



# Prayer tools

This document contains a range of prayer tools, ideal for personal use. There is no set order to do these in; simply select some to try.

We pray that these tools help you worship, listen to, and connect with Jesus in fresh ways.

## **Prayer tools include:**

- The Prayer of Examen
- Lectio Divina
- Gospel immersion activity
- Conversational prayer guide
- ACTS prayer
- How to prayer walk
- Five finger prayer
- Teaspoon (TSP) prayer
- Daily prayer for reconciliation and healing
- Prayer doodling
- Guide for a time of listening to God
- How to plan a personal prayer retreat

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## The Prayer of Examen

*See the end of this document for a printable card featuring this prayer format.*

### **Be still**

Begin with a pause and a slow, deep breath or two. Become aware that you are in the presence of the holy God. Take your time.

### **Petition**

Tell God that you are about to review your day. Ask for his light to help you see him and for you to see yourself as he sees you.

### **Thanksgiving**

Consider: What am I especially grateful or thankful for in the past week?

### **Review**

Review your week/day. Where have you felt true joy? What has troubled you? What has challenged you? Where and when did you pause and rest? Have you noticed God's presence in any of this?

### **Response**

In light of your review, what is your response to God?

### **Looking ahead**

As you look ahead, what comes to mind? With what spirit or attitude do you want to enter tomorrow?



## Lectio Divina (Divine Reading)<sup>1</sup>

See the end of this document for a printable card featuring this prayer format.

*Lectio divina* or 'divine reading' is a way to meditate on and apply a small passage of Scripture. *Lectio divina* is made up of five movements:

### **Silencio** Quiet preparation of the heart.

Come into God's presence, slow down and relax. Release the chaos and noise in your mind to him.

### **Lectio** Read the word.

Read a Scripture passage slowly and out loud, lingering over the words so that they resonate in your heart. When a word or phrase catches your attention, don't keep reading. Stop and attend to what God is saying to you.

### **Meditatio** Meditate.

Read the Scripture a second time out loud. Savour the words. Listen for any invitation God is extending to you. Reflect on the importance of any words that light up to you.

### **Oratio** Respond.

Read the Scripture a third time. Now is the time to talk to God. There is no right or wrong way to do this. The important thing is to be honest. What feelings has the text brought up in you? Are there parts you are wrestling with? Talk to God about these feelings.

### **Contemplatio** Contemplate, rest, and wait in the presence of God.

Allow time to let the word sink deeply into your soul. Yield and surrender yourself to God. Finally, take God's word with you throughout the day.

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<sup>1</sup> Some content on this page was drawn from Bill Gaultiere, [SoulShepherding.org](http://SoulShepherding.org)



## Gospel immersion activity

*See the end of this document for a printable card featuring this prayer format.*

1. Select a Gospel passage where Jesus is interacting with others.
2. Read through the passage a couple of times until the story is familiar. You might like to read it out loud.
3. Close your eyes and place yourself in the scene. Play it in your mind like a movie.
4. Use all your senses to experience the scene. Use your imagination to touch, smell, see, hear, and taste the scene.
5. What thoughts or feelings come up for you?
6. Close with prayer, speaking your heart to Jesus.

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## Conversational prayer guide<sup>2</sup>

Prayer can be approached like a conversation with a close friend.

### 1. Start with praise.

Lord, you are amazing. You are mighty and powerful. You are abounding in love. You care for all of your creation and you always keep your promises.

### 2. Say thank you.

Thank you for the blessings in my life. Thank you for loving me and helping me learn how to have better conversations with you.

### 3. Share something about your day or what's going on in your life.

God, sometimes I struggle with prayer. I feel like I should be more comfortable talking to you, but I don't always know what to say and I get nervous when it's my turn to pray aloud for the group. I feel like I don't have the right words.

### 4. Apologise for anything you've done wrong

I'm sorry for not trusting you to guide me and help me find the words. I'm sorry for not believing you'll want to hear whatever words I have. I know prayer isn't a contest but is instead a way I can have a relationship with you.

### 5. Ask for help – for yourself and others

God, help me be more confident and consistent in prayer. Help me be a leader among my friends and family. Help me pray boldly for myself and others and truly believe you are at work in these requests. Even when I can't find the right words, I trust you know what is heavy on my heart.

