

ADULTS



PARKLAND BAPTIST CHURCH

FAMILY MISSION TRIP

LESSON PLAN

Adult Lesson Plan: Parkland Baptist Church

A resource in the 2026 EBO Curriculum series

Theme: Fill the Gap

Theme Scripture: Ephesians 4:15-16

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Scripture Quotations

Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®) unless otherwise indicated.

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LEADER HELPS & RESOURCES

The following is meant to provide background for you as you prepare to lead the lesson. To prepare your heart to teach, make sure to Read the Leader Devotion Page beforehand.

Key Scripture(s): Ephesians 4:15-16

Biblical Background

When Paul wrote the letter to the Ephesians, he was likely a prisoner in Rome, writing to a city that was a massive melting pot of cultures, religions, and social classes. Ephesus was home to the Temple of Artemis, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, and the culture was steeped in individualism and idol worship. For the early Christians there, the idea of "unity" was revolutionary. They were coming from backgrounds where people were divided by ethnicity, status, and gender.

Scripture Insights & Teaching Anchors

Paul explains that God provides specific spiritual gifts not for personal status, but to "equip" every believer for a shared mission. He uses the metaphor of a human body to show that spiritual maturity is a collective effort: the body only functions when it remains connected to its "Head," Jesus, and when every "joint" and "ligament" fulfills its specific role. We have a radical call as believers to "fill the gaps" for one another, and if even one part of the body remains inactive or disconnected, the church is hindered.

GO DEEPER

Have more time for prep or want to know more? You can use these passages for personal study before teaching. For Best results, try to choose at least 1-2 from each theme.

1. CHRIST AS THE HEAD OF THE BODY (V. 15)

- **Colossians 1:18-19** - Explicitly states that Christ is "the head of the body, the church," and that in him all fullness dwells.
- **Ephesians 5:23** - Reiterates that "the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body".
- **Colossians 2:19** - Describes the body holding fast to the "Head, from whom the whole body, supported and knit together by its joints and ligaments, grows as God causes it to grow".

2. SPEAKING TRUTH IN LOVE (V. 15)

- **1 John 3:18** - Encourages believers to "love not in word and speech, but in action and truth".
- **2 Corinthians 4:2** - Discusses commending themselves by "the open statement of the truth" rather than deceit.
- **Zechariah 8:16** - Commands, "Speak the truth to one another, and render true and sound judgments in your courts".

3. GROWTH THROUGH INTERCONNECTEDNESS (V. 16)

- **1 Corinthians 12:12-27** - Provides the analogy of the church as one body with many parts, where every part is necessary.
- **Romans 12:4-5** - Emphasizes that "we, though many, form one body in Christ, and each member belongs to all the others".
- **Colossians 2:19** - Mentions the church growing as it is "knit together by its joints and ligaments".

4. BUILDING UP IN LOVE (V. 16)

- **1 Corinthians 14:12** - Encourages trying to "excel in gifts that build up the church".
- **Galatians 5:13** - Instructs believers to "serve one another humbly in love".
- **1 Corinthians 13** - The entire chapter highlights that all spiritual gifts and actions are worthless without love.

LEADER DEVOTION

Read: Ephesians 4:15-16

“But speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into him who is the head—Christ. From him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building itself up in love by the proper working of each individual part.” (CSB)

Paul writes to Ephesians a letter of encouragement as they develop into mature followers of Christ. The focus of Chapter 4 is how to live as people with a new identity and in unity as the body of Christ, growing and building up the church in love. Paul instructs the church to live out truth in love and to live as a part of a greater whole. By using the physical body as an example he teaches that many parts join together for the function of the whole body, each part is needed for proper growth and development. Much like this, believers all have different functions and giftings, as they work together, they strengthen the body of Christ.

Reflect:

How do I use my giftings in the church? Do I work in unity with others, using our unique strengths together for kingdom impact or do I use my giftings independent of others?

Meditate:

(Scripture-focused only – we fill our minds with God’s Word, not empty them.)

