



WAY OF LIFE

STAY ♦ SHARE ♦ SERVE



COMMUNAL PRACTICES

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CONTENT

The following practices form a 'starter kit' for any church or team seeking to cultivate communal formation, which may lead to discerning or practising a shared Way of Life. Each practice has a communal focus and can be integrated into meetings, services, and small groups, creating space to listen to God, self, and others.

SETTING OFF

BREATHING // BREATH PRAYER

A practice to settle into a session or service, or to pause and return to an awareness of God's presence.

DWELLING // DWELLING IN THE WORD

A practice to dwell in a passage of Scripture together, with a focus on listening to God and to others.

NOTICING // COMMUNITY EXAMEN

A practice to notice and name God's presence in joyful and difficult moments, and to ask God to guide our living into the future.

GOING DEEPER

STILLING // SHARED SILENCE

A gathered form of silent prayer that deepens our awareness of God's love for us in the midst of community.

DWELLING // DWELLING IN CREATION

A practice using poetry or visual elements - including works of art, icons, objects, and nature - to connect with God and listen to others.

LISTENING // LISTENING GROUP

A practice that encourages deep sharing about our faith journeys.

JOURNEYING // PRAYER JOURNEYING

A practice that leads us onto the streets and into our neighbourhoods, creating space to reflect with God and each other on what we notice as we journey.



WAY OF LIFE | COMMUNAL PRACTICES

BREATHING BREATH PRAYER

INTRODUCTION

◆ Background

Breath Prayer is a form of contemplative prayer linked to the rhythms of breathing. Each day, we take about 26,000 breaths. Our breath is so essential for life that we often don't think about it until something is wrong. It is simply part of who we are. In early Christianity, many monks and nuns began to combine a phrase of prayer or blessing with each inhale and exhale as a way of being present to the sacred. In the earliest tradition, the words used were:

*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God (inhale)
have mercy on me, a sinner (exhale).*

◆ Summary of the practice

As you focus on your in- and out-breath, someone will slowly read a verse from Scripture or a simple prayer.

This *Breathing* practice is an embodied form of prayer which requires us to slow down and, as such, can calm us physically as well as emotionally. It allows us to foster an awareness of God's presence with us, wherever we are and whatever our circumstances.

◆ Ways to use the practice

When used as a communal practice, Breath Prayer can be integrated into a service or meeting, to help settle into a session or to pause and bring those participating back to an awareness of God's presence. It can also be used as an act of resistance or justice, praying phrases that remind us of a specific cause or purpose and our shared identity in Christ.

As an individual practice, Breath Prayer is a way of punctuating our day with an awareness of God's presence. It can be practised wherever we find ourselves: at work, in the car, at the school gate, while boiling the kettle, or washing our hands. Our breath becomes an ally for slowing down, for touching stillness. Even if our mind continues to fill up with distractions, we gently bring ourselves back to our breath.

◆ Time

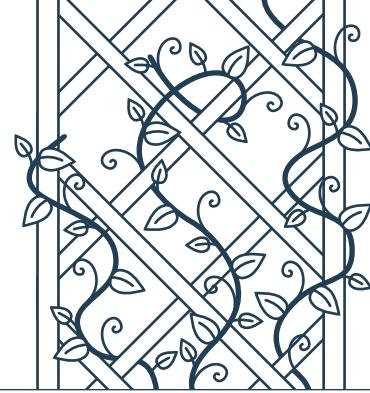
Whether used to help us settle into or pause during a meeting or service, or to punctuate our day, breath prayers are short but repeated several times over 1-2 minutes.

Breath Prayer can also be used over an extended period as part of other contemplative prayer practices.



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BREATH PRAYER



OUTLINE

1 Find a phrase

Look up a simple verse from Scripture, a prayer, or a poem – or write your own phrase. Ideally, it is short and fits easily into one inhale and exhale. It might be useful to stick with a specific phrase for an extended period of time and learn it by heart.

