



# A Lenten Journey

Lent 2022

Dear CPC Families,

Welcome to ***A Lenten Journey!*** This resource is designed for use during the six weeks of Lent. (This year it begins on Ash Wednesday - March 2 and continues through Easter - April 17<sup>th</sup>.) We've adapted a resource created by educators of Grace Presbytery and wanted to share it with you. ***A Lenten Journey*** highlights a different prayer practice each week of Lent with suggestions for adapting each prayer practice for children, youth, and adults. We'll also be featuring these each week in worship during the Children's Message:

- Week 1: *Breath Prayer*
- Week 2: *Examen*
- Week 3: *Prayer Walk*
- Week 4: *Lectio Divina*
- Week 5: *Labyrinth*
- Week 6: *Praying with Color.*

For our at-home mailing, we've included materials from Week 1. Please feel free to explore Weeks 2 – 6 by visiting the church website or the weekly CPC email and downloading them. Note: there's also Response cards to print out if you'd like to explore that as a family faith practice. Families with elementary-age children are also receiving a scratch-off prayer calendar to use each day or as suits your family's schedule.

**We invite you to pray** as the Spirit moves you -- each day or each week.

We hope that you and your family will grow in faith and love this season. We're keeping you in our prayers.

---- the Christian Education Team at CPC

***A Lenten Journey* Writing Team Members:**

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## Breath Prayer

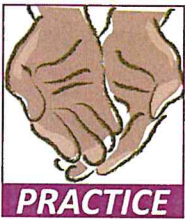
A breath prayer is a short prayer that can be spoken aloud or thought silently in a single breath. It may be prayed anywhere and at any time— whether sitting in silence or as you move about through your day. Carolyn Brown says, “Breath prayers are like texting God.” Breath prayer reminds us our spirit is connected with God’s Spirit through our very act of breathing, as when the resurrected Jesus breathes on his disciples and says to the “Receive the Holy Spirit.” (John 20:22).



**READ**

### John 20:19-22

<sup>19</sup>When it was evening on that day, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” <sup>20</sup>After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup>Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” <sup>22</sup>When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.



**PRACTICE**

### Create your breath prayer

Create your breath prayer. Answer these two questions to create the two parts of your prayer:

1. What is a favorite name you use for God?
2. What is a deep desire or need that you have? Jesus stands before you asking, “{Your name}, what do you want me to do for you?” Your response to this question is the second part of your breath prayer.

Put the two parts of your prayer together to create a short phrase that you can say in one breath. Decide how to best order and phrase the two prayer parts where your prayer sounds best. It may help to write down your prayer on a slip of paper that you can carry with you throughout the day.

**Adapting for young children:** For young children, the easiest way to address God is by using God or Jesus. For children too young to read, choose a very simple phrase and help them learn it by saying it with them.

**Simple breath prayer examples:** “*God, be near me*” or “*Help me, Lord Jesus.*”

### Practice your breath prayer

First, practice your prayer while sitting in a quiet place. Take two to five minutes to sit in silence. Breath in and say the first part of your prayer; breath out and say the second part. Repeat the prayer as you sit in silence. If your mind wanders, turn your attention back to your breathing and your prayer.

Next, practice your prayer as you move and go about your daily tasks. Pay attention to how God is speaking to you and your own response as you engage in breath prayer.

Continue practicing your breath prayer throughout the week.

# Breath Prayers

## Psalm 23

Inhale: I will not be afraid

Exhale: for You are  
with me

## 2 Corinthians 12:9

Inhale: Your grace  
Exhale: is enough for me

## Psalm 46:10

Inhale: Be still  
Exhale: and know that  
you are God

## Psalm 46:1

Inhale: You are  
our refuge  
Exhale: and our strength

## Psalm 56:3

Inhale: When I am afraid  
Exhale: I will trust you

Inhale: Come  
Exhale: Lord Jesus

## Romans 8:38-39

Inhale: Nothing can  
separate me  
Exhale: from God's love

## Philippians 4:7

Inhale: Peace of Christ  
Exhale: guard my heart  
and mind



## Examen

The examen, or examination of conscience, is a quick prayer to see where God was active in your day. Usually done for 15-20 minutes at the end of the day, the prayer was popularized by Saint Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuit Order, in his classic text *The Spiritual Exercises*. Using the five easy steps below, you can practice the examen prayer every day and begin to see God's presence in your life more easily.



