

## Who can Pray? May 1



### BEFORE CLASS ACTIVITY

Have several tables set up with a simple picture on each one, a dog, a person, a house. Have something they can build or create with, pencil and paper, play dough, pipe cleaners, Lego's. Tell them while you're waiting on the others to arrive, create one of the things on the picture. Wait to start class for a few minutes so that everyone who enters has a chance to create something.

### LESSON

**Main Point:** God created you and He created you to pray. Prayer is just a conversation with God.

You did a good job creating this morning. Each of your creations were different. The Bible tells us that God created us! Think about that for a moment. God created everything out of nothing at all. He spoke and there were clouds and animals and seas. He created us. You may not have had time to think about it when you were creating your things today, but if you had time, you might have thought about what things you would want your creations to do. How many of you created a dog? What would you want your dog to do? (Bark, play, eat, etc.) When God created each of us, He had a purpose in mind for us. One of the things He wants us to do is to be friends with Him. He wants us to have a relationship with Him.

What does it mean to be a friend? What are some things you do with a friend? Think of one of your best friends, what are some things that you know about them? How do you know those things? (You've spent time with them, you've watched them and you have listened to them.)

God wants us to spend time with Him also. He already knows EVERYTHING about us. Did you know that? The Bible says that nothing is forgotten by God. "Indeed the very hairs of your head are all numbered!" Luke 2:7 Do you even know how many hairs you have on your head? He loves us that much that He knows and is concerned with everything about us. Wow! Aren't you glad that we serve a God that is big enough, smart enough and loving enough that He is concerned about things that we don't even know!

Because He loves us so we want to do all we can to love Him back and to get to know Him better.

One of the ways we do that is through prayer.

Prayer is as easy as us talking to God. Regardless of how old you are, you can talk to God. Anyone can pray. Everyone can talk to God. There are prayers in the Bible in which God gives us ways to pray. And then we know that we can just talk to God just like we talk to our friends. We can tell Him about our day. We can thank Him for all He does for us. We can tell Him about things that we are worried or scared about. We can share with Him things that make us happy. We can pray for our friends. We can pray for our families. We can pray for our Church.

We can say our prayers out loud, or can quietly say our prayers. We can even write out our prayers. God hears all of them!

Our scripture verse for today is I Thessalonians 5:16-18 "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

What does God's will mean? It's kind of simple. It means that is what God wants for us. It's what He wants us to do. (During this set of question and answers you could stay in a group, or you could have the students divide up in pairs or small groups.)

Why do you think God wants us to pray?

Why do you think He wants us to rejoice?

Why do you think He wants us to give thanks?

Do you think it's because He needs to know the things that we will tell him in prayer? No. He knows everything! He wants us to pray and be in conversation with Him because He loves us and He knows the more time we spend with Him that better we will get to know and love Him.

The Bible tells us that when we pray God hears us. That's good news isn't it! He's never too busy or asleep or watching TV – He hears us when we pray. Jeremiah 29:12 "Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you."

So how do we pray and what do we pray about? Do we have to use special words? Do we have to close our eyes? Do we have to just be in church? Do we have to be a grown up? All of these are good questions. Would you like to take some turns answering some of them? What do you think? If your friend asked you about prayer what would you say?

Anyone and everyone can pray. We pray just like we're talking to a friend. Now even though God is powerful and all knowing and all seeing He still wants to be our friend. We don't have to close our eyes. We can pray anywhere! The Bible describes a variety of ways to pray: kneeling, standing, lifting hands, and even lying on a bed. We can use lots of words or single sentences. Even if it means a quick "Please help my friend" when someone is hurt. We can pray out loud or we can just whisper or even think a prayer! God hears all of them! Anything that we are happy about, sad about it, confused about, or mad about, God says we can bring those things to Him. Nothing is off limits! James 5:13 "Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise." Everything from trouble to happy, God says we can share it with Him!

One sentence prayers are effective anytime! Help your students look for opportunities to pray that may be just a quick sentence. Even in that brief time you're helping train them to turn their focus on God. A quick "Thank you God for this food" as they are in their car at the drive through. Suggest they pray a sentence prayer anytime they hear sirens. "God please help the people those people in need. Also help the people who are driving the ambulance / police car / fire truck. Keep them safe also. Anytime they see a homeless person. "God please help that person." Anytime they pass a hospital. "Please be with the sick people, their families, and the people treating them."