Examples:

- *The breath of God (inhale)
gives us life (exhale)*
Job 33:4
- *The LORD is my shepherd (inhale)
I lack nothing (exhale)*
Psalm 23
- *Nothing can separate us (inhale)
from the love of God (exhale)*
Romans 8:38-39
- *You are before all things (inhale)
in you all things hold together (exhale)*
Colossians 1:17
- *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God (inhale)
have mercy on me, a sinner (exhale)*
Desert Fathers and Mothers
- *I breathe in peace (inhale)
I breathe out love (exhale)*
Christine Valtner-Paintner
- *In freedom, I lie down (inhale)
Exhaustion is not my calling (exhale)*
from @BlackLiturgies

Another common formula is a name for God followed by your desire, for instance:

- *Spirit (inhale)
Peace (exhale)*

2 Still

Stop what you are doing and take a moment to be still, whether physically, emotionally, or both.

3 Breath

Notice your breathing. Use the natural contours of your in and out breaths to pray your chosen phrase. As you inhale, you whisper or say in your mind the first line of the phrase. As you exhale, you whisper or say in your mind the second line of the phrase.

When in a group, one person can gently lead others through the prayer by slowly saying the phrases aloud, encouraging everyone to inhale when the first part of the phrase is spoken and exhale when the second part of the phrase is spoken.

4 Repeat

Repeat step 3 at least three times, or for 1-2 minutes.



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DWELLING DWELLING IN THE WORD

INTRODUCTION

◆ Background

Dwelling in the Word is rooted in the ancient practice of Lectio Divina. We hear a passage of Scripture and, guided by the Holy Spirit, see where our attention is drawn. We dwell in the passage, listen, and share.

◆ Summary of the practice

Once a Bible passage has been selected, the group hears the passage read out slowly, listening for a word or phrase that stands out and feels important. This is shared in pairs, after which each listening partner will present to the group what stood out to their partner.

◆ Ways to use the practice

Dwelling in the Word can be a good way to start a PCC, Synod, or other church meeting. Use the Dwelling practice in small groups; with children, young people and adults; in school as a tool for spiritual reflection or an RE lesson; as a family at home; or in church as a sermon or creative reading.

Any Bible passage can be used, though some good places to start could be:

- Genesis 32:22-31, Jacob Wrestles
- Exodus 3:1-6, Moses at the Burning Bush

- Exodus 3:11-14, I Am Who I Am
- Micah 6:1-8, What God Requires
- Matthew 3:3-17, The Baptism of Jesus
- Matthew 6:25-34, The Lilies of the Field
- Luke 6:12-19, The Twelve Apostles
- Luke 10:38-42, Mary and Martha
- John 20:11-18, Do Not Hold On To Me
- Acts 2:1-13, Pentecost
- 2 Corinthians 4:1-15, Spiritual Treasure

You might want to choose one passage and use it throughout or have a more varied diet. As different groups of people meet at different times and in different places, there will be great richness from dwelling in the same passages.

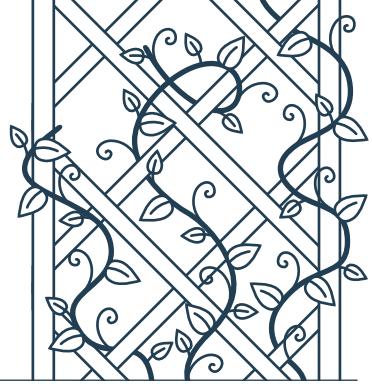
◆ Time

Dwelling in the Word is primarily a listening practice, which needs time. Anything from 15 minutes to an hour. If you are short on time, skip the second reading (step 5) and shorten the amount of sharing time (steps 6-8). If you have lots of time, leave long pauses after each reading. Share in pairs, then groups of four, and then the whole group. Reflect together on the experience.



WAY OF LIFE | COMMUNAL PRACTICES

DWELLING IN THE WORD



OUTLINE

1 Pray

Invite God in prayer, to open ears, hearts, and minds. You could use the following prayer, with one person leading and everyone joining in with the words in bold:

God who speaks, hear our prayer.

As we dwell in your life-giving word,
May we find deep-rooted delight.

As we learn to live inside your Kingdom story,

May our stories find their meaning.

As we look through the lens of your love,
May our perspectives be enlarged.

As we let go and listen with ears to hear,
May we be open to hearing God's voice through others.

As we catch wind of your gentle whisper,
May we find your comfort and challenge.

Speak God, we are listening.

Amen.