### 6. Listen

(Be quiet, take a deep breath, quiet your inner conversation. Sit in the silence and allow your heart to listen for God's response.)

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<sup>2</sup> Some of the content on this page was drawn from [Kathrynsirley.com](https://www.kathrynsirley.com)



## ACTS prayer

*See the end of this document for a printable card featuring this prayer format.*

### **A = Adoration**

Tell God how wonderful he is. Consider his attributes. Worship him.

*For inspiration, see: Psalm 46, Psalm 103, Psalm 145, Ephesians 3:14-21, Romans 11:33-36, Galatians 1:4-5, 1 Timothy 6:14-16*

### **C = Confession**

Admit your sins. Acknowledge that we can only come to God because of his grace. Ask for forgiveness.

*For inspiration, see: Isaiah 53:6, Ephesians 2:4-5, Hebrews 4:14-16, 1 John 1:8-10*

### **T = Thanksgiving**

Say 'thank you' for all God has done in your life. You can list the things you are thankful for, or zero in on some, and go into detail about why you are grateful for that one thing.

### **S = Supplication**

Make your requests to God – for yourself and for others. Pray for your church, for your community, for local leaders and for global issues.

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## Prayer walking ideas

*'Prayer walking' is a way of saturating a particular place and community with prayer, while physically walking through it.*

### 1. Prayer walk around your neighbourhood

Walk around your own neighbourhood - praying over every house, every neighbour.

If you see signs of children in the house, pray for those children to grow up knowing God. Pray for the parents to have wisdom and patience as they parent.

If you see signs of teenagers in the house, pray for safety as those kids begin to stretch their wings. Pray they will find a good path and stay well-grounded.

If you see a 'for sale' sign in the yard, pray for a smooth transition for the family and pray for the new neighbours who will move in.

### 2. Prayer walk around your local school

- Pray over the teachers, administrators
- Pray for the students
- Pray about the impact of Scripture teaching in the school

### 3. Prayer walk around your corps or ministry area

Place your hands on the place where you meet. Pray for Holy Spirit protection over that place. Affirm that the place is dedicated to God.

Place your hands on each chair and pray for the people who will sit in those chairs. Pray for God to speak into their hearts, heal what is broken and comfort them where needed.

If you pass a place where decisions are made, pray for wisdom and discernment for good decisions.

If you have a lectern/pulpit, place your hands on it and pray for preaching that is Spirit-led, Scriptural and life changing. Pray for your preachers.

