

# PRAYERWORKS

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of this badge, members will:

- demonstrate knowledge about what prayer is and how to pray;
- describe ways to communicate with God ;
- participate in prayer;
- consider how God answers prayer.



## BADGE REQUIREMENTS

1. Explain what prayer is and different types of prayer.
2. Rewrite the Lord's Prayer and identify the prayer model in it.
3. Write a prayer using the prayer model and participate in a form of prayer.
4. Participate in at least one form of personal communication with God.
5. Demonstrate that you know how God answers prayer.

GUARDS  
RANGERS

prayerworks  
AGCS

CATEGORY  
Spiritual

TIME FRAME  
Minimum  
Four weeks

AIM  
To learn how to  
pray to God.

THE SALVATION ARMY  
**SACALA**  
GUARDING AND  
LEGION ACTIVITIES



# Teaching ideas

## 1. Explain what prayer is and the different types of prayer.

To ensure plenty of time to cover the teaching material well, you may choose to teach the Prayer Model (ACTS) over two weeks, e.g. Adoration and Thanksgiving one night; Confession and Supplication another.

### 'Talking' activity

Ask the group to pair up and instruct them to talk with each other about anything they wish. Both must contribute. Allow 3-5 minutes for this.

### Discussion

Ask the group to describe what they've been doing. Answers might include talking with a friend, having a conversation or dialogue.

Explain that prayer is a conversation with God; talking with God about anything that concerns us.

Ask the group what the difference is between talking *with* God and talking *to* God. (Explain that the first is a dialogue – two people speaking to each other; the second is a monologue – only one person speaking.) You might like to display the two phrases ('Talking *with* God' and 'Talking *to* God') for members to see.

Talking with God is usually called 'prayer'. (Write the word 'prayer' onto a board/chart.)

There are two sides to a conversation – what are they? (Talking and listening.) We often find it harder to listen because we like to talk about what interests us, or we are thinking about what we want to say next whilst the other person is talking.

### 'Listening' activity

In pairs, one person talks for 2-3 minutes about any topic or tells a story. The other person must listen without any interrupting. At the end of the time the listener repeats to the speaker what he/she heard. Play again with the roles reversed.

Ask the group how we can listen to God.

God may speak to us through other Christians who we admire or would talk to for guidance or advice; He will use our conscience to guide our thoughts and actions. God talks through the Bible which is His Word (the Bible was written by men inspired by God). Reading the Bible regularly will help us listen to God.

### Prayer model

Write on a board/chart the acronym ACTS and the following words.

Adoration      Confession      Thanksgiving      Supplication

Used together they create a model or guide for talking with God. When we pray we should start with telling God that we love Him (*adoration*), tell Him what we've done wrong (*confession*), thank Him for all the good things in our life (*thanksgiving*) and ask for what we, and others, need (*supplication*).

You may wish to assign the following activities/teaching areas to different areas of the room where members complete the activities.

# Teaching ideas



## Adoration

Display pictures or names of famous people the Guards/Rangers would relate to or admire (e.g. film, music, sporting personalities). Alongside this display place a sheet or cardboard with the word 'God' written on it.

Activity: Ask the group to write only positive words next to the various pictures. (If they can't write anything positive then they shouldn't write anything at all.)

Explain that this is a form of adoration – telling someone how great you think they are. Ask them to write words on the sheet/cardboard that express how they feel about God. Explain that even as they write their words they are praying to God.

## Confession

Explain that 'confession' is when we admit or own up to doing something wrong.

Discussion: Invite individuals to share an occasion when they 'confessed'. This doesn't have to be confession to God, nor anything recent or significant. It is simply an exercise to help the Guard/Ranger understand what confession is.

## OR

Show a clip from the film, 'Hope floats'. Cue the film at 31 minutes + 5 seconds where Birdie interviews Dot. Stop the film at 34 minutes + 45 seconds where Birdie begs Dot for a job. The clip is a conversation between Birdie and Dot. Birdie apologises for the way she treated Dot in high school.

We usually 'confess' when we are sorry for what we've done. For confession to be meaningful we must be sincere. It's important that we confess and say 'sorry' to God because when we disobey and break His rules we add to the ruin and hurt of the world He created and cares for.