2 Passage

Read your chosen Bible passage aloud, slowly.

3 Perceive

Notice where your attention is drawn. It could be a certain verse, phrase, or single word – something that resonates, or something that feels strange or raises questions.

4 Pause

Pause in silence for a minute or two. Dwell with the place in the passage that stood out for you.

5 Passage

Read the passage aloud again, slowly.

6 Pairs

Share in pairs what you noticed. Each person should speak without being interrupted and both need time to speak. In the next step, you will be asked to share what your partner said, not what you noticed. You might find it helpful to take notes to help you remember.

7 Pass on

Regather as a whole group or organise into groups of four or six. Take turns to introduce your partner by name and share what you heard them say.

8 Ponder

Spend some time reflecting, as a whole group, on the themes arising. What might God be saying to us?

9 Pray

Thank God in prayer for speaking to the group. You may like to take some time to reflect together on the experience. You could use the following closing prayer:

God, we thank you for your word. A lamp for our feet, a light for our pathways.

May your light shine
Restoring your image in us.

May your light shine
Reorienting us within your story.

May your light shine
Reframing the present.

May your light shine
Reimagining the future.

May your light shine
Now and forever. Amen.



WAY OF LIFE | COMMUNAL PRACTICES

NOTICING COMMUNITY EXAMEN

INTRODUCTION

◆ Background

The Examen is a spiritual practice created by priest and theologian St Ignatius of Loyola in the 16th century. It is a prayer of thankful reflection: a tool to walk through the recent past with God, noticing and naming God's presence in joyful and difficult moments, and a way of asking God to help resolve how to live well in the future.

◆ Summary of the practice

Community Examen is based around three questions:

1. Where have we seen a glimpse of glory?

This question enables us to see where God is in the present.

Our response is thanksgiving.

2. What is troubling us?

This question enables us to name our fears, anxieties, and the things we lament.

Our response is to ask for peace.

3. What are we hoping for?

This question enables us to look to the future in faith.

Our response is to seek God's blessing.

◆ Ways to use the practice

Community Examen can be a good way to start or close a PCC, Synod or other church meeting. Use the practice in small groups; with children, young people and adults; in school as a tool for spiritual reflection or an RE lesson; as a family at home; in church as a sermon.

Community Examen can form the structure for meetings, using each question as a lens to look at a particular issue – mission, finance, buildings, diocesan priorities, e.g.: Where have we seen glimpses of glory in our local community? What is troubling us about our building? What are we hoping for financially?

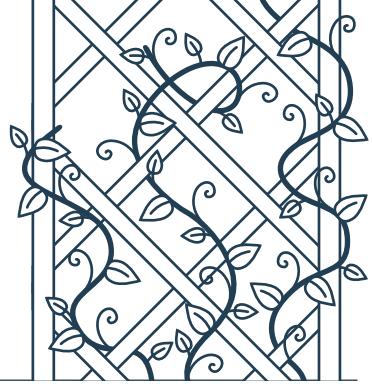
◆ Time

Community Examen is 'stretchy'. It can take a few minutes at the start of a meeting or form the entire structure of a meeting, small group, or church service. With more time, there is space for reflection, sharing and conversation between each question.



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COMMUNITY EXAMEN



OUTLINE

1 Pray

Open in prayer. You could use the following liturgy; inviting everyone to join in with the words in bold:

Slowing our breathing, remembering God's presence with us, we open our hands to pray...

Come Holy Spirit to our mind,
We receive your goodness.

Come Holy Spirit to our heart,
We receive your peace.

Come Holy Spirit to our soul,
We receive your blessing.

2 Question

Ask each question in turn, leaving space in between for silent reflection. If you have time, invite the group to share a few thoughts before concluding each question with a simple call and response:

Where have we seen glimpses of glory?

Where have we seen God at work? Where have we known God's presence? What has been good?

Hold silence

Share brief reflections

CALL: Where we see glimpses of glory,

RESPONSE: **Lord, we thank you.**

What is troubling us?

What is making us fearful? What is making things difficult? What are we lamenting?

Hold silence

Share brief reflections

CALL: Where there is trouble,

RESPONSE: **Lord, bring wisdom and peace.**

What are we hoping for?

