

Creative prayer ideas that you can use with your Children and Youths.



# Play and Pray

*Great Ideas for*

 *Sunday Schools*

 *Kids church*

 *Kids clubs*

 *Teen Clubs*

 *Youth groups*



# Play and Pray

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## WHY ?

God is revealed first in the Bible, in the very first book of the Bible, Genesis, as a God of creativity and this is not " a way-in-the-past" idea; rather it is still true now, today. And as he took so much trouble to make sure the first craftsmen/builders of the Temple he had chosen to dwell were filled with his Spirit ( Exodus 31 : 1-11) , then no wonder he asks, no commands, everyone of us now to be filled with his Spirit for the new Temple he is building! And I don't think it too much of a conclusion that as Bezalel and his team were gifted in areas of art, design etc then God's people today ought to be brimming with all sorts of art, dance, music, design, writing, inventing etc. By the way ancient Talmud tradition has it that Bezalel was 13 years of age.....

Where does God's creativity come from ? I believe God's creativity is but an overflow of his love and desire to express who he is. Our creativity also ought to be an expression of our love and a response to his. God's people should be the most colourful, innovative, passionate people in the whole world today, in the way we make friends and share hospitality; in worship and praise, in praying; in the ways we reach out to our lost friends and communities. Our GOD is creative God and as his children we also should be creative. In this book you can find lot of CREATIVE ideas that you can organize a creative PRAYER time with your youth Group or with your Sunday school kids.

**Praying can be difficult: you may not know what to pray about, where to start, or which words to use. Sometimes you may feel too tired, or not be in the right 'mood'. If so, this page is for you! Please contact us if you have any good ideas of your own, so we can add them to our resources.**

**Prayer is all about communication with your best friend - the One who always answers (although not always in the way you expect). There are literally hundreds of ways to communicate with other people - through words, pictures, music... Why not try some with God?**



# Heart Preparation :

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Heart preparation : We have little 5 things for heart preparation for the very effective prayer. Here are the 5 steps we have doing.....

- BE THANKFUL
- SE SORRY
- BE FILLED
- BE QUIET
- BE READY and EXPECTANT FOR GOD TO SPEAK

## 1. BE THANKFUL

Psalm 100 : 4 says " Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise...." Griping, moaning, grumbling and complaining are not what God wants us to live in. We belie and belittle God himself, exposing how little trust him. They are the traits that led a whole people to wander in a desert for 40 years, a journey that ought to have taken no longer than 10 days.

Thankfulness unlocks in our young people such wonderful qualities as humility, honesty, gratitude and respect. At the outset of " Heart Pre" it breaks the sound barrier. Thankfulness is first of all an inner attitude but does well to expressed, and loudly too. Ask everyone to be ready with 1/2 items they are grateful to God for. You may need at first to prime them with some suggestions, encourage the ordinary everyday things such possible.

Now ask for a "machine gun" time of thanksgiving as each person joins in one word after the other. No gaps, just quick fire prayer. No long prayers allowed but only 1/2 words. In all age setting ask adults to hang back at first until the younger ones are joining in.

## **2. BE SORRY**

Psalm 24 : 4 says we need " clean hands and a pure heart" to be in God's presence. I may lead the group in this way" OK everyone, let's ask God to check our hearts right now. Don't go digging around but allow the Holy Spirit to gently show you any area he isn't happy with. If it's something between you and God ask his forgiveness. 1 John 1: 9 says" If we confess our sin he is faithful and just to forgive and cleanse us from all our unrighteousness." If it means going to say sorry to someone else then do it right now if possible. If it is someone else not with us here then agree to the Lord to speak to that person as soon as you get home, even telephone call. Jesus' teaching is clear, we are a deep breath as we forgive others.

## **3. BE FILLED**

Ask God to fill us afresh with Holy Spirit as he is the helper, the one who helps us to cry to our father ( Romans 8:) You may like as the leader to ask one of the children to lead this prayer. One idea here is to ask everyone to hold out their palms face up and take a deep breath. He is closer than the very next breath we take.