One way that you can begin your prayer time is to think about some of the things you like about God. For example, you like the fact that He is your friend. You like the fact that He listens to you. You like the fact that He made the earth, the sun, the different seasons and the animals. There are lots of things to thank and praise God for. We sometimes call this Adoration. Adoration means to honor and to have deep love and respect. Beginning our prayers this way reminds us and God, how much we love and honor Him.

We have lots of things that we want to tell God. We have needs, and some wants, that we like to ask Him for. And that's ok, that's better than OK, that's exactly what God wants, is for us to present our requests to Him. The Bible says that when we call on God He is near to us! Isn't that Good News! Psalm 145:18 "The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth." When we share our hearts with God, He is near!

God wants to hear about us, but God also wants us to pray for others. We can pray for our friends when they have needs or when they are sick. James 5:16 "Pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." That is one of the joys we have as being a part of a church family is that we get to pray for one another.

I Timothy 2:1-2 "I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people . . . "



## ACTIVITY

Prayer Journal.

You can do as much of this in advance, or as little, depending upon your class. Your journal can be as simple as a few pieces of paper stapled together. You can have the students decorate spiral notebooks or you can buy three ring binders so that they can add pages. They can be constructed however you like. Some options are: Add pages for specific things, one page for prayers for them, one page for

prayers for their family, one for their friends, one for their community, their church, etc. You can let them take their journals home or it could be something you could keep and work on each month as you talk about prayer. For preschoolers you could find pictures of things they pray about, pets, family, food, etc. Or you can have coloring pages and let them color some of these things. You can have one Class journal that you could record their prayers as well as how you see God answering their prayers.

#### Prayer Station

It could be just a bulletin board with sticky notes and pens and markers beside it. Tell the students they can write their prayers down on a sticky note and put it on the board. Let them know you will read them after service and pray for them during the week. If they would like for their requests to be secret, they can fold their note before attaching it to the Board. They can sign their papers or they don't have to. Once your Board becomes full, take off the oldest ones and place them in a scrapbook.



One of the ways we pray or talk to God includes us being thankful. We can tell Him things He has done and provided us that we are thankful for. Have a container with letters in it at one end of the room. Have students move from one end of the room to the other, pick up a letter and give something they are thankful for that begins with that letter. With younger children you may partner them with an older one, or sound the letter out when they select it. You can get creative about how they advance from one side of the room to the other, they could hop, they could balance a paper on their head, or they could walk backwards. Let them come up with new ways!

Memory Verse Games. One way to help kids remember and sink the scriptures down in their hearts is through games. You could play the above relay game with the Scriptures talked about today, I Thessalonians 5:16-18 "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus", Jeremiah 29:12 "Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you" and James 5:13 "Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise."

You can buy inexpensive puzzles and on the back side write the verse. They could put them together today as well as use them again throughout this series.

Writing the verse on a smart board or dry erase board and erasing random words one at a time. Have the kids recite the verse again, saying the missing word. Then erase another word and repeat until all you have left is the Scripture reference. It's harder than you think, and they will like the challenge!

## CONCLUSION

End with prayer. You could pray, or you could allow the students to pray. Remind them that prayer can be as simple as one sentence. You can thank God, you can tell Him something you are thinking about, you can pray for someone else.

## PARENT TOOL

Send an email or a note to your parents letting them know you talked about prayer today. Include as many tools as you can to equip your parents to be able to continue the discussion with their children. Maybe they are not fully confident about their own prayer life. Books, articles or website suggestions for them would be helpful. Be intentional with the constant reminder to your parents that you, the church, and they, are partners in the discipleship of their children. Provide as many ways as you can to set them up for success in them being able to continue spiritual conversations.

There are many prayer guides available to help kids and adults pray. One is to use each letter of the word PRAY.

P- Praise – Start with Praising God for who He is and what He's done. Tell God how awesome He is by recalling His faithfulness in your life, from God's word or from what you've heard or seen. Helping your younger kids begin might even be to begin the sentence for them and allow them to finish. I think God is awesome because . . .

R- Repent – Then go into asking God to search your heart. Repent of anything the Holy Spirit brings to mind. Remind your children that God loves us no matter what but confession helps us grow and connect in deeper ways. God desires that we have a pure heart and one way for that to happen is to ask for His forgiveness. The bible tells us that he forgives and forgets. That is Good News!

A- Ask- This is where pray and ask for things for yourself, your family, the sick, and those around you. This seems to be the easiest part of prayer for us.

Y- Yield – This is the peace that comes from knowing we've talked to God and He has heard us. From here we leave it with Him, knowing whatever His answer is it is the right one for us.

