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# Prayer Resource Booklet

*Compiled by members of the "Go and ..." planning team with help from participants.*

*What a friend we have in Jesus  
All our sins and griefs to bear  
And what a privilege to carry  
Everything to God in prayer*

*Oh, what peace we often forfeit  
Oh, what needless pain we bear  
All because we do not carry  
Everything to God in prayer*



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*Have we trials and temptations?  
Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged  
Take it to the Lord in prayer*

*Can we find a friend so faithful  
Who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our every weakness  
Take it to the Lord in prayer*

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Author: Joseph Medlicott Scriven (1855)*

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*"Except for God's grace, prayer is the most abundant - and underused – resource available to the church. Where prayer has been emphasized, the church has grown."*

*(Pedersen, Bjorn, Face to Face with God in Your Church: Establishing a Prayer Ministry, Augsburg Fortress, 1995, p. 14)*

## Some Ways to Pray – Prayer Practices for Individuals and Groups

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- **Praying the Lord's Prayer with our cameras** - This activity helps bring mindfulness and prayer to daily life and to praying the Lord's Prayer. Using Luther's *Small Catechism* and his explanations of each petition of the Lord's Prayer, pay attention throughout the week for images or symbols that represent a particular petition and how you see it "breaking into" your life and the world. For example, for the First Petition, "Hallowed be Thy name," you may take a picture of your home Bible and/or your prayer resource, the spot where you pray most, etc. For the Fifth and/or Sixth Petition, take pictures of ways in which sin and brokenness impact us and the world, perhaps using screenshots of headlines, or even downloading pictures of symbols of brokenness and of reconciliation and protection. If this activity seems challenging, begin with the Fourth Petition, "Give us this day our daily bread." Of this daily bread, Luther writes that it comprises "*Everything our bodies need such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, fields, livestock, money, property, an upright spouse, upright children, upright workers, upright and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, decency, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.*" Imagine the collection of photos one could curate in just a few days of paying attention to all that God provides!

A family, group of friends, Bible study, or other small group could share their images as a way of debriefing their days/weeks over a meal or other discussion time.

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- **High, Lows, God Moments** - At the beginning of a meeting or gathering, take a couple of minutes for people to share highs, lows, and God moments from their past week. Once everyone is done sharing the prayer can happen a couple of ways depending on how many people you have. Either the pastor would pray for everyone and what they shared, or the group could split up into two's and pray for each other.
- **Prayer Labyrinth** - Engage in the ancient practice of walking a prayer labyrinth while meditating and dwelling in prayer as you journey through the twists and turns of the labyrinth allowing yourself to be open and vulnerable with God and whatever you may be carrying.

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- **“Setting up Shop”** – While this practice may be particularly appropriate for pastors, it works for lay people who like to sit in a coffee shop or diner and read or do other things. You can place a little tent card on the table that has a statement like:
  - a. Free Prayer!
  - b. Would you like me to pray with you?
- **Good Friday** – During worship, congregation members are asked to write down their sins, regrets, prayer requests, joys, or any concern on slips of paper. At a certain point in the service (while we are all singing a hymn) people come forward, drop their slips of paper in a basket at the foot of the cross. They then proceed to a bowl of sand, where they can take a candle, light it, and offer a prayer as they place the candle in the sand. When all slips have been deposited in the basket, they are placed in a sealed envelope. These slips of paper are used to light the Paschal Candle at the Easter Vigil.
- **“Prayers on the Spot”** – Make a sign with a color picture of a big cross with words next to it saying: “Prayers on the Spot.” Place the sign on an easel. You might also provide some time of carpet. If you are doing this in a public place such as a farmer’s market or in front of a business, make sure you have permission to do so. You might even hand out a card with information about your congregation.
- **The Lord’s Prayer** – Many people are not familiar with the Lord’s Prayer. Encourage people to pray the Lord’s Prayer while they washed their hands (instead of singing Happy Birthday). This should take about 20 to 30 seconds. Since people are unfamiliar with the prayer, you might do a Facebook Live video every day at noon. After several people got on, you pray the Lord’s prayer and encourage them to pray the Lord’s Prayer while washing their hands.
- **“Prayer and Reflection with *Pastor Jay*”** – Insert your name. On a given day and time (e.g. Monday evening at 7pm). Notify people that you will be going live at the time you have chosen. When you are live, you might read scripture, a poem, a short story, then do a short reflection. After the reflection, pray intercessory prayers and ask people to enter their prayer requests in the comments section of the window. Prayer requests can be incorporated as they come in.

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- **Prayer Cube** - Either bought or made. This is great to do with kids because you roll the cube and say the prayer that is on it. You can also make them with prayer prompts or make them seasonal (advent, meals, bedtime).
- **Prayer at night in the sanctuary** – Go into the sanctuary around midnight to pray. The only lights came from the lit candles. It was powerful to pray in the dark seeing the moon shine through the stained glass.
- **Prayer Wall** - Modeled on the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. Invite youth to help build a prayer wall in the church narthex. People could write on the wall (visible to all) or tuck prayers into the nooks and crannies which were intentionally created (to keep it private). Your wall may be built in such a way that people can pin prayers to it.

