



Prayer

Creating a prayer room

“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went to a solitary place, where he prayed.” - **Mark 1 v 35**

“Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.” - **Luke 18 v 1**

The importance of prayer

Throughout the New Testament, we see countless times where Jesus takes himself to a quiet place to talk to his Heavenly Father, God. We see him plead with God for the lives of people he loves. We also see him publicly speaking to his Father as he asks for healing or forgiveness of sins. Before leaving this world, Jesus intentionally spends time teaching his disciples how to pray using the familiar words of what we now refer to as ‘the Lords prayer.’

I wonder what your first thoughts are when you think about prayer? Maybe it is something you love to do and you have regular times during your day where you just spend time with God. Or maybe the word brings a feeling of guilt because you feel you should be better at it but the thought of trying to actually do it fills you with dread or a sense of boredom? Growing up I was always taught the importance of prayer and like many, I strived to have my daily quiet times. But although I wanted so badly to spend more time talking to God and listening to His voice, I struggled to sit in a quiet room, on my own, with my eyes closed, head bowed trying so intently to focus and listen. More often than not I would fall asleep or begin thinking about what I was having for my dinner. Resulting in the feeling of further guilt that I couldn’t even stay awake for half an hour to talk to God.



Perhaps my experience resonates with you or maybe you are trying to figure out how to encourage and help your young people to interact with their Heavenly Father through prayer. Whatever your thoughts, experience or feelings are about prayer, I want to encourage you to keep going. But I also want to offer you some ideas or thoughts as to what prayer could look like. Over the past 10 years I have been on a journey of discovery with prayer that has showed me prayer does not have to be in a quiet room, on my own, eyes closed, head bowed. If that works for you, that is great. But for me, being a creative person who likes to be on the move and doing, I find it much easier to engage with God if I have things to stimulate my thoughts.

In 2005 I had my first experience of a **prayer room** and I have to say, initially I found the thought a bit strange and didn't really understand it. But after my first hour spent in a prayer room, I was amazed at how much it helped me engage with God and hear his voice. As Pete Greg describes in his book 'Red Moon Rising,' it felt like "a **thin place**," where the boundary between heaven and earth is especially thin, a place where we sense the **presence of God** more readily. An hour in the prayer room felt like 10 minutes and I couldn't wait to get back.

In essence, a **prayer room is a room set aside for a community of people to seek God**. To stimulate your thoughts and help focus you, there are different 'stations' set up around the room that give you some guidance as to things you might pray for as well as a creative way to do that. On the next page I have given you some ideas for prayer stations that may help you get started, but just be creative. Maybe it would help to gather other youth leaders, some friends, perhaps some of your artistic young people and work on it together. What ever works for you, I encourage you to give it a go.

Prayer Rooms

24-7 prayer are a great organisation who exist to encourage, support and help people to engage with God through prayer and are focused on the mission of God. They highlight 5 simple steps to setting up a prayer room:

1. Gather your friends
2. Pick a time
3. Find a space
4. Get creative
5. Mobilise people to pray



On paper it looks simple but we know that sometimes these things can take time and a lot of effort. So let us help you where possible for now. On the pages to follow you will find some ideas to get you started on the creative end of things, along with a Bible reference that relates to each one. It is important that what we do is backed up with what God teaches us through His word.

Saying Thanks to God - Set out some thank you cards and pens and ask people to think about what they are thankful for and write a card to their Heavenly Father. (1 Thessalonians 5 v 18)



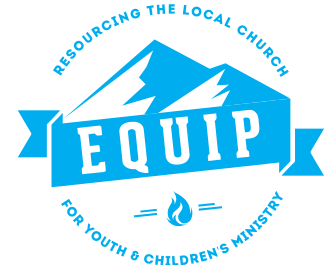
Praising God - Cut out some triangles and place them on the floor along with some felt tips. Write or draw something that you want to praise God for, make it as colourful as possible. Then using some string or ribbon, add your completed triangle to the row to make some bunting that hangs around the room. (1 Chronicles 16 v 34)

Saying Sorry and Forgiveness - Place a small bowl of water on a table and lay stones out beside it. Invite people to lift a stone, think about what they want to say sorry for and as they do so throw the stone into the water as a sign of God washing our sin away and forgiving us. (1 John 1 v 9)