#### **4. BE QUIET**

There are three main voices we hear in our minds and hearts, God's, our own and Satan's. It is a simplistic way of looking at it we know but can help us focus. With some basic teaching we can help young people learn to recognize the voice of the enemy and his tactics of temptations, accusations and condemnation etc. What is harder is learning you discern between our own voice and ideas and God's voice. In this section we model "silencing the voice of enemy" James talks of "resisting the enemy and he will flee" John 10 says "his sheep hear his voice" So we are saying "Lord we chose to shut out any distractions or influence the enemy would bring to us now and we take authority over him in Jesus name. Lord we choose to listen to your voice right now, trusting in your ability to speak to us."

#### **5. BE READY AND LISTEN**

The final step is to give God time and to wait before him, thanking him that he is a God who loves to speak to his children. It's helpful to have a specific question for the group to all ask father God together. eg. "Father, is anything there on your heart that you want to share with us today about our church, city, community, day of outreach, Sunday school?" Get comfortable for a few minutes and then feedback in to small groups or the whole group with Bible verses, impressions, pictures people got in their minds. Encourage people to speak out even if what they feel they have is silly or irrelevant. God often speaks with bits of the picture and it is like putting a puzzle together. After

getting a sense of what God might be saying don't forget to thank him and pray in to what he has revealed.



## 01. Good news for the Poor

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Make small cards with pictures on them representing things that many children do not have. For example: Food, clothes, shoes, water, medicine, family, house, bed, money, school, Bible, toys.

Place the cards in a container. Allow each person to take a card and then spend time thinking about what life would be like without the item on the card. ? Ask each person to write a prayer on the back of the card, and then put it back in the container. When all the cards are completed, have each person take out a card and read the prayers aloud in the group, until all the prayers have been read.



## 02. Freedom for the captives

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Have a few of the group stand or sit in a circle facing inwards, representing children in prison. Ask the rest of the group to form another circle around them, facing outwards (i.e. back to back with the children), linking arms or holding hands to represent the bars of a prison.

1. Ask everyone to close their eyes for a few moments, and imagine what it would be like to be a child in prison.

2. Then get everyone to pray out loud at once:

- Those representing children pray prayers of freedom, peace, protection, hope and love.
- Those representing the prison bars pray for changes in laws, governments and attitudes.



## 03. King's KIDS

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Each child can make a crown from paper or card, making it as beautiful as possible with pens, pieces of coloured paper, shiny sweet wrappers, etc.

The children can then put the crowns on, to show that they are the King's children and they are precious to him.

As they wear the crowns, they can pray for children who feel dirty and unloved because people have hurt them



## 04. Praying in the Park

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This is a great time of year to take a group of kids or youth on a prayer walk in the park. Lead them in prayer for their city, neighborhoods, schools, friends, church, pastor, children of the world, etc.

If there are people in the park, two or three of the children or youth (with adult supervision) could approach them explaining they have gathered together for prayer and inquire if they have a special request or need for prayer. Encourage them to pray for/with people immediately or, if they are a little shy, take the requests back to the group to be prayed over.



## 05. The Five Finger Prayer

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1. Your thumb is closest to you. The thumb reminds us to pray for those closest to us - our family and friends.

2. Your pointer finger, or index finger, reminds us of teachers who point things out to us. Pray for the people who teach you - pastors, teachers, children's Church leaders, Sunday school teachers, school teachers, coaches, Girl Scout and Boy Scout leaders, etc.

3. Your middle finger is the longest, which reminds us to pray for those who are in authority over us. Try to wiggle your middle fingers without moving any other fingers. Many people can't move them without moving any other finger. Those in authority over you (your middle finger) move other people (fingers) to do things.

4. Your ring finger is next to your little finger. It is one of your weakest fingers, so it reminds you to pray for those who are weak - the sick and the unsaved.

5. Your little finger is the smallest finger of all. It represents you. We are to think more highly of others than ourselves (the little finger); therefore, your little finger reminds you to pray for yourself. While it is important to spend time praying for others, you should also remember to pray for your own needs.

6. Your whole hand reminds you that God holds the whole world in His hand. Send your prayer with praise and worship to God. So, raise your

hands to God and give Him praise. Most of the time, we pray more for ourselves than we do for others. This helping hand prayer will help you to remember who to pray for.