An activity for them to participate in together as a family could be a prayer jar. You could have them gather the jar and paper, or you could send it home with them with instructions.

**Prayer Jar**

Find a jar and place it somewhere that you gather as a family, the kitchen cabinet, the dining room table, the family room. You could even get a plastic container and put it in your vehicle.

The purpose of the Prayer Jar is to allow members of your family to record and drop in prayer requests. The requests can be anything from praying for a sick friend to praying for an upcoming test in school. Parents be sure and add your requests in as well.

If you have young children, you can ask them to share the things they'd like to record or have them draw the request and share it with you later.

As a family – gather regularly to pray over each request. Be sure to look for ways to praise God for His answers to your requests. And be ready to give praise for the fact that God hears all that we say to Him. Sometime we see a quick answer and other times we don't, but we know in each and every season, He hears us! Jeremiah 29:12 "Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you"

## How do I Pray? May 8



### BEFORE CLASS ACTIVITY

Have some tables set up ready to play “Go Fish”. You can buy these cards at a Dollar Store or you can play with a regular playing deck of cards. If you have a desire to be really creative you could make your own deck with card stock and pictures! Make sure to have 4 of each of the same picture. They could be pictures of the kids in your class, pictures of areas of your church (sanctuary, hallway, playground, entrance, etc.) or pictures of people in the Bible.

The object of “Go Fish” is for each player to collect as many books as they can. A book is 4 cards. 4 sevens for instance, one of each suite. Or 4 cards that all have the picture of Moses on them. A player asks another player for a card, “Do you have any Jacks?” If they do, they turn the jacks over, if not they say “Go Fish”. It’s a great game for mixed ages of kids because anyone can play.

Give the kids a chance to play for a few minutes after class begins so that everyone has had at least a chance to play.

### LESSON

**Main Point:** We can pray for our needs and for the needs of others. We can ask and talk to God about anything.

We had a fun time playing “Go Fish” didn’t we? Sometimes you were the one who asked for a card. Sometimes you got the card you were looking for but also what happened? You didn’t get what you asked for. Even after that, you had a chance to ask for it again. In the beginning you may have had an idea or a plan and then because things didn’t go as you thought, you switched plans.

Spend some time asking questions about the game and giving the students a chance to answer.

Were you afraid to ask for a card? The answer will probably be no. Expand on that. Of course, you weren’t afraid. There was nothing scary about it, and that was what you were supposed to do.

Were you disappointed when you didn’t get what you asked for? Maybe. At least for just a little bit, but then what? Did you move on? Sure.

In some ways our game of “Go Fish” is like praying.

God tells us to ask Him. Did you know that? He wants us to talk to Him. What do we talk to Him about? Anything we want! Kind of like a part of the game of “Go Fish” is to ask, that is part of our relationship with God also. He wants us to talk to Him!

In Matthew 7:7 and 8 Jesus tells us to ask! “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.”

If your children are older, they may be able to continue on with the lesson. If they are younger, sometimes they need a break, or to move to an activity where they can move. Depending upon the age and how your kids are responding you may or may not want to insert an activity here.

**“What does that mean?” Activity.**

Have pieces of paper with a “yes” on one side and a “no” on the other.

Or, have a “Yes” on one wall, and a “no” on the other wall.

You will ask the students questions and let them respond either by raising the correct paper, or facing the right direction.

Make up your own questions asking about prayer. You want them to get them correct, so you can be pretty extreme! Here are a few.

1. Does Matthew 7:7 mean you can ask God for a pet elephant to live in your bedroom?
2. Does Matthew 7:7 mean you can ask God to give you 100 new games for your Play Station?
3. Does Matthew 7:7 mean you can ask God to help you be kind to your friends?
4. Does Matthew 7:7 mean you can ask God to help you find a million dollars when you dig a hole in your back yard?

We can ask God and He hears all of our prayers. But we know that He answers prayers that are in HIS will. He answers prayers, in the right time, when He knows the answers will be best for us.

God hears us all the time. Sometimes His answer is yes, sometimes it is no, sometimes it is not now. And whatever God’s answer is, we know His will and His plan is the very best.

Who do we pray for other than us? The Bible tells us that we pray for everyone!

I Timothy 2:1-2 “I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people . . . “

I Timothy 2 1-3 “The first thing I want you to do is pray. Pray every way you know how, for everyone you know. Pray especially for rulers and their governments to rule well so we can be quietly about our business of living simply, in humble contemplation. This is the way our Savior God wants us to live.” The Message



From the words of 1 Timothy we hear the request to pray. The Message says “every way we know how and for everyone you know.”