Giving God your Worries - Set two backpacks on the floor, one weighed down with some small rocks, the other empty. Have some stones or rocks sitting beside with some markers. Invite people to think about what they are worried, nervous or anxious about and write it on a a stone, then place it in the first bag. Put it on your back and hold it, notice how heavy it feels. Give your concerns to God then place the bag down and pick up the light one a a symbol God has taken your worries and you no longer carry its weight. (1 Peter 5 v 7)

Praying for those who are ill - Have an outline of a person drawn on card and stick it to the wall or place it on the floor. Using some plasters and pens, write the name of someone you want to pray for who is sick and stick it to person. (James 5 v 16)

Committing yourself to God - Take a piece of a jigsaw puzzle. Hold it in your hand and if you are willing and ready to commit, ask God to take all the pieces of your life and use it for His glory. Take the puzzle piece home as a visual reminder of the commitment you have made. (Romans 12 v 1&2)



Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication - Using the game Twister, stand on each colour, one at a time and pray. Yellow - Praise God for who he is and tell Him how much you love Him. Red - Focus on the Cross and what it means to be forgiven by God. Confess your sin. Blue - Thank God for all he has given you and done for you. Green - Pray for those you know and love who need Gods touch.

Growing the Fruit of the Spirit in our lives - Have a bowl of fruit along with the passage from Galatians 5 v 22-23 printed beside it. Take a piece of fruit and as you eat it reflect on the passage, asking God to 'grow the fruit' within you so that you may reflect His goodness.

Part of Gods family - Draw an outline of a tree on a large roll of paper. Lay it out on the floor or stick it to the wall. Using coloured paper, draw around your hand, write your name in the middle and add it to 'Gods family tree' as a symbol that you have been adopted into His family and you are His child. (2 Corinthians 6 v 8)

The Lords Prayer - Take a rope and string beads in the order of the prayer below. Take home this prayer sheet and use the bracelet to learn the Lord's Prayer.

Our Father - White Bead (God who is light)

Who Art in Heaven - **Blue Bead** (Blue heavens)

Hallowed be thy name - **Green Bead** (enduring, everlasting color like pine trees)

Thy kingdom come - **Purple Bead** (Royal color)

Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven - **Brown Bead** (Color of the earth)

Give us today our daily bread - **Yellow Bead** (Color of grain)

Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us - Clear Bead (Coins we pay for our debts)

Lead us not into temptation - Black Bead (Represents sin)

But deliver us from evil - **Red Bead** (Blood of Jesus)

For thine is the kingdom, and the power - **Gold Bead** (God's kingdom that is lit by the glory of God)

And the glory, forever and ever. Amen. - **Orange Bead** (Dominant color in a glorious sunset that reminds us of the glory of God.)



Moving forward - Using a sand pit, individuals step into the sand barefoot and think about what has been happening in life recently that has been difficult, challenging or tough. Bring to God whatever is on your heart and mind. Confess your sins, ask for forgiveness, give God your worries or anger...whatever it is that is going around in your head, give it to God. Then bend down and draw a line in the sand before stepping over it as a sign that what has happened is in the past and that you are ready to 'draw a line in the sand' and move forward with God right beside you. (2 Corinthians 5 v 17)

Resting in His presence - Lay out some soft cushions, bibles, paper, pens and perhaps some Bible verses printed out that remind us we are loved, are His children and that he cares for us. Invite individuals to rest and reflect. To spend time with your Heavenly Father. (Matthew 11 v 28)

As you set up a prayer room, think about trying to create a peaceful, calming atmosphere as soon as you enter the room. This might mean having some soft worship music playing in the background and thinking about the lighting, or even temperature. Just do whatever it is you can with your space to encourage people to focus, leave distractions at the door and spend time with God.

Please feel free to adapt or completely change them to work for you and your context. But go for it!

Have fun, seek God and watch what happens as you begin to pray.

For more ideas and top tips check out 24-7 prayer at <http://www.24-7prayer.co.uk/>

Pinterest is also a great place to find creative ideas and inspiration for prayer rooms

<https://uk.pinterest.com/247prayer/24-7-prayer-room-ideas/>

“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7 v 14