**READ**

### Psalm 139: 1-18, 23-24 (CEB)

Lord, you have examined me.  
You know me.

<sup>2</sup>You know when I sit down and when I stand up.  
Even from far away, you comprehend my plans.

<sup>3</sup>You study my traveling and resting.  
You are thoroughly familiar with all my ways.

<sup>4</sup>There isn't a word on my tongue, Lord,  
that you don't already know completely.

<sup>5</sup>You surround me—front and back.  
You put your hand on me.

<sup>6</sup>That kind of knowledge is too much for me;  
it's so high above me that I can't reach it.

<sup>7</sup>Where could I go to get away from your spirit?  
Where could I go to escape your presence?

<sup>8</sup>If I went up to heaven, you would be there.  
If I went down to the grave, you would be there too!

<sup>9</sup>If I could fly on the wings of dawn,  
stopping to rest only on the far side of the ocean—

<sup>10</sup>even there your hand would guide me;  
even there your strong hand would hold me tight!

<sup>11</sup>If I said, "The darkness will definitely hide me;  
the light will become night around me,"

<sup>12</sup>even then the darkness isn't too dark for you!  
Nighttime would shine bright as day,  
because darkness is the same as light to you!

<sup>13</sup>You are the one who created my innermost parts;  
you knit me together while I was still in my  
mother's womb.

<sup>14</sup>I give thanks to you that I was marvelously set  
apart.

Your works are wonderful—I know that very well.

<sup>15</sup>My bones weren't hidden from you  
when I was being put together in a secret place,  
when I was being woven together in the deep parts  
of the earth.

<sup>16</sup>Your eyes saw my embryo,  
and on your scroll every day was written that was  
being formed for me,  
before any one of them had yet happened.

<sup>17</sup>God, your plans are incomprehensible to me!  
Their total number is countless!

<sup>18</sup>If I tried to count them—they outnumber grains of  
sand!

If I came to the very end—I'd still be with you.

<sup>23</sup>Examine me, God! Look at my heart!  
Put me to the test! Know my anxious thoughts!

<sup>24</sup>Look to see if there is any idolatrous way in me,  
then lead me on the eternal path!



**PRACTICE**

Read Psalm 139 and think of these verses as you go through each step of the Examen Prayer this week:

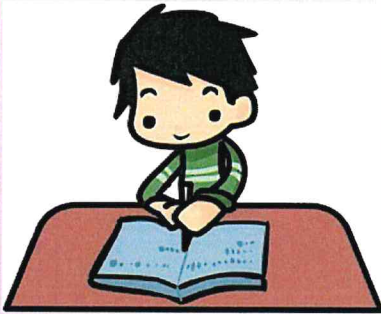
1. **Ask God for light.** I want to look at my day with God's eyes, not merely my own.
2. **Give thanks.** The day I have just lived is a gift from God. Be grateful for it.
3. **Review the day.** I carefully look back on the day just completed, being guided by the Holy Spirit.
4. **Face your shortcomings.** I face up to what is wrong — in my life and in me.
5. **Look toward the day to come.** I ask where I need God in the day to come.

\* taken from [www.ignatianspirituality.com](http://www.ignatianspirituality.com)

# A Guided Examen for Children



God loves me and wants to listen to me talk about my day, right now!



I tell God what I did today.



When was I the happiest?  
When was I the saddest?



What did I like best about today?

I end with this prayer to God.  
Thank you, God, for this day.  
Bless tomorrow, this I pray.



