



Listening | A GUIDE Hearing | FOR PRAYER children, youth, and adults



Dublin

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

ACCEPTANCE · GROWTH · GENEROSITY

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CHILDREN'S GUIDE TO PRAYER

**“DEVOTE
YOUR-
SELVES TO
PRAYER.”**

COLOSSIANS 4:2

What is prayer?

Prayer is communicating or talking with God. Speaking, writing, drawing, singing or simply thinking about God and listening are ways you can pray. You can pray when you are in trouble. You can pray when you are happy. James 5:13-16 When you are in trouble, when you are happy, when you are sick, to show faith, for confession of sin, and to pray for others. God is willing to give us many good things as long as we ask for them in accordance to Gods Will. God answers our prayers with signs, the Holy Spirit and Gods Word, the Bible. When we pray, our relationship with God grows. "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." Jeremiah 29:13

Why should we pray?

God wants to spend time with us and prayer makes that possible. Imagine trying to have a best friend without communicating with them. Prayer is talking with God and seeking Gods direction for our lives. Praying also helps keep us doing the right things. Jesus said, "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation." (Matthew 26:41)

Children can start learning to pray even before they have learned to speak in coherent sentences. Simply allow them to see you praying and invite them to pray with you as best they can. Make prayer as regular a part of life as soon as you can. Once a child can communicate verbally, they can learn to pray on their own either out loud or silently. Don't worry if prayer is new to you and your family! This is the perfect time to learn about prayer.

How should I pray?

Starting and ending each day with prayer is a great way to get children tuned into their special relationship with God without distractions. Praying before leaving for school, day care, or to spend the day with a babysitter, can help children of all ages start the day off right. If your child is stressed

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

1 John 5:14

or anxious about the day ahead, pray with them to give their cares up to God and to release their concerns so they can better focus on what the day will bring.

Younger children sometimes have difficulty coming up with things to pray for. Bedtime is a good prayer time for them because they can easily remember and pray about what happened during that day. Children can thank God for fun times or new friends and ask for help with correcting a poor choice they may have made during the day. Praying at the close of the day can be comforting and relaxing at any age.

Hands folded and heads bowed is a traditional way to pray that helps us focus and to be humble as we seek the Lord. It is good to teach this tradition along with teaching other ways we can pray. Prayer can happen as we sing or as we draw. Prayer can happen as we work and as we play.

The ACTS method

This method involves four steps: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication. When this method is used by adults, it usually means a lengthier prayer time. Look for creative ways to engage children.

Most young children won't understand what each letter of the ACTS acronym means, so instead, use it as a guide to take them through the prayer time as follows, pausing after each step for a minute or so to allow time for prayer.

ADORATION: First, tell God how much you love him.

CONFESSION: Then, tell God about what you have done wrong and tell him you are sorry. He will forgive you, but he asks that you don't do this thing again.

THANKSGIVING: Think about all the good things in your life and thank God for these blessings.

SUPPLICATION: Pray for something you need help with, and for other people who need God's help.

Creative ways to pray

Draw a picture of all the things that you are thankful for. Write your prayer as a letter to God and keep it in a special place. Sing "Jesus Loves Me" or another Christian song that you know well as part of adoration. Play catch with a friend and every time you catch the ball, say the name of someone you want God to help.

**“PRAY
WITHOUT
CEASING.”**

**1 THESSALONIANS
5:17**

Prayers to Memorize

God is great. God is good.

Let us thank God for our food.

By Gods hands we all are feed.

Give us Lord our daily bread. Amen.

Dear God,

In my work and in my play

Be with me all through the day. Amen.

Blessed Lord,

Make me yours from head to toe.

Wherever I am, wherever I go. Amen.

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. Amen.
(NUMBERS 6:24-26)

The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father, who art in heaven,

Hallowed be thy Name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

As we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power,

and the glory,

for ever and ever.

Amen.

An Example Guide to Prayer

Dear God,

You are good because _____ and

_____. I'm sorry for _____

and _____. Thank you for

_____.

and _____. Help _____

and _____ see your love today.

Thank you for your love of me. I love you too!

Amen.

Draw a Picture Prayer



YOUTH & ADULT GUIDE TO 30 MINUTES OF PRAYER

Pray each section for about two and a half minutes and that will lead you though half an hour. You might enjoy praying with a friend. If you find yourself wanting to spend more time, please continue praying.

