

LIFE Meeting

Experiencing Types of Prayer

November 4, 2015

1. Opening Prayer and Explanation

Michael

2. Types of Prayer

Katie: Lectio Diviana (Mrs. Sweetmon's Room)

Ali: Gospel Dramatization (Commons)

Nathan: Centering (Media Center)

Grant: Mandalas (Matzen's Room)

3. Small Group

4. Large Group: Feedback from the night

5. Closing Prayer

Nathan

Opening Prayer

Hold hands and interlock fingers so that all the weaknesses in the group are covered by each other's strengths.

<http://www.godtube.com/watch/?v=0BB22FNU>

Tonight's meeting is all about prayer. This video describes prayer as the most mind-blowing thing you can do because you connect with God, the one who created all, on a personal level by having a conversation with him. To me the most amazing part of prayer is that we can do it in almost any way, whether it be through music, nature, people, or just a one on one conversation with God. This video encourages us to pray every day and mentions the difficulties that come with prayer. Sometimes you feel as if God forgot about you because of the struggles you have been going through or you feel as if he is not listening or responding to your prayers, but I believe Garth Brooks puts it best when he says "some of God's greatest gifts are unanswered prayers," because going through life and following God's plan is not always easy, but going through those struggles can make us better people and help us to grow in our faith as an end result but at the time we see it as a time when God was absent from our lives, when in reality God was just allowing us to live out his plan for us. But prayer does not have to just be us asking God for things, prayer can be about anything and formed however you desire it to be. You will see some examples of this throughout the meeting tonight. Prayer is not one certain thing defined by what you do, prayer is simply you connecting to God on a personal level and feeling his presence. I hope you keep this in mind tonight as you participate in each type of prayer. Dear God, please help us to keep an open mind as we experience new forms of prayer, and please help us to feel your presence in all we do. Amen.

To be a Christian without
prayer is no more possible
than to be alive without
breathing

-Martin Luther

Centering

As the people enter make it obvious that this is a silent place and make sure that they are calm

Instruct the people to sit down comfortable in the desired, open pose

Explanation of Centering (2 minutes):

Centering is a form of prayer that originates from the Buddhist religion. Centering has been around longer than Christianity. Prayer is prayer no matter what religion it came from. The idea and essence of prayer is always the same, to be in the presence of God. For this session, we are going to focus on being in the presence of God devoid of all distractions and worldly effects.

Part 1 (7.5 minutes)

1. We ask the Holy Spirit to bless us as we begin our journey and ask for him to inspire us with a theme suitable for us.
2. After pause, we will focus on the aspect of forgiveness of ourselves and of others.
3. Close your eyes, sit with your back straight and focus on your breathing. In and out, in and out.
4. Introduce the mantra: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God...Have mercy on me, a sinner." (Coincide with the breathing).
5. Focus on being open and quiet and clear of mind.
6. Take a few minutes of silence before going on to part 2.

Part 2 (7.5 minutes)

1. Allow the students to now prop themselves up against a wall or table etc.
2. Remind them: "we are focusing on forgiveness and having asked for our own forgiveness we now ask for the help to forgive others".
3. "Think of everyone you have encountered in your life...now think of the most negative person in your life. Someone who makes you feel hatred or anger against them." Take a moment.
4. What makes you feel this anger towards this person? Is there a certain memory you are thinking of or a certain experience? ... Realize that what is creating this anger and forbearing is the mere memory of an event, not the person. You are holding emotions created by their actions not by themselves....
5. Imagine you are holding a crystal ball (encourage that they actually perform the actions). What is your crystal ball like? Is it dark or light? Shiny or murky? Smooth or jagged?
6. Now think of the memory and push the memory down into the crystal ball. Let all the emotions empty out of you and fill the crystal ball.
7. What is happening to the crystal ball? Is it growing in size or is it shrinking? Is it really heavy and weighing you down?... ***Take a moment of silence***
8. Drop the crystal ball! Let it fall from your hands and fall to the ground!

