



Jenny Hawke

What is Prayer?

Prayer is simply a conversation with God that involves both listening and speaking. It's about acknowledging that God is present with us every day in the simplest things and that God promises to travel with us through all the mess and muck of life with its joys and sorrows.

Jesus told us and showed us that God loves us more deeply than we can ever imagine. He said:

Luke 12:6-7 “Aren't five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one sparrow is forgotten by God. Even the hairs of your head have all been counted. So do not be afraid; You are worth much more than many sparrows!”

How do I Pray?

The wonderful thing is that we can pray in so many ways.

You can sit in silence, calming your mind and heart and seeking to be open to God's presence. It often helps to focus on your breathing and as you breath in and out to say to yourself something simple like: [IN] 'God is here' – [OUT] 'God loves me.'

You can talk to God about your life. We often divide this into areas like:

- Praising God for creation and the simple but important things like the air we breathe and the food we eat.
- Saying sorry to God for the ways in which we may have failed to live and love others as God showed us in Jesus.
- Remembering those who have passed away.
- Thanking God for God's presence in our lives often shown through those that help us and serve us.
- Asking God for specific help in our lives and the lives of others.

The Lord's Prayer

Jesus taught us to say:

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,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

(Modern form)

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin
against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.

Praising

Take a moment to look at yourself.
Marvel at how you are formed.

Close your hands in a tight fist.

The world is a tense place right now.
Many of us are feeling fearful, stressed
or sad.

How are you feeling?

Imagine that your feelings are inside
your fists right now.

Open your hands and let God have those feelings.

Tell God how you feel.

God is waiting to hear from you. God understands.

- **Turn your hands upwards to receive God's blessings.**
- **God's love and grace are poured out for you.**
- **God's joy and peace are there offered freely to you.**

Lift your hands and praise God.

Praise God for the beauty of this world reflected in the whole of
creation.



Being Sorry

Opening Prayer

O God our creator, your kindness has brought us the gift of this day. As we come to say sorry - for things said and done, or not said and not done - we gather our thoughts and feelings, our regrets and our hopes...

Help us to leave yesterday; recognizing that nothing we can do now can change what has happened. Help us to accept the uniqueness of today. Help us to live fully in this moment, to cherish what is good, and to release what is not.

And if we are laid low with regret, be near us dear God and take from us those burdens which we can carry no longer.

In silence, bring to God the things for which you are sorry.

Loving God – I have sinned against you, your people and your world, in what I have thought, said and done.

I have not loved my neighbour as myself.

I am truly sorry and turn away from what is wrong.

Then read this verse...

1 John 1.8-9

**If we say that we have no sin,
we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.**

If we confess our sins, God - who is faithful and just - will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Know in your heart today that God – in Christ the Son – offers you forgiveness and a fresh start. **Amen**

Remembering

We come today to remember with thankfulness those we have known and loved who have died. We give thanks for all that they have meant to us. We come seeking to learn of God's love and to open our lives to the help and strength that God can give as we continue the journey of life without them. We pray for ourselves and all who mourn that they would be comforted.



Here is a prayer you can say...

**Gracious God, hear us as we remember in love,
those whom we have placed into your safe hands.**

None of us are perfect,

so we thank you for your grace towards them.

Thank you that you welcome them and have a place for them.

Enfold them in the arms of your mercy,

May they know your everlasting peace,

and rest now with you. Amen

Thanksgiving

Give thanks with a grateful heart

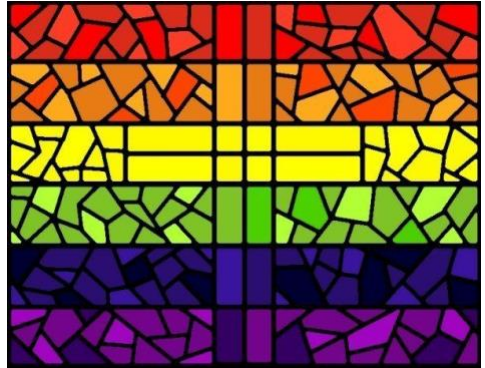
Give thanks to the Holy One

(From the song by Henry Smith)

A Prayer you can say...

I thank you, O God,
for you are gracious.

You have loved me from the
beginning of time and you remember me
in times of trouble and of joy.



Focus on the seven colours of the rainbow and thank God for:

1. Family
2. Friends
3. Healthcare and Emergency Services
4. Church
5. Local Community Services
6. Communication networks
7. Wider Community Support

Thank you God, for your love shown to us through the care and commitment of those around us.

Thank you God, because Christ's light has come into the world and shines for all. Through Jesus we may meet with you face to face,

because he came into the world and has become one with us that we may become one with you.

God's Rainbow

When you feel battered by life's storms and you are filled with doubt and dismay just remember God's rainbow is coming - it's only a prayer away!

Asking

God knows us and is near to us in the ordinary moments of daily life.

The heart of the story of Jesus - born as a baby in a stable - is that God is with us. God promises to hear our prayers and although we may not always get the answer we want, God always promises to be with us in this world, in this moment, in the midst of our need.



Using the sunrise to guide your prayers

Before you begin read Luke 1:78-79 and Malachi 4:2

These readings speak of the promise of a new day, of the light of Jesus renewing, healing, breaking through the darkness to restore peace.

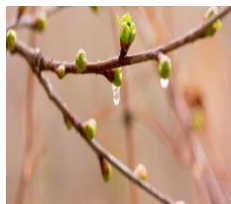
Think for a moment about the person or situation you are bringing before Jesus – and then bring the sunrise, imagine the “darkness” within that person’s life or within the situation gradually receding and being replaced by the light of Jesus filling and responding to their needs.

Pray: Lord Jesus, in you is the power to bring the light of change. May all that weighs down bringing darkness be lifted into the light of your healing and may each new day bring lasting hope of a future filled with the light of your love. Amen



Using Trees to guide your Prayer.....

Before you begin read Psalm 52:8



Then think of a tree before the buds appear. Think of a tree covered in buds ripe and ready to burst. Think of the buds bursting and the tree reemerging into life. Think of the eventual harvest.

Then pray bring to God the person or situation in need, as you pray visualise the need as a bud opening, being freed from restraint and fulfilling its promise, the tree coming into leaf and the fruit forming.

“You shall be like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither”. Psalm 1:3

So take some time here and bring your concerns and needs to God who in Jesus said: “Come to me, all you are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28

James 5:13

Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise.

Prayers request
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Philippians 4:7
May the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.