- “But speaking the truth in love”—The truth of the gospel is to be spoken in love.
 - How do you relate to nonbelievers? When you share the gospel, what does that look like? Do your words/actions/tone match? Biblical truth of the gospel should be met with Christlike love.
- “let us grow in every way into him who is the head—Christ”—As we grow in spiritual maturity, we have a deeper understanding of the truth of the gospel, and our reliance on Christ as the head of our lives and of the church.
 - Do you live daily for Christ? What does that look like? Would you say that Christ is the driving force behind your church? Is the gospel of Jesus Christ and making that known the focus in your corporate worship and church programming?
- “From him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament”—Much like the physical body, each member of the body of Christ is unique in gifting and purpose in relation to the whole, all are equally important but serve different purposes. Each member is essential to the health of the whole body.
 - Do you look at some spiritual gifts or contributions to the body as more important than others? Do you sometimes wish that you were gifted in a different way? Do you know what your spiritual giftings are? If so, do you utilize them for kingdom impact? If not, why?
 - If you do not know what your spiritual giftings are, take a spiritual giftings assessment to learn how the Lord has uniquely designed and equipped you for kingdom impact. A great spiritual giftings assessment can be found here:
<https://www.lifeway.com/en/articles/women-leadership-spiritual-gifts-growth-service>

LEADER DEVOTION

Meditate:

- “promotes the growth of the body for building itself up in love by the proper working of each individual part”—When the physical body is working properly, growth happens, the body is stronger and able to do more, the body can endure. As believers, we are a part of the body of Christ and all have an important role and purpose. As we work together and fulfill our roles within the body, we strengthen and grow as a community of believers and the body becomes healthy. A healthy church body is one that is gospel driven with a focus on making, equipping, and leading disciples for kingdom impact.
 - What are ways that I can use my giftings to fill in the gap of lostness? How does my church partner to fill in the gap of lostness throughout Kentucky?

Pray:

“Lord, help me to use my spiritual gifts for the furtherance of your kingdom and to live in unity with other believers seeking to share the truth in love so that your name will be proclaimed, your body will be healthy, and your kingdom will be expanded.”

SESSION GOALS

Our goal of this session is to help believers understand that we all have a part in God's mission of restoration. As we read Ephesians 4:15-16, we see we are all parts of one body, held together through Christ. We are built up when each part of the body functions in according to its giftings, it is then that the body sees growth. We are called to live out the truth in a spirit of love and live as part of the greater whole, which is the body of Christ. As we share the truth in love, utilize our giftings, and work together as the body of Christ we are strengthened and equipped through Christ to confront lostness. Together we can fill in the gap and impact lostness.

Needed Resources

- Bible
- Journal
- Pen/Pencil
- EBO Prayer Cards available for download at kywmu.org/ebo-resources
- EBO Video

Enlist Helpers

Tag team your gathering. Enlist individuals to lead the Missions Learning and Prayer Time. This will engage more people to use their creativity to make your gathering unique and exciting.

Plan Your Gathering

- *Welcome & Prayer* (1-2 minutes)
- *Get Started* (7-8 minutes)
- *Study & Learn* (20-22 minutes) - Use the discussion questions to deepen the conversation. Dig deep in the Word to understand God's desire for us to live lives worthy of our calling.
- *Apply* (8-10 minutes)
- *Missions Learning* (15-20 minutes) - use the suggested EBO video and highlight a Kentucky Ministry. Identify ways you can adopt this ministry and come alongside them in missions action. Identify ways your church can engage your community similar to what this ministry is doing. Highlight the State Offering Goal and your Church's goal. Incorporate a unique challenge to help your church meet your goal.
- *Faith in Action* (10-15 minutes) - Include prayer for missionaries with birthdays in "Prayer Patterns" in Missions Mosaic, KBC's InterSeed Calendar, and the KBC's Church Planter of the Week. Use the EBO prayer cards and incorporate creative ways to engage your group in prayer.
- *Dismiss*

GET STARTED

Icebreaker Option 1: “Truth with Love”

- **Say:** “Share a time you told the truth but did it without love.”
- **Ask:** “What happened? How could the truth have been shared with love? Would that have changed the person’s feelings or responses?”
- **Transition:** “Often, it’s not what we say, but how we say something that can positively or negatively impact someone. As we look at sharing truth in love think about how our motivation for sharing truth should be Christ.”

