



CALL TO ACTION

WEEK 1: MARY, MOTHER OF JESUS

1. Take home and read the provided printout of the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Screening Tool (https://med.stanford.edu/content/dam/sm/ppc/documents/DBP/EDPS_text_added.pdf). For each question, pray for the new and expecting mothers in your community who may be experiencing mental health challenges and ask God to open you to how you might offer support.
2. Investigate initiatives in your community seeking to improve perinatal and postpartum care for women with a higher risk of maternal mortality, particularly Black women. For example, in Kansas City, a partnership between Wichita Birth Justice Society and Uzazi Village produced the Neighborhood Doula Advocates program, which seeks to train doulas to bring support to Black, Latino and Indigenous families through pregnancy and birth (<https://wichtabirthjusticesociety.org/meet-the-neighborhood-doula-advocates-2/>). Consider ways you can support or become involved in this or other programs in your area. To find local breastfeeding support for Black and Latino families, such as the Chocolate Milk Cafes in Kansas City, Topeka, and Wichita, visit the Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition Directory at <https://ksbreastfeeding.org/local-resources/>.
3. Explore and join the Kansas Birth Equity Network: <https://www.kumc.edu/school-of-medicine/academics/departments/population-health/research/kansas-birth-equity-network.html>. The network uses a community-centered approach to engage diverse stakeholders and create solutions that improve Black maternal, paternal, and infant health in Kansas through training, research, healthcare, and advocacy.
4. Explore how your church can support young families by creating an infant feeding room in which mothers and caregivers can feed their infants and/or pump in a quiet, safe, and hygienic environment. The space should provide complete privacy, comfortable seating, plugs for pumping equipment, and, if possible, a small refrigerator where mothers can store breastmilk and a sink for handwashing and mixing formula. Signage and messaging should make clear that while this space is available, families are not required to use it and breastfeeding is welcome in the sanctuary and other community spaces in the church. Consider enrolling in the “Breastfeeding Welcome Here” program (<https://ksbreastfeeding.org/cause/breastfeeding-welcome-here/>) and displaying window decals and table tents to let families know breastfeeding is welcome at your church. For more ideas, see <https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/Library/CR-011414.pdf>.
5. Take a moment to notice the new and expecting mothers in your church and neighborhood and brainstorm ways you might offer them support, whether by yourself or in partnership with others. In addition to initiatives like a meal train or a diaper shower, are there other ways you or your community could support the mother and her child throughout the first year of life? For instance, consider whether your church or neighborhood could begin a Grandmothers Tea program to support breastfeeding mothers (<http://www.illinoisbreastfeeding.org/21401/21464.html>). Get the mother(s) involved in the brainstorming and pay attention to areas where they may need more help.