

Prayer Aids

Prayer Board

Put photographs or names of people or situations to remind you to pray for them. Put a different name or issue on a separate note and rotate them if you have a lot. You could also pin up pictures, images of Jesus, newspaper articles, poems, songs, Bible verses etc.

The Lord's Prayer

This prayer includes all aspects of prayer. Take time to read it phrase by phrase, perhaps rewrite each line in your own words. Think about what each line really means to you. You'll be more conscious of the words the next time you pray.



Arrow Prayers

An 'arrow' prayer is simply a quick prayer to God, like an arrow shooting up to heaven! It is a good way of praying a simple thought, especially in the middle of a busy situation.

A Five Finger Model of Prayer

The thumb reminds you of those far away who need prayer. Your pointer finger is for those who lead us (pastors, teachers, etc.) and your second finger is those who have responsibility or power. Your ring finger is a reminder of those we love and the little finger is for the weak, ill, helpless, etc. Lastly, your whole hand is for yourself as a way to be aware that we are His hands to all we meet, offering your hands to God to serve Him as *praying* and *servicing* hands for all the people you meet.

Spoken Meditations (sometimes called 'mantras')

Use repeated phrases, such as:

'Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.'

'Be still and know that I am God' (Psalm 46:10).

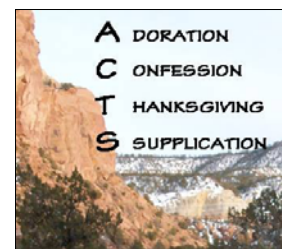
'Jesus, Christ, come and meet my deepest need'.

'Jesus, Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me'.

Teaspoon Prayers (TSP or ACTS)

TSP: Thanks, Sorry, Please

ACTS stands for Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication



Bible Stories for Meditation

Take a story and imagine yourself into the character's situation. Ask yourself things like:

'How would I have felt?' 'What would my response have been?'

Perhaps you can 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!)

You can ask other questions as they come to mind. Finish your meditation with a prayer, thanking God for giving us stories about people in the past, and ask God for help with anything you found difficult that came out of the story or that related to you personally.

Using Others' Prayers or Bible Prayers/Psalms

Borrow other's prayers, from devotionals (online or books), BCP, etc.

Use prayers and psalms from the Bible.



Praying on the phone

Remember, even if you are not sitting in the same room as somebody, you can pray with them! Sometimes you will think of someone-give them a call to see if they need pray. Maybe the call in itself is the prayer they need.

‘Txt pryr’

Why not use your mobile ‘phone as a prayer tool?

- 1) Send a text message to a friend asking them to pray for you
 - 2) Make an agreement with a friend to send each other a daily text prayer or perhaps a Bible reading to encourage them to start each day with Jesus at their side.
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Music

Use music-Christian or orchestral to help you pray.

Active Aids

Lighting a Candle

Light a candle to represent someone.

Light a candle during your prayer times.

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).



Different Prayer Postures

It can be interesting to try different postures/body language when praying. 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! It’s o.k. to be honest with God – He knows how you feel anyway!

Praise and thanks: stand up and raise your head and hands (don’t forget to smile!), give God glory.

Confession: sit and bow your head.

Raise your open hands, waiting for them to be ‘filled’.

Try expressing doubt or fear etc. through a posture, etc.

Time Capsule

Make a note of some promises to God to try to keep for a year, or a month, or through Lent, like ‘Bible reading every day’ or ‘remember to pray regularly for such and such’, etc. Put the piece of paper into an envelope and keep it somewhere safe. Decide on an appropriate date to open your prayer time capsule, and reflect on what you achieved or didn’t! This activity can be done privately or perhaps in a small group.



The Holding Cross

Holding crosses can be used by anyone, and make good gifts to people in times of need. A holding has the arms deliberately uneven in shape to make it comfortable to hold in the palm of a hand.

Rosary

Rosary or other prayer beads are another prayer aid that helps you focus on the prayer rather than distractions around you. There are many styles from the shorter, “Anglican” rosaries to assorted sizes of “Catholic” rosaries. There are even finger rosaries available.