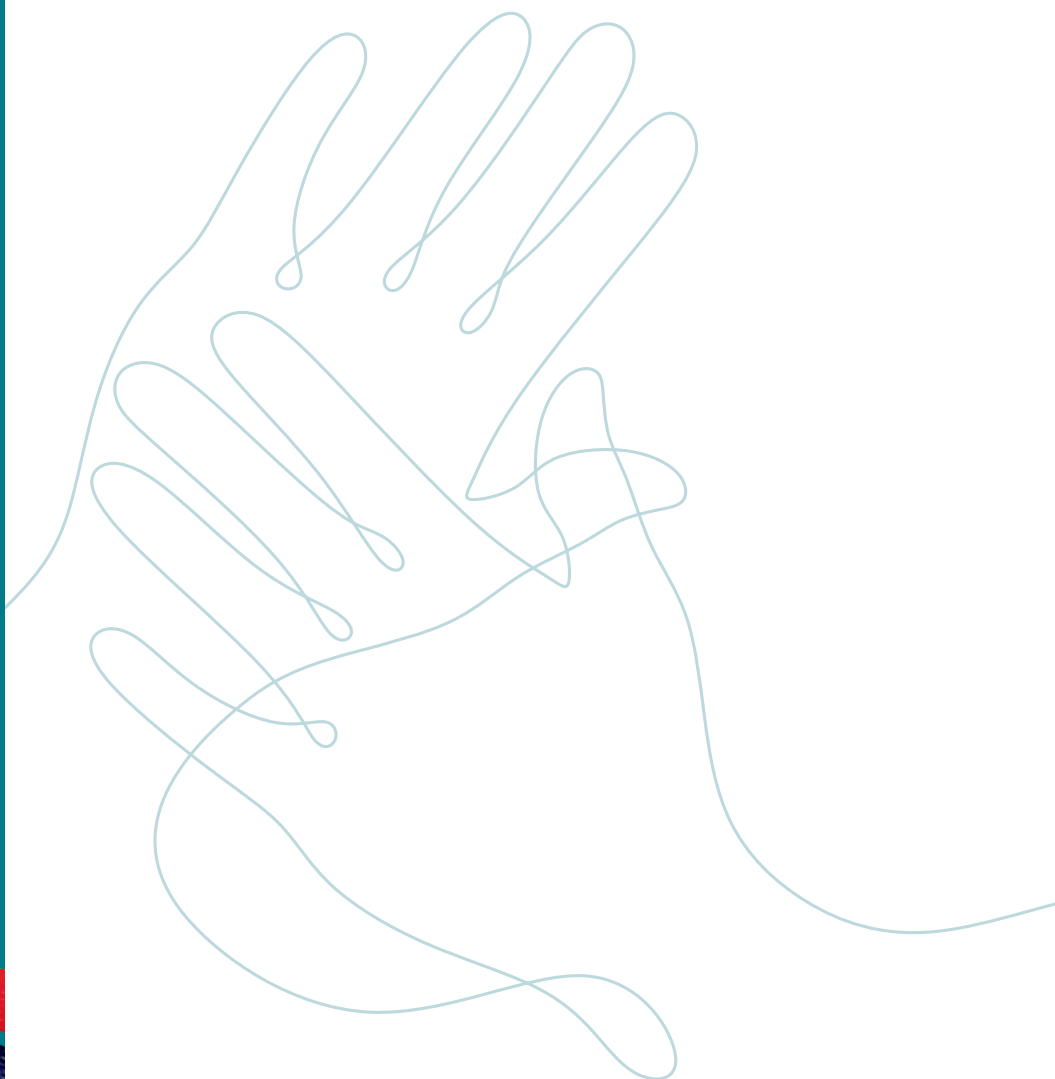
If you have a musical instrument that is used in worship, or a microphone, pick it up and pray for your worship team – for unity and harmony and for Holy Spirit anointing.



## Five finger prayer

*See the end of this document for a printable card featuring this prayer format.*

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|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Thumb:</b>         | Pray for those closest to you                    |
| <b>Index Finger:</b>  | Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal      |
| <b>Middle Finger:</b> | Pray for those with authority                    |
| <b>Ring Finger:</b>   | Pray for the weak, sick, and those with problems |
| <b>Pinkie:</b>        | Pray for yourself                                |



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## Teaspoon (TSP) prayer

*See the end of this document for a printable card featuring this prayer format.*

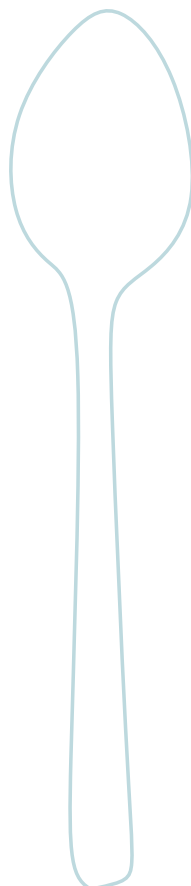
Perhaps the simplest way of structuring a prayer is to use these three words:

**T** Thank you

**S** Sorry

**P** Please

This is an ideal model to teach young children or those who are brand new to prayer.



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## Daily prayer for reconciliation and healing

Pray this prayer and commit to working for reconciliation and healing across our nation.

*Our Creator Spirit, you are like the fragrance of fresh gum leaves and as sweet as nectar.*

*I adore you.*

*I acknowledge that this is where you placed First Nations peoples, to have this deep and enduring relationship with you and creation.*

*Give me a greater understanding of Indigenous peoples and give me the courage to be brave, to step out in faith, to be bold and to stand in solidarity with them.*

*Forgive me when I've looked the other way.*

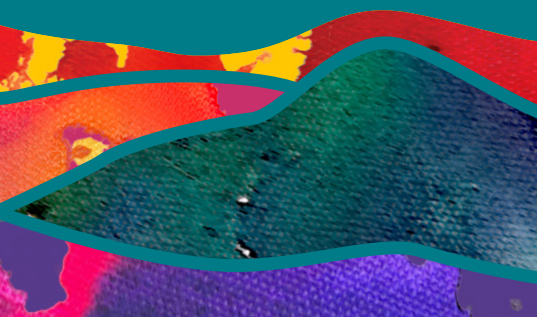
*Let me use your power to bring peace and unity to this nation, so that the wound in the heart of Australia is healed.*

*I ask this in Jesus' name.*

*Amen.*

Written by The Salvation Army Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Team, 2023.

