

## Prayer Resources

### Written Prayers

Directions: consider using one of these prayers as part of your daily prayer time.

#### *Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi (UMH 481)*

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace; Where there is hatred, let me sow  
love; Where there is injury, pardon;  
Where there is doubt, faith; Where there is despair, hope; Where there is  
darkness, light; And where there is sadness, joy.  
O Divine Master, grant that may  
Not so much seek to be consoled as to console; To be understood, as to  
understand;  
To be loved, as to love;  
For it is in giving that we receive,  
And it's in pardoning that we are pardoned.  
And it's in dying that we are born to eternal life.

#### *A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition (UMH 607)*

I am no longer my own, but thine.  
Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt. Put me to doing, put me  
to suffering.  
Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee, exalted for thee or brought  
low for thee.  
Let me be full, let me be empty.  
Let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and heartily yield all things to  
thy pleasure and disposal.  
And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.  
And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

*A Prayer of Submission by John Wesley*

“To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, my Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, I give up myself entirely. May I no longer serve myself, but you, all the days of my life. I give you my understanding. May it be my only care to know you, your perfections, your works, and your will. Let all things else be as dross unto me, for the excellency of this knowledge, and let me silence all reasonings against whatsoever you teach me, who can neither deceive nor be deceived.

I give you my will. May I have no will of my own. Whatsoever you will, may I will and that only. May I will your glory in all things, as you do, and make that my end in every thing. May I ever say with the Psalmist, “Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire other than you.” May I delight to do your will, O God, and rejoice to accept it. Whatever threatens me, let me say, “It is the Lord; let him do what seems good to him.” And whatever befalls me, let me give thanks, since it is your will concerning me.

I give you my affections. Dispose of them all. Be my love, my fear, my joy; and may nothing have any share in them, but with respect to you and for your sake. What you love, may I love; what you hate, may I hate; and that in such measures as you are pleased to prescribe for me.

I give you my body. May I glorify you with it, and preserve it holy, fit for you, O God, to dwell in. May I neither indulge it, nor use too much rigor toward it; but keep it as far as in me lies, healthy, vigorous, and active, and fit to do you all manner of service that you shall call for. I give you all my worldly goods. May I prize them and use them only for you. May I faithfully restore to you, in the poor, all you have entrusted me with, above the necessities of life; and be content to part with them too, whenever you, my Lord, shall require them at my hands.

I give you my credit and reputation. May I never value it, but only in respect of you; nor endeavor to maintain it, but as it may do the service and advance your honor in the world.

I give you myself and my all. Let me look upon myself to be nothing, and to have nothing, apart from you. Be the sole disposer and governor of myself and all; be my portion and my all.

O my God and my all, when hereafter I shall be tempted to break this solemn engagement, when I shall be pressed to conform to the world and to the company and customs that surround me, may my answer be: “I am not my own. I am not for myself, not for the world, but for my God. I will give unto God the things that are God’s. God, be merciful to me a sinner.”

### Online Prayer Books

Directions: Using a prayerbook can help focus your prayers and help your prayers be larger than yourself. Some prayer books include suggested scripture lessons to include in your devotions.

- *Common Prayer for Ordinary Radicals*-<https://commonprayer.net>
- *Methodist Prayer*-<https://www.methodistprayer.org>
- “An Order for Morning and Evening Prayer”-  
<https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/10240/an-order-for-morning-and-evening-prayer>
- *The Missio Dei Breviary*-  
<https://www.eumch.org/files/pdfs/handouts/breviary.pdf>

### Hardcopy Prayer Books

Directions: Using a prayerbook can help focus your prayers and help your prayers be larger than yourself. Some prayer books include suggested scripture lessons to include in your devotions. A hardcopy has the advantage of avoiding distracting screens.

- Common Prayer: a liturgy for ordinary radicals (Zondervan, 2010)
- The Divine Hours series by Phyllis Tickle (<https://www.phyllistickle.com>)
- The Methodist Book of Daily Prayer (Abingdon Press, 2023)
- Benedictine Daily Prayer: a short breviary (Liturgical Press, 2005)

## **Form of Prayer: ACTS**

Directions: There are many ways to pray. One way of praying is using a form. Below is the form of an ACTS prayer. An ACTS prayer uses an easy to remember formula: adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication.

