

EQUIPPING

for intergenerational ministry

Encouraging families to pray

Prayer is an act of worship, and an expression of our faith. We communicate with God the Father, through Jesus Christ the Son, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Throughout his life, Jesus modelled many ways to pray, but still the disciples asked him how to do it. Jesus gave them, and us, the Lord's Prayer. He is not teaching us what to say, but how to pray.

*"When you pray, say:
Father, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come. Give us each
day our daily bread. Forgive
us our sins, for we also forgive
everyone who sins against us.
And lead us not into temptation."*

John 11:2-4



Prayer is vital to the life of a family of faith. It is through prayer that we come close to God and God comes close to us. In prayer, we can bring to God anything we want to talk about, and we can pray with and for others.

Praying is as simple as having a conversation. Prayer can come easily to some people and be daunting for others. By practising prayer, in many different forms, we will begin to feel more comfortable about praying silently, out loud, or in the presence of another person. Prayer can also bring people closer together in ways that no other activity can, as we share our joys and sorrows with each other.

May your home prayer life be encouraged by knowing

- Jesus modelled for us how to pray and gave us the words to say in the Lord's Prayer. Use this prayer regularly and talk about what each petition means.
- Simple thank you prayers for each other are an easy way to begin. Thank God for the small and large moments, the ordinary and sacred times.
- There are so many prayers you can learn: age-appropriate prayers, special ones to learn at bedtime, in the morning and before meals.



- There are many different ways to pray. Help your family to learn about being still and silent, praying through music, and writing prayer (journaling). These are just a few.
- Allow your family to see you praying. Let them glimpse through the window of faith what it looks like, and sounds like, to pray.
- A simple blessing can create a special time and bond within families. As family members leave for school or go off to work, simply say the words 'God bless you,' as you depart.

What a gift it is to share in our families that God loves to hear our prayers, and that nothing is too small (or too big) to pray about. Prayer can be very personal. As the seasons change in your home, continue to encourage each other that God is always ready to listen to everything we have to say.

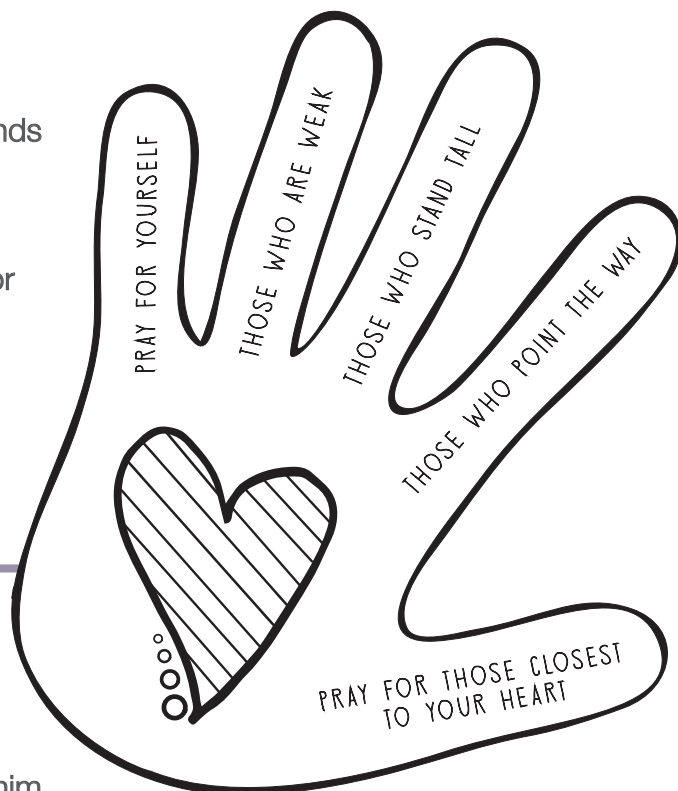
He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honour him.

Psalm 91:15, NIV

PRAYER IDEAS

Pray using your **HAND** as a guide:

- **Thumb**—closest to the heart, for family and friends
- **First finger**—the pointer finger, for those who nurture, guide, direct or instruct us.
- **Second finger**—the finger that stands tallest, for those who govern and have authority.
- **Third finger**—the weakest finger, for those hurting or suffering.
- **Fourth finger**—the smallest finger, a humble reminder to pray for oneself.



Pray using the **ACTS** acronym:

- **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.
- **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.

If you would like more information about Grow Ministries, intergenerational ministry, or resources and training, please call **08 8267 7300** or visit our website: www.growministries.org.au



GROWING IN FAITH TOGETHER



CELEBRATING PRAYER IN WORSHIP

PRAYER IDEAS

- Hands of Prayer – Appendix 11 (you could use this as a children's address during the service – see below)

We pray because the Bible specifically tells us to. I like what Paul wrote in his letter to the Thessalonians: *Never stop praying. Give thanks no matter what happens. God wants you to thank him because you believe in Jesus Christ.* 1 Thessalonians 5: 17-18.

