

**MODEL UNIT
BAND A
LEVEL 3**

JESUS AND PRAYER

LIFE CONCEPT: GOD HELPS PEOPLE PRAY

YEAR:.....SUGGESTED DURATION: 4 weeks (100 minutes per week)

DATE OF USE: FAITH STATEMENTS: ① ② ③

UNIT-SPECIFIC GOALS (highlighted)

1. GOD INVITES PEOPLE TO PRAY TO HIM IN JESUS' NAME

- 1a explore the Christian belief that prayer is talking to God
- 1b investigate things Christians can pray about
- 1c investigate things Christians use to help them pray, eg books, postures, learned prayers

2. GOD PROMISES TO HEAR AND ANSWER PRAYER

- 2a explore Bible stories in which God answers prayer
- 2b explore the Christian belief that people can pray at any time and in any place

3. JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE TO PRAY

- 3a investigate Bible accounts of Jesus praying
- 3b hear the prayer Jesus taught his disciples

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

ASSESSABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES
Illustrate their understanding of prayer. (1a)	⇒ work samples
Write a response to illustrate their understanding that people can pray by themselves. (1b,2b,3a)	⇒ TRS A3/1
Write a response to illustrate their understanding of things Jesus prayed about and things that Christians can pray about. (1b,3a)	⇒ TRS A3/2
Use the words of the Lord's Prayer. (3b)	⇒ work samples, prayers, songs

UNIT SUMMARY

The teacher uses the students' illustrations to assess what students know about prayer. Students then investigate the role of prayer in Jesus' life and corresponding occasions in the lives of Christians today. Students hear and learn the words of the Lord's Prayer. Students can collate the work of this unit into a journal about prayer.

UNIT NOTES

In this unit students investigate the place of prayer in Jesus' life and Jesus' teaching of the Lord's Prayer. Opportunities are given for students to write prayers. Remember that prayer is a response and must not be forced.

The work of this unit can be collated into a journal about prayer. Teacher Resource Sheets (TRS's) can be part of this journal.

Students are introduced to the Lord's Prayer and participate in activities to help them learn it. A detailed examination of the Lord's Prayer is done in the model unit for Band B Level 3.

WORDS TO KNOW

communicate prayer table grace
the Lord's Prayer

INTRODUCTION

1. COMMUNICATING WITH EACH OTHER

Investigate ways in which people communicate with one another and ways in which relationships affect the form of communication. This could be done in any of the following ways:

- Students identify people with whom they communicate and the different forms of communication they use, eg a phone to talk to a friend, send a letter, fax or e-mail to grandparents.
- Compare the different types of language used to communicate with different people, eg how does the way you speak to a friend differ from the way you speak to a teacher?

Students prepare the first page of their journal showing people with whom they communicate.

Link these activities with other curriculum areas, eg Society and Environment, English, Media. They need not be done in the Christian Studies time frame.

DEVELOPMENT

2. WHAT IS PRAYER

Just as people want to communicate with each other, a person who is in a relationship with God will want to communicate with God. This is the basis for prayer.

Tell students that prayer is a form of communication: the one Christians use to talk to God.

Students illustrate what they know about prayer, adding words if they wish. (Use these to assess students' understanding of prayer, eg prayer postures, places of prayer, words used in prayer). As a group discuss the students' illustrations. If students are collating a journal, these can form the next page.

3. JESUS PRAYED

Prayer was an important part of Jesus' life. The Bible records times and ways in which Jesus prayed, things he prayed about and Jesus' teachings on prayer.

A. Jesus prayed with other people

The Bible records occasions when Jesus prayed with others. You are aiming to develop these concepts:

- Jesus prayed with his friends and with other people.
- Some of the prayers that Jesus used were prayers that everyone knew. Others were prayers in his own words.
- Christians also pray with others. Sometimes they use prayers where everyone joins in; sometimes they pray in their own words.

Jesus prayed in public worship (Luke 2:41-52; see Bible References Menu for other examples). Show a picture of the temple. Tell students that Jesus called the temple 'a house of prayer'. When Jesus went to the temple, he would have said prayers along with the other people there (see TRS A3/1 for extra information).

Make copies of prayers that are regularly used in class or school worship. Discuss what is being said in these prayers.

Students complete TRS A3/2.

B. Jesus prayed alone Luke 5:16; Matthew 14:23 (see also