1. Address to God
2. Adoration/Praise (praise God for what God has done, what God is doing, what makes God great, things that make God praiseworthy)
3. Confession (confess the sins you see in your life, what ways have you fallen short of loving God and loving your neighbor?)
4. Thanksgiving (what are you thankful for, how has God blessed you)
5. Supplication (what are your concerns, what weighs heavy on your heart, what are things you would like to see God to do, name persons/places/situations that you feel need to be lifted up before God)
6. Who you are praying through (usually Jesus)

### **Form of Prayer: Collect**

Directions: There are many ways to pray. One way of praying is using a form. Below is the form of a collect. The collect using an easy to remember formula: You, Who, Do, Through.

#### Technical Formula

- 1) Address to God
- 2) Aspect of God or what God has done related to the petition
- 3) Petition before God
- 4) Desired result of the petition
- 5) Who you are praying through (usually Jesus - rarely Holy Spirit)

#### Example one

- 1 - Almighty God,
- 2 - unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid:
- 3 - Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit,
- 4 - that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name;
- 5 - through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*(Copyright United Methodist Publishing House ©1992. Used by permission)*

#### Example two

- 1 - Most holy God
- 2 - the source of all good desires, all right judgements, and all just works
- 3 - Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give,
- 4 - so that our minds may be fixed on the doing of your will, and that we, being delivered from the fear of all enemies, may live in peace and quietness;
- 5 - through the mercies of Christ Jesus our Savior.

(From Seedbed - "The Anatomy of a Prayer: Using the Collect in Worship." - <http://www.seedbed.com/the-anatomy-of-a-prayer-using-the-collect-in-worship/>)

## Orthodox Prayer Rope



In the Orthodox tradition, people often use a prayer tool similar to the Roman Catholic rosary. The orthodox prayer rope (also known as a komboskini or a chotki).

A person will wear a prayer rope around their wrist or keep it in their pocket. It can be used to pray at any time. Some find it helpful to pray with it while waiting or in periods where you might turn to your phone. Instead, you can. Turn to God through prayer. The knots/beads are a way keeping track on how many times you have said your prayer. The most common prayer used with a prayer rope is an ancient prayer known as the Jesus prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.”

Instructions on how to make a prayer rope

- “How to Make Orthodox Prayer Ropes: a beginners’ tutorial” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zqM8aPaYQrQ&t=171s>)
- “How to tie an orthodox prayer rope, komboskini, chotki; VERY EASY!!” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GDmL18yX8kE&t=8s>)

## Other Prayer Resources in this packet

- Contemplative Prayer-A way of centering prayer
- Body Prayer-A way of praying using your whole body.
- Finger Prayer – A way of praying using your fingers
- Finger Labyrinths -A way of centering prayer. As you trace the labyrinth with your finger, pray using a word, phrase, or short scripture verse.

## The Guidelines

1. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within.
2. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within.
3. When engaged with your thoughts,\* return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.
4. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.

*\*thoughts include body sensations, feelings, images, and reflections*

## Centering Prayer Guidelines

### I. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within.

- The sacred word expresses our intention to consent to God's presence and action within.
- The sacred word is chosen during a brief period of prayer to the Holy Spirit. Use a word of one or two syllables, such as: God, Jesus, Abba, Father, Mother, Mary, Amen. Other possibilities include: Love, Listen, Peace, Mercy, Let Go, Silence, Stillness, Faith, Trust.
- Instead of a sacred word, a simple inward glance toward the Divine Presence, or noticing one's breath may be more suitable for some persons. The same guidelines apply to these symbols as to the sacred word.
- The sacred word is sacred not because of its inherent meaning, but because of the meaning we give it as the expression of our intention to consent.
- Having chosen a sacred word, we do not change it during the prayer period because that would be engaging thoughts.

### II. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within.

- "Sitting comfortably" means relatively comfortably so as not to encourage sleep during the time of prayer.
- Whatever sitting position we choose, we keep the back straight.

- We close our eyes as a symbol of letting go of what is going on around and within us.
- We introduce the sacred word inwardly as gently as laying a feather on a piece of absorbent cotton.
- If we fall sleep, we simply continue the prayer upon awakening.

### III. When engaged with your thoughts, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.

- "Thoughts" is an umbrella term for every perception, including body sensations, sense perceptions, feelings, images, memories, plans, reflections, concepts, commentaries, and spiritual experiences.
- Thoughts are an inevitable, integral and normal part of Centering Prayer.
- By "returning ever-so-gently to the sacred word" a minimum of effort is indicated. This is the only activity we initiate during the time of Centering Prayer.
- During the course of Centering Prayer, the sacred word may become vague or disappear.