Remind students they can pray for people they don't know. This would be a good chance to have a member of your NMI Council come and share about a LINKS family or a missionary family. Together with pictures and a map this could be a great introduction to helping children partner with the church to pray for people we do not know. With a globe or a world map remind our children that the world is bigger than our church or our neighborhood and there is a world full of people who need our prayers and need to know the love and saving power of Jesus.

Remind them the Church of the Nazarene is bigger than just the spot you are in now. There are churches in many different towns, states and countries, full of adults and students just like them!

Pray for our friends who do not know Jesus. It seems easy for us to teach children to pray for their friends who are sick or have a physical need, but we also need to help them intercede for those around them who don't know Jesus.

Help them with scriptures which show it is God's will, His desire that EVERYONE be saved. Share with them 1 Timothy 2:3-4 “This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Also, 2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.”

This would be a good time to talk about the plan of salvation and what it means to be saved, to repent, to walk in the way of knowing God's truth.

Pray for themselves. It's fairly easy for children to have things they need or want to ask for. Give them time and space for that. Also help them incorporate into their prayers help for their actions and attitudes to be Christlike. One way is to help them pray for the fruit of the spirit. Galatians 5:22-23 These are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Purchase an assorted bag of toy or plastic fruit. Use a marker or sticker to put the names on the fruits. When it is time to pray for themselves, have them pick one fruit. Talk about what that fruit means, for example gentleness.

What does it look like for them to be gentle? How can they be gentle in their actions? How can they be gentle towards others, at school, at home? How can they be gentle in their response and reactions to others? Ask them to pray and ask God to help them be gentle to all.

It's important for us to remind our students sometimes it's not always our first instinct or response to have or use the fruit of the spirit. Sometimes we don't always WANT to be gentle. That doesn't make us bad it's just a reminder that we

need God's help and the help of the Holy Spirit to make right choices. That's where prayer comes in! God wants to help us and He does. Philippians 2:13 "for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose." When they get in a spot where they want to do something they know is not right, help them lean on God, through prayer, to help give them the strength to act according to His purpose for them.

## ACTIVITY

**Make a Prayer Box.** As with any activity you could make this in class or pass the idea on to your families and have them make them at home.

You can pick up recipe boxes and dividers. Allow the kids to decorate the outside of the boxes. Or you can gather cardboard boxes of various sizes.

Have divider tabs to go into their boxes. Suggest or already have made up a few pre-determined ones and then let them help suggest the other ones. Ones to have made might include: Scriptures and Answered Prayers. Then ask them what others might be. Answers will probably include: Friends, Family, Leaders, Church, and Me. Provide them with plenty of index cards to fill out as they would like. They could just put names of people on their cards. It might be that during class time or another class you could look up scriptures to include with cards. Things to include on their me card might be spiritual goals: Help me to be kind, forgiving, patient, loving. Help me to be more like Jesus. You might want to make your box up first and share some of the things in yours.

## GAME

**Memory Verse Games.**

Gather stuffed animals, blocks, anything you can attach a word or phrase to. Divide the scriptures up and place them on stuffed animals. You can divide up in teams and hide them around the room and the first team with all their animals and words in the correct order wins. To use for more than one team, each team will have their own color of paper. They only find and retrieve the stuffed animal that has the word or phrase on their color. Example the blue team, red team, etc.

**Fill in the Blank Prayer Game.** Take turns passing or rolling a ball from person to person, if you're in a group, saying, "God is great, God is good, thank you God for \_\_\_\_\_. " See how long you can keep it going. It's fun (and sometimes

breathhtaking) to hear what children say. Discussing what is inside our hearts and minds with each other is a crucial way to build relationships. Consequently, this practice builds both relationships with God and with each other. Afterwards you can continue the discussion by expounding on the things we are thankful for and helping children to realize that just as they are thankful for others that there are people who are thankful for them!

### CONCLUSION

End with prayer. You could pray, or you could allow the students to pray. Remind them that prayer can be as simple as one sentence. You can thank God, you can tell Him something you are thinking about, you can pray for someone else. Remind them of the verse in Matthew 7:7 that God wants us to ask Him. He wants us to talk to Him. And He wants us to pray for others.

### PARENT TOOL

Send an email or a note to your parents letting them know you talked about prayer today. Include as many tools as you can to equip your parents to be able to continue the discussion with their children. Maybe they are not fully confident about their own prayer life. Books, articles or website suggestions for them would be helpful. Be intentional with the constant reminder to your parents that you, the church, and they, are partners in the discipleship of their children. Give them as many ways as you can to set them up for success in them being able to continue spiritual conversations.