Icebreaker Option 2: “What Part Am I?”

- **Ask:** “Which part of a body (hand, eye, foot, etc.) do you feel that you currently represent in the church body and why?”
- **Transition- Say:** “All parts of the body are needed to perform their function for a healthy body. In the church body we all have giftings and roles which is equally important, yet diverse in function. As we perform our functions, led by Christ as the head of the body, we grow and strengthen the body of Christ.

STUDY AND LEARN

This section uses short prompts to keep the flow natural. Use the timings as guides.

1) Read the Word

- **Say:** Let's open to Ephesians 4:15-16 and ask the Spirit to make our heart and minds open to understand and apply his word to our lives. (Pray)
- **Ask a Volunteer:** "Please read Ephesians 4:15-16 aloud."
- **Summarize the text:** Paul tells the Ephesians that as believers, they are a part of something bigger than themselves, they are parts of the body of Christ, they have a new identity. Their strength and power come from Christ. As they speak truth in love they grow and mature in their faith. They are led and guided by Christ, who is the head. Much like parts of a physical body, each member has a function. As each individual member fulfills its function, the whole body is strengthened and grows.

2) Live as the Church

- **Say:** "In this text Paul teaches how to live. We are to live out the truth in a spirit of love and to live as a part of a greater whole."
 - To live out the truth in a spirit of love is the mark of maturity. We must share the truth of the Gospel in a way that shows Christlike love.
- **Ask:** "What does it look like to share the truth of the Gospel in love?"

3) Interdependence of the Body

- **Say:** "As we read this passage we see the interdependence of the body, Paul gives the example of the physical body as a word picture for the body of Christ, the church"
 - Each part of the physical body has a specific job that it does to promote physical health and growth. If one body part was to suddenly stop working correctly, it would negatively impact the entire body. Other body parts would either try to overcompensate, or the body just would not function or grow as it is intended.
 - In the body of Christ, each part needs to function properly in order promote health and growth of the body. As believers, we are each a part of the body of Christ and have been equipped with giftings and functions to contribute to the growth of the body. We each have roles that we fulfill and work together for growth and kingdom building.

STUDY AND LEARN

This section uses short prompts to keep the flow natural. Use the timings as guides.

- **Ask:** “When thinking of the physical body, what do you think the most important body part is, and why?”
- **Ask:** “How do you see yourself as part of the body of Christ? What are your spiritual giftings and how do you utilize them for kingdom impact?”

4)Part of a Greater Whole

- **Say:** “The physical body is made up of organ systems with different roles that work together to maintain life and health. Much like that believers are parts of systems (churches, associations, ect) that work together as part of the body. We have been discussing our individual roles and giftings as part of the body of Christ, now let’s think on a larger scale, as Kentucky Baptists we have the opportunity and privilege of working together. Through prayer, financial support, sending, and partnership we work together to strengthen the body and confront lostness. As we come together under Christ’s leading, within our functions, we promote growth in the body.”
- **Ask:** “How do communities of believers come together for kingdom impact?”

APPLY

Goal: Help participants discover how they can be an active member of the body of Christ

Small-group Discussion (5-6 minutes)

Have groups of 3-4 discuss these prompts (choose what fits your group):

1. In Ephesians 4:15-16, we repeatedly see the word love, what does speaking the truth in love and being built up in love look like? How do you demonstrate this in your daily life, both with believers and nonbelievers?
2. How do you use your spiritual gifts for kingdom impact?
3. In what ways do you see your church supporting kingdom impact throughout Kentucky?

Transition to Missions Learning (1 -2 minutes)

- **Say:** “In our Missions Lesson, we will learn how one church saw the need for families to be engaged missionally and how they worked alongside a ministry center across the state to create a unique mission opportunity. Through their work together they have impacted lostness in both communities.”

