

Praying and Playing

Christ Church All Church Retreat
Grove Hall, Ocean Grove, New Jersey
Fall 2014

Opening Session

Materials: Scrap paper, pencils, flipchart, markers, coloring sheet, storybook: **The Lord's Prayer** by Tim Ladwig

Optional Icebreaker: Go around the circle; say your name and your favorite game.

Snowball Toss Game: Ask each person to write down answers to 3 questions on a scrap piece of paper – What was one of your favorite Halloween costumes? What is one of your favorite songs? If you could have one superpower, what would it be?

After everyone is finished, ask them to ball up the paper and toss it across the room. Have everyone toss three or four “snowball papers” across the room. Then pause and have everyone open up a snowball near where they are sitting. If they get their own paper, trade with a few partners. Then go around the room and share what is written on the paper. Guess who that “snowball” belongs to.

Brainstorm: With the group brainstorm the question “What is prayer?” Write the answers on the flipchart. If the group is shy you can break up into smaller groups to discuss the question first and then share the highlights of the conversation with the larger group.

Lord's Prayer Song:

Learn this song and have the group make up motions to go with parts of the song

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_NUg7mwsuWU

Pass out the Lord's Prayer Coloring Sheet (or find your own coloring sheet)

<https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B0RweH-3RyI0SUp2VzlxZk1xX1E/edit>

As the group is coloring discuss: “What does the Lord’s Prayer mean to you”, “What is the most meaningful part of the Lord’s Prayer for you?”, “Do you have any special memories or associations with the Lord’s Prayer?” Discuss how different versions of the Lord’s Prayer have different words but that it is the same prayer. See if anyone has any questions about what words or phrases mean in the prayer.

Close the session with Tim Ladwig’s storybook: **The Lord’s Prayer** (Copyright 2000 Eerdman’s Books for Young Readers)

Sing **The Lord’s Prayer** song once more & end with closing prayer.

Second Session Prayer Stations (Directions attached at the end of this document)

Read a book about prayer. Here is a suggested reading:
Can I Pray with my Eyes Open? By Susan Taylor Brown
(Copyright 1999 Hyperion Books for Children)

Ask the group to practice praying with eyes open for a few minutes. Ask a lay leader open the prayer and ask everyone give thanks or pray for something that they can see.

Say to the group (something like) "Let's have an eyes open prayer. I will start but when I finish you can look around and see what you see - if you want - you can raise your hand and say "Dear God I thank you for the bird" Or "God I thank you for these friends. And we'll take turns looking around and finding things to be grateful for...Is everyone ready - let's remember to keep our eyes open!"

Prayer Stations* (lettered game tiles, sidewalk chalk, candle-lighting, broken-world prayers, Legos®, finger paint prayer)

*See attached prayer station directions

Close by gathering in a circle and sharing about the prayer station experience. This reflection can be done during a later session. Ask: Which

stations did you find most meaningful? Where did you feel closest to God? Which was the most challenging?

Third Session Building a Labyrinth

As a group build a labyrinth with sand on a beach OR with sidewalk chalk in a large paved area.

Have someone in your group explain the meaning and purpose of prayerful labyrinth walks. Be sure to make the explanation “kid friendly” as well as friendly for “first timers.”

Draw, decorate and walk the labyrinth together.

<http://www.instructables.com/id/Draw-your-own-labyrinth./>

Free Time

Fourth Session Evening Program/Worship

Closing Worship Materials: Set up a dark room with glow stick light jars (see instructions for how to make these on Pinterest), candles and Christmas tree lights. Have video ready to play. Provide glow bracelets to people as they enter. The space should be meditative and silent.

Sing **Lord’s Prayer Song** with motions

Open with prayer

Read Transfiguration story from **The Message**: Matthew 17:1-8

Have a volunteer read the following poem:

How might I shine with light?
How might I be transfigured by the light of God?
How might I be light for the world?

Practice joy and you will glow like a star.

Practice wonder and you will shine
like a candle in a dark place.
Practice compassion and you will radiate like the sun

And if that is too hard,
practice gratitude.
Simply practice gratitude
and you will shine with the light of God

(Steve Garnaas-Holmes Unfolding Light
www.unfoldinglight.net)

Show Enra “dancing with light” clip:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ow9pIVVx8S8>

Closing Reading:

Reader 1:

The disciples were having no strange vision,
nor the evangelist concocting a tableau
for the delight of Renaissance painters.

Reader 2:

It was simply this: for a moment
Jesus' friends were seeing truly,
seeing him as he was,
seeing a human being as we all truly are,
shining with the whole glory of Creation,
stardust that we are.