Prayer-Walk around your Neighborhood, Work Place, Church

Go for a walk around your neighborhood, work place, school, etc. Note particular homes, buildings, rooms and the people who live or work there. Consider possible prayer needs for each of these situations, and make a note. You might organize a small group to join you for a ‘prayer walk’.

Written Aids

Thanksgiving on Post-it Notes

Pick a 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. We too often notice only bad things that happen, and gradually forget about the good things that surround us daily.

You can also use post-it notes to record prayer requests.



Prayer-Letters to Friends

It's a great way of keeping in touch and helping people to pray specifically. Each one of us has a vital role to play and has prayer needs, whether in your job, at Church, or at home. In that sense every Christian is in 'full-time Christian work'. If you're not a traditional pen-and-paper letter-writer, why not send out prayer-emails to your contacts?

Prayer Diary

Keeping a prayer diary tends to be more focused and have a clearer purpose. In a prayer diary you write about your daily experiences in the form of prayer e.g. 'Dear Lord (rather than 'Dear Diary!'), thanks for the nice weather today, and for the chance to do *particular activity*. I'm worried about *name*, please help them with *particular problem* and help me to know what to do to help. I've been finding *difficult task* hard at work at recently, please provide some help for me...etc.' Every so often go back to read over your prayers, and make a note of answered prayers—maybe draw a smiley face or star next to them.



Letters to God

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? By writing specifically to God, you leave it in His hands – the best hands to deal with it!

Manipulative Aids

Praying through Sketches

Draw your prayers.

- 1) A simple two-stage picture of the present and future. Divide a piece of paper into two. On the left sketch how you feel now, and then on the right, sketch how you would like to feel in the future.
- 2) Start off simply using colors: are you tired and stressed?— try scribbling with dark colors, and then on the right side, use colors, which represent calm – maybe pale yellows and blues?
- 3) Use simple stick-man shapes to represent yourself and how you feel.



Clay shapes

Playing with clay or praying with clay can be a really fun experience.

- 1) Take lumps of clay and mold them into shapes of things for which you would like to thank God.
- 2) Mold a lump of clay into a shape to represent how you are feeling and offer it as prayer to God
- 3) Just enjoy the tactile experience of playing with clay while meditating on the verse "I am the potter, you are the clay." (Isaiah 64:8)

Praying in Sand

Sand is a good tactile aid to prayer (and it's simply fun to play with!). One way is to pray for some 'sin' is to 1) write that concern in a tray of sand (to acknowledge it to yourself and confess it to God) and then 2) as you pray asking for forgiveness and for feelings of guilt to be removed, wipe away all the traces of your wrong action in the sand.

Group Prayer Aids

Praying with a Map or Globe

Use a map or globe and ask members of your group to name situations in countries overseas, for which they would like to pray, esp. where they have contacts. Use a large world map or globe, put pins or sticky labels onto the relevant locations. Display/post it or use it in your small groups as a focal point when you pray.



Musical Prayers (instead of chairs)

Spread lots of bits of paper with things to pray for on the floor. Play peppy music - everyone bounces around, from square to square on the floor until... you guessed it - the music stops and you have to follow the instructions like

- Shout out one thing you are grateful for,
 - Stop, ask God what he wants to say,
 - Tell God about your day,
 - Ask God for something you want / need,
 - Ask God for something for one of your friends,
 - Thank God for one person in your life,
 - Ask God to meet with someone,
 - Shout out the name of someone you hope to become a Christian,
 - Tell God something you want forgiveness for,
 - Tell God someone you want to forgive.
- ...Add some of your own prayer requests or needs of others...

Prayer Walls/Vigils

Ask volunteers to sign up for 1 hour slots of prayer. Each person can pray wherever they are. 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.



Praying with Stones

Sometimes we can feel as if we are carrying around heavy burdens: things that we have done wrong or perhaps people or situations about which we are concerned. This prayer idea works as part of a service when several people could take part.

- 1) Place a large cross in the corner of a room / church building.
- 2) Invite people to select a stone from a pile. Ask them to take a moment to think about what burdens they might be carrying around inside themselves.
- 3) As they take the stone to place it at the foot of the cross they should be encouraged to pray that Jesus will be with them in that situation or even take the burden away completely.

Borrowed and adapted from <http://www.prayerrequests.co.uk/CreativeArchive01.html>