

The Lord's Prayer

AN INTERGENERATIONAL EVENT AND WORSHIP EXPERIENCE

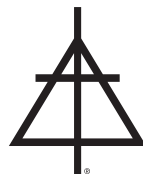


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Christian Reformed Church
**Faith Formation
Ministries**

WELCOME!

You've probably opened this file because you're curious.

- Perhaps you've never tried an intergenerational event before, and you want to see what it's all about. Or perhaps you do intergenerational events regularly and are looking for a new topic.
- Maybe you're convicted about the importance of prayer and want to find a way for all of you—from small children to grandparents—to grow together through living into this well-known prayer.
- Maybe you're trying to imagine how someone could build a whole session around these well-known words that many people know by heart!

No matter what your reasons or your goals, we're glad you're here. On these pages you will find many options and ideas. We've organized them under the typical framework of a learning session or intergenerational event. But we are well aware that some people will use these ideas to frame an hour-long event, others will look here for ways to enhance a worship service in thirty minutes or less, and still others will use nearly everything here to plan a series of several events. No matter what your approach or your objectives, we trust you'll find plenty of suggestions on these pages to feed your imagination and structure your time.

Why the Lord's Prayer?

How many times have you found yourself saying the well-known words of this prayer without thinking about what they mean? These are words many of us learned as children. And we've said them over and over again until they just tumble out of our mouths without any effort.

But they are also the words of a prayer that Jesus gave us for important reasons. He wanted us to know what we should say when we're talking with and to our Father. He wanted us to know that every prayer we utter should include praise and adoration along with our petitions and requests, that we should not just pray for ourselves but for others as well.

As Leonard Vander Zee, author of the section [The Lord's Prayer—Going Deeper](#), says,

“One of the great lessons of the Lord's Prayer is that true prayer is God-centered. We implore God that our lives might revolve around him like the planets around the sun. We pray that we might fulfill the very purpose for which we were created.”

Our goal through the suggestions on these pages is to invite people from our congregations to think into the heart and soul of this prayer, to discover the meaning behind the words Jesus gave us, and to pray them with all their heart. Through that discovery all of us will learn more about praying the way Jesus taught us to pray—and we'll probably be far less likely to just mouth the words of the Lord's Prayer without thinking!

TIP

Take time to check out the insightful meditations in [The Lord's Prayer—Going Deeper](#).

Before the Event

You have choices to make as you plan for this event. It's probably best to begin by reading through all the suggestions on these pages. Then you can begin to pick and choose the ideas that will work best for your group. The following may be food for thought.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL ATTEND?

If you are planning an event with stations and tables, it will be important to know how many people to expect. A month ahead of time begin telling the congregation about the event. Get people excited about attending! Seniors, singles, parents, teens, children, persons with disabilities—all should feel welcomed and needed. Each week add a few more details about the event you're planning. Intrigue people. Keep inviting them. And don't forget to include sign-up sheets. By the final Sunday before the event you will need a final count. There's a big difference between preparing for 50 attendees and 150!

SETTING UP THE STATIONS

You'll find plans and suggestions for seven stations on these pages. They don't need to be fancy, but gathering materials will take some time. This gives you a wonderful opportunity to invite families, teens, or small groups in the church to help. Put each available family or group in charge of one of the stations. Let them plan it and set it up. If that's not possible, you'll at least want to recruit some helpers to gather materials and set up on the day of the event.

Ideally, table groups will visit these stations together. The order is not important. If your total attendance is large, you'll need to consider having a couple of groups visit each station at the same time, or you may need to set up two sets of stations.

Another possibility is to have a "holding station." Enlarge this [Lord's Supper coloring poster](#) so it's as big as possible. (Your local office supply or other print shop should be able to help.) Place the jumbo-size coloring page on a table and invite all who are waiting to begin (for example, if you have nine groups instead of seven) to use markers (laid out beforehand) to fill in your Lord's Prayer poster. Other groups can contribute when they finish. Display the finished poster somewhere in your church foyer or hallway.

If you are meeting in a large room, consider having the stations along the edges, in a large circle. If that's not possible in your meeting room, use a large hall or another room for this purpose.

LORD'S PRAYER IN SIGNS OR MOTIONS

Before this session consider asking a group to develop movements to go with the Lord's Prayer—or to learn sign language for this prayer—that they can teach the whole group at the event. A group of middle school or high school teens would be ideal, and this would be a wonderful way to include teens as a valuable, necessary part of the event. You can find suggested signs [here](#) (video) or [here](#) (scroll down for an illustrated version).

