAYING!



PRACTICE NIGHTS:

Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays
5:30 PM - 9 PM

Weeks of: Jan. 12th, 19th, 26th
Feb. 2nd, 23rd
Mar. 2nd, 9th, 16th

GAME DAYS:

Saturdays from 8:30 AM - 8:30 PM

Dates: Jan. 24, 31; Feb. 7, 14, 28; Mar. 7, 14, 21

**Games run every hour starting 8:30 AM until 5:30 PM.*

***Final games are 7th-9th boys at 6:15 PM and 7:30 PM.*

FINAL TWO UPWARD EVENTS

Sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ

Saturday, March 21 @ 8:30 PM

This is the "5th Quarter" for boys in our 7th-9th grade division. We gather in the gym following their championship game, enjoy pizza, fellowship, and share the Gospel with the players and their families. Pray for souls to be saved and for the young people to desire to get connected through Refuge!

Sunday, March 22 @ 3 PM

This is our Season Celebration for players in Kindergarten through 6th grade. Families are invited to attend as well. Our sanctuary is filled to capacity! Please be in prayer that hearts would be open to receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ at this celebration.



PRAY for our COACHES

David Barry
Lindsey Bishop
Steven Bopp
Jason Bramwell
Donovan Braun
Rob Braun
Mara Briggs
Aaron Bundschuh
Patrick Carrington
Ben Cassata
Sophia Cassata
Terriance Cecil
Anna Chebanenko
Omar Chevalier
Lucas Christopher
Luke Cialdella
Zachary Cutlip
Averi Cyr
Traci Cyr
Kevin Damann
Krista Damann
Mark DiRaddo
Jesse Flint
Pam Flint
Matt Fordham
Sarah Friery
Zack Friery
Allison Galvano
Jeremiah Garcia
Toni Gennarino
Jeff Grace
Erin Graupman
Lucy Guagliardo
Jonathan Hakes
Paige Hakes
Dan Hindman
David John
Keoni Kaanana
Drew Karschner
Jameson Kelly
Aaron Kent

Matthew Kotsyuba
Ashley Krajna
Brandon Kuzgun
Angel Lagares
Joseph Loray
Manuella Maftey
Kyle Mattle
Grace Medeiros
Maria Melnik
Gerri Melnotte
Jenell Miller
Mark Miller
Rob Miller
Matt Minnis
Brenton Moore
Jathniel Morales-Lopez
Josh Peck
Sarah Peterson
Paul Petrella
Clayton Pittinaro
Jessica Portanova
Luis Recio
Scott Rhodes
Freddy Salcedo
Alphonse A Sasso
Kurt Schultz
Matt Schultz
Addie Sloan
Anibal Sosa Lorenzo
Carlos Soto
Olivia Swizdor
Steven Taccone
George Torres
Dennis Tyson
Anna Valenti
Joe Verdura
James VonBramer
Cuevas Walker
Nehemiah Walker
Malorie Wright