9. What happened to the ball? Did it shatter into a million pieces? Did it break in two? Or did it merely crack?
10. Let all that negativity leave from you.
11. Spend the next few moments forgiving the person you thought of.
12. *spend the next moments in silence, deep breathes*

Dramatization of Gospel

The Last Supper (Luke 22)

The Conspiracy Against Jesus

- 1 Now the feast of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was drawing near,
- 2 and the chief priests and the scribes were seeking a way to put him to death, for they were afraid of the people.
- 3 Then Satan entered into Judas, the one surnamed Iscariot, who was counted among the Twelve,
- 4 and he went to the chief priests and temple guards to discuss a plan for handing him over to them.
- 5 They were pleased and agreed to pay him money.
- 6 He accepted their offer and sought a favorable opportunity to hand him over to them in the absence of a crowd.

Preparations for the Passover

- 7 When the day of the feast of Unleavened Bread arrived, the day for sacrificing the Passover lamb,
- 8 he sent out Peter and John, instructing them, "Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover."
- 9 They asked him, "Where do you want us to make the preparations?"
- 10 And he answered them, "When you go into the city, a man will meet you carrying a jar of water. Follow him into the house that he enters
- 11 and say to the master of the house, 'The teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"'"
- 12 He will show you a large upper room that is furnished. Make the preparations there."
- 13 Then they went off and found everything exactly as he had told them,
and there they prepared the Passover.

The Last Supper

- 14 When the hour came, he took his place at table with the apostles.
- 15 He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer,

16 for, I tell you, I shall not eat it [again] until there is fulfillment in the kingdom of God.”

17 Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and said, “Take this and share it among yourselves;

18 for I tell you [that] from this time on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”

19 Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me.”

20 And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you.

The Betrayal Foretold

21 “And yet behold, the hand of the one who is to betray me is with me on the table;

22 for the Son of Man indeed goes as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed.”

23 And they began to debate among themselves who among them would do such a deed.

The Role of the Disciples

24 Then an argument broke out among them about which of them should be regarded as the greatest.

25 He said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them and those in authority over them are addressed as ‘Benefactors’;

26 but among you it shall not be so. Rather, let the greatest among you be as the youngest, and the leader as the servant

27 For who is greater: the one seated at table or the one who serves? Is it not the one seated at table? I am among you as the one who serves.

28 It is you who have stood by me in my trials;

29 and I confer a kingdom on you, just as my Father has conferred one on me,

30 that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Peter’s Denial Foretold

31 “Simon, Simon, behold Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat,

32 but I have prayed that your own faith may not fail; and once you have turned back, you must strengthen your brothers.”

33 He said to him, "Lord, I am prepared to go to prison and to die with you."

34 But he replied, "I tell you, Peter, before the cock crows this day, you will deny three times that you know me."

Instructions for the Time of Crisis

35 He said to them, "When I sent you forth without a money bag or a sack or sandals, were you in need of anything?" "No, nothing," they replied.

36 He said to them, "But now one who has a money bag should take it, and likewise a sack, and one who does not have a sword should sell his cloak and buy one.

37 For I tell you that this scripture must be fulfilled in me, namely, 'He was counted among the wicked'; and indeed what is written about me is coming to fulfillment."

38 Then they said, "Lord, look, there are two swords here." But he replied, "It is enough!"*

The Agony in the Garden

39 Then going out he went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him.

40 When he arrived at the place he said to them, "Pray that you may not undergo the test."

41 After withdrawing about a stone's throw from them and kneeling, he prayed,

42 saying, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, not my will but yours be done."

43 And to strengthen him an angel from heaven appeared to him.

44 He was in such agony and he prayed so fervently that his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground.]

45 When he rose from prayer and returned to his disciples, he found them sleeping from grief.

46 He said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not undergo the test."

The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus.

47 While he was still speaking, a crowd approached and in front was one of the Twelve, a man named Judas. He went up to Jesus to kiss him.

48 Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

49 His disciples realized what was about to happen, and they asked, "Lord, shall we strike with a sword?"

50 And one of them struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear

51 But Jesus said in reply, "Stop, no more of this!" Then he touched the servant's ear and healed him.

52 And Jesus said to the chief priests and temple guards and elders who had come for him, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs?"

53 Day after day I was with you in the temple area, and you did not seize me; but this is your hour, the time for the power of darkness."