What are our hopes and dreams? What is giving us energy? What are we wanting from God now?

Hold silence

Share brief reflections

CALL: Where we see hope,
RESPONSE: **Lord, pour out your blessing.**

3 Pray

At the end of the meeting, you could use the following closing prayer; inviting everyone to join in with the words in bold:

God, our maker, redeemer, and friend.
We thank you for being present with us:

May your goodness guide us.

May your peace protect us.

May your blessing encourage us.

May you send us out together in love.

Amen.



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STILLING SHARED SILENCE

INTRODUCTION

◆ Background

This *Stilling* practice outlines a contemplative, silent form of gathered prayer; moving away from more active and wordy kinds of prayer into a place of resting in God. It is not intended to replace our other ways of praying together, but to deepen and underpin them. Silent prayer has been part of the Church's tradition since the earliest days, though it has often been more pronounced within Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches. Within the Protestant tradition, the Quakers are an example of a denomination where meetings are framed around prayerful silence.

◆ Summary of the practice

When we gather for Shared Silence, we simply dedicate time to sit in the presence of God. We find a space that is comfortable, whether sitting on a chair or kneeling on a prayer stool. If you are able, maintaining good posture will be helpful. It is important to acknowledge that we might initially be worried to enter silence, wondering what might be disclosed. We can also be put off by our 'wandering mind'. Rather than fighting our thoughts, can we embrace ourselves with all our fears and distractions and try to gently bring ourselves back to God's love for us in Christ?

◆ Ways to use the practice

Though this practice has often been thought of in solitary terms, silent forms of prayer thrive well in communal settings. This practice can be integrated into a service or meeting, or be the sole focus of a gathering.

Coming together for Shared Silence can help us persevere when the silence feels challenging, foster a sense of belonging to the Body of Christ, and be an intimate and bonding experience. As in an orchestra, each person's tune becomes part of a symphony of silence.

◆ Time

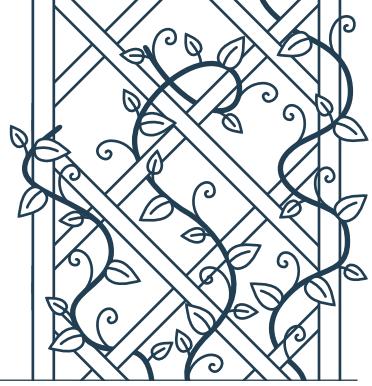
Shared Silence could be as short as 30 seconds to a minute with our children, 1-2 minutes to break up a meeting or 5-10 minutes as part of a daily prayer routine. Some groups spend as much as an hour in prayerful silence.

It will be helpful to find ways to prioritise and schedule this type of prayer, as silence is often the first thing to get squashed from our busy timetables.



WAY OF LIFE | COMMUNAL PRACTICES

SHARED SILENCE



OUTLINE

1 Prepare

Designate one person to hold the space for this shared time of silence, including leading the opening and closing prayer and keeping an eye on the time. Decide how long you will spend in silent prayer together and keep to this time. It might help to read through the steps below, before starting your time of Shared Silence.

2 Settle

To help everyone settle and focus, you might light a candle as a reminder of God's presence. Mark the start of the silence with an opening prayer. You can use the following prayer, saying the words in bold together:

God who stills, hear our prayer.
As we contemplate your presence,
may we be still and know that you are God.
When our thoughts try to take over,
may we return to the still centre.
Help us to rest in you,
and know that we are loved.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

You might want to spend some time focusing on your breathing, becoming aware of its natural rhythm, not forcing anything; breathing out any heavy or difficult feelings you might be carrying, and breathing in God's deep and unconditional love.

3 Stay

Thoughts, feelings, and outside distractions will emerge. This is normal! Notice them but don't engage with them in conversation. Take a friendly attitude towards them; try and let go of them by placing them in the hands of Christ so that you can make space for stillness and silence.

It can sometimes help to take a word or a phrase of prayer that you can return to when your thoughts take over like 'Come Holy Spirit' or 'Lord, have mercy on me' or 'Jesus'. You could also hold something in your hand, like a holding cross, stone or fidget toy. Or simply take a few deep breaths and gently remind yourself of God's love for you in Christ.