Reader 1:

They saw through the scruff and dirt
that this rough world leaves on us,
saw past the judgments and appearances,
the masks and costumes and shrouds
that we throw on each other:
they saw the heaven within a person,
the image of God.

Reader 2:

If only they hadn't been so shocked
they would have noticed it in themselves.
Jesus had to tell them later:
"You are light for the world."
God shines in you,
gleams with the splendid light of heaven.
Beyond any smudge this world can put on you,
or any human word or deed can remove,
you are dazzling, radiant with newborn light.

Reader 1:

Right now, sitting there, hearing this,
you breathe God's light in and out.
Your nerves spark with life.
Your eyes light up the world.
Let this light fill you, the fire of God.

Reader 2:

Be mindful of this radiance.
Look for the light in all whom you meet.
Trust the light. Give thanks for the light.
Even in your sleep, the light closes its eye,
but breathes deeply, calmly, faithfully.

Steve Garnaas-Holmes Unfolding Light
www.unfoldinglight.net

Close with prayer.

Fifth Session Making Prayer Pails

Materials: Sharpies®, tin pails (can be found at dollar stores), stickers, wide craft sticks, assorted craft supplies.

Decorate small tin pails. Hand out several wide craft sticks and ask participants to write different prayer requests and/or joys on them (e.g. family, friends, concerns, joys, things you are grateful for, country, world

etc.). Encourage participants to take these pails home with them to help them pray.

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/91479436150648399/>

Closing Worship

Supplies: Communion liturgy and elements

Sing **Lord's Prayer Song** with motions

Read aloud **Journey to the Heart: Centering Prayer for Children** by Frank X. Jelinek (Copyright 2007 Paraclete Press)

Practice Centering Prayer together for a few minutes

Talk about what it was like to practice centering prayer

Communion and closing prayer.

Christ Church All Church Retreat 2014 **"Praying and Playing"** **Supplies for Prayer Stations**

***Prayer Candles:** Tea light candles, lighter or matches, tray for candles, handouts

***Lego® Prayers:** Big Legos®, grease pencils, handouts

***Scrabble® Prayers:** Scrabble® letters, magnet words if you have them, handouts

***Sidewalk Chalk:** Sidewalk chalk, handouts

***Finger Paint Prayer:** Finger paint, trays, paper towels, hand outs

***Prayers for the World:** Maps for tearing up into pieces, pencils, markers to write on the map pieces, clothes pins, mobile made out of string and wood that on which to pin the world map pieces to after prayer.

Prayer Candles: Shh-this is a quiet prayer station

Read the scripture silently or whisper it to your neighbor so that you don't disturb those who are praying quietly.

Think of someone who needs prayer or someone who is special to you.

Light a candle in honor or in memory of that person.

Sit in silence for a few minutes and pray for that person.

Think about God's love surrounding that person.

And pray for other blessings that you want for that person.

Think about how this person has affected your life.

Thank God for this person.

***Psalm 46:10 (The Message)**

***James 5:13-16 (The Message)**

Lego® Prayers

Read the scripture aloud.

Sometimes our prayers feel small or unimportant, but look what happens when we build on each other's' prayers.

Take grease pencil and write a prayer concern on the side of a Lego® block.

Pray for someone who needs healing, or help, or someone who is going through a hard time. Also, pray for any of your family or friends.

Place your Lego® on top of the others and watch the prayer Lego® tower grow!

***Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (The Message)**

Scrabble® Prayers

Read the scripture out loud.

Spell out a word that describes God or what it feels like to be in the presence of God. Connect the words as if you are making a crossword puzzle.

*Psalm 103:8 **(The Message)**

*Exodus 3 **(The Message)**

Sidewalk Prayers

Read the scriptures out loud.

Draw and/or list things and people for which you are grateful.
Say a prayer of thanks for these blessings in your life as you draw.

*Philippians 4:6-7 **(The Message)**

*1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 **(The Message)**

Finger Paint Prayers: Shh...this is a quiet station 😊

Read the scripture silently or whisper it to your neighbor.

Make a finger paint prayer.

Let your fingers do the praying

Don't think too much about what you are drawing, but listen to the music and get into a meditative space.

*Romans 8:26 **(The Message)**

Prayers for a Broken World

Read the scriptures out loud. Find a piece of the world you'd like to pray for. Tear off that part of the map. Write your prayers for the world on the piece of the map and clip it to the prayer mobile.

*Psalm 46:9,10 (The Message)

*Isaiah 32: 17,18 (The Message)

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Email: Rev. Julie Yarborough
revjy@ccsnj.org

OR

Rev. Caroline Dean
cdean@ccsnj.org

If you have questions!