PRAY for our PLAYERS

Logan Adams	Abigail Calder	Giovanni DiPasquale
Joshua Adiele	James Calvy	Elias DiRaddo
Jerrin Ahrens	Darcya Campbell	Jordyn Doolin
Ryan Arbore	Viviana Campione	Jason Dunham
Gino Armeli	William Cannon Jr.	Giovanni Evangelista
Grady Arnold	Cam Caprino	Grace Fabry
Sadie Bachmann	Princeton Carrington	Isabella Fabry
Aleah Banks	Joel Cassata	Malia Fabry
Gabriel Banks	Seth Cassata	Mira Fabry
Bahati Baraka	Levi Cavalieri	Sean Fallon
Henry Barber	Joey Chapman	Frank Fedele
Alyssa Bard	Ezra Chappell	Angelina Fendikevich
Clare Barry	Isaiah Chappell	Jonny Fendikevich
Aubrey Barut	Jordan Chappell	Milana Fesyük
Matthew Barz	Zeke Chappell	Halen Fintak
Brynn Baxter	Leah Chebanenko	Lucas Fischer
Hudson Baxter	Michael Chebanenko	Leah Flint
Jack Baxter	Alex Chevalier	Luke Flint
Ross Baxter	Johnny Chianfoni	Lorenzo Fontanez
Teagan Baxter	Dominic Chimino	Chase Fordham
Dean Bedenbaugh	Leo Chimino	Weston Fordham
Olivia Bishop	Leona Cignarale	Conrad Foster
Brody Blanchard	Ronin Cignarale	Ellis Foster
Eli Bliss	Liam Clary	Ava Franklin
Aaleyah Blue	Amelia Colaprete	Tanner Franz
Reese Bonafede	Kyle Commauf	Vincenzo French
Michael Bosak	Landen Crittleton	Leah Friery
Adeline Brado	Charlotte Cutlip	Trent Friery
Micah Bramwell	Marshal Daly	Ryder Fulford
April Braun	Michael Daly	Dominic Gaiteri
Liam Bruce	Hannah Davcev	Fiorella Garcia
Lucas Bruce	Aubrey Davis	Eloise Garofoli
Colin Buck	Skylar Decker	Cully Genier
Reese Buckley	Hayden DeCramer	Giuliana Gennarino
Nick Burgmaster	Crosby Deignan	Elijah George
Henry Burkhardt	Graham DeMerchant	Rah'Mero George
Milana Burkovskaya	Olivia DeMerchant	Evelyn Gerwitz
Marcus Burkovskiy	Nathan Dennis	Antonio Gibbardo
Frank Buscemi	Caleb Devlin	Jackson Grabowski
Vivienne Buscemi	Asher Diffenderfer	Adrian (Georgie) Grace
Llewyn Bushen	Anthony DiGabriele	Remi Gape
Landon Caccamise	Andreao Dillard	Julia Graupman
Louie Caccamise	Valentino Dillard	Elijah Grinishin



PRAY for our PLAYERS

Liam Grinishin	Elise Kirik	Jaxson McPherson
Dima Gritsak	Lucas Kirik	Jesse Medeiros
Julianna Gritsak	Timothy Kirik	Nora Medeiros
Max Gritsak	Johnny Klepanchuk	Steven Meinholt
Kingston Guillod	Jonathon Knapp	Gabriel Melnik
Benjamin Gurali	Daniel Kostyuk	Jonathan Melnik
Ilya Gurali	James Kostyuk	Caleb Merrill
Joshua Guy	Liana Kostyuk	Christian Merrill
Elijah Hakes	Eloise Krajna	Mia Michael
Leighanna Hakes	Addison Krautwurst	Daniel Mikhaylov
Aaron Hall	Kayden Kuzgun	Isaac Miles
Brady Hall	Christian Lacek	Easton Miller
Price Hall	Aviana Lagares	Jazlyn Miller
Steele Hall	Joseph Lagas	Josaphine Miller
Lane Harris	Brooklyn Latta	Juliette Miller
Luke Harris	Camden Latta	King Mills
Callan Hart	Mia Leonardo	MacKenzie Mills
Henry Heckle	Antonio Licata	Greyson Minnis
Aria Heinsbergen	Jonathon Liotta	Jay Minnis
Isaac Henderson	Luke Lipinczyk	Caleb Moore
Corey Hepburn	Grayson Longnecker	Carter Moore
Sheldon Hepburn	Theodore Longnecker	Lilah Moore
Charlie Herbert	Sammy Loray	Makayla Moore
Desmond Higgins	Jack Macri	Seth Moore
Matteo Hindman	James Macri	Sailor Morris
Benjamin Horton	Aaron Maftey	Alijah Muniz
Gavin Hysner	Avenir Maftey	Callum Muraj
Finn Ilges	Travis Malone	Micah Musumeci
Emerson Jaffarian	Tristan Malone	Lily Nelson
Janae James	Liam Marcello	Jesiah Nugent-Mills
Liam Jerge	Luciano Marcello	Jason O'Buck Jr
Logan Jerge	Marco Marcello	Eva O'keefe
Jagger Jovcevski	Audrina Marello	Adelyn O'Meara
Bane Kaanana	Wyatt Marello	Finn OBrien
Ruby-Kate Karschner	Jagger Markson	Sam Obrien
Naomi Kasap	Lucas Marshall	Marshall Ohl
Nathan Kawski	Elijah Matiishin	Weston Ohl
James Keating	Isaiah Matiishin	Marko Onyshchuk
Acelyn Kelly	Jackson Mattle	Abigail Oshinnaiye
Andrew Kent	Jett Mattle	Ace Ostrander
Gavin Kent	Bria Mazur	Liam Palermo
Zeke Kent	Jakai McPherson	Owen Park