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*St. Thomas, Brick*

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- **Prayer Focus Card** – Using a piece of cardstock, divided into 3 columns, chose a theme verse for each month (e.g. 1 Timothy 2:1-3) and select prayer topics for each day of the week. This way people are praying for the same concern each day of the month.
- **Prayer Stations** – During worship, have a designated person(s) to pray for individuals. We have done this during communion. As people are waiting to come forward or are returning to their seats, they are invited to go to a prayer station for prayers.
- **Intercessory Prayer Ministry** – Gather 7 individuals who will pray for specific, confidential prayer requests each day of the week (1 person per day). Create a space where folks can deposit their confidential prayer request. Have a team leader who will distribute those requests to team members only. Team members are to keep these requests strictly confidential. They are not even to ask how those they are praying for are doing in a public place. They can call, text, write or email in order to maintain confidentiality. Notes can be sent to those being prayed for.
- **Sanctuary Prayer Chain** – This may be done as an annual event. Provide strips of different colored paper (they may be placed in the pew wracks) on which people are able to write their prayer request. You might ask if it is ok to publicly pray for the person named or if it is okay to write that individual a letter. Prayer requests are placed in the offering plate and stapled together each week to form a chain. The chain should be hung in the sanctuary (higher enough up) for all to see. This ministry provides as a visual reminder that as people of God we should lift our needs in prayer.
- **Yarn-Web Prayer** – Sit in a circle with a large ball of yarn. Have one person hold the end of the yarn and say something for which they are thankful. Pass

(or gently toss) the ball of yarn across the circle for the next person to hold and to do the same. Continue passing the yarn, creating a “web.” This prayer can be done with prayers of supplication/intercession (prayers for others of yourself), or prayers of praise and adoration, etc., as well. Conclude by praying the Lord’s Prayer.

- **Five Finger Prayer -**



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The following practices have been adapted from Rebecca Brooks in *Christianity Today/Ignite Your Faith* 2015:

- **Journal your Prayers** – Write out questions, struggles, and praises. Write a letter to God, a poem. Consider going back and reading your entries in a week or month. There is a good chance that you will be reminded of how God has answered your prayers. Also, when we are feeling down, reading over our praises can remind us of God’s goodness and love for us.
- **Take a prayer Walk** – Hike in nature and thank God for creation. Walk in a neighborhood and pray for the households you pass or in a town and ask God for blessings on the businesses in the area.
- **Pray for your Calendar & Schedule** – Ask God for strength for upcoming tests in school or upcoming appointments or meetings and new people you will meet. Pray for both teams in upcoming sports contests
- **Pray for the News** – When hearing about a disaster, warfare, or a troubling event, pray for those involved. Pray for leaders and politicians who make the news. Thank God for the good happenings we learn of through news reports.
- **Partner up** – Find someone to pray with regularly, possibly once a week.
- **Be Quiet** – Since prayer is a conversation, we also need to listen. Getting away from distractions and allowing for silence is important. As you listen don’t expect to hear a voice. But look for God to tug at your heart, move your conscience, or help you to realize something you need to change in your life.

- **Keep a Prayer on Your Lips** – Countless thoughts pass through our minds daily. We will think bad or gossip thoughts. Ask God to forgive you for thoughts that take your mind into places it should not go. Ask God to help anyone hurt by gossip. “Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” (Philippians 4:6)

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- **Praying with Our Bodies** - There are many different ways to pray with our total body which is an experience of heart, mind, soul, and strength: Stretching Physically and Spiritually, Yoga Prayer Cards, Gardening with Faith, a Prayer Walk, or Engaging in Visio Divina, which is Latin for “Divine Seeing”

All these practices start with the understanding that the Living God is already active in our lives and contexts (church and neighborhood/community). We engage in discerning how God is inviting us into prayer, imagination and experiments. We garden, walk, etc. and pay attention to see with God’s eyes. Feel God’s love for the place, the growing things, the people. We walk and bless the houses, or rooms, paths, and people and creatures. And pray for God’s healing, guidance, protection.

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- **Daily Morning Prayer** - Start your day in prayer by anointing yourself Prayer begins the moment we awake. Every morning/day anoint yourself in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Speak to God, giving thanks that you have awakened once more to start your journey and ask God to forgive your transgressions and to help you to be a better person than you were the day before. Pray over yourself asking God to remove your pain, sorrow, procrastination, all things that would keep you from living according to the will of God. Praying over yourself is key, this increases your awareness of God and faith in our Lord and Savior. Open your Bible to a favorite text, randomly open the Bible, or read a daily devotional (most include a scripture) dwell in the message, let the message penetrate through your mind, rest in the scripture and the message asking God for understanding and wisdom. After you have dwell in the spirit send a text to a friend or friends sharing the scripture and a short message of God’s divine word. Remember, we pay homage to God when we pray over ourselves and for others. Always give praise to God that God has awoken you again to be the best person God has designed you to be. You will notice the

difference in your day when it starts with gratitude and praise to our Lord and Savior.

### **Miscellaneous Prayer Practices:**

- I like the idea of looking at the sky and screaming.
- "Peaks and Pitts" (a.k.a. "Highs and Lows") Share the "peaks and pitts" of your day around the dinner table. Once everyone has shared, pray for those things you mentioned in conversation.
- In the "before times" pray with laying on of hands for life transitions such as surgery, jobs, leaving.
- Every Friday at sunset you might pray evening prayer via the Friday Evening Prayer edition of [dailyoffice.wordpress.com](http://dailyoffice.wordpress.com)
- Here is a wonderful meditative guide for the Jesuit practice of the Daily Examen: <https://youtu.be/JVItxNMrNnw>
- Here is an additional resource for Examen – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pDQgjzJINdk>



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### **Additional Resources:**

- Pedersen, Bjorn, *Face to Face with God in Your Church: Establishing a Prayer Ministry*, Augsburg Fortress, 1995
- *There's No Wrong Way to Pray* (This book is phenomenal and not just for kids!)
- Rebecca Brooks in *Christianity Today/Ignite Your Faith* 2015