## The Lord's Prayer May 15



### BEFORE CLASS ACTIVITY

Cup Sorting Minute to Win It. Have 10 plastic Dixie cups or Styrofoam cups and on each have one phrase of the Lord's prayer. Make many different sets of these so that all of your kids have a chance to participate.

Write on the cups the following:

Our Father in heaven  
Hallowed by your name  
Your kingdom come, Your will be done  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our debts,  
As we also have forgiven our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from the evil one.  
Amen

Mix them up and let them arrange them in order. There's a good chance they won't get them right, but that's OK. You could have a bell for them to ring, or if you're adventurous a whistle for them to blow when they think they have it right. Tell them how many cups are correct and then let them, or another student at their table, rearrange and try again. If you include an "Amen" cup, they probably will at least know that is the last cup.

### LESSON

Main Point: God gives us a model on how to pray.

Matthew 6:9-13 "This, then, is how you should pray:  
'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
Your kingdom come,  
Your will be done  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our debts,  
As we also have forgiven our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from the evil one.”

God gave his disciples a way to pray and He gives it to us also. Think about that, we can pray the very same prayer that Jesus prayed!

There are different pieces to the prayer, just like we had the different cups. Let’s break this down into sections and talk about each one.

We start with praise. That’s where it all begins! If it weren’t for God we wouldn’t be here. Our very first thing we can do is to praise for making us and for loving us. He is a great God! His name is great. What do you think the word hallowed means? What do we mean when we say “Hallowed be thy name”? If you good readers it’s always a fun idea to have an actual paper dictionary or a Bible dictionary in your class. Ask a student to look it up, while the others are answering. Some answers include sacred, revered, holy. God’s name is holy. It is a reflection of the perfect God that He is, without blemish or stain. He is worthy of our praise and our adoration.

Your Kingdom come. What would your church, your town look like if God was sitting right in the middle of it? Would there be some things that would be different? Would God be happy with everything or would there be things He might change? When we pray for God’s kingdom to come, we are saying that we want things to be the way that God wants things. We want His will and His way. That also helps us to think if God WERE sitting right here beside me, would I act differently? As I pray for God’s kingdom to come, I am reminded that I have a part in that too. We can ask for God to show us ways that we can do things that would be helpful and would help others to see Him through our actions and responses. We know that God’s kingdom is not mean. It is not cruel. When we pray for His kingdom to come, we act in ways that the Bible tells us line up with God’s ways.

Talk about God’s will and how we know that sometimes we don’t always think the way God does and we don’t know all that He does. So, we pray “Thy will be done.” We know that God is the wisest and we want to do things His way. We don’t pray this way to give Him permission. He doesn’t need our permission. We pray this way to remind ourselves that we want to do things the way God wants to do things. Sometimes when people don’t know how to pray, they say “God’s will be done.” That’s not an easy way out, that is a statement of faith and trust. It says I trust God more than I trust myself and my own ideas. I want what He wants.

*(Leader note: As you are praying for this lesson, pray specifically for insight and the power of the Holy Spirit to help you explain God’s will and the difference between that and what we want. What a great milestone it would be if your kids could grasp a true meaning of God’s will at a young age, and what pain it would save them!)*

Ask for needs. “Give us this day our daily bread.” In Bible times bread was the most necessary thing in their day. What are some necessary things we have today? What

is the difference between a want and a need? Why do you think we pray “Give us this day our daily bread?” God loves us so very much and He knows what we need.

Ask for forgiveness. “Forgive us our debts.” In this section we are asking God to forgive us for things we have done wrong. The Bible says that we have all sinned and fallen short of God’s glory. We are asking Him for forgiveness for our sins. The Good News is - God’s word says that when we ask for forgiveness, He forgives us!

One great thing about prayer is that at the moment we realize we have done wrong, that is the time we can pray and ask God to forgive us. We don’t have to wait until we come to church, we don’t have to wait until someone finds out and asks us, the very moment we know we have done wrong we can pray and ask God to forgive us. Isn’t that exciting! What a great God we have!!

Forgive others. As we also have forgiven our debtors. Just like we want God to forgive us, God wants us to forgive others. Sometimes that is not always easy. God wants us to do it anyway. And guess what? We can forgive them even if they don’t tell us they are sorry!