4 Emerge

At the end of your time of silence, close with a song, scripture reading or prayer of gratitude for God's presence and love in your life. Spend a few moments noticing what was going on within.

Remember that the outcome of practising silent prayer will often be experienced more in daily life, than during the practice itself.



WAY OF LIFE | COMMUNAL PRACTICES

DWELLING DWELLING IN CREATION

INTRODUCTION

◆ Background

Dwelling in Creation is rooted in the ancient practices of Lectio and Visio Divina. We use creativity – like works of art, stained glass, icons, objects in nature, poetry, or music – to help focus our prayer and, guided by the Holy Spirit, notice where our attention is drawn. We dwell in this, listen, and share.

This form of prayer engages multiple senses to help us connect with God. It is a form of prayer that has been used throughout the centuries, mainly in Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches where icons are often used in prayer. It is growing in use across Protestant communities.

◆ Summary of the practice

After selecting an artwork, icon, image, object, poem, or piece of music, the group spends time observing and prayerfully reflecting on it. Participants then share their reflections in pairs. Each listening partner will later share with the larger group what stood out to their partner.

◆ Ways to use the practice

Dwelling in Creation works well to start a PCC, Synod, or other church meeting. It can be used in small groups with children, young people, and adults, in schools for spiritual reflection or RE lessons, at home as a family, or during church services.

You might want to explore and extend your experience of this practice by using creativity in response, e.g. spending some time creating your own piece of art or music.

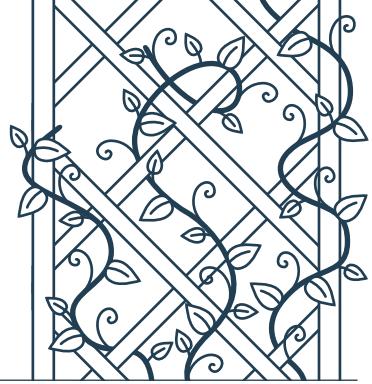
◆ Time

Dwelling in Creation is a practice of observation and listening, which needs time. It can take from 15 minutes to an hour or more. If time allows, include longer pauses for deeper reflection. Share first in pairs, then in groups of four, and finally with the whole group. Reflect together on the experience.



WAY OF LIFE | COMMUNAL PRACTICES

DWELLING IN CREATION



OUTLINE

1 Pray

Invite God to open your ears, hearts, and minds. You might light a candle to remind you of God's presence and spend a moment focusing on your breathing.

2 Observe

Spend time in silence, engaging with the chosen artwork, icon, image, object, poem, or music. If a physical object has been selected, you are invited to touch it gently. Focus on your immediate sensory experience: what you see, hear, feel, or sense physically. Notice what draws your eye, stirs your heart, or even unsettles you.

3 Reflect

In quiet reflection, notice any thoughts, feelings, or memories that arise in response to your observations. What emotions come to the surface? Are there stories, experiences, or places from your life that this brings to mind? You may find it helpful to make notes or drawings. Allow yourself to stay with what stands out or follow where your thoughts and feelings lead.

4 Pause

Hold a minute or two of silence, dwelling with what has come up and speaking to God about it quietly.

5 Observe

Spend more time with the piece: read the poem again, play the music once more, explore the object by touch, or simply sit quietly with the artwork.

6 Pairs

Share your observations in pairs. Each person speaks without interruption. Then, listen carefully as your partner shares. You will later be asked to share what you heard from your partner, not your own thoughts. Taking notes may help.

7 Pass on

Gather as a whole group or in groups of four to six. Take turns introducing your partner by name and sharing what you heard from them.

8 Ponder

As a whole group, reflect on the themes that have emerged. Consider what God might be saying to the group. You might offer arts and crafts materials for creative responses.

9 Pray

Thank God for speaking to you through this time. You may wish to spend a few moments sharing reflections on the experience together.



WAY OF LIFE | COMMUNAL PRACTICES

LISTENING LISTENING GROUP

INTRODUCTION

This is a shortened version of the Listening Groups practice. A full introduction and further handouts can be found on listening.wayoflife.london

Background

Listening Groups offer a safe space to notice and name what God is doing in our lives today. Our sharing becomes a form of prayer that deepens our connection with God, ourselves, and one another. Every voice is valued equally. The focus is on listening with open hearts, rather than convincing others of our views. Honest sharing matters more than having all the answers. Participation is voluntary; it's okay to pass or share later if needed.