## 06. Disciplined Praying

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1. **Name It:** Around the circle each person names one person/situation to be prayed for (have someone writes down the list of prayer requests--don't forget to hold on to the list, you'll need it again)
2. **Adopt It:** As the list of prayer requests is read, ask the question. Who is willing to pray for Nick's uncle this week? How 'bout Laura's friend whose having a difficult time at home?
3. **Commit to It:** Have each person restate a commitment to hold that person/situation in prayer for a week. Lord, I pray for Nick's uncle as he faces surgery on Friday. Lord, I hold Laura's friend in my prayer that you bring her peace.
4. **Pray It:** Throughout the week each person continues to pray for that particular concern or joy. 5. **Revisit It:** Take time to find out about each prayer concern. Nick, how is your uncle doing? Laura, did your friend have a good week?

## 07. Images from the World for Meditation

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Use photographs / newspaper articles / pieces of nature to encourage you to think about situations which need prayer, or simply be inspired to thank God for his beautiful creation!



## 08. Lighting a Candle

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Lighting a candle as a reminder to pray is a very old idea. Light is a very powerful symbol of Jesus' presence. 'In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness but the darkness has not understood it...the true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world' (John 1: 4—9). Lighting a candle reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world, that He is present, and prays with us to the Father (Hebrews 7: 25). Some ways of using candles:

- 1) Light a candle in a church or cathedral to represent someone.
- 2) In your small groups (prayer / cell / home groups), light a candle during your prayer times.
- 3) Light a candle on anniversaries of births / baptisms / deaths etc. to remind you to pray for that person (or to thank God for their life).

There are many other ways you could explore...



## 09. Plant a Tree / Bulb

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Planting a tree can be a lovely reminder of someone who lives far away, or as a remembrance of someone who has died. Choose a plant, with characteristics similar to those of your friend:

E.g. a bold red rose for someone on the 'frontline' of their work, or a delicate pink flower for someone with a gentle nature etc. Alternatively you could choose a plant, which flowered around the time of an anniversary of a special occasion of your own or a loved one, for example a baptism, or wedding day. The flower will prompt you to pray.



## 10. Clay shapes

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Playing with clay or praying with clay can be a really fun experience. Many of us have not played with clay or play dough since we were children. However, most adults who have a go seem to become completely immersed in what they are doing and really enjoy getting their hands dirty! There are many different activities you could try using clay.

1) Take lumps of clay and mould them into shapes of different parts of creation, for which you would like to thank God.

2) Mould a lump of clay into a shape, which might represent how you are feeling at the moment, or perhaps how you would like to feel and then pray to God asking him to help you.

3) Just enjoy the tactile experience of playing with clay! It's very therapeutic.



## 11. Different Prayer Postures

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It has become less common to kneel down and 'put our hands together and close our eyes' to pray. Of course, prayer needs no special formula in order for God to hear it. However, it can be interesting to try different postures when praying. We use 'body language' to express ourselves day-to-day (some more than others!), but for some reason when we pray we often close our eyes and become still. Prayer is about communication: if we have a living relationship with God, then that will mean expressing all kinds of emotions, so why not show them!

Here are some examples of possible different postures relating to particular states.

**1. Praise and thanks:** stand up and raise your head and hands (don't forget to smile!), as you express God's glory and your gratitude.

**2. Confession:** sit and bow your head.

**3. Asking God for help:** kneel and raise your open hands, waiting for them to be 'filled'.

**4) Your turn! Try expressing doubt or fear etc. through** a posture. It's o.k. to be honest with God – He knows how you feel anyway!

## 12. Prayer Walls

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The idea here is to build a 'wall' of prayer for 24 hours, 7 days a week (or just 24 hours for a start!) by asking volunteers to sign up for 1 hour slots of prayer. The aim would be to fill a week with wall-to-wall prayer for one particular event / situation or person. Each person can pray wherever they are. You could then repeat the week over and over again. It is amazing how many people will actually sign up to pray even at the most unsociable hours! To make it more visual you could draw a wall with hours of the day written on each brick, and each person could sign his / her name on that brick.



## 13. 'Fishing for Prayer' Net

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Get or make a fishing net and stick one end on the wall. Cut out little paper fish for people to write prayer requests on. Stick them onto the net so people can read them and pray. If it is more of a private prayer, then simply roll the paper fish up so it could be a message in a bottle.



