

REIMAGINING PRAYER

Different approaches to prayer that may help young people connect afresh with their God.



Light a Candle

Light a candle to symbolise a prayer. Say a prayer for something you have seen on the news, for someone you know or use a simple prayer like those below.

*You, O Lord, are my lamp;
you turn our darkness into light.*

*Christ your light shall rise in the darkness
and your healing shall spring up like the dawn.*

*We will light three lights for the trinity of love:
God above us,
God beside us,
God beneath us:
The beginning, the end, the everlasting one.*

*In the beginning was the Word
and the Word was with God
and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God.
Through him all things were made
and without him nothing was made
that has been made.
In him was life
and the life was light for everyone.
The light shines in the darkness
and the darkness has not overcome it.*

Alternatives ...

Take the candle home as a reminder to pray.

Spell out a word as the candles are put down.

Inscribe the name of the person you are praying for in your candle.

Spread unlit candles out. Light the first candle and say a prayer of thanks. Move off, light another candle, again with a prayer of thanks. Repeat this until all candles are lit. Look back at the trail and reflect on what God has done for you.

Take a photo

Take a photo of things that you are thankful for and concerned about. Put these up on a wall. Pray through them. Give thanks and ask for God's blessing on the things that worry you.

Take a journey

In Celtic spirituality, certain locations - especially islands, mountains and springs - became sacred and were visited by people on relevant occasions. They were called "thin places", because here the division between heaven and earth was said to be at its narrowest. If this is true for you now, think about making a physical journey where you will be able to get in touch with your feelings and share your burden with God.

It could be that you need refreshment. In which case, find a spring or river and pay it a visit. Or maybe you could do with a time of separation to sort out a confusing situation. What better place to visit than an island isolated from the world? Or perhaps you want to seek God's nearness and perspective - climbing a hill or mountain might be useful at such times.

Once you have completed your journey, you could journal about what you did and how it was for you.

Burn paper

Similar to burning incense, this exercise symbolically carries your prayers to God. Even the simple act of writing down your thoughts can be a powerful and memorable experience. You will need a piece of paper, a pen or pencil and something on your mind to express. Write out your prayers and remember that no one is going to read them but God - so be as honest as you can. Find a safe place to burn your prayer.

Use your hands

Get some clay or play dough and make something that you are thankful for.

Move your body

This is a physical prayer exercise and the repetitive prayer form uses the whole body to move in time with the prayer.

Have a room set up with candlelight and worship music playing quietly.

Stand up with your arms straight out to your side and your palms pointing to the ceiling and pray: "Creator God". Bring your hands together in front of you, forming a triangle with your thumbs and forefingers, and pray: "The three in one". Keeping the triangle shape, move your hands down to touch the ground and pray: "Be in this place". Stand up again and place the triangle over your chest praying, "Be in my heart", and over your forehead praying, "Be in my mind". Take the triangle above your head and pray: "I love you and adore you". Bring your hands down to the starting point and you can start to pray again.

Get artistic

Draw a square on the ground using chalk and divide it into four.

Use ACTS as a guide for prayers. Write or draw your prayers.

Adoration (recognising who God is)

Confession (recognising what you've done against God)

Thanksgiving (recognising what God has done for you)

Supplication (recognising how God can help you and others)

Make prayer beads

To help stop your mind wandering while praying make a set of prayer beads, by tying a knot on either side of the beads as you thread them onto cord. Take the cord in one hand. Hold a bead between the thumb and index finger. Pray a prayer. Pause. Then push the bead on and take the next one. Repeat for one cycle or as many as you like.

You could also pray the Jesus prayer each time they come across a bead.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God

Have mercy on me, a sinner.

You could go on a short walk, repeating the prayer in time with your breathing or with your walking. You could pray: "Lord Jesus Christ" as I breathe in, "Son of God" as you breathe out, "have mercy..." as you breathe in, "on me" as you breathe out. Or you could pray each word in time with each step.

The dekhomai prayer cord has five beads with different colours. These colours represent the following:

Yellow	thanks
Red	mercy
Blue	peace
Green	healing
Purple	justice

You could pray with your own words and thoughts or try these simple prayers:

Yellow	Thanks for life
Red	Have mercy on me
Blue	Peace on earth as it is in heaven
Green	You are the Healer, come and heal ... in Jesus' name
Purple	May your justice roll down like a river
Amen	

You could tie the beads to your keys or pencil case as a reminder to pray.