Ask for help with temptation and sin. “And lead us not into temptation.” In this part of the Lord’s prayer, we are asking God to help us. There are many kinds of temptations. We are tempted to eat the snack our mom told us to save until after dinner. We are tempted to cheat on a test when we see our friends’ answers. We are tempted to say bad things about someone who hurt our feelings. When we pray to God and ask Him to lead us not into temptation, we are asking Him to help us. We’re asking Him to help us make the right choices and to do the things which are pleasing to Him.



## ACTIVITY

### **Colored bracelet or chain.**

Make a bracelet with beads or a paper chain to help learn the Lord’s prayer. Use the colors to help connect key words in each phrase. You can adapt these colors to fit what you have, or what your students will best remember.

Our Father. White for pure.

Who is in heaven. Blue for the sky.

Holy is your name. Green for ever lasting.

Your Kingdom come. Purple for royalty

Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Brown bead for earth / soil.

Give us today our daily bread. Yellow for bread / grain.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Black for sin.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. White. God delivering us to Himself.

For yours is the kingdom and the power. Purple again for kingdom, royalty. And the glory, forever and ever. Amen. Orange for sunset, ever and ever.



## GAME

### **Hand Motions.**

Divide your class up into sections and let each group come up with hand motions for each section of the Lord's prayer. Give them a few minutes to be creative, then let them share their section. Practice putting all the sections together with each group's movements. This can be done for several weeks after and every time you say the Lord's prayer.

Here are some examples.

This also is a great exercise for your preschoolers.

Our Father who is in heaven (hands raised high)  
Hallowed be your name (join hands together like you are praying)  
Your kingdom come (release hands and point upward to heaven)  
Your will be done (a salute)  
On earth as it is in heaven (reach down and touch both hands on the ground, then pop up and point towards the sky.)  
Give us this day our daily bread (pretend to eat bread)  
Forgive us our sins (shake head saying 'no')  
As we forgive those who sin against us (look at people either side)  
Lead us not into temptation (stop sign with hand)  
but deliver us from evil (hands together and pulling apart, like you are breaking free)

### **Praying hands.**

Let kids trace their hands on construction paper, and then cut them out. Punch holes in them and put them together with a pipe cleaner.

Make as many different hands as you wish, with prayer prompts on them to help the pray out loud and to help them recite the Lord's Prayer.

They could include: Praise, God's Will, Needs, Forgiveness, Forgiving others, temptation, Give God glory.

You could do this all-in-one lesson, or you could begin and add a "hand" over a series of weeks.

Write a word or a phrase from the Lord's prayer on popsicle sticks. Put them in a cup or a baggie and let the kids put them in order. They can work in teams or individuals. You could put their cups at one end of the room and they have to race down, pick up a stick, bring it back, and go pick up another one. The first team to have their sticks and arranged in order wins. If you do choose to play in teams, have enough extra sets so that each student can take a set home.

### CONCLUSION

End with prayer. You could begin by saying the Lord's Prayer and then ask the children to join you.

### PARENT TOOL

Send an email or a note to your parents letting them know you talked about the Lord's Prayer today. You might include the translation you shared with the students. If you didn't have time to complete all the activities or games, or even if you did, send home instructions for them to do as a family.

There are many videos of children doing the hand motions or sign language for the Lord's Prayer. You could include a link to a video for them to watch and learn as a family. Don't forget to ask next week when you come back together if anyone would like to share what they learned!

Find a "Lord's Prayer" word search to send home. On the back put your announcements and upcoming activities. It will provide an opportunity for the students to find and circle and hopefully discuss some of the terms they talked about in class, hallowed, debts, forgiveness.



**"I Can Pray!"**  
**May 22**



**BEFORE CLASS ACTIVITY**

Lay out carpet squares, construction paper, different colored bed sheets, or even folding chairs. Give the kids one blown up balloon or multiple. Have each different square or folding chair marked as a different country that we have a church in. (This might be a good opportunity for a representative from your Missions Council to join.) When the balloon drops help them say the name of the country.

If your kids are older and this seems too easy, you could give them their own straw and they have to keep the balloon up by blowing air through their straw.

**LESSON**

**Main Point:** God wants us to pray!

Did you know that the Church of the Nazarene expands to lots of different places in lots of different towns and countries? Can you name some of the places that your balloon landed on this morning? Do you know anyone in those countries? I don't. But you know what, I can still pray for them and with them!

Who can tell me what prayer is? (Talking to God.) Do you have to use a whole lot of big words? Do you have to have your eyes closed? Do you have to be in church?

Let's read some scriptures about prayer.

I Timothy 2:8 "Therefore I want men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing."