## 14. Pray for Street Children

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In one corner of the room there could be a large cardboard box and a dustbin full of 'clean' rubbish tipped on the floor. Allow children to imagine what it must be like to only have a box for cover at night and to have to rummage through rubbish to live.

- The children might like to get in the box and pray for children in these circumstances.
- Provide a 'graffiti' wall (a large sheet of paper attached to wall), where children could write down prayers to God for the street children.
- If countries or projects are known to you, provide pictures and specific information and prayer requests.



## 15. Thanks Giving on Post-it Notes

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During a chosen day, carry around a pen and post-it notes. Make an effort to jot down every time something positive happens or you are aware of a reason to thank God. This might be

- 1) for the sun, which provides the energy to run the planet,
- 2) for having a house to wake up in, and food for breakfast,
- 3) for having transport to get to school / work,
- 4) for some kind words spoken to you during the day...

If you really thought about it you would probably run out of post-it notes! By the end of the day you may have a whole pad of blessings. We too often make a habit of only noticing bad things that happen, and gradually forget about the good things that surround us daily. This exercise can help alter our perspective from the 'glass half empty' to the 'glass half full' mentality.

Understandably, there might be days or indeed long periods of time when you may feel that there is little to be thankful for at all. Perhaps you have been unwell or unemployed for a long time? Perhaps you have difficulties with your family or job?...and so on. If so, you might find yourself thinking, 'Well, that's o.k. for you, but what about my situation?' You may find this exercise emotionally difficult, but on the

other hand, it might help you to recognize some of the good things you do have, and feel a bit more positive. I pray that this will be the case, if you give it a go. Often it is the people who face the most trying of circumstances who are examples to others for their ability to realize how much there is to be thankful for, even in hard times.



## 16. Intercession Drama - Praying with a Map or globe

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### Praying with a Map or Globe

This activity probably works best with a group. Ask members of your group to name situations in countries overseas, for which they would like to pray. Make a list, something like this:

- 1) **Iraq**- for all the innocent people who have been injured or lost their homes in the recent war and continuing unrest.
  
- 2) **Indonesia** – for all Christians who are in great danger of persecution because of their faith.
  
- 3) **Chile** – for a friend called ... who is working as a missionary.
  
- 4) **Spain** – for relatives who have just moved, and need to find good friends.
  
- 5) **Sri Lanka** - Civil War

You will probably discover that members of your group have some very interesting contacts! Either using a large world map or globe, put pins or sticky labels onto the relevant locations. You might wish to use small photographs or short summaries of each situation. Your 'prayer

map' could be displayed in your church, or globe used in your small groups as a focal point when you pray.

(Don't forget to keep it up-to-date: it doesn't give a very good impression about the prayer-life of your Church if notices are not current!)



## 17. Pass the parcel

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Divide your group in to smaller groups of 10 or so. Wrap a nice gift like some chocolate in several layers of paper. On each layer write a prayer request or something to do as individuals, in twos, all together as a group. Play music and pass the parcel! When the music stops the person holding the parcel gets to unwrap one layer and read out the prayer activity.

Ps. This really worked with my group of children.



## 18. Sending Balloons to Heaven

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This is a fun group activity, particularly for children, though anyone can enjoy it! You will need helium balloons. Write prayers for, or just names of, people overseas, into balloons. At a specific time, all release the balloons, praying together. It is a good symbol of the 'prayers of the saints' (that's all Christians) flying up to heaven for God to answer. You could even write your address / email address onto a balloon and see if you get a response from someone finding it!



## 19. Praying through Sketches

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You might not think of yourself as an artist, but I challenge you to have a go as a prayer activity! I was never any good at art as a child, but when I tried sketching some of my feelings years later, I was quite surprised by what I produced on the paper.

- 1) There are no rules, so whatever I produce is more interesting than a blank piece of paper.
- 2) It's a different way of getting things off my chest from talking.
- 3) I am quite often surprised that I managed to draw something, which actually looks reasonably good!



## 20. Step Outside & Pray

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- This time of prayer and praise is fun and creative.
- Equip each person with a small bag, or even better a small bucket, a 3 x 5 card and pencil, and a Bible.
- Have each person go outside and find 10 things that can fit into the bag or bucket that remind them of God.
- Have them write down each item on the 3 x 5 card. Next find a Bible verse that can be related to their item and write it down on the card.
- Come back together and relate what you have found.
- Then take the time to praise God for the things you have shared.