Allow the group time to think about what they might need to confess to God. Some suggested ways for them to respond are:

- write the confession on paper and members dispose of it in a bin (to be destroyed later);
- display a wooden cross and have nails available for members to hammer into the cross as a sign of their apology;
- provide a large bowl of sand in which members write a word or two, or draw a picture representing the confession. Once written or drawn they 'rub out' the words/drawing.

Before members move on direct them to 1 John 1:9 (either displayed or they find the verse in a Bible). Tell them that God always forgives us when we truly, sincerely confess our wrong-doing. Whilst we will continue to disobey God and He will continue to forgive us, we must strive to live holy lives where our disobedience, or sin, is reduced. We won't stop sinning completely in this lifetime, but we can and should apply self control in areas that we know displease God.



# Teaching ideas

## Thanksgiving

### Discussion

Thanksgiving is simply thanking God for everything He has given us. Ask the group to consider ways they can be thankful to God. Ask the group to complete the sentence, 'Thank you, God, for ...' Individuals can call out what they're thankful for. Encourage everyone to participate and help them to remember that they are speaking to God and so a measure of reverence should be maintained.

These prayers could also be written or drawn and displayed on a board or chart with the heading 'Thank you, God'. Members could also create a collage of pictures from magazines and catalogues displaying things for which they are thankful to God.

### Supplication

The word 'supplication' is not used much today but it means an earnest and humble request. Supplication is asking for God's intervention and help in people's lives and circumstances. Ask a member/s to look up and read Philippians 4:6 and 1 Timothy 2:1.

Ask the group:

- What are we to ask God's help for? (*Everything.*)
- Who can we pray for? (*Include themselves.*)
- What do they think God is interested in?
- Is anything too small to bother God with?
- Does prayer have to be spoken aloud?

Each of these headings (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication) are types of prayer on their own. Sometimes we might simply want to tell God how great He is, or that we're thankful. There might be times when we only want to confess a wrong to God, or there's someone we want to ask God to help. Each is a way of talking with God.



## 2. Rewrite the Lord's Prayer and identify the prayer model in it.

Direct members to the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6: 9 - 13 or Luke 11: 1 - 4) in a modern translation (e.g. Contemporary English Version, New International Version). Instruct them to read the prayer and then identify the ACTS model (see **badge requirement 1**) in the Lord's Prayer. Discuss with members the meaning of the teaching following the prayer in Luke's Gospel.

Members may work individually, in pairs or other small groups to rewrite the prayer in their own words. This could be done as a banner, chart, in note books or as bookmarks or other creative crafts.



## 3. Write a prayer using the prayer model and participate in a form of prayer.

Each member must write a prayer using the ACTS prayer model. The prayer doesn't have to be prayed aloud, only written.

In addition every member must participate in some type of prayer to complete this requirement. It is **not** required that every member prays aloud, rather they should demonstrate that they understand at least one type of prayer. The activities in **badge requirement 1** may **NOT** be used to complete this task.

# Teaching ideas

Following are some ideas to help members complete the requirement – you may add your own ideas.

- Create a prayer room where members may engage in various creative forms of prayer at their leisure. See the ideas in the Resource section below. Other ideas can be found and adapted from various websites; the Territorial Youth and Children's Ministries team; your DYCS, CO or corps' members. Members could set up a prayer room as part of a corps' prayer day/week and use the prayer room for an hour as part of the corps' prayer focus.
- Create a prayer room using the Lord's Prayer to focus on different aspects of prayer, e.g. a section of the room focuses on 'Our Father in Heaven', another focuses on 'Forgive us our debts'.
- Encourage members to pray aloud during a parade. They could use one prayer type from the prayer model, or several types.
- Members could write their own prayer using one or more types of the prayer model.
- Members pair up to pray together and for each other.

## Prayer Room

Use this activity for a whole parade time. Set up prayer stations around the room to demonstrate different forms of prayer. This could be similar to the 24/7 prayer room idea. Inform the group that they can go to any station at any time and there will be instructions at each station to tell them what to do. Go through each station and briefly describe how prayer can be offered at each area before releasing the group. Make sure the group understands this is a time for reverence and that they will be spending time praying using the ACTS method outlined in **badge requirement 1**.