Peter's Denial of Jesus

54 After arresting him they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest; Peter was following at a distance.

55 They lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat around it, and Peter sat down with them.

56 When a maid saw him seated in the light, she looked intently at him and said, "This man too was with him."

57 But he denied it saying, "Woman, I do not know him."

58 A short while later someone else saw him and said, "You too are one of them"; but Peter answered, "My friend, I am not."

59 About an hour later, still another insisted, "Assuredly, this man too was with him, for he also is a Galilean."

60 But Peter said, "My friend, I do not know what you are talking about." Just as he was saying this, the cock crowed,

61 and the Lord turned and looked at Peter; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times."

62 He went out and began to weep bitterly.

63 The men who held Jesus in custody were ridiculing and beating him.

64 They blindfolded him and questioned him, saying, "Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?"

65 And they reviled him in saying many other things against him.

Jesus Before the Sanhedrin

- 66 When day came the council of elders of the people met, both chief priests and scribes, and they brought him before their Sanhedrin.
- 67 They said, "If you are the Messiah, tell us," but he replied to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe,
- 68 and if I question, you will not respond.
- 69 But from this time on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God."
- 70 They all asked, "Are you then the Son of God?" He replied to them, "You say that I am."
- 71 Then they said, "What further need have we for testimony? We have heard it from his own mouth."

Instructions

1. Read Luke Chapter 22. Tell them to listen to the story.
2. Read Luke Chapter 22 again. Have them act out the following:
 - The Conspiracy Against Jesus- Have them huddle up.
 - Preparations for the Passover- Have them act like they are searching for something.
 - The Last Supper- Instruction for the Time of Crisis -- Have everyone sit in a circle and hold hands
 - During the Role of the Disciples have them start "arguing."
 - Agony in the Garden- Have them sleep
 - The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus- Have them act defeated. (Lying down, walking around slowly, contemplating)
 - Peter's Denial of Jesus- Have them run around
 - Jesus Before the Sanhedrin- Have them sit in a line
 - Have them also yell are you the Son of God after you read it.
3. Read again. Then ask them to pick a character that they related to in the scripture.
Characters:
 - Jesus
 - Peter
 - John
 - Judas
 - Apostles
 - Guards
 - 3 people to question peter
 - Sanhedrin
4. Ask who everyone related to and why they felt like they could relate to that character.

Mandalas

Ask group to pick a mandala picture to color and then sit down and quiet their minds and hearts:

Read bible verse:

Isaiah 49:13-16 New American Bible (Revised Edition) (NABRE)

¹³ Sing out, heavens, and rejoice, earth,
break forth into song, you mountains,

For the LORD comforts his people
and shows mercy to his afflicted.

¹⁴ But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me;
my Lord has forgotten me."

¹⁵ Can a mother forget her infant,
be without tenderness for the child of her womb?

Even should she forget,
I will never forget you.

¹⁶ See, upon the palms of my hands I have engraved you;^[a]
your walls are ever before me.

Let group being to color:

Reflection questions while they are coloring:

What are your hopes for your future?

How can God lead you to accomplish those hopes and dreams?

Where do you feel God's presence the most?

What is the best way to get closer to God?

How has your family and friends brought you closer to God?

Small Group

Questions

1. Did you feel like you understood the scripture more by acting it out?
2. Did you enjoy expressing yourself through the different people in the scripture?
3. Even though the idea of centering comes from a different religion, why is it a good way to pray?
4. What is the benefit of adapting other religions' prayers to use in our own prayer life?
5. Did you find coloring the mandala relaxing?
6. Did it help you relax and reflect on different aspects of your faith?
7. Were you able to get more from the verse by listening to it more than once?
8. Do you consider lyrics to a song or a conversation with a friend possible forms of prayer? How could they (or similar things) be forms of prayer, even though we usually don't think of it as prayer?
9. Which new form of prayer did you enjoy the most?
10. Do you find it beneficial to pray every day? What benefits are there from normal day to day prayer?
11. Do you think you will add these into your daily prayer life?