Summary of the practice

In small groups of three to four, the practice begins with a short silence and opening prayer. Participants may choose to reflect together on a Scripture passage, reading it aloud and sharing brief responses. Then, everyone takes turns sharing their faith experiences, with quiet moments between each person sharing. The focus is on attentive listening, trusting that God is present in the sharing. Over time, groups may incorporate additional responses or questions, but the heart of the practice remains noticing God at work and listening prayerfully.

Core Principles

- **Share honestly:** Speak from your experience of God in your life.
- **Listen deeply:** Let each person share without interruption.
- **Avoid judgment:** Refrain from offering advice or evaluating what others say.
- **Embrace silence:** Silence is an essential part of the process; allow space for reflection.

Ways to use the practice

Listening Groups can be part of a larger meeting, starting with a shared prayer and reflection before breaking into smaller groups. They can also run independently, with participants organising their own meetings.

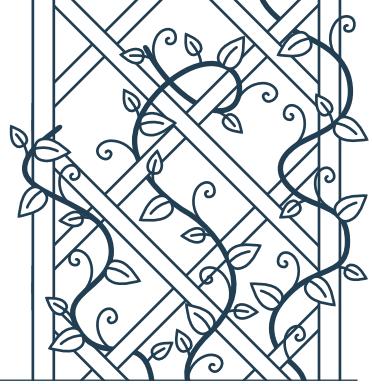
Time

A session usually lasts about an hour. Groups may add time at the end to pray for each other. Sessions can happen every four to six weeks, either in person or online.



WAY OF LIFE | COMMUNAL PRACTICES

LISTENING GROUPS



OUTLINE | BEGINNER

For groups meeting for the first few times. You will need: a candle, a lighter, a copy of this outline for all participants, and a Bible.

1 Prepare (5 min)

Introduce yourselves. Choose someone to facilitate the session and guide the group through this outline. (The facilitator can rotate each meeting.)

Decide whether to include a Scripture reflection as part of the practice. If you do, agree on which passage to use, e.g. the daily or Sunday Gospel reading from the lectionary.

2 Check-in (5 min)

Take turns sharing anything on your mind that will help you be present. This might include questions about the process or something from today you would like to 'park' for a while.

3 Opening Prayer (5 min)

Light a candle as a sign of God's presence. Pause for two or three minutes of silence, then say together:

Creator God, as we gather in your presence, may we meet you in the world around us, in one another, and in our own hearts. Amen.

4 Share (30 min)

When you are ready, move gently into a time of sharing. This sharing time has two parts: a Scripture reflection (optional), followed by the core practice of listening deeply to one another's experience.

PART 1 | Scripture reflection (optional)
Choose one person to slowly read the chosen Bible passage aloud. Next, take turns sharing a word or short phrase from the passage that stands out to you without explanation.

Have someone else read the passage aloud again. Take turns sharing briefly, up to one minute each, about why that part of the passage speaks to you. Hold a short silence between each person sharing.

PART 2: Wonderings (core practice)

Choose someone to read each of the wondering questions aloud.

Then take turns reflecting on one wondering of your choice for three to four minutes, without interruption. Hold a short silence between each person sharing.

Wondering Questions

- I wonder how Christ has been present for you in the past week(s).
- I wonder if Christ has also been present in your struggles.
- I wonder what has helped you listen to God, and what has been a distraction.
- I wonder what help you seek from God at this point in your life.

6 Reflect (5-10 min)

Spend some time reflecting on the practice:

- What was it like to share without being interrupted?
- What did it feel like to be listened to?
- Were there any distractions that made it difficult to listen fully?

7 Closing Prayer (1 min)

Pray together before blowing out the candle:

May the light of Christ shine within us, among us, and through us into the world, with wisdom, compassion, and peace. Amen.