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## Prayer doodling

Write a name for God, the name of someone you're praying for, or words from a scripture verse.

Draw a shape around it and begin to doodle.

Pray as you draw.

Ask God to be with you as you do this.

*For more tips and for templates like the one below, visit [prayingincolor.com](http://prayingincolor.com)*



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## Guide for a time of listening to God<sup>3</sup>

**Set aside 10-20 minutes to bring yourself to a place of stillness.**

Sit or walk and pray.

*Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth. Psalm 46:10 (NIV)*

**Exercise the authority of Christ over all the other voices that speak to you.**

Breathe deeply and slowly. Spend time in worship, focusing on God and his authority in your life.

*Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. James 4: 7 (NIV)*

**Ask Jesus to come and make you aware of his presence.**

*Hasten, O God, to save me; come quickly, Lord, to help me. Psalm 70: 1 (NIV)*

**Ask Jesus to search your heart.**

*Search me O God and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there is any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139: 23-24 (NIV)*

**Ask Jesus to speak with you and open your spirit to hear.**

*Speak Lord, for your servant is listening. 1 Samuel 3: 10 (NIV)*

*When God called out to Moses from the burning bush, Moses said, 'Here I am'. Exodus 3:4 (NIV)*

**Wait in silence to hear God.**

*Truly, my soul silently waits for God. Psalm 62:1 (NKJV)*

**Journal the thoughts that come to mind.**

When God communicates with us, it's good to write down what we hear and reflect on it.

Learning to listen to God is a process that can start awkwardly and grows slowly. If it is new for you, persevere and ask God to help.

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<sup>3</sup> The content on this page was drawn from 'Listening and Inner Healing Prayer' by Rusty Rustenbach



## How to plan a personal prayer retreat

### Set a date

Book it in your diary like any other appointment. Don't break your appointment unless something urgent comes up; give God priority.

### Choose a place

Choose somewhere that restores and refreshes you – for example, the bush, a mountain, beach, or lake.

### Pack

Pack your favourite Bible, pens, highlighters, journal, colouring in (if that appeals to you), and a couple of books that nourish your spirit. Bring your phone, but try to disconnect as much as possible, keeping your phone for urgent matters only.

### Submit your mind to God

Start by breathing deeply, reminding yourself of God's faithful presence. As your mind is quietened, realise that you are in a special space, devoted to the nurturing of your relationship with God.

### Begin by praising God

Start your retreat by praising God. You could start with some Psalms or play some worship music.

### Repentance and Rest

Focusing on God's character almost always leads us into repentance. When you become aware of sin, ask for God's forgiveness. Ask him to wash you clean. You may need rest at this point.

### Continue as God leads

Take time to listen in silence. Breathe in the presence and peace of the Holy Spirit. Breathe out stress and anxiety. You might find it helpful to read, pray out loud or colour in.

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**PRAYER**

### **ACTS Prayer**

**A** = Adoration

**C** = Confession

**T** = Thanksgiving

**S** = Supplication

### **Five finger prayer**

**Thumb:** Those closest to you

**Index:** Those who lead

**Middle:** Those with power

**Ring:** Those who are suffering

**Pinkie:** Yourself

### **Teaspoon (TSP) prayer**

**T** = Thank you

**S** = Sorry

**P** = Please

### **Prayer of Examen**

**Recognise** the moments  
today that went well.

**Request** the Spirit's help as  
you review the day.

**Review** the day.

**Repent** of any mistakes.

**Resolve** to live tomorrow well.

### **Gospel immersion**

1. Read a gospel story twice.

2. Place yourself in the scene.

3. What do you see, hear, smell,  
taste, think?

4. Spend five minutes taking it in.

5. Pray.

### **Lectio Divinia**

**Silencio** (Silently prepare your heart)

**Lectio** (Read the Bible)

**Meditatio** (Meditate)

**Oratio** (Respond)

**Contemplatio** (Let the message  
sink into your soul)