## 21. Rockin' for the Lord

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- Send everyone outside in different directions. Have them find 10 different rocks. They can be different sizes, types, or colors.
- Come back together and read Joshua 3:1 - 4:7. Joshua had the children of Israel build an altar of remembrance. You will do the same thing.
- In an attitude of prayer have each person bring one rock at a time and place it down in the center of the group to create an altar. Each time they place a rock down they say should one thing that they are thankful for. If necessary, use a can or two of brown Playdoh to stick the rocks together.



## 22. Breaking Chains

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Give each member of the group/congregation a slip of paper, approximately 2X8 cm.

(Alternatively, use pre-prepared paper chain packs.)

Ask each person to write a prayer for the victims or perpetrators of human trafficking on their slip of paper. Join the strips into one long chain. Invite the group/congregation to hold the chain above their heads. Then read a prayer out loud together, and when you reach the 'amen', everyone should demolish as much of the chain as they can, as a sign of God's desire for the chains of injustice to be broken.



## 23. Ask - Seek – Knock

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The key to praying is often knowing exactly how to approach the need. If someone is sick, do you ask God to heal them, do you rebuke the sickness, do you need to pray through some underlying problem, etc.? This is a good model to use when you're not sure which approach to take.

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you” -Matthew. 7:7-8 NIV

- 1- **Ask** God to anoint you to pray for this particular need. Admit that you don't have what it takes, and you need His supernatural help even to pray effectively. Then receive His anointing.
- 2- **Search** for the right approach or promises to apply to this need. Lay down your own personal understanding of the situation, or your own desires for the solution. Wait with the Lord until you have received the revelation you need. It may help to Search through His promises until He highlights the right ones.
- 3- **Knock** on His door of heaven with these promises or revelation in your hand. Come with boldness, because you know you have His heart on the matter. Don't give up, keep knocking until He opens the door, and you receive the blessing you seek.

## 24. Throwing prayers

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Get a large sheet of cardboard and stick duct tape on it back to front. (Bend over each end and stick it on) so that the card is covered with the tape and the sticky side is facing out. Give everyone a piece of paper and ask them to write on it a brief prayer for children in your community, or the names of children they know who aren't? a part of your church. On a given signal, get them to make a ball out of that paper and throw it at the sticky card so that it sticks. Pray a general prayer that God will help these children stick with him (or you could come up with a slightly less corny way of praying!)



## 25. Bookmarks

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Give everyone a slip of paper or card and ask them to write or draw on it something that will remind them of the needs of children in the local community. You could help them by providing some cuttings or news footage about children in your area. Alternatively they could draw the On Our Knees Again arrows to remind them that we need to be praying to God, listening to children and seeing things from their point of view, and asking God to show us what we need to do to reverse the decline.

Ask people to put the bookmarks in their Bibles and to pray about these things each time they come across them.



## 26. Scripture Prayers

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Find about 10 verses from the Bible about God's heart for the poor, the oppressed, widows and orphans.

Before your Sunday meeting, select 10 people from the congregation, and give them a verse each (try to choose those who rarely do 'up-front' things).

In the prayer time, ask them simply to stand up where they are, one at a time, and read their verse.

(NB. This activity is most effective when you have primed them beforehand, so that it comes as a surprise to the congregation. Hearing God's heart, spoken by unfamiliar voices from different parts of the building, can be very striking.)



## 27. Local Focus

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This call to prayer lasts just a few days, but the problem of trafficking will be around for much longer. Do some investigations in your local community, and choose some mid/long-term prayer goals to work towards together.

Ask the police whether they believe trafficked people live in your area, and if so, how many. Commit to praying that the police will successfully prosecute perpetrators, and that the number will decrease over the next year.

Are there shops which display adult magazines where children can see them? Begin to pray together that shopkeepers will change their practices. In this case, writing to the shop owners as well as praying could be an effective way forward.

God's word is clear and unequivocal that we should welcome the foreigners in our midst, regardless of how they come to be there. Begin a campaign of kindness towards those of other cultures who live in your area. Pray for them, and find ways to bless them.