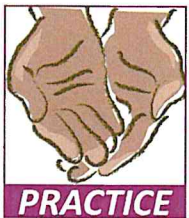
## Prayer Walk

A prayer walk is simply walking somewhere with the intention of lifting up prayers for people and situations along the way. It is a kind of "moving intercession." There are no set rules about how to do it. The length, or how many and what prayers are lifted up, is entirely up to the walkers. The walk can be taken by individuals or by groups of all



### Psalm 19:1-4a (CEB)

Heaven is declaring God's glory;  
the sky is proclaiming his handiwork.  
<sup>2</sup> One day gushes the news to the next,  
and one night informs another what needs to be known.  
<sup>3</sup> Of course, there's no speech, no words—  
their voices can't be heard—  
<sup>4</sup> but their sound extends throughout the world;  
their words reach the ends of the earth.



An easy prayer walk (or drive) to take with children is a walk in your neighborhood or a park to observe nature and admire God's handiwork. Stop every little while and let each family member share something they see, hear or smell for which they are thankful for and why they are thankful for it. Then pray something like, "Thank you God for the birds whose singing makes Peter happy, and for the flowers that smell so nice, and the plants that give us oxygen, etc." **You could also use the Nature Prayer Walk handout which is attached to this week's prayer practice.**

Adults and youth may want to expand this to pray for the people they encounter, or the people in the buildings they walk by, or the organizations or groups that use the buildings or places they pass. Thank God for the gifts of protection (police, fire stations, etc.) or care (medical buildings, pharmacies, nursing homes, etc.), the children that use the playground and so on. Ask God to be with these people in whatever ways might be appropriate. Pray for those in need of help – nursing care residents, recipients of help from the food bank, those living in shelters, etc. Craft your prayers for whatever you encounter on your walk (or drive.)

### Prayer Examples:

*Almighty God, you lend your strength to all those who are there for us in times of crisis, fear, and hurt. You give courage to the first responders who continue to do this important work they are called to do, looking beyond the risk for the sake of those who need your help and protection.*

*Lord Jesus, who healed the sick and gave them new life, be with doctors, nurses and caregivers as they act as agents of your healing touch. In desperate times, keep them strong yet loving; and when their work is done, be with them in their weariness and in their tears.*

# Nature Prayer Walk



Bird: Pray for someone important to you



Flower: Pray for those who care for others



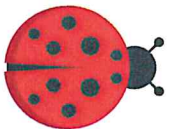
Evergreen Tree: Pray for leaders



Grass/Snow/Sand: Pray for teachers



Leaves: For your family



Bug: Pray for whatever - you choose!

What else can you find in nature?



## Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina is an ancient spiritual practice from the Christian monastic tradition. In Lectio Divina, we seek to experience the presence of God through reading and listening, prayer, meditation and contemplation. Lectio Divina can be done as an individual or as a group, with children, youth and adults.



**READ**

### Psalm 23 (Growing in God's Love Story Bible)

God takes care of me like a shepherd cares for the sheep. I have everything I need: food to eat and water to drink.

God takes care of me. God leads me to good ways of living. Even when I am frightened, I remember that God is with me. God cares for me and keeps me safe.

God, you care for me, even when people want to be mean to me. You give more than I can imagine. Yes, your constant love will be with me forever.

I will be your child as long as I live.



**PRACTICE**

### FOR CHILDREN:

Read a story from your own story bible. Invite your child(ren) to sit quietly and as still as possible for a minute. Allow the children to look at the illustrations while you read the story. Read the story slowly, then pause for a minute. Invite the children to listen for what God is doing. Then read the story a second time.

Ask the children to tell you what is happening in the story, using the illustration to guide the discussion. Perhaps ask them which character they would like to be in the story. After a few minutes of sharing, ask the children what they would like to say to God after hearing the story. Finally, invite the children into a few minutes of quiet, telling them that God wants to tell them something in response to what they told God.

### FOR YOUTH:

Use the "Lectio Divina for Youth" with the verses of your choice.

### FOR ADULTS:

Begin by choosing a section of scripture that you would like to read and pray. Try not to set a goal for how much content you will cover. The goal is to listen for God and experience God's presence.

Next, do what you must to quiet and prepare yourself to hear from God. If you need to find a quiet room, or sit in silence for several minutes, or sit in a comfortable chair, take whatever posture will help you prepare to receive and experience God's presence.