Share with God

Call out to God and tell God your Pows [stuff that hurts]. Tell him your Wows [stuff you are glad about]. Praise God for creation. Think about Gods love and wisdom and praise God! "Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name." Psalm 100:4

Read the Bible

Look up Psalm 8 and read it. Ask God to give you understanding as you read Gods Word. Look up Psalm 23 and read it. Let the Scriptures fill your mind and impact your heart. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet" Psalm 119

Be still and quiet

Take a deep breath and relax. Open your hands and close your eyes. If that becomes difficult, draw a picture of a cross or read the words of a favorite Christian hymn or song. Write out Scripture you have just read and think about it. "I treasure your word in my heart." Psalm 119:11.

Name your mistakes

We know we make mistakes. It helps our hearts to come clean about it when we pray. Think about attitudes, thoughts, words, and actions that God brings to mind and lay them down at the foot of the cross. Confess your sins to God and humbly ask for forgiveness and cleansing. Open your hands and think about receiving the grace of God. "If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9

**"CAST
YOUR
CARES
ON THE
LORD."**

PSALM 55:22

**“PRAY
FOR
EACH
OTHER.”**

JAMES 5:16

Pray for others

Write down or say out loud the names of people you want to pray for. If you are uncertain, begin with people you know who are having a problem, lifting up family members or friends and others who are sick. “...I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone.” I Timothy 2:1 Don’t worry if you have trouble finding the words. “...the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.” Romans 8:26

Listen

Quiet your heart again and be still before God. Ask God to speak to you through Gods Word. Listen. “Ascribe to the Lord the glory of His name; worship the Lord in holy splendor....the voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.” Psalm 29:2, 4

Write down your prayers and insights

Keep a prayer journal. Write out how you love God, and your prayers for others. Write down any insights and direction God gives to you during your prayer time. “You are my dwelling place.” Psalm 90

Share your personal requests with God

Think about your daily needs. “Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7

Pray for family

Pray for your family. Pray for families in general. Ask the Lord to strengthen marriages and uphold family relationships. “How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!” Psalm 133:1

Pray for the Church

Pray for Athens First United Methodist church and all who seek to know the Lord there, for our church leaders, and for the universal Body of Christ. “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ... Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” I Corinthians 12:12, 27

**“ALWAYS
PRAY
AND
DON’T
GIVE
UP.”**

LUKE 18:1

Pray for government leaders

Pray that God will give our leaders wisdom and understanding. Pray for local, national, and international concerns. “...we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God’s will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding...” Col. 1:9

The Serenity (internal peace) Prayer

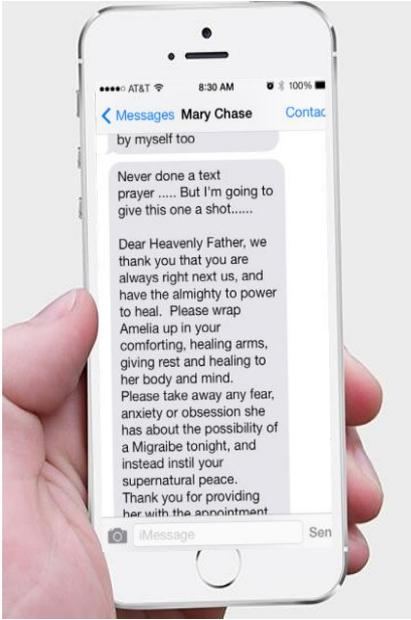
God, give me grace to accept with serenity (peace) the things that cannot be changed,
Courage to change the things which should be changed,
and the Wisdom to distinguish the one from the other.
Living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time,
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace,
Taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is,
Not as I would have it, trusting that You will make all things right,
If I surrender to Your will,
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life,
And supremely happy with You forever in the next. Amen
-Reinhold Niebuhr

Pray for justice

O Lord, open my eyes that I may see the needs of others; Open my ears that I may hear their cries; Open my heart so that they need not be without help; Let me not be afraid to defend the weak because of the anger of the strong, nor afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich. Show me where love and hope and faith are needed, and use me to bring them to those places. And so open my eyes and my ears that I may this coming day be able to do some work of peace for you. Amen. (Modified from the United Methodist Hymnal, p.456)
“What does the Lord require of you? To do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8

Give thanks

Think about the good gifts God has given you and express your gratitude for God’s care and provision. Praise God for all that He has done and for all that He will do. “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” I Thessalonians 5:18



Creative ways to pray

Prayer via text. Instead of simply telling someone that you are praying for them, text them your prayer. Writing out your prayers is a great way to stay focused, and in the future you can look back and see how God has answered your prayers. Additionally, this gives added comfort to the person you are praying for.

If you're not into writing but still have trouble getting you're to do list out of your head during prayer, try a prayer mandala. While in prayer, color in the patterns of the mandala. You can even use it to track the time. You can divided the mandala into fourths and dedicate each quarter to a different prayer focus.



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