

Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you in all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears” (John 16:12-13).

Prayer is an expectation of Christ for the Church. Jesus said, “and when you pray...” in Matthew 6:5, not, if you pray. “When we pray, we offer ourselves to God. We become agents of God’s acts in new ways because we pray. By entering into intercessory prayer, we give God opportunities that God did not have before...If God is to intercede in human affairs, if God is to continue to bring the creative power of love and justice into our lives, God needs us to pray and to act.” 2

It is important to see that **prayer connects us to acts of justice and compassion in our community.** Former ways of thinking disconnected prayer and action as if they were on two different planets. In fact, a deeper spiritual problem often underlies social problems like violence, prejudice and poverty. A growing life of prayer will lead to deeper connections and result in sustained attitudinal change and involvement in your community for just causes.

The natural connection between **prayer and action leads us to respond to God’s call to us as believers to intercede on behalf of our**



community and world. Intercede is a Latin word, *intercedere*, which means “to go between.” Webster’s dictionary defines intercede as follows: “to plead or make a request in behalf of another; to intervene; mediate.” The prophet Isaiah says, “Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands at a distance..The Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no justice. He saw that there was no one, and was appalled that there was no one to intervene” (Isaiah 59:14,15b-16a).

The image of intercession here is like an attorney who represents her client by speaking to the judge on her clients behalf. To do intercessory prayer requires preparation and understanding, like a lawyer who has done her homework on a case. Then we can plead, mediate or intervene for individuals or for whole groups of people who are experiencing starvation, abuse, and other forms of injustice.

PRAYER POWER

VOLUME FIVE



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How many ways to pray????

**How many stars in the sky!!!
Here are some ideas for leading
children and youth in prayer**

[http://www.elca.org/eteam/assessment/
Leading%20Children%20Youth%20in%20Prayer.htm](http://www.elca.org/eteam/assessment/Leading%20Children%20Youth%20in%20Prayer.htm)

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LUTHERAN BOOK OF WORSHIP PRAYERS

PICTURE POEMS-write a prayer in the outline of a simple shape....a star, a butterfly, a scallop shell, etc.

POETRY-write your own or read one that someone else has written. A simple form is the cinquain (a five line poem).

First line: one word, a noun.

Second line: two adjective words to describe the noun.

Third line: three action words about the title.

Fourth line: four words describing a feeling about the title.

Fifth line: rename the title, one word.

SONGS AND HYMNS AS PRAYERS

Use different mediums to express a prayer. We all remember the hugs and love we received when we brought home art work to our parents who then placed the pictures on the refrigerator. God must have a great big refrigerator for all our gifts!

COLLAGE, BANNER AND POSTER PRAYERS

DANCE AND MOVEMENT

DRAMA AND MIME- prayers expressed through Christian clowning are a good example of this.

FLASH PAPER PRAYERS-magic stores can provide you with a type of paper that when lit it immediately disintegrates in a flash and not even ashes are left. Write prayers of confession on flash paper and offer them up to God by lighting the paper.

MUSIC/MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

PRAYER CHAINS-write prayers on strips of paper and link them together or write a prayer on construction paper cut into shapes like stars, and link them all to colored string with tape.

PRETZEL PRAYER-a good winter activity is to make your own home-made pretzels or buy them at the store. Talk about how the pretzel is shaped to represent arms folded across the heart. Close with prayers about winter!

SCULPTURE PRAYERS-use play dough, aluminum

foil, pipe cleaners, shaving cream and even mashed potatoes!

SIGN LANGUAGE PRAYER-simple actions and motions



Why bother praying?

A frequently asked question is,

“Why bother

praying if God is going to do whatever God wants anyway?” Here are some thoughts on why we need to pray:

The Hebrew scriptures introduce the understanding that **we were created by God for the sake of an interdependent relationship** with God. God placed us on earth as God’s representative to creation having received authority to exercise God’s will (Genesis 1; Psalm 8). The responsibility and authority to carry out God’s plan comes from the covenant relationship that God established with us. Prayer reinforces our dependence on God for everything.

Furthermore, **God needs us to pray**. “God chose, from the beginning of Creation, to work on the earth through humans, not independent of them. He always will, even at the cost of becoming one. Though God is

sovereign and all powerful, Scripture tells us that He limited Himself, concerning the affairs of earth, to working through human beings.” 1

Three examples make this point clear:

1) In the Lord’s Prayer, we are taught to pray, “your kingdom come, your will be done” (Matthew 6:10). Why should we be taught by our Lord to pray this petition, which God desires, if our prayers do not impact its outcome?

2) God wants to be in a relationship with all people. If God does not need our prayers, why did Jesus say that we are to “ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers in his harvest?”(Luke 10:2)

3) We are to be God’s hands, feet and voice in our world. “So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us” (2 Corinthians 5:20).

Ambassadors are people who have been authorized and sent to represent a particular country. We have been sent by God to be witnesses, to make disciples, and to intercede on behalf of individuals to God in prayer.

Why is it important that we pray? One of the New Testament images of the church is the “Body of Christ.” As such, Christ is the head and we are the body. Using this metaphor, the right hand does not act unless it is instructed to do so from the mind, or head. Prayer enables the church to communicate with and understand the will of God. Jesus said, “I still have many things to say to you. But you cannot bear them now. When the