Here's [a sample](#) of how you might develop and include motions.

Worship Service Resources

If you've decided to use this theme as part of one or more worship services instead of or in addition to hosting a separate all-ages learning event, check out some of these ideas:

THE LORD'S PRAYER IN OTHER LANGUAGES

Here is [a link to the Lord's Prayer](#) in just about every version and language imaginable. Because we are unable to check the accuracy of these, we encourage you to check them with native language speakers before using the texts publicly.

WORSHIP SERVICE PLANS ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

- [A service of confession and assurance using the Lord's Prayer](#)
- [Rattling Heaven's Doors: Six Service Plans Based on the Lord's Prayer](#)
- [Praying the Lord's Prayer During Lent](#) (includes a litany designed with the full participation of children in mind)
- [Our Father in Heaven: A Prayer Service Using the Lord's Prayer and the Heidelberg Catechism](#)
- [The Lord's Prayer: Using Hymns and the Heidelberg Catechism to Reflect on the Lord's Prayer](#)
- [All Age Worship Service on the Lord's Prayer](#) (lots of creative ideas including some links to videos)

VISUAL IDEAS

- [These banners](#) provide examples of ways to involve children in worship themes, and the banner activity is a good "pew project" idea for children and/or all ages.
- Lord's Prayer by [Timothy Botts](#) (calligraphy).

DRAMAS

- A skit on the meaning of the [Lord's Prayer](#)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

- Making a [prayer sandwich](#)
- [Pray about everything](#)
- [God's cell phone](#)

LITURGY

- For a paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer, see [this version](#) by Sarah Dylan Breur.

MUSIC

- **Abana in Heaven**, Arabic Lord's Prayer ([Lift Up Your Hearts #911](#))
 - Also see Greg Scheer [mp3](#) | [chart](#) | [info](#)
- **May Your Kingdom Come**, Eric Priest (with Caedmon's Call) [mp3](#) | [chart](#) | [blog](#)
- **Mayenziwe/Your Will Be Done**, South African ([Lift Up Your Hearts #909](#))
- **Our Father**, Bethel Music [chart](#)
- **Our Father**, Hillsong [chart](#)
- **Our Father**, Jared Anderson (Integrity) [mp3](#) | [chart](#)
- **Our Father in Heaven**, Swee Hong Lim ([Lift Up Your Hearts #914](#))
- **The Lord's Prayer**, Enter the Worship Circle (from *Chair and Microphone*, vol. 4) [mp3](#) | [chart](#) | [info](#)
- **The Lord's Prayer**, Clark (from *Humble American Christmas*) [mp3](#) | [chart](#)
- **The Lord's Prayer**, Zac Hicks (from *Songs for Liturgy*) [mp3](#) | [chart](#) | [info](#)
- **The Lord's Prayer**, Malotte ([Lift Up Your Hearts #912](#))
 - Contemporary arrangement: Christ Church, Nashville [mp3](#) | This is an arrangement of the most iconic version of the Lord's Prayer by [Albert Malotte](#).
- **The Lord's Prayer**, Shane & Shane (from *Worship Together.com*) [mp3](#) | [chart](#) | [info](#)

GATHERING

Before people arrive, set up tables in your meeting area. Round tables work best for conversation, but rectangles are fine too—as long as they aren’t too long. (Eight people per table is ideal.)

As people arrive, welcome them warmly. You want everyone—from children to senior citizens to everyone in between—to feel recognized and connected in what is going to happen in your event. But you’ll also need to take a little leadership to help people organize into truly intergenerational groups. We’re human, after all, and most of us gravitate toward our comfort zones, which usually include other people our age, people we know, and people we like. In this event and in other intergenerational events like it, it’s important to stretch people out of those zones a bit—to promote a true blend of generations around each table.

Church of the Servant in Grand Rapids, Michigan, uses a fun and attractive way of making this happen, using silk flowers and quart jars. Annette Ediger, organizer of intergenerational events for that congregation, describes how it works:

“As people enter the fellowship space, there is a table loaded with baskets and vases of silk flowers and ferns. I determined five different age groups and assigned each age group their own flower color. The groups are

- Age 0 – 6th grade
- 7th – 12th grade
- High school grad through 29 years old
- 30 – 55 years old
- 56 years old and up

“The participants are instructed to ‘make a bouquet’ by wandering through the fellowship space and placing their flower in a quart jar located at the center of a guest table. No table is permitted to have more than three flowers of the same color in their bouquet—meaning that at least three different age groups will be represented at a table of eight people. *Note: I don’t have rules about parents sitting/not sitting with their own children because I feel that decision is best left to the parents.*”

—excerpted from an article at [BuildFaith.org](https://www.buildfaith.org)

Of course, this is just one approach. A less expensive modification might be to use colored popsicle sticks. While the visual effect won’t be quite as lovely, people will get the point, and the tables will take shape with a variety of age groups.