FEAT. MINISTRY-SPOTLIGHT ARTICLE

Parkland Baptist Church - *Louisville*



BRIDGING THE BLUEGRASS: A VISION FOR FAMILY MISSIONS

The distance between Louisville and Pike County is roughly 200 miles, but for Parkland Baptist Church in Louisville, that span represents a bridge of intentional gospel impact. Driven by a vision to see families serve on mission together, Parkland sought to remove the traditional barriers that often keep parents and children on the sidelines: time, cost, and accessibility.

The vision found its footing when Parkland connected with Josh Odom, the Ministry Director at The Freeda Harris Baptist Center (FHBC) in Elkhorn City, KY. Together, they began dreaming of a mission experience that wasn't just for "experts" or "youth groups," but for the whole family unit. FHBC is a ministry hub located in the heart of Pike Country, KY, where 92% of the county are unchurched and only 1 in 12 people go to a church of any denomination. FHBC mobilizes mission teams into the community to show the love of Christ. The goal is to build partnerships with local churches to impact lostness in the difficult to reach areas of Eastern Kentucky. Josh used his expertise and community connections to create a mission trip experience for Parkland Baptist Church, that would both be a support to the local church and use the unique giftings of family ministry teams.

To turn this dream of families on mission into a reality, Parkland addressed the primary obstacles head-on: The Barrier of Time: By utilizing Labor Day weekend, they created a window that allowed working parents and their children to serve without the pressure of a week-long commitment. The Barrier of Cost and Accessibility: Through the generous support of the Eliza Broadus Offering, a grant was secured to offset expenses for the Parkland trip. This reduced the family's responsibility to one simple task: just get to The Freeda Harris Center.

For the past two years, the Friday evening commute on Labor Day weekend has looked different for many Parkland families. Cars are loaded with changes of clothes, young children, and pack-and-plays as families drive across the state to spend their holiday weekend in service to eastern Kentucky.

This partnership with FHBC has allowed Parkland to pour into Pike County through diverse ministry avenues. They have been able to support local churches through hosting block parties and one day VBS events. They have met tangible needs of the community by completing home repairs and work projects. Doors have been opened to gospel conversations through acts of service and partnership with the local church.

The impact, however, hasn't just been one sided. These trips have served to strengthen the marriages and families at Parkland. By giving children their first taste of hands-on ministry, parents are modeling a lifestyle of service that transcends a single weekend. Since the 2025 trip, four of Parkland's children that attended the event have been saved and baptized and look forward to sharing their gospel stories when they return to Pike County.

As this partnership matures, the vision is expanding. Having already worked alongside two local churches in the Pike County area, Parkland Baptist Church and FHBC are actively looking to partner with more churches in 2026. The goal remains clear: to see families—now including those with older children and teens—be encouraged to take up the mantle of the Great Commission. Together, Parkland Baptist Church and the Freeda Harris Baptist Center are proving that when a church removes barriers and dreams with local partners, the entire family can play a role in filling the gap where lostness is greatest.

MISSIONS LEARNING

Needed Resources

- Parkland Feat. Ministry Video found at kywmu.org/ebo-resources
- TV, Laptop, and/or Projector on which you plan on watching the video.

Prepare in Advance

- Download the Parkland video beforehand from kywmu.org/ebo-resources and test audio.
- If internet is unavailable, use the Spotlight article on page 11 instead."

Optional: Interactive Viewing Guide

Pause ~00:00:54 (after: "to seek to make much of Jesus here in our area").

- Ask: "What stands out to you about the way Parkland and Freeda Harris approached missions together?"
- Listen for: They partnered with local churches rather than simply coming in to do their own ministry.

Pause ~02:45 (after: "People that don't know God, they really need to know God").

- Ask: "What made this mission experience more than simply a service project?"
- Listen for: Service created opportunities for relationships and gospel conversations.

Pause ~03:24 (after: "doing missions with their families").