### IV. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.

- The additional two minutes enables us to bring the atmosphere of silence into everyday life.
- If this prayer is done in a group, the leader may slowly recite a prayer, such as the Lord's Prayer, while the others listen.

## Some Practical Points

1. The minimum time for this prayer is 20 minutes. Two periods are recommended each day, one first thing in the morning and the other in the afternoon or early evening. With practice the time may be extended to 30 minutes or longer.
2. The end of the prayer period can be indicated by a timer which does not have an audible tick or loud sound when it goes off. There is a free Centering Prayer mobile app timer available.
3. Possible physical symptoms during the prayer:
  - We may notice slight pains, itches, or twitches in various parts of the body or a generalized sense of restlessness. These are usually due to the untying of emotional knots in the body.
  - We may notice heaviness or lightness in our extremities. This is usually due to a deep level of spiritual attentiveness.
  - In all cases we pay no attention and ever-so-gently return to the sacred word.
4. The principal fruits of Centering Prayer are experienced in daily life and not during the prayer period.
5. Centering Prayer familiarizes us with God's first language which is SILENCE.

## Points for Further Development

1. During the prayer period, various kinds of thoughts may arise:
  - Ordinary wanderings of the imagination or memory.
  - Thoughts and feelings that give rise to attractions or aversions.
  - Insights and psychological breakthroughs.
  - Self-reflections such as, "How am I doing?" or, "This peace is just great!"
  - Thoughts and feelings that arise from the unloading of the unconscious.
  - When engaged with any of these thoughts return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.

2. During this prayer we avoid analyzing our experience, harboring expectations, or aiming at some specific goal such as:
  - Repeating the sacred word continuously.
  - Having no thoughts.
  - Making the mind a blank.
  - Feeling peaceful or consoled.
  - Achieving a spiritual experience.

## Ways to Deepen Our Relationship with God

1. Practice two 20-30 minute periods of Centering Prayer daily.
2. Listen to the Word of God in Scripture and study *Open Mind, Open Heart*.
3. Visit our website to access various online resources, practices, courses and groups.
4. Join a weekly Centering Prayer Group.
  - It encourages the members of the group to persevere in their individual practices.
  - It provides an opportunity for further input on a regular basis through multi-media resources and discussion.
  - It offers an opportunity to support and share the spiritual journey.

## What Centering Prayer Is and Is Not

- It is not a technique but a way of cultivating a deeper relationship with God.
- It is not a relaxation exercise but it may be quite refreshing.
- It is not a form of self-hypnosis but a way to quiet the mind while maintaining its alertness.
- It is not a charismatic gift but a path of transformation.
- It is not a para-psychological experience but an exercise of faith, hope and selfless love.
- It is not limited to the "felt" presence of God but is rather a deepening of faith in God's abiding presence.
- It is not reflective or spontaneous prayer, but simply resting in God beyond thoughts, words, and emotions.



*Be still and know that I am God.*

PSALM 46:10

### Contemplative Prayer

We may think of prayer as thoughts or feelings expressed in words. But this is only one expression. In the Christian tradition contemplative prayer is considered to be the pure gift of God. It is the opening of mind and heart — our whole being — to God, the Ultimate Mystery, beyond thoughts, words, and emotions. Through grace we open our awareness to God whom we know by faith is within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than choosing, closer than consciousness itself.

### Centering Prayer

Centering Prayer is a method designed to facilitate the development of contemplative prayer by preparing our faculties to receive this gift. It presents ancient Christian wisdom teachings in an updated form. Centering Prayer is not meant to replace other kinds of prayer; rather it casts a new light and depth of meaning on them. It is at the same time a relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship. This method of prayer is a movement beyond conversation with Christ to communion with him.

### Theological Background

The source of Centering Prayer, as in all methods leading to contemplative prayer, is the indwelling Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The focus of Centering Prayer is the deepening of our relationship with the living Christ. It tends to build communities of faith and bond the members together in mutual friendship and love.

### The Root of Centering Prayer

Listening to the word of God in Scripture (*Lectio Divina*) is a traditional way of cultivating friendship with Christ. It is a way of listening to the texts of Scripture as if we were in conversation with Christ and he were suggesting the topics of conversation. The daily encounter with Christ and reflection on his word leads beyond mere acquaintanceship to an attitude of friendship, trust, and love. Conversation simplifies and gives way to communing. Gregory the Great (6th century) in summarizing the Christian contemplative tradition expressed it as “resting in God.” This was the classical meaning of contemplative prayer in the Christian tradition for the first sixteen centuries.