Once people are assigned to tables, you may want to use one or more of the following activities to “break the ice” and to fill time until all attendees are present.

Option **1** Prayer Wall

The idea is to create a place where people of all ages can write or draw things they would like the church to pray for. The simplest approach is to hang a large sheet of poster paper on the wall of the room where you’re meeting. On a small table beneath or beside the poster, include markers of all colors. Make sure the poster is reachable by even your youngest members. At the top, include a heading, such as *(Your church name) prays for . . .* or *We pray* or just *Pray*.

Once people are settled at their tables, encourage them to visit the prayer wall and to write or draw their prayer requests and ideas there. Tell them that later in the session they will refer to the wall as they pray together.

Option 2 Conversation Starter Slips

A jarful of [conversation starters](#) is sometimes a wonderful way to get people talking to each other! Prior to the session make a copy of these starters for each table. Cut them apart, fold them, and put them in a small jar or cup. Invite table groups to pass the cup, taking turns picking out a question and responding.

Option 3 Food

There's probably nothing that helps conversation around a table better than food! Whether it's a simple snack, like cookies and punch or coffee, or a simple meal like sandwiches or pizza or a pot-luck, consider having food together at the beginning of this event.

Option 4 Music

Music would make a great transition between the Gathering activities and the Opening of your session. Use a familiar prayer song that your congregation knows and loves (for example, “Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying” or “Open the Eyes of My Heart”), or a version of the Lord’s Prayer from your church’s hymnal, or one of the following recordings:

- [The Lord’s Prayer](#) (featuring Sandra McCracken) from the album [The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like This](#) by Rain for Roots
- [The Lord’s Prayer](#), Matthew Black

Another possibility is to use this music video, a presentation of the prayer in Swahili:

- [Baba Yetu](#), Swahili for “Our Father”

TIP

If you’d like to teach the words of one of these songs to the group, consider having someone in your congregation—maybe teens—make a PowerPoint version of it before the event.

OPENING

A good place to begin is to tell the group a bit about the Lord’s Prayer. Don’t assume that everyone knows what this prayer is and why we pray it. Explain that we find the prayer in Matthew 6:9-13 and that Jesus gave us this prayer as part of what we call the Sermon on the Mount.

Invite the group to imagine a mountainside with hundreds of people sitting and listening to Jesus. Then ask someone to read verses 5-8 of Matthew 6 aloud for the group, stopping before the prayer itself.

Explain that the verses that follow give us the words of this well-known prayer and that you are going to listen to (and maybe participate in!) that prayer now as a group. Choose **one** of the following ways to present the prayer:

TIP

If possible, read the Scripture story using an easy-to-read translation like the New International Reader’s Version (NIRV).

Option 1 Lord's Prayer with Motions or Signs

If you had a group—perhaps middle schoolers or high schoolers—develop or learn signs/motions for the Lord's Prayer, invite them to lead the group with the prayer now. After they have spoken and signed/motioned the prayer once, encourage them to do it a second time, inviting the other participants to join in.

Option 2 Music Videos of the Lord's Prayer

Show one of the following videos, inviting the group to watch and listen to a musical version of the Lord's Prayer:

- [The Lord's Prayer by Shane & Shane](#)
- [The Lord's Prayer Worship Song \[HQ\], arc loop](#)

Option 3 A Prayer for Kids Too

It's easy to forget that children are part of the group Jesus is teaching to pray! Use one of the following child-centered videos to present the prayer:

- [Children Pray the Lord's Prayer](#) (from Zonderkidz)
- [A Paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer](#) (read from *The Jesus Storybook Bible* by author Sally Lloyd-Jones)

Option 4 A Prayer for All of Us

Because the words of this prayer are so well known, they have become a “heart” prayer: they often comfort people in difficult times when they struggle to connect with God. Say the words of the prayer together with the group.

It's likely that many people in your congregation can remember times when the petitions of this prayer took on special meaning for them. Ahead of the session, invite one to three (or more) members of your congregation to share very briefly (practice first and give them a time limit) what the Lord's Prayer and/or prayer in general has meant to them, or ask them to speak about a particular phrase in the Lord's Prayer in connection with their lives—for example, having lived into “your will be done” or “forgive us as we forgive those who sin against us” in a powerful way.