NOTE: This event will require a reasonable amount of preparation and it would be good to let the group know in advance that this will be happening. These are ideas only; leaders are encouraged to use their own creativity to make this a memorable night. You may add candles and other items to help create an atmosphere of prayer.

### You will need:

- Background music
- Instructions for each station displayed
- Cardboard shaped bricks
- Pens
- Blue tack
- Psalm 51 written out
- Prayer of confession written out, e.g. Psalm 32
- Writing paper
- Selected verses of praise displayed
- Bin
- Bibles
- Songbook

You may choose to limit the time for this activity to about 30 – 40 minutes. At the conclusion, bring the group together and explain that everything they have done can be used at home in their own times of prayer. Explain that the group has experienced a variety of activities and that they don't have to complete all of them to pray – simply talking with God about some of the areas of prayer (i.e. adoration, confession,





# Teaching ideas

thanksgiving and supplication) is sufficient. These activities may be used as often as the individual wants and are useful to help focus during times of prayer.

## Prayer stations

### station 1 - Prayers of Thanksgiving (Prayer wall)

Use a prayer wall for prayers of thanksgiving to God. Cut cardboard into brick shapes. Have pens/felt-tip pens available. Place instructions on the wall explaining what members are to do, e.g. write a 'Thank you, God ...' sentence prayer or paragraph on a brick.

### station 2 - Prayers of Confession (Written prayers)

Have available Psalm 51 and/or the 'Prayer of Confession' (Psalm 32) for members to read if they wish. Also make available sheets of paper and pens. Members are to write their own prayer of confession on the paper provided. Encourage the group to be open and honest with God and assure them that their prayers will not be read. The Psalm and Prayer of Confession are displayed to help members write their own prayer.

When they have finished writing their prayer and prayed it to God, they are to tear up their paper and deposit the pieces in the bin. They should then read 1 John 1:9 and thank God for His forgiveness.

### station 3 - Prayers of Adoration (Praying scripture)

Display some or all of the following verses around this part of the room. Encourage members to read some or all of the verses as prayers of praise and adoration to God. Members are also encouraged to pray – either aloud or silently – their own prayers of praise. You may add other verses as you wish.

Psalm 89:1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8

Psalm 104: 1 - 4

Psalm 93: 1 - 5

Psalm 113: 1 - 5

Psalm 100: 1 - 5

Psalm 134

Psalm 103:1 - 5

Psalm 8

### station 4 - Prayers of Supplication (Spoken prayers asking God for help)

Display these verses in the Supplication area: Philippians 4:6 'Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.'

1 Timothy 2:1 'First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, requests and thanksgivings be offered to God for all people.'

In this area, members are encouraged to pray for the needs of others (e.g. family, friends, world events) and their own needs. As an alternative to the other areas, prayer is thought or spoken, i.e. prayers are offered silently or quietly spoken aloud. However, if individuals would prefer to write their requests they may do so – remember to provide paper and pens. A Bible, song book or other devotional resource may also help members to pray.



## 4. Participate in at least one form of personal communication with God.

Three forms of personal communication with God are included – you may add other forms that meet the requirement. You may choose to

# Teaching ideas

invite a guest/s to explain how they spend time with God.

## Quiet Time

A quiet time is known by other names including personal devotions. Each individual conducts his/her quiet times in a variety of ways, using various resources. Resources may include a Bible, music, prayer list, diary, Bible reading notes or devotional book.

This time might begin with quietness – emptying our minds of concerns and anything else that might distract us from focusing on God. This is followed by Bible reading – usually a short passage which may be included in Bible reading notes or devotional book. This helps us think about what the verses mean and how they might apply to us today. The time is concluded by prayer, possibly using all or some of the types of prayer we have discussed.

## Journalling

Journalling is simply a notebook where thoughts, ideas, prayers, life lessons and other personal notes are recorded. These may follow from Bible reading and/or prayer. Journalling may be part of the Quiet Time described above. It may also include a list of names and concerns to pray about, noting the date when the prayer was started and when the answer was received.