Romans 12:12 "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."

James 5:13 "Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise."

Have you ever had the thought "I want to do what God wants me to do?" We want that don't we? We really want to do what is right and good. Sometimes we are just not sure what that is. There are ways for us to know that. Do you know how? By

getting to know God better and by reading the Bible. We know one thing that God wants us to do is to pray! In I Timothy he says he wants men, and women and boys and girls, everywhere to pray! That includes us!

What do we pray about? Everything! Anything we are happy about we can share with God. Anything we are worried about we can share with God. We can pray with and for our family and friends. One way is to look at your hand and pray the five-finger prayer. Our thumb reminds us to pray for those closest to us, our friends and family. The index finger reminds us to pray for those who teach and instruct us. Our middle finger, our tallest, reminds us to pray for those who lead us. The ring finger, our weakest, reminds us to pray for those who are weak. The pinky finger is to remind us to pray for ourselves.

Do you remember Romans 12:12? Be joyful in what? Hope. Be patient in what? Affliction or trouble. Be faithful in what? Prayer. God wants us to be faithful in praying for our needs and the needs of others. What does it mean for us to be faithful?

We get the chance to join with Half a Million other people who will be praying for the Church of the Nazarene. Half a Million!! Wow! That's a lot. And how exciting that they asked you and I to be a part! You know why? Because God says he want people, adults, teenagers, children, students, senior adults, all people, everywhere to pray!

We're going to practice some prayer in the next few minutes. Remember there's nothing hard or difficult about praying. Even though we're praying to a great Big Wonderful Mighty God, it's just the same as having a conversation with a friend. God already knows what is going on with us, we're just sharing with Him.

In some of these stations we're praying for ourselves, and in some we're praying for others. In each of these you may have things you want to tell God, but also take time to listen. Don't be in a hurry. See if there are things that God wants to say to you!



## ACTIVITY

### Prayer Stations

Before class set up the following stations. You can go through as a group and have an Adult say a prayer first at each station, then encourage the students to pray. They could pray out loud or silently. Or you can divide the class up and let them visit each station on their own.

Explain each station before they begin their rotations.

There is room for much flexibility with this. Use the supplies you have on hand, or create whole new stations, depending upon your space and your students. They can be in any order and the students can go through in any order.

1. Station: Foil Prayers.

Set up: Have squares of aluminum foil. Make sure it's shiny on one side and flat on the other.

Instructions: Hold the piece of foil and look at the shiny side. Thank God for the things in your life that are "shiny", the things that are good and going well. Wad the foil up into a crumpled ball. Pray for the things in your life that are not so smooth. Maybe a friend who is not being kind, maybe someone who is sick, maybe something you did wrong that you feel bad about. Mold the foil into the shape of a letter of someone you want to pray for. Stop and say a prayer for that person and ask God to help and bless them.

2. Station: Scour Pads

Set up: Have scouring or scratchy pads set up.

Instructions: Gently rub your hand on this. How does it feel? Sometimes people "rub us the wrong way". Pray for someone you know who does that. Pray that you God would help you to love them and bless them and that you would be able to have a good relationship together without causing hurt feelings or disunity. Ask God to help you to be kind and gentle and not "scratchy"! Ask Him to help you be a peacemaker. Matthew 5:9 "Blessed are the peacemakers. . . "

3. Healing.

Set up: Poster Board or large sheets of paper taped to the wall. Box of band aids. Pens or markers.

Instructions: Do you know someone who is sick and needs help getting well or feeling better? Write their name on a band aid, stick it on the wall and pray that God would help them. God tells us in James 5:16 to "Pray for each other so that you may be healed."

4. Pray for friends.

Set up: Lego's of different shapes and sizes.

Instructions: These Lego's are hard. Pray for someone you know who might be going through a hard time. Maybe that someone is even you. These Lego's are different colors. Pray for your friends who are different than you. Maybe they live in a different house than you, maybe they like different things than you. Pray for a friend who is different than you. Pick out a Lego and see how many bumps are on that lego. Give thanks to God for that number of things that you like and admire about your friend.

5. Forgiveness.

Set up: Bowl or box with sand in it.

Instructions: The Bible tells us when we confess our sins that God forgives us and that He forgets our sin. Is there something that you have done that you would

like to confess and ask to forgive you? Trace the first letter of that in the sand. Ask God to forgive you and help you not to do that again. Erase the letter and be reminded that God forgives and forgets.

6. Pray for leadership.

Set up: Picture of your mayor, governor, president.