Concerned about time and long speeches? Consider making a video of their responses before the event and simply playing it for the group.

PRAYER STATIONS

Inviting people to explore the Lord's Prayer through stations is a wonderful way of building interaction and community. You'll want to set the tone by using words like *quiet, meditative, reverent* as you tell the group about the stations. And you'll want to encourage each table group to spend about five minutes at each of the seven stations if possible. Stress that the order of their visits is not important! Starting with station 7 or station 4 is just fine. Mark the end of each five-minute segment by either sounding a wind chime or singing "Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying" as a signal for the groups to move. If some tables will be beginning in a "holding station," introduce that activity now too.

Encourage groups to alternate leadership at the various stations, if possible (recognizing that some people may not feel comfortable in this role). The leader will need to be someone who is able to read the instructions and prayers. Groups should decide ahead of time who will be the leader at each of the stations. Words and materials will be provided. Remind leaders that the instructions for each station should stay in the station.

For each station we've indicated the phrase from the Lord's Prayer that you'll want to print out and hang up to designate that station. If you'd like to make your station posters more visually appealing, consider creating your own version of [this Lord's Prayer poster idea](#) from HouseMixBlog.com.

What about the Kids?

Good question. And churches will choose to answer it in a variety of ways. Since children ages 5 and under may struggle to grasp what is going on in the stations, you may want to create a separate station for them. Make it bright and colorful. Consider including play dough, coloring pages, and markers. Also include several adults or teens and a stack of the following fine books on the Lord's Prayer:

[Thank You, God](#) by J. Bradley Wigger

[Can I Pray with My Eyes Open?](#) by Susan Brown

[Our Father](#) by Sabrina Bus

[The Lord's Prayer](#) by Tim Ladwig

[The Lord's Prayer](#) illustrated by Anne Wilson

If you have access to the [Young Children and Worship figures and scripts on the Lord's Prayer](#), you might arrange for one of the teens or adults to prepare and present the Lord's Prayer to the children that way.

If you'd like to make a craft with the preschoolers who attend, consider this idea for [Prayer Caterpillars](#) from Theresa Cho.

Older children will probably appreciate the pilgrimage through the stations with adults and teens. To provide some added interest for them, you may want to give each child a piece of string, a shoelace, or a pipe cleaner and a copy of the [Make a Lord's Prayer bracelet](#) sheet. At each station the child can collect a new bead or beads and begin assembling a Lord's Prayer bracelet. Encourage children to use the bracelets at home to learn or continue learning this prayer that Jesus gave us.

Station 1 Our Father in heaven

For this station you will need a stack of pictures (at least 15) that might help people think about attributes and characteristics of God. You can either print these pictures from the Internet (pixabay.com offers copyright free images) or look for them from other sources (old calendars, magazines, etc.).

Here are some ideas for words to use when searching for images on the Internet; you may have many other ideas as well:

- Parent and child
- Mountains
- Sun
- Lighthouse
- Ocean
- Earth from space
- Thunder
- Wind
- Castle and/or crown
- Mother bird with babies
- Father

TIP

[Vibrant Faith](#) sells beautiful sets of images that would be suitable for this event and for future small group and faith-based activities.

Arrange the pictures on a wall or on a table.

If the children in your group are making prayer bracelets, also include a bowl of white beads and a bowl of blue beads at this station.

Hang a poster with the words **Our Father in heaven**.

Print out the [instructions for station 1](#) and place them at this station.

Station 2 Hallowed be your name

For this station you will need some sort of bush. You can either bring a potted bush or create an artificial bush by arranging branches in a large vase or pot. The bush should be large enough so that each person in your event (all groups) can attach a leaf to it with their name on it.

You will also need to cut out [leaf shapes](#) from yellow and/or orange construction paper (one for each participant). People will use markers to write their names on the leaves and then tape or paper clip or string them to the bush—creating their own “burning” bush.

The feeling you want to project at this station is holiness and awe. Consider adding battery operated tea lights and/or candles to the area. Softly playing a recording of music from Taize (or something similar) would also be appropriate.

To remind the group of Moses, who stood before the actual burning bush, place a pair of sandals near the bush.

Hang a poster with the words **Hallowed be your name** in a visible place near the “entrance” for this station and, if possible, place the bush a few feet back so that participants have to walk to it after reading the instructions. Near the bush, place the markers, the leaf shapes, and whatever you’ll be using to attach the leaves. (If you’re using string, punch holes in the leaves in advance.)