## 28. Sharing Burdens

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Acquire a piece of chain and a padlock. (You can buy these from any Hardware shop.) In your small group prayer time, give one person the chain, and ask them to hold it.

As they feel the weight, coldness and hardness of it, invite them to pray for those who live in slavery today.

When they have prayed, invite them to pass it to the next person, to do the same thing. Repeat this, until everyone in the group has held the chain and prayed. (This activity is best suited to small groups)



## 29. Open doors

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Give everyone a piece of paper with a picture of an open door on it (you could photocopy one or ask them to draw one). Start by asking them to think of children who used to be in the church but have left (the open door symbolising departure) – they may know them by name, or they might need to think more generally of children leaving church. Ask them to pray that wherever those children are today they will sense how much God loves them. Ask for God's forgiveness for attitudes and actions that may have caused them to leave.

Now ask everyone to think of the open door as a way of coming into the church. Ask them to pray that those same children who left would come back in. Ask God to show your church what can be done to help them return. In addition, you could ask them to think of where the open doors are in your church (groups, activities, events...) and that God would help children to find them and come in.



## 30. Station Prayer

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**STATIONS OF PRAYER** -for a special prayer adventure with the family or youth group at home, church or outdoors, set up a variety of prayer stations.

At each station, post 3 X 5 cards that would guide prayer. Vary the activities by using suggestions listed in this packet. You may want to have “mementos” at each station for participants to take along. A couple of examples in the church setting might be...in the secretaries office, print the names of congregational members who are ill or shut in. After offering a prayer, the participants would take the card along and continue to prayer for that person. A bathroom sink filled with water provides a unique setting for a prayer on our baptism. Make the sign of the cross with the water before leaving that station.



## 31. Prayer Props

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**There are many ways of using resources and modern technology to pray in new ways. Here are just a few:**

- **Text prayer groups** . People commit themselves to pray at a particular time and text each other as a reminder; or one of the group texts the others with a prayer or Bible text for reflection.
- **Set up an e-mail group and send each other prayer ideas and requests.**
- **Use images to stimulate prayer**, e.g. postcards, or images from magazines can be scattered around a room and people can choose one that inspires or moves them. Have a time of quiet to pray about issues that the images bring up and then invite those who feel able to talk about the experience.
- **Magnet magazine** is an excellent source of striking images that can stimulate reflection and prayer.
- **Create presentations** use Power Point or OHPs to combine music and images that might lead people into prayer. This is a great way of

offering intercessions in worship. Use images that reflect the news and the world around us.

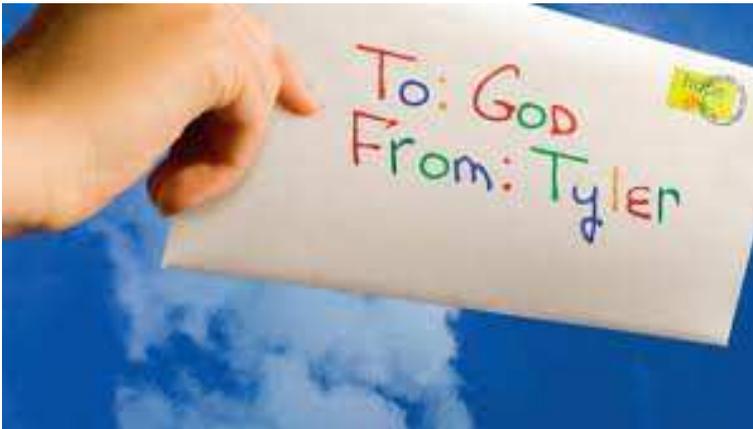
- **Set up a Prayer Board at church**, low enough for children to reach. Encourage people to pin prayers onto the board. Why not have a different theme each week? Shape your note paper to reflect your theme, e.g. hand shapes for thanksgiving; fish shapes for prayers about mission; leaf shapes for creation. Have plenty of pens and pencils available for people to use.



## 32. Letters to God

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Some people find it easier to write down their feelings than to verbalise them. Try writing a letter to God, expressing what's going on in your mind. You might want to say sorry for something, or there may be a situation you just can't understand and want to pour out your feelings. Maybe you want to make a promise to God to do something particular or to change a habit? I often find that writing something down helps me to understand it or deal with it. By writing specifically to God, you accomplish all of the above *and* leave it in His hands – the best hands to deal with it!