- Ask: "What barriers might keep families from serving together?"
- Follow-up: "What could our churches do to remove some of those barriers?"

Pause ~03:45 (after: "we are so thankful to be one of those people that gets to benefit as well").

- Ask: "Where do you see the Eliza Broadus Offering making a difference in this story?"
- Follow-up: "How does giving allow us to participate in missions we may never personally experience?"

Story Recap (1-2 minutes)

Summarize Spotlight article (leader may read below or paraphrase):

- Parkland Baptist Church in Louisville was looking for an opportunity to encourage mission involvement within the young families of their church. Cost, time commitment, and accessibility were barriers that made traditional mission trips a near impossibility for their families. Church leaders worked alongside Josh Odom, the Ministry Director of the Freeda Harris Baptist Center in eastern Kentucky, to create a weekend long family mission trip for Labor Day weekend. The church received a grant through the Eliza Broadus Offering, which offset the cost of the mission trip for the families, leaving them with just the responsibility of transportation to and from eastern Kentucky.
- Through partnership between local churches, The Freeda Harris Baptist Center, and the Parkland mission team, doors were opened to the gospel. The teams hosted evangelistic block parties, one day VBS events, and completed work projects. They were able to encourage the local church as they worked together to reach an area of the commonwealth with extreme lostness.
- The mission team not only had impact in the local community, but they also saw their own marriages and families strengthened. Since taking the trip, four of Parkland's children have accepted Christ and been baptized, these children now have a story to tell about their lives transformed.
- As the church looks to the future, they plan on expanding the mission trip to families with teens and are praying for full church involvement in the Labor Day trips. They also continue partnering with Josh at the Freeda Harris Baptist Center and local churches. Together, through the leading of Christ they are filling the gap of lostness.

MISSIONS LEARNING

Discussion (4 minutes)

- Why is it important to teach children to live missionally from a young age?
- What are some challenges to family missions and what is the value in family missions?
- How can you or your group support family missions within your local church and community?
- What are some ways individuals, as well as families, can discover and engage in mission opportunities both locally and abroad?
- The church received a grant to help offset costs. What are practical steps our church or small group can take to make mission involvement more accessible for all members?
- We are not limited by age or ability to be used by God. How does this truth empower each of us to find our unique role in fulfilling the Great Commission?

Prayer & Response (2-3 minutes)

- Pray for The Freeda Harris Baptist Center, the Ministry Director—Josh Odom (and his family) as they seek to build relationships with local churches and impact lostness in eastern Kentucky.
- Pray for the Labor Day mission trips of Parkland Baptist Church, that they would continue to grow and expand to families with teens. Also, pray for partnerships with additional churches in eastern Kentucky.
- Pray for the children of Parkland, that they will grow and learn to be on mission from a young age, and that they would know Jesus as Lord.
- Pray that churches across Kentucky would see the value in family mission trips and strategically find opportunities to serve together in all stages of family life.

Lord, Jesus we thank you for the opportunity we have, to be your hands and feet. Help us to remember that we are not limited by age or ability to be used by you. Lead us to creative ways that we can live on mission in our local communities and beyond. Amen.

FAITH IN ACTION

By engaging in these activities, we can move beyond simply doing good deeds to being a light in our communities, demonstrating sacrificial love, and intentionally sharing the hope and transforming power of Christ. Think of them as the opportunity to practice costly discipleship in the spirit of Ephesians 4:15-16.



Leader tips

- Mission trip planning often requires dedicated church involvement and vision casting by church leadership. Prayerfully seek the support of church leaders and offer assistance as needed, understanding that each church has different policies and strategies for missions.
- Advocate for prayer, giving, and going as families together filling in the gap and confronting lostness.

GET INVOLVED WITH THE FREEDA HARRIS CENTER

Plan A Family Mission Trip

The Freeda Harris Center is always looking for ministry partners. Ministry Director, Josh Odom strategically partners mission teams with local churches based on giftings and abilities to make gospel impact throughout eastern Kentucky.