Sometimes when we go to pray we don't know what to say or who or what to pray for. I'm going to tell you about a simple way that might help. All you need is your hand. Hold up your hand.

1. **Your thumb** is nearest to you. Begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you. Pray for your family and friends. They are the easiest to remember.
2. The next finger is the **pointing finger**. Pray for those who point the way. Pray for those who are an example of the Christian life—teachers, mentors, pastors, lay workers, parents.
3. The third finger is the **tallest finger**. It reminds us to pray for our leaders. Pray for the leaders of our churches, leaders of government and leaders in business and schools. These people help shape our nation. They need God's guidance.
4. The fourth finger is our **ring finger**. This is our weakest finger. It reminds us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain.
5. And lastly comes our **little finger**. Your pinky should remind you to pray for yourself. Pray for your concerns, plans, hopes and fears.



- A string of prayers – invite everyone to write prayer petitions on small sheets of paper and peg them on a string strung across the front of the church. You could read these during prayer time.
- Invite congregational members to write prayers ahead of time and bring them to read out during worship. You might like to give them a specific topic e.g. your congregation, local concerns, government leaders, church leaders, the world, the sick and grieving.
- Provide an opportunity for people to light a candle during communion or at another appropriate time during the service as a prayer for someone they know. You could have a larger candle in the middle of a sand box and narrow taper candles or smaller candles for people to light and place in the sand.

BIBLE VERSE OPTIONS

Philippians 4:4-9

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18

Nehemiah 1:4-11

Luke 18:1-8

Matthew 6:5-15

DRAMA OPTIONS

- Skit: I wonder if this prayer stuff really works – Appendix 2
- Skit: Hello, God Here – Appendix 3

SONG IDEAS

What a friend we have in Jesus – Lutheran Hymnal #426

Lord of all hopefulness – Lutheran Hymnal Supplement #870

Seek ye first – All Together #34

Jesus, please watch over us – All Together #101

May the words – All Together #518

DECORATE THE CHURCH

- Prayer wall – cut out large letters spelling PRAYER and display on a wall or board somewhere in your church or hall. Have cut out shapes of hands and speech bubbles that people can write their prayer petitions on and put up around the word PRAYER. You could have the option for people to trace their own hands and cut them out to write on.
- Display the Lord's Prayer

BLESSING

Bless each other with the following words:

(Name), child of God, pray boldly knowing that God hears all your prayers.

GUEST SPEAKER

Invite a member of your congregation to share a testimony of what prayer means to them. If you have a prayer ministry team you might like to have them share what they do in their ministry..