Lectio Divina

Step One: Lectio

- Reading/listening
- Listen deeply to hear “with the ear of our hearts”
- Listen to the small voice of God, the “faint murmuring sound”
- Listen for God to speak to us personally, not loudly but intimately

Step Two: Meditatio

- Meditation
- Repeat words to yourself that speak to you. Let it interact with our thoughts, hopes, memories, desires, etc.
- Let God's word become His word for you personally, let it affect you at the deepest level

Step Three: Oratio

- Prayer
- Have a conversation with God
- Allow the words you've been thinking about to touch and change your life
- Allow your real self to be touched and changed by the word of God

Step Four: Contemplatio

- Contemplation
- Rest in the presence of God who has used his words as a means of inviting us into his embrace
- Practice silence, letting go of your own words. Enjoy the experience of being in the presence of God

Actual Prayer

Everyone relax, find a spot that's comfortable, close your eyes and get ready to begin prayer

1. Listen for Gentle Touch of God's Word
 - a. Read the Psalm twice
 - b. Silence for 1 minute to silently repeat word/phrase that attracts
 - c. share word/phrase that spoke to you (no elaboration)
2. How Christ's Word speaks to me personally
 - a. Read psalm
 - b. Silence for 2-3 minutes to reflect “Where does the content of this reading touch my life today?”
 - c. Share aloud briefly
3. What Christ the Word invites me to do
 - a. Read psalm
 - b. Silence for 2-3 minutes to reflect on “I believe that God wants me to. . . today/this week.”

- c. Share aloud reflection in more elaboration
- 4. Closing prayer to reflect on overall experience

Psalm 46

God is our refuge and strength,

☞A very present help in ☞trouble.

²Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change

And though the mountains slip into the heart of the ☞sea;

³Though its waters roar *and* foam,

Though the mountains quake at its swelling pride. ☞*Selah.*

⁴There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,

The holy dwelling places of the Most High.

⁵God is in the midst of her, she will not be moved;

God will help her ☞when morning dawns.

⁶The ☞nations made an uproar, the kingdoms tottered;

He ☞raised His voice, the earth melted.

⁷The LORD of hosts is with us;

The God of Jacob is our stronghold. *Selah.*

⁸Come, behold the works of the LORD,

☞Who has wrought desolations in the earth.

⁹He makes wars to cease to the end of the earth;

He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two;

He burns the chariots with fire.

¹⁰“☞Cease *striving* and know that I am God;

I will be exalted among the ☞nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”

¹¹The LORD of hosts is with us;

The God of Jacob is our stronghold. *Selah.*

Closing Prayer

Matt Maher - As it is in Heaven

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=BGAZVASoUv4>

Hold hands and interlock fingers so that all the weaknesses in the group are covered by each other's strengths.

Our Father, who art in Heaven
Hallowed be thy name
Come and let Your glory,
Come and let Your glory fall.

Our Father, who art in Heaven
The rocks cry out Your fame
Come and let Your glory,
Come and let Your glory fall.

I will sing, sing a new song
I will sing, sing a new song
I will sing, sing a new song to the Lord

Let your kingdom come
Let your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven
Every eye proclaim
The mercy of Your name
On earth as it is in heaven.

God give us new every morning
Mercy his daily bread
In the name of Jesus
In the name of Jesus we pray

And lead us, not to temptation
But deliver us with Your hand
In the name of Jesus
In the name of Jesus we pray
Father we pray

I will sing, sing a new song
I will sing, sing a new song
I will sing, sing a new song to the Lord

Let your kingdom come
Let your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven
Every eye proclaim
The mercy of Your name
On earth as it is in heaven.

For the kingdom is yours
And the power is yours
And the glory forever Amen
For the kingdom is yours
And the power is yours
And the glory forever Amen
For the kingdom is yours
And the power is yours
And the glory forever Amen
For the kingdom is yours
And the power is yours
And the glory forever Amen

Let your kingdom come
Let your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven
Every eye proclaim
The mercy of Your name
On earth as it is in heaven

Reflection:

Simple, everyday prayer may seem to become repetitive and bear less and less meaning each time you say it. This is hard to avoid especially how often we repeat the same prayers on a daily bases. This song by Matt Maher is a variation of the Our Father. The Lord's Prayer is a substantial prayer in our religion and faith. It is important that we do not lose sight of what the meaning and teachings are behind the prayer and by mixing the way we pray traditional prayers can be beneficial to our faith life. It is also a good way to be reminded that prayer doesn't have to be so ordinary.