# Lectio Divina for Youth

Lectio Divina, Latin for “sacred reading,” is an ancient practice of quiet prayer and reflection, reading scripture and listening to the voice of God, dating back to about 300 CE. Lectio can be done alone or in a group. There are 4 sections to Lectio Divina.

## REMEMBER:

Posture is important. Sit straight up, feet on the floor, hands in your lap or to your sides. This is important to attentive listening. While this process can be restful, it is a time to be attentive to God’s voice.

This time is your gift to God. It’s not about whether you get something out of it or not. Don’t be discouraged if you don’t “get it.”

Your mind will wander. Recognize that this happens, even to those who practice Lectio often. When you catch yourself, refocus and continue. They don’t call them “spiritual practices” for nothing!

## LECTIO - READ

**Scripture passage for the week:** John 3:14-21

READ through this short passage of scripture at least two times.

LISTEN for a specific word or phrase that catches your attention. Write it down.

**Word or phrase:** \_\_\_\_\_

## MEDITATIO - THINK

- ✚ “Meditate” literally means “to gnaw”, as a dog gnaws on a bone.
- ✚ Actively think about your word or phrase.
- ✚ Ask: Why is it important? How does it make me feel?
- ✚ “Shine a spotlight on it” – look at the word or phrase from different angles.

## ORATIO - PRAY

- ✚ Ask, “God, why did you give me this word? Why do I feel this way about this phrase?”
- ✚ Listen for a response.
- ✚ Follow your active thoughts (not your distraction thoughts).
- ✚ Be patient.

## CONTEMPLATIO - LIVE

- ✚ Rest in the love and presence of God, feel God's closeness.
- ✚ Thank God for this word.



## Labyrinth

A labyrinth is an ancient symbol. Using the circle and spiral images it becomes a meandering but purposeful path which represents a journey to the center and back out again. As a meditation and prayer tool, it guides us into our own center then back out again into the world.

A labyrinth is not a maze so you cannot get lost. There are no dead ends or multiple turns to lead you off the path. The labyrinth is one continuous path that leads you to the center. Even though there are twists and turns, you cannot get lost in a labyrinth.

Labyrinth walking is a practice used by many faiths. Walking the labyrinth slowly quiets the mind and focuses on prayer. Finger labyrinths and virtual labyrinths offer an opportunity for the same practice when there is no availability to a full-sized labyrinth.

Further information on labyrinths can be found at the following site:

<https://labyrinthociety.org/virtual-labyrinth-walk>



**READ**

### Luke 11:1-4 (NRSV)

Jesus was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.

He said to them, "When you pray, say:

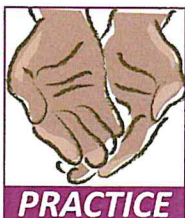
Father, hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come.  
Give us each day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our sins,  
for we ourselves forgive  
everyone indebted to us.  
And do not bring us to the time of trial  
but rescue us from evil."

### The Lord's Prayer

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.



**PRACTICE**

There is a small labyrinth near the pavilion of the church. If you want to "walk" at home, a **pattern of a finger labyrinth is attached and is a good option.**

A labyrinth is a great place to pray. You can read scripture and meditate on sections that speak to you. Think on those portions of the scripture to meditate on as you walk (or follow with your finger) the labyrinth path. Or, practice another form of prayer as you walk --- breath prayer or examen, for example. You may simply wish to walk quietly and welcome it as a time of reflection, or of conversation between you and God.

*You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy. Psalm 16:11aA*





## Praying with Color

This week the practice will be praying with color. There are no hard and fast rules for this practice. There are guidelines that should help make the practice a meaningful experience. This practice is based on the ideas of Sybil MacBeth. You can find more information at <https://prayingincolor.com/praying-in-color-praying-in-black-and-white>



**READ**

### Mark 11:1-11 (CEB)

11 When Jesus and his followers approached Jerusalem, they came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives. Jesus gave two disciples a task, <sup>2</sup> saying to them, “Go into the village over there. As soon as you enter it, you will find tied up there a colt that no one has ridden. Untie it and bring it here. <sup>3</sup> If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘Its master needs it, and he will send it back right away.’”