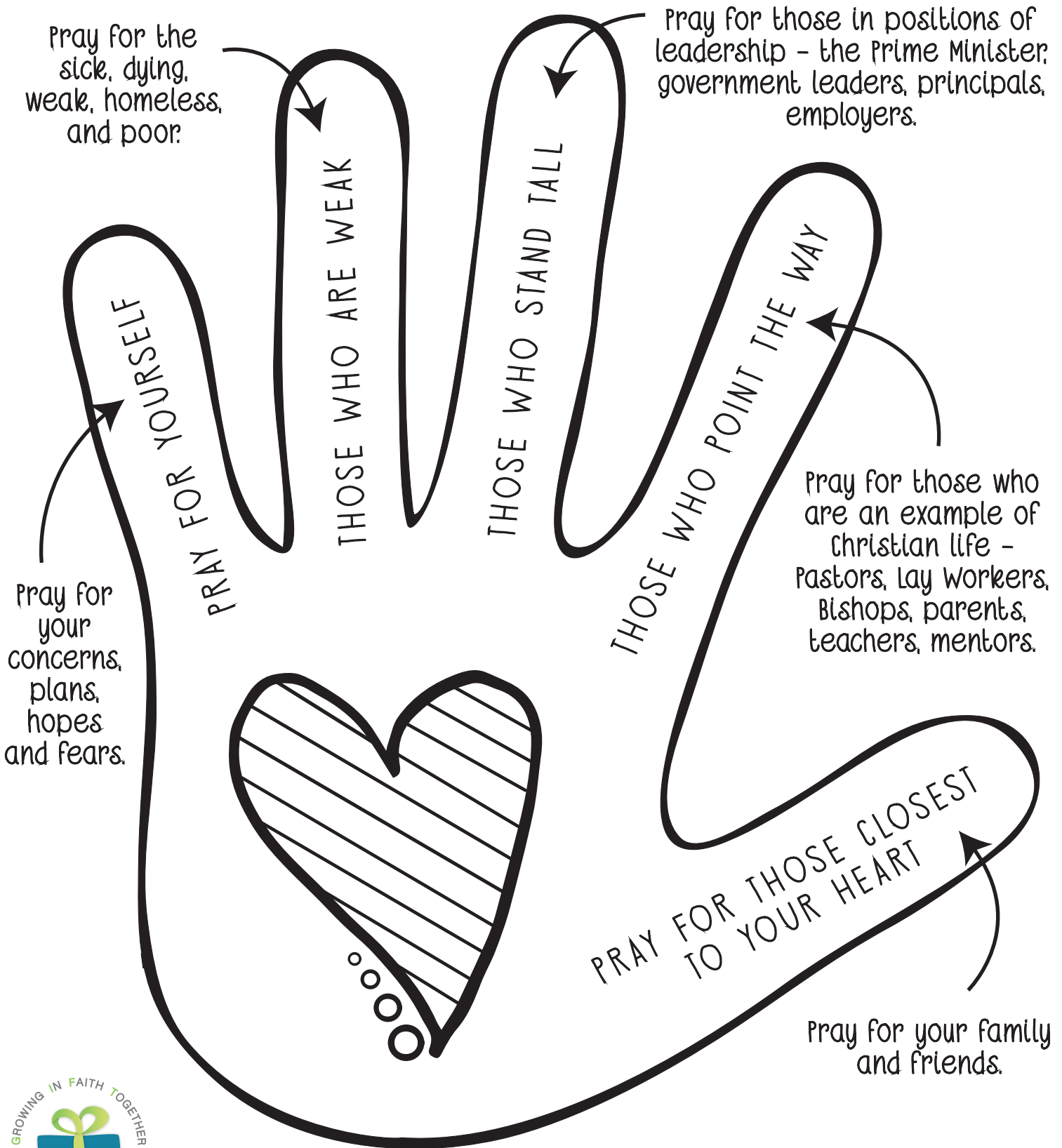
TAKE HOMES

- Taking Prayer Home – Appendix 25
- Growing Faith Moment – Prayer – Appendix 26
- Hand out tracts on prayer (see Appendix 10 for ideas)

For more help with worship planning please visit the LCA Worship Planning Page.
<http://www.lca.org.au/worship/cowadmin/>

HANDS OF PRAYER

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING - 1 THESSALONIANS 5:17



GROWING IN FAITH TOGETHER



GROWING IN FAITH TOGETHER



20 PRAYER STARTER CARDS

I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers. Philemon 4

cut out each of the cards below.
Decorate. Laminate if you like,
and place in a small box and
use regularly in your family
prayer time, youth group or
small group.



Lord, help me with...

God, forgive me for...

Lord Jesus, please help
my friends and family,
especially...

God, you created me to
know, love, and serve you.
Use me to bless...

Please bless...

For those I said I
would pray for...

God, thank you for...

Jesus, I ask that you...

Holy Spirit, guide my
life so that I...

Lord Jesus Christ,
Son of the living God,
I pray for...

God, sometimes
I feel...

Jesus, help me to
cling to you...



Lord God, bring healing and comfort to those who are sick – physically, mentally, emotionally...

Lord, give strength, comfort and courage to those going through a difficult time...

Jesus, give wisdom to the leaders of our country...

Holy Spirit, guide and keep safe...

God, thank you for the leaders of your church. They need your grace and wisdom to...

Lord, I pray for my friends, especially...

God, thank you for parents. Bless and protect them...

Father, I don't know what to pray, but I know I can trust you with...





THE POPCORN GAME

This is an easy, fun, and inexpensive game for a lesson about hearing God, being close to God, or the importance of prayer. It's called, simply, the popcorn game.



You will need:

- Popcorn
- An even number of participants
(if you don't have an even number feel free to stand in)
- A big open space
- A broom (to clean up afterwards)

What to do:

1. Arrange participants in two straight lines, facing each other. Participants will be paired up in teams of two.
2. Once teams are in position hand one piece of popcorn to each team.
3. Standing about three metres apart invite the participants to toss their piece of popcorn to their partner. Obviously they won't be able to catch it. So when this happens invite them to take one small step toward their partner. Have them keep doing this until their partner catches the popcorn.
4. Explain that our relationship with God is similar to this game. It's really hard to hear God when you're far away from him. In the book of Thessalonians, chapter 5, verses 16-18 the apostle Paul encourages us to... *Be cheerful no matter what; pray all the time; thank God no matter what happens. This is the way God wants you who belong to Christ Jesus to live.* Discuss ways we can do this:
 - Read our Bible
 - Pray
 - Go to church
 - Come up with you own ideas or add others.

Yes this game is a bit messy—but it's heaps of fun and the mess is totally worth it. Finish by eating the left over popcorn.