

To pray is to make our hearts ready to experience the love of God in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Praying regularly will help us to develop a spiritual rhythm. A discipline of prayer changes the way that we think about our lives, because it creates new habits of heart and mind. Prayer opens us more deeply to the transforming grace of God. We enter into God's presence, allowing the Holy Spirit to pray in us.

Services like Morning and Evening Prayer, Prayer during the Day, and Night Prayer are designed so that they can be said by individuals or in a group. These services and guidance for using them can be [found here](#).

But we may often wish to pray by ourselves as we try to share in Christ's prayer to his Father. Whether you are a child, young person or an adult, prayer is easier than you might imagine! Millions of people of every age pray every day.

Remember that God hears every prayer—but not all prayers are answered in the way we might expect or desire: we don't always pray for his will to be done! Prayer is a discipline - it can be difficult at times, just like keeping fit, being on a diet, or keeping weeds down in the garden. Little and often is best, but don't give up! No prayer, however inadequate you may feel it to be, is ever wasted or of no value.

When should I pray?

Traditionally, prayer times have been morning and evening, but you can choose a time which is best for you. It helps to be somewhere quiet, where you can have some time for yourself.

What do I need?

You might like to set up a special place in which you pray regularly. You might also place an open Bible, a cross, a candle, an icon or another picture, to give the time and space special significance.

You don't have to know any prayers if you want to pray - in fact, words can often get in the way. But you may wish to write down or memorise some prayers that speak to you, especially the Lord's Prayer. You could build up a collection of favourite prayers and sayings and keep a scrapbook. Or you could use a collection of prayers such as [Pocket Prayers](#) or [Words for Worship](#).

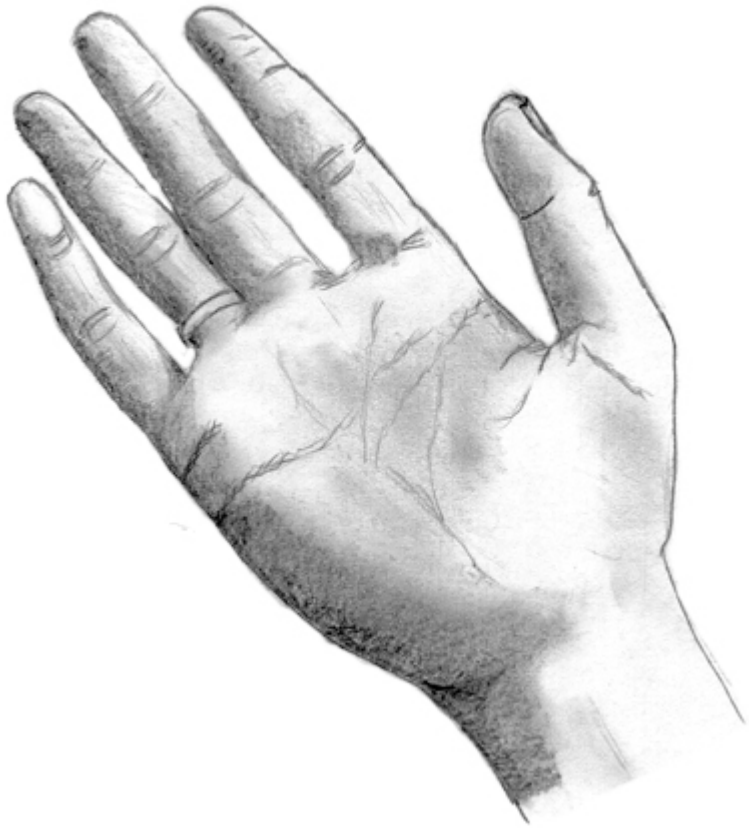
Do I have to kneel?

Kneeling is the traditional posture for penitence and standing for praise, but you can pray anywhere - walking, standing, sitting, whatever feels comfortable.

Structure

Sometimes we need to offer 'arrow prayers', asking for God's immediate help in a particular situation. But thankfully we don't live all our lives in moments of extreme crisis. What about day-to-day praying?

Use your hand as a model



Your fingers can be used to bring to mind different things to pray for.

1. **Thumb**

This is the strongest digit on your hand. Give thanks for all the strong things in your life, like home and family, relationships that support and sustain you.

2. **Index finger**

This is the pointing finger. Pray for all those people and things in your life who guide and help you. Friends, teachers, doctors, nurses, emergency services and so on.

3. **Middle finger**

This is the tallest finger. Pray for all the important people who have power in the world, like world leaders and their governments, members of parliament and local councillors, the Royal Family, other world leaders and their governments.

4. **Ring finger**

This is the weakest finger on your hand. It can't do much by itself. Remember the poor, the weak, the helpless, the hungry, the sick, the ill and the bereaved.

5. **Little finger**

This is the smallest and the last finger on your hand. Pray for yourself.

Find a prayer that speaks to you and meditate on each word one by one

For instance the Jesus Prayer: 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner'.

Read a psalm

[The Common Worship Psalter](#) gives prayers after each psalm.

Use a prayer book

[Time To Pray](#) or [The Book of Common Prayer](#) to give you some ideas, or use its prayers as a basis for your own.

Looking for further resources?

Archbishop of Canterbury Mothering Day Sunday 2020

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Join our Church online

Watch our virtual service and explore other digital resources



Read Today's Prayer

Here is today's prayer from the Church of England

Clasped hands praying over an open Bible with a purple tint

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Coronavirus liturgy and prayer resources

Special prayers, intercessions and liturgy for COVID-19



Time to Pray app

Services of Daily Prayer, Psalms and readings from Common Worship

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/learning-pray>