PRAY for our PLAYERS

Austin Parry	Lucio Sasso	Adelynn Ursulom
Ellison Payne	Silas Sasso	Dominick Vacco
Vivian Peck	Uriah Sasso	Gus Vacco
Mario Penna	Caroline Savage	Emmanuelle Vega
Finnley Peters	Leo Schantz	Ellie VerWulst
Sawyer Peters	Brady Schoeps	Isla VerWulst
Daxton Peterson	Callie Schoeps	Luke Vileria
Mikey Petrella	Chase Schoeps	Luke Vincent
Brynn Philipp	Jaden Schrader	Charlie Voellinger
Paige Philipp	Jackson Schrier	Daxton VonBramer
Elijah Piano	James Senchyna	Aiden Voronin
Olivia Piano	William Senchyna	Daniel Voronin
Luca Piccirillo	Lizzy Shaw	Lucas Voronin
Ben Piper	Jordan Shellman	Sarah Voronin
Adrian Pittinaro	Brielle Sheridan	Calvin Vowles
Pending Player	Dylan Shippers	Nathan Vysotskiy
Amelia Poprozhuk	Leysa Shoaf	Teddy Waasdorp
Olivia Portanova	Eric Simms	Tessa Waasdorp
Elijah Porzi	Nora Simms	Camden Wagner
Henry Power	Iris Simonelli	Levi Wagner
Lucy Power	Mackenzie Simpson	Naomi Walker
Mark Primakov	Landen Sloan	Nathan Walker
Joey Proia	Jase Smarcz	Nehemiah Walker
Giovanni Provenzano	Ezekiel Smeltzer	Noah Walker
Antonio Prus	Judah Smeltzer	Logan Walters
Mila Prus	Carlos Soto	Wayde Watt
Avery Quackenbush	Leymarie Soto	Santino Weingart
Sophie Quackenbush	Sebastian Spagnola	Casey Welker
Kameron Rivers	Milo Spallina	Joey Wenzel
Ariyah Roberson	Mikey Spencer	Aaro West
Fiona Robertson	Carter St Arnaud	Willa Whitney
James Robinson	Dallas Stickney	Daisy Wilkins
Andrew Romaniv	Dalton Stickney	Hazel Wilkins
Caleb Ronnenberg	Jason Sushko	Hudson Willert
Isaac Rosario	Ethan Taccone	Aiden Wilson
Isaiah Rosario	Theodore Taccone	Penelope Wright
Joseph Rutan	Beckett Thomas	Priscilla Wright
Anna Sachman	Sebastian Thomas	Simehoni Yeremia
Carter Sachman	Kimberly Tindal	Michael York
Harper Sackett	Keegn Tucker	Jayden Zgainer
Cristiano Salcedo	Savannah Tumminelli	Isaiah Zuhlke
Nico Sanchez	Cameron Tyler	Josiah Zuhlke
Alphonse "AJ" Sasso	Abby Tyson	Kellin Zuhlke