Leaders may like to purchase and distribute notebooks for members to begin journalling.

## Prayer diary

This is a notebook where members write either their prayers in full, or headings, using the ACTS prayer model.



## 5. Demonstrate that you know how God answers prayer.

### Discussion

- What do you think happens to your prayers?
- Do you think God hears your prayers?
- How do you think God answers your prayers?

### Discovery

Give the following verses to various members to read aloud. Use a modern translation such as Contemporary English Version or Good News Bible.

- a) 1 John 5:14, 15. What do these verses say about God hearing our prayers? (*God answers our prayers if we ask according to His will.*)
- b) Acts 12:5 - 17. (*Or use the Visual Bible's 'Acts' video.*) How did God answer the prayer of the believers for Peter? (*God's answer was 'yes' and Peter was released.*)
- c) Corinthians 12:7, 8. What was Paul's prayer and what was God's response? (*For the 'thorn' to be removed. God said 'no' because it helped Paul rely on Him.*)
- d) Isaiah 55:8, 9. How do these verses help us to understand how God answers prayer? (*God's timing is best and sometimes that means His answer is 'wait' so that we can have the best.*)





# Teaching ideas

Ask the group what answers they think God might give to their prayers.

God's answer might be 'yes', 'no', or 'wait'. Are 'no' or 'wait' still answers? (Discuss.) They are answers – God uses 'no' or 'wait' to protect us (when we ask for things that could hurt us or prevent us from growing more like Him), or when what we ask for is not according to His will – which is good and perfect.

## Discussion

Why might God say 'no' or 'wait' to our prayers? (Some of the following answers may be useful if the group is finding this difficult.)

- Selfishness – temptation to ask for personal benefits. (James 4:3.)
- Lack of faith – losing confidence when we don't get our wish; thinking our prayers are too 'small' or 'unimportant'. (James 5:7 - 8.)
- Impatience – being lazy in prayer or in Christian life.
- Dishonesty – pretending to be what we aren't; covering up instead of revealing.
- Ignorance – forgetting that God may have a different plan for things; forgetting that we don't always have the 'right' answer.
- Unforgiving spirit – holding a grudge instead of restoring the relationship.

Jesus assures us that true prayer is ALWAYS answered. 'Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find.' Matthew 7:7

**BUT...** the answer may **NOT** be what we **EXPECTED!**

Ask the group to tell you the three types of answers to prayer and share with them the following summaries.

No	WAIT	YES
* When God has a plan different from yours.	* Your faith must be 'long' as well as 'strong'.	* When you are spiritually right with God.
* When your prayer is insincere or selfish.	* God may require patience of you.	* When your prayers are strong and unselfish.

We need to know what types of answers God gives so we can be aware of how he might answer us.

# Devotional ideas

1. **Title:** Listen and understand  
**Bible:** Mark 7:14  
**Thought:** To understand the importance of listening to God  
**Supplies:** Pieces of paper for each team with different Scripture verses written on each; a Bible

**Game:** Chinese Whispers.

Divide the group into teams of at least six to eight players or use your whole group. Give the person at the head of each team the written message. Give them enough time to read it and then put it away. They then whisper what was written on the paper to the next person who in turn whispers the message to the next person and so on until it reaches the last person. The last person from each team tells everyone what the message was. (Usually the final message is not the same as what was written on the paper.)

This can be a fun way to learn. If we don't listen carefully to what is being said, we quite often don't understand what we are being told and we can get the message wrong.

Ask a member to read Mark 7:14. Ask the group what they think Jesus said. Jesus often asked His disciples to listen to Him. Crowds would follow Him and gather round to listen to Him speaking.

Explain that prayer is like that. We don't just talk to God but it is important that we stop and listen to Him as He speaks to us. Sometimes we don't listen properly or long enough and we think that God isn't speaking or that we know what God is saying, but we misunderstand Him. By giving ourselves time to listen to God we are better able to hear and understand what He is saying.

How can we hear what God is saying? He might help us remember a verse from the Bible, or words someone has spoken to us. We can be sure He will never tell us to act unkindly or to break any of His commands. He will tell us to be strong and confident and that He is with us.

Try being quiet before Him and listening to Him!

