



Praying at Home

Lent I

*God's story, our story:
talking about your day.*



Personal prayer is a key part of living a Christian life. So whether you are confident in praying, or less sure, we would like to help you find a pattern of regular prayer at home which lasts for your whole life, and not just while public worship is suspended.

Personal prayer often feels private, and so we don't always talk about it with other people. That means that we don't always know how other people pray, or how we might find new ways of praying. We might even worry about whether we are praying 'properly'.

There isn't really any such thing as praying 'properly', but over the next few weeks we will suggest some different techniques for praying, and some issues which you might like to make the subject of your prayers.

Very deliberately, this booklet can be used by anyone of any age. There are some techniques which might appeal more naturally to different age groups, but give them a try and see what you think!

Please join us for online worship on Sunday, and whenever you can during the week.

There are two major questions about prayer:

1. What do we think is happening when we pray?
2. How can we pray?

What do we think is happening when we pray?

This week, take some time to consider what you think is happening when we pray. What is the point of it? Does it make a difference, and if so, to whom?

Some practical tasks: Getting ready to pray.

Christians can pray anywhere, but many people feel more comfortable praying in particular places or circumstances. They may find that it is easier to feel close to God in those places.

Think of a time when you felt close to God. When was it? Where was it?

Choose a place where you are going to pray regularly during Lent. If it is outside (for example on a regular walk), make sure you have a wet weather plan, or at least an umbrella! If it is inside, decide what you need to make it comfortable. Do you need an extra cushion on a chair, or a visual focus like a cross or candle or picture?

It is usually easier to do something if we commit to it by telling someone else, or if we agree with them that we will both do it. Find a 'prayer friend' who may or may not be a member of your household. Tell them about your prayer space and also tell them how often and what times of day you are aiming to pray (though remember you can always add in extra times)! You don't have to pray *with* them unless you both find that helpful.

When you use your prayer space, you need to make yourself comfortable. Try saying the Lord's Prayer as a way of focussing your thoughts. If you can't think of anything else to say to God, the Lord's Prayer is there to help you.

**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.**

One way of praying this week

Each evening for the week ahead, try the Examen. If you are a young person you could do it together with your parents or carers. But however old or young you are, you don't need to say the answers to the questions out loud unless you want to.

There are a number of variations, but try this version:

1. **Make yourself comfortable.** Do you feel peaceful? Are you aware of being in the presence of God?
2. **Think about your day, step by step.** Can you remember getting up this morning, what you had for breakfast, what you did next?
3. **Did anything happen today for which you can give thanks?** Even small details are important. You might not have been outside, but you might have seen something out of the window. Say thank you to God.
4. **Did anything happen today which didn't feel right and for which you need to say sorry?** Even if you haven't spoken to anybody today, you might have had thought things which you wish you hadn't. Say sorry to God.
5. **Is there one moment from today which stands out** and which you want to bring before God in prayer? It doesn't matter if you don't know what to say. Just let the thought fill you.
6. **Think about tomorrow.** What do you need from God to make the most of tomorrow? Ask him to be with you and guide you.

**We are praying for you every day
at Blackburn Cathedral.**