Steps

- Pray and discuss with church leadership the possibility of a family mission trip to the Freeda Harris Center.
- Meet with Freeda Harris Center Ministry Director, Josh Odom to discuss opportunities for ministry.
- Hold an interest meeting with potential team member, sharing important details such as expectations, goals, dates of trip, and cost.
- Select leaders for the trip and begin planning with Josh Odom based on needs of the local community and church leaders.
- Pray and select mission team—be attuned to and anticipate needs of families participating in the trip.
- Begin working through logistics and prepare for the trip.
- Set timelines and complete procedures outlined by your church for mission trips.
- Go and serve together as families on mission for Jesus!
- Upon return, debrief and share with the church how the Lord worked through the trip
- Plan return trips and build partnerships with local churches in eastern Kentucky

VBS Ministry Highlight

Highlight The Freeda Harris Center as your VBS missions offering and prayer focus. During VBS, spend time each day sharing with children about the Freeda Harris Center and all the work being done in eastern Kentucky. Contact the Freeda Harris Center for up-to-date information, prayer requests, and ways to donate. Utilize this information to create a strategy for highlighting this ministry during VBS!

FAITH IN ACTION

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DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING THROUGH INTERGENERATIONAL SERVING

Find local opportunities to encourage families to become more missionally minded and serve together. Meet with your pastor to discuss ways that your church can live on mission together across all generations. This could look like a family mission trip, or an outreach event in your local community where all ages are encouraged to participate together. When creating an event, think about how the youngest to the oldest can serve.

Local School Clean Up Day

Build relationships with a local school by cleaning up the school grounds.

Gospel Connection: Through community service and outreach relationships between the school and the church may be strengthened.

Quick start (30-60 days)

- Contact local principal/school administrators to offer assistance in a clean up day to be performed by the church outside school hours. See what needs requirements the school has for this type of volunteer work.
- Recruit volunteers, focusing on families and intergenerational involvement. Small children can easily pick weeds, teens can rake and haul limbs, adults can mow and supervise.
- Advertise the event as an opportunity to spend the morning serving as families.
- Ensure you have the proper equipment (gloves, yard waste bags, lawn tools)
- Confirm expectations from the school
- Prior to event and the day of the event pray for the school, the students and families that are represented there and school faculty and staff.
- Show the love of Christ through this act of service.
- Continue to build relationships with the school by repeat yard cleanup days, possibly before school starts at the end of summer, late fall, and early spring.

FAITH IN ACTION

By engaging in these activities, we can move beyond simply doing good deeds to being a light in our communities, demonstrating sacrificial love, and intentionally sharing the hope and transforming power of Christ. Think of them as the opportunity to practice costly discipleship in the spirit of Ephesians 4:15-16.



Leader tips

Understand that volunteers are not limited to families, but be creative in finding ways to welcome families serving together.

Community Block Party

Invite community to a block party outreach event.

Gospel Connection: Build relationships in order to create opportunities to share the gospel

Quick start (60-90 days)

- Meet with church leaders and pray for the potential of a block party for an outreach event.
- Select a date for the event.
- Begin recruiting the volunteer team, focus on creating avenues for families to serve together at the event. Here are a few examples:
 - Welcome team- families with young children can easily welcome neighbors to the event.
 - Carnival Game team- family teams run games-corn hole, other simple yard games
 - Gospel presentation team- family teams that trained and comfortable with sharing the Gospel can utilize tools such as the Wordless Book, Gospel Story Bracelets, and other simple presentations to share the Gospel
 - Snack Team- replenishes snacks offered at the event such as popcorn
 - Information and Follow up team- create a team specifically for gathering information in order to follow up with party attendees
- Meet with teams to plan and prepare, make lists of items needed for the event and borrow or purchase items
- Advertise for the event
- Create a detailed schedule for volunteers and order of the day for the block party
- Enjoy the block party!
- Follow up with attendees, build relationships, continue building on gospel presentations made at the event
- Debrief the event with team leaders and look for opportunities for improvement
- Set a future date for another block party!

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in every way into him who is the head—Christ.
From him the whole body, fitted and knit together
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