If the children in your group are making prayer bracelets, also include a bowl of green beads at this station.

Print out both pages of [instructions for station 2](#) and place them at the entrance to this station.

Station 3 Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven

For this station you will need a globe (and, if you choose, a map of your nation). Place the globe (and map) on the table along with index cards and pencils.

Hang a poster with the words **Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven** in a visible place.

If the children in your group are making prayer bracelets, also include a bowl of purple beads and a bowl of brown beads at this station.

Print out both pages of [instructions for station 3](#) and place them at this station.

Station 4 Give us today our daily bread

At this station you will need a basket of bread. Try to make it interesting, including as many different types of bread as possible (pitas, tortillas, naan, French, Italian, whole wheat, rye, etc.). Remember to include enough bread for all the people who will attend the event, since each of them will pass through this station.

You will also need [bread-shaped cutouts](#) and pencils. Each person will be writing a prayer request on a bread shape and offering it to God as part of a prayer that the group prays together.

In addition, you will need an empty basket to collect the bread shapes during the prayer.

Hang a poster with the words **Give us today our daily bread** in a visible place.

If the children in your group are making prayer bracelets, also include a bowl of yellow beads at this station.

Print out the [instructions for station 4](#) and place them at this station.

Station 5 Forgive us our sins (debts) as we forgive those who sin against us (our debtors)

The central item at this station should be a large cross. It should be the first thing people focus on as they approach the area.

You will also need several pads of notepaper, pens or markers, and a Bible (an easy-to-read version, such as the New International Reader's Version, is best).

Make sure to find (or build or draw) a cross large enough so that everyone who is attending can attach a note to it. Make available at the station tape or thumb tacks or sticky tack to attach the notes to the cross.

Hang a poster with the words **Forgive us our sins (debts) as we forgive those who sin against us (our debtors)** in a visible place.

If the children in your group are making prayer bracelets, also include a bowl of clear beads at this station.

Print out both pages of [instructions for station 5](#) and place them at this station.

Station 6 Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil

At this station do what you can to create a desert environment. [Click here](#) for a photo that shows how this station could look.

- Place a sheet or tarp in one corner and cover it with sand (or simply use a large bowl of sand).
- Add a large picture or cutout of a sun.
- Add a large rock.

Each person will need a place to sit facing the wilderness (provide chairs, stools, cushions, etc.).

You'll also want a pile of small stones or rocks—enough so that each person can take one with them from the station. You should be able to purchase small stones/rocks at your local dollar store, craft store, or garden center.

You'll want to have appropriate music available for participants to play and listen to at this station. For example, you might have a tablet or laptop cued to this recording of [“I Want Jesus to Walk with Me”](#) or another song about needing Jesus during times of trial.

Hang a poster with the words **Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil** in a visible place.

If the children in your group are making prayer bracelets, also include a bowl of glittery beads and a bowl of red beads at this station.

Print out the [instructions for station 6](#) and place them at this station.

Station 7 For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

This station needs a “praise wall.” Create it by hanging three or four pieces of posterboard or newsprint on one wall and labeling it **Praise Wall**.

From colorful construction paper cut enough [shapes](#) so that each participant can have one. (Make a few extras too, in case people want to start over!)

Lay out a plentiful supply of pencils, pens, and markers for people to use in creating their praise shapes.

Provide glue or tape for attaching the shapes to the praise wall.

Print some words of praise on a few shapes and hang them on the praise wall to help participants get started.

If the children in your group are making prayer bracelets, also include a bowl of metallic gold beads and a bowl of orange beads at this station.

Print out the [instructions for station 7](#) and place them at this station.

CLOSING

*Note: Prepare in advance a [Lord's Prayer Journal](#) for each individual/family to take home with them.

After all groups have had an opportunity to visit all seven stations, reassemble the full group. If you worked on a prayer wall, invite participants to spend a minute or two walking past the wall and reading some of the things people posted there.

Explain that you will be praying together. Someone (asked in advance to lead this exercise) will read a line from the prayer and suggest some themes to pray about during the silence that follows. During the times of silence encourage people not to feel uncomfortable! Invite them to lift their own requests to God (as well as requests they saw on the prayer wall, if you used that option).

Then use the [Bidding Prayer](#) to offer your closing prayer to God.

As participants leave, give each individual/family a copy of the [Lord's Prayer Journal](#) to use at home as they continue to reflect on the prayer that Jesus gave us.