## 33. Bible Stories Meditation

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The Bible is packed with stories about real characters in real, challenging situations. This prayer idea combines prayer and Bible study – so it has double value! Why not take a story and imagine yourself into the character's situation?

You can probably conjure up more questions to ask yourself once you get into the flow. Finish your meditation with a prayer, thanking God for giving us stories about people in the past, who made mistakes like us, and yet some were also amazing examples of how to live for God. Then ask God for help with anything you found difficult that came out of the story or that related to you personally.

Ask yourself,

'How would I have felt?'

'What would my response have been?'

Then, can you relate this story to a personal experience or perhaps one of someone you know? Ask,

'What did I do in that situation?'

'Did I respond like [ *character's name* ]?'

'Did they respond in the best way?'

'What did he / she / I learn about God?'

'Where was God in the whole picture?'

(This may be different from how you *felt* God to be present!)

Some good stories for starters: loads in the Old Testament...try putting yourself in Abraham's shoes or Joseph's in any of their challenging situations (*Genesis*), Moses (*Exodus*), Elijah (*1 Kings*), Jonah, Job (if you're prepared to be stretched!). And in the New Testament, what about Mary or Joseph discovering that Mary was pregnant with God's Son? Or choose one of the people who met Jesus: a disciple /someone he healed /someone he accepted and forgave, like the tax-collector Zacchaeus, or Mary the prostitute? There are lots of exciting stories about the early Church in *Acts* you could explore...

## 34. Braided Prayers

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Set out colorful strips of cloth and a length of clothesline tied between to trees or posts. Invite worshippers to take three cloth strips to represent three people or things they want to pray about. Tie the ends of the three strips to the clothesline and then braid the three together, all the while meditating and praying on the selected pray concerns. Encourage participants to take note of the braided cloths left by others and to consider their prayers as well.



## 35. Prayer Path

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Create a simple circular path out of tape on the floor or chairs and rope. Design the path to wind in on itself and reach an open center space that is equipped with pillows on the floor and written instructions for participants to sit and offer silent prayers for those people who have been important to their own prayer journey and to offer thanks to God for their guidance.



## 36. Water Prayers

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Provide a large glass bowl and pitcher of water . Provide instructions for participants to offer a silent prayer and pour a small amount of water into the bowl. As each person prays, his or her water prayers are mixed with those of others as the bowl fills.



## 37. Short Daily Prayers

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### Act of Faith

My God,  
I believe in you and in  
all your Church teaches,  
because you have said it and  
your word is true.

### Act of Hope

My God  
I hope in you for grace  
and glory,  
because of your promises,  
your mercy and  
your power.

### Act of Charity

My God,  
because you are so good,  
I love you with my whole heart,  
and for your sake,  
I love my neighbour as  
myself.

### Act of Contrition

My God, I am very sorry  
I have sinned against you,  
Because you are so good,  
and I will not  
sin again.

## 38. Thanks Giving Parties

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Let's take some time during 2013 to honour God by gathering over a meal to thank him for all that he has done for us, all he is doing and all he will do. For more ideas on ways to pray, check out our resource book. Or better yet, have a chat with friends and see what you come up with!



## 39. Cast off Your Burdens

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Take the things you wish to confess, the conflicts or the mistakes made, write them on scraps of paper and put them anonymously into a container. When you have prayed over these, you might wish to burn them or otherwise dispose of them. (As an alternative, you might want to attach the scraps to a cross to represent Jesus' death taking away our burdens). It is important to encourage people to share what they have prayed about afterwards with a trusted friend or mentor.



## 40. The News

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Read a news clipping.

Think about what it must be like to be the people involved in that story or the people involved with or affected by them.

Begin to pray for the people involved from the position of having 'stood in their shoes' in your imagination.



## 41. Preschool Prayer Phone

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Some kids can talk and talk on the phone to their parents or grandparents, yet they don't know what to say to God. Encourage preschoolers to talk to Jesus by making a "prayer phone." Use a real phone that no longer works, and let the kids use the phone to tell God all about their day, what made them happy or sad, what they learned, what they want to do to make God happy, or how they need God to help them.