Instructions: I Timothy 2:2 says "Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity." Pray for those leaders that you know. Pray that they would love God and would serve Him. Pray that they would have wisdom and that they would make good choices.

7. M and M prayers.

Set up: Have several different colored M&Ms in a small baggie. Have a sheet with colored circles and names beside them.

Orange – Someone in your church

Brown – someone in your family

Green – someone in another country

Blue – a teacher, pastor or leader

Red – someone who doesn't know Jesus

Yellow – a neighbor or friend

Instructions: Look at the color of M&M. As you eat it pray for the person who is connected with the color on the chart.

8. Rejoice Tree

Set up: On Butcher paper have a large tree trunk and branches. Have green, orange, red leaves. Pens or markers. Tape.

Instructions: Psalm 118:24 "This is the day the Lord has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it." Write something that you are thankful for, or something that causes you to rejoice, on a leaf. Tape your leaf to the tree.

9. Prayer Pail

Set Up: pail or bucket with Popsicle sticks inside. They can have anything written on them that would help prompt them to pray. Examples include: obedience, self-control, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, health, friendships, family relationships.

Instructions: It is God's desire that we live holy lives that are pleasing to Him. Pick one of these prayer prompts and ask God to help you in the area that is written on the stick. Philippians 2:13 "for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose." We need Him to help us live good lives!

10. Cross.

Set Up: Cross, papers, pens and ways to attach the paper to the cross. If it's paper, tape. If the cross is wood, push pins or tape.

Instructions: Psalm 68:19 20 "Praise be to the Lord, to God, our Savior, who daily bears our burdens." Write something that is troubling you or is a burden to you, and place it on the cross. Ask Jesus to help you with it . . . and He will!

Thank God for sending His Son to die on the cross so that we can have forgiveness for our sins.

Rejoice in the reminder that Jesus didn't stay on the cross or in the ground, but that He has risen and is in heaven listening to our prayers!

#### 11. Pray for the Church.

Set Up: Have pictures of District Leaders, General Superintendents and pictures of churches in different parts of the world. This would be a good rotation to connect your students with others students on your District or in another state or country and create Prayer Partners.

Instructions: Prayer for the Church of the Nazarene. Pray that God would give each church wisdom and protection. Pray that each Church would look for new ways that they can tell others about the love of God.

### GAME

Static Prayers.

God WANTS to hear our prayers. He wants us to talk to Him. He is waiting to hear from us.

Have different strips of tissue paper cut out. Ask the students to write one word that would represent what they are praying for. Be careful because the tissue paper will tear. In small groups or pairs give them a balloon and let them rub it against their hair to gather some static electricity. Explain to them that God wants to hear our prayers and He is waiting to receive them. Have them hold their tissue close to the balloon and watch as it is pulled to the balloon and sticks there. These are like our prayers. God hears them, grabs them, and holds them close to Him! Psalm 116:1-2 "I love the Lord, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy. Because he turned his ear to me . . ."

### CONCLUSION

How did you like the prayer stations? Which one was your favorite? Did you think they were hard? Are there any of these that you might want to do at home with your family?

End with a corporate prayer and allow the kids to hear you or other adults praying. They have spent time praying in prayer stations, give them a chance to hear you.

### **PARENT TOOL**

If space and time allows you might leave the prayer stations set up and invite the parents to come through at another time with their students. You can have instructions at each station for the family walk through, but you will be surprised at how much the students will remember. They will be excited to share about each station with their families.

### **PRESCHOOL TIPS**

Any age is the right age to teach children to pray, the earlier the better! Preschool children are some of the best at praying! They are not intimidated. They're eager to use their words. Preschoolers love to rhyme, so yes, it's perfectly fine to help them memorize prayers in the beginning. It gets them into the habit of pausing and taking time to focus on God. Even if they don't know all the words or phrases yet, remind them that they are talking to God and that He hears them. If you can instill a thankful heart in a three-year-old simply by saying "God is great, God is good, let us thank Him for our food" you're accomplished a whole lot!

If you've worked with kids for any amount of time you know they're going to want to pray for some things that maybe we as adults don't pray for, a dead pet, for instance. It's OK! It's a reminder to us that God cares about what they care about! If that is what is on their heart, it's OK for them to talk to God about it!

Incorporate exercises that help them pray for one another, a bean bag or a ball toss. Gather them in a circle, toss the ball and let them pray a one sentence prayer for the person next to them. "God help Courtney."

Having pictures that you can hold up will also help them pray, a picture of a family, of your church, of the world.