WAY OF LIFE | COMMUNAL PRACTICES

JOURNEYING PRAYER JOURNEYING

INTRODUCTION

◆ Background

Prayer Journeying, or prayer walking as it is often called, takes us out of our church buildings and into our streets, parks, and estates. It is a form of prayer with a deep history; by it people have encountered the wonder of God in a specific place, prayed for protection and healing, spread the good news of the Gospel, and engaged in pilgrimage. It is a practice that spans different Anglican traditions, including pilgrimages, Rogation Sunday 'beating the bounds' and Palm Sunday processions.

◆ Summary of the practice

Prayer Journeying involves praying in and for our neighbourhoods by having a conversation with God about what we notice as we journey. It is a prayer of our whole being. Our prayer may involve words, thoughts or feelings in our hearts as we converse with God.

The focus is not on a specific destination; it is in the journey itself that we find meaning and a new way of understanding. We set out in trust, are attentive to encounters along the way and bring a sense of wonder to the environment through which we travel.

Prayer Journeying often leads to greater engagement with our communities. It may

be through conversations we have with people we meet, or by God prompting us about the possibilities of responding to local needs, or simply through God's love for our neighbours, our community and ourselves being renewed.

Being prayerfully present helps us become aware of and recognise God's presence in the places around us, while also leaving footprints of blessing, goodness and mercy behind us.

◆ Ways to use the practice

This practice could be integrated into our already existing routines, e.g. the school drop off, our daily commute or another regular journey we take.

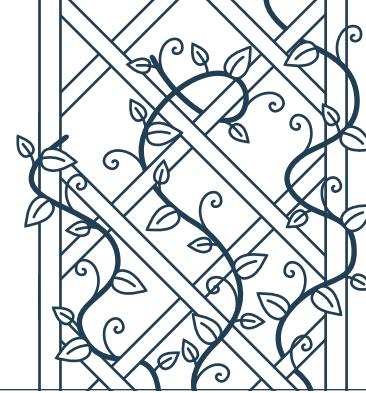
If meeting as a group, the journey could be started and finished with a communal time of prayer. For the journey itself, following the example of Jesus and his disciples, going out in pairs will give everyone involved plenty of space to pray and discern.

It is important to be aware of the different sensory abilities and perspectives in any group. We might want to consider a virtual opportunity, e.g. live streaming a prayer journey for those who cannot physically take part.



WAY OF LIFE | COMMUNAL PRACTICES

PRAYER JOURNEYING



OUTLINE

1 Plan

If your prayer journey is not part of one of your regular journeys, think about where you might go. Include significant places like schools, health centres, churches, spots with clear needs, places of beauty like parks, or local services such as foodbanks.

2 Pray

Prepare your heart, becoming aware of God's love. Use a prayer practice, worship song, or hymn to centre your attention on Jesus. Ask for help to recognise God's presence as you go out.

3 Journey

As you journey, the following steps might be helpful:

STAY:

Take time to be present and listen. Become aware of your own breathing and allow the journey to become an expression of prayer with your whole body, as you journey with God and respond to your environment. Become aware of anything you are drawn to and consider how you could respond to that prayerfully. **Where is God and what are you noticing in your locality?**

SHARE:

Share your insights with each other, to build up a bigger picture of the local area and what God is doing. Don't worry about interruptions. Many a prayer journey has been interrupted by conversations that have provided opportunities to engage with people, receive and learn from them, and share about the good news of Jesus. Be open to change where you go and

what you pray for as you sense the Spirit's leading. **As you journey the streets, what do you sense, notice, feel, wonder?**

SERVE:

What are the prayers and actions that are emerging from this time? What does *Thy Kingdom Come* look like 'here and now'? How might you embody this? For example, if a specific place feels 'unsafe', pray for an increase in safety for all. If it looks 'unclean', you might feel stirred to spring into action and organise a litter pick.

4 Reflect

Record your experience in some way – make a journal or record a voice message, draw a picture, or think of a prayer that sums up the experience. If you have gone as part of a group, share stories, thank God, and debrief together. Consider whether there were any repeated themes or prayers from different groups. If there are issues that need more prayer or specific actions, you might plan to return.

Finally, prayer brings change, both to yourself as well as to your surroundings, so expect and look for responses to your prayers. It may be a scheme to bring people in the community together, a news report or a minor detail that can be an encouragement for you in your prayer. You might also notice yourself becoming more present to the people you share your locality with. Thank God for the answers to prayer.