### Wisdom Saying of Jesus

Centering Prayer is based on the wisdom saying of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount: “When you pray, go to your inner room, close the door and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you” (MT 6:6). It is also inspired by writings of major contributors to the Christian contemplative heritage including John Cassian, the anonymous author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*, Francis de Sales, Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, Thérèse of Lisieux, and Thomas Merton.



## Contemplative Outreach

*For information and resources:*

Contemplative Outreach, Ltd.  
1560 Union Valley Rd, #909  
West Milford, NJ 07480  
973.838.3384  
office@coutreach.org  
contemplativeoutreach.org

*Use the free Centering Prayer mobile app timer to support your daily prayer practice.*

*The app is available for iOS and Android mobile devices and is also available in Spanish-language versions.*



© 2006, 2019 Contemplative Outreach, Ltd.

## THE METHOD OF CENTERING PRAYER THE PRAYER OF CONSENT

Thomas Keating



Contemplative  
Outreach





## The Body Prayer of Julian of Norwich

This offering of The Body Prayer of Julian of Norwich comes from *The Plural Guild, a music, arts, liturgy collective*

The 14th century Christian mystic, Julian of Norwich, once wrote, “The fruit and the purpose of prayer is to be 'oned' with and like God in all things.” After suffering immense pain she created this body prayer as a simple and beautiful way to pray without words.

These days when so many of us have been handed a faith tradition that ignores or distrusts or sometimes

even hates the body, and when we live in a society that has made the body a commodity, and has privileged certain kinds of bodies more than others, this prayer can be a way to reclaim God's love for all our bodies.

Julian of Norwich's body prayer can help us resist the idea that the body is something we need to renounce or transcend in order to experience communion with God. Instead, Julian invites us to be in our bodies, embrace our physicality as a way to ground ourselves, and find oneness with the divine and with all living things. As you pray this prayer it can help you connect your heart, mind and body and to more fully experience God's love for every part of you.

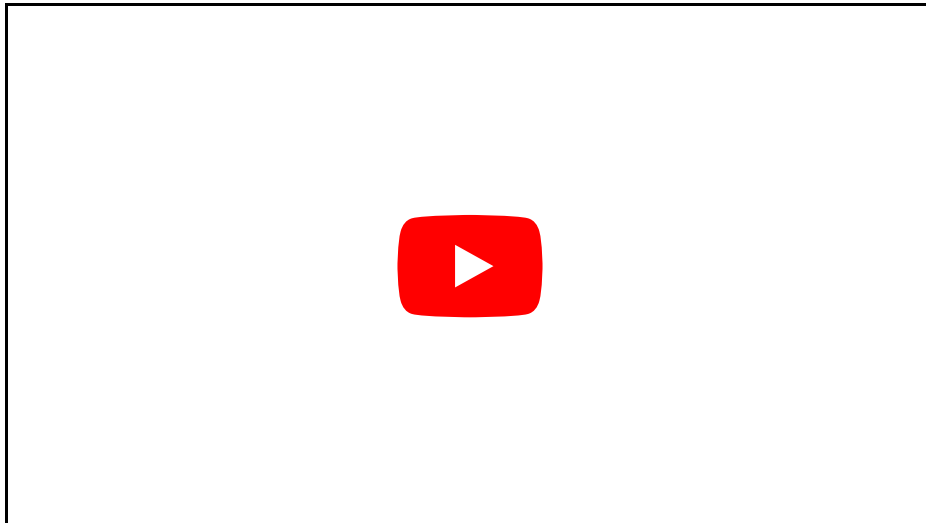
The prayer has four simple postures. And intentions.

- **AWAIT** (hands at waist, cupped up to receive): Await God's presence, however it may come to you.
- **ALLOW** (reach up, hands open): Allow a sense of God's presence to come ...or not... and be what it is.
- **ACCEPT** (hands at heart, cupped towards body): Accept as a gift whatever comes or

does not come. Accept that you don't know everything, that you are not in charge.

- **ATTEND** (hands outstretched, ready to be responsive): Attend to what you are called to, willing to be present and be God's love in the world, however God calls you to.

You can find the prayer here:



CORE

CONTACT US

ADDRESS

# HAND PRAYER

pinky = "small"

babies, children, pets

ring = "weak"

sick and injured

middle = "tall"

leaders in church and world

index/pointer = "point"

parents, teachers, coaches

thumb = "1<sup>st</sup> & big"



Rev. Megan Burd-Harris