<sup>4</sup> They went and found a colt tied to a gate outside on the street, and they untied it. <sup>5</sup> Some people standing around said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” <sup>6</sup> They told them just what Jesus said, and they left them alone. <sup>7</sup> They brought the colt to Jesus and threw their clothes upon it, and he sat on it. <sup>8</sup> Many people spread out their clothes on the road while others spread branches cut from the fields. <sup>9</sup> Those in front of him and those following were shouting, “*Hosanna! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord!*” <sup>10</sup> Blessings on the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest!” <sup>11</sup> Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. After he looked around at everything, because it was already late in the evening, he returned to Bethany with the Twelve.



**PRACTICE**

For this practice you can use crayons, markers, colored pencils, sidewalk chalk, a regular number 2 pencil, a ball point pen, or any other writing tool. Any kind of paper will do; you can use things like printer paper, the back of an envelope, the back of a piece of junk mail, or a cardboard delivery box. You don’t even need paper if you have chalk to use out on the sidewalk.

Write the word **hosanna** somewhere. **Hosanna** was shouted by the crowds in the story you just read. It literally means “save now!”

Draw a shape around it or just start to doodle around it.

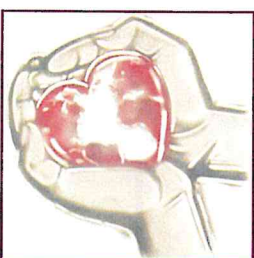
If you want to pray for someone or a group write their name somewhere on the page. Draw or doodle around it. Add color, if you want. Think of each stroke of your pen as a prayer for them

Add more names as you think of them.

Feel free to stop when you want. You can come back to this page later. Or you can start a new one at any time.



# Response Cards



**RESPOND**

The final step of the journey with each of the prayer practices is **RESPOND**. The response to our connection with God through prayer is to act in faith to further God's kingdom here on earth.

There are **Response Cards** included with this material that provide activities that can be done in service to others or to encourage your solidarity with God's children who may need encouragement and support.

Some of the cards include an activity that starts with "fast from...". While fasting is usually known as the practice of giving up food, during Lent the practice is used to give up something or refrain from something in order to focus on prayer and reflect on the work of Jesus on the journey to the cross. Fasting on these cards suggest giving up something for a day: screen time, snacks, etc.

There are plenty of cards for families to use and we suggest cutting them up and putting them in a basket or bowl to draw from each week or each day. There are blank cards to create personal responses.

*response*

write a letter  
of thanks  
to someone  
you love

*response*

draw a  
picture or  
write a note  
to your  
pastor or  
teacher

*response*

fast from  
tattling

*response*

fast from  
saying  
anything  
negative

*response*

fast from  
screen time

*response*

fast from  
snacks

*response*

fast from  
sweets

*response*

fast from  
eating out

*response*

fast from  
buying  
anything

*response*

joyfully  
help with a  
project or  
chore

*response*

write a  
card to  
someone  
who needs  
extra love

*response*

give  
someone  
real or paper  
flowers

*response*

pick up litter  
outside your  
house  
or at  
a park

*response*

take a  
meal to  
someone

*response*

eat very  
simple meals  
for breakfast  
lunch and  
dinner

*response*

learn  
something  
about another  
country or  
culture

*response*

plant a  
flower  
or herb

*response*

deliver  
pet food  
to a local  
animal shelter

*response*

do something  
anonymously  
for a friend  
or neighbor

*response*

give away  
a toy  
or a  
book

*response*

do a chore  
without  
being  
asked

*response*

take an  
unexpected  
treat to a  
friend

*response*

donate  
food to  
a local  
charity

*response*

smile at  
three  
people you  
meet

*response*

give  
someone a  
compliment

*response*

donate  
money to  
a cause  
you love

*response*

unload  
the  
dishwasher



*response*

*response*

*response*

*response*

*response*

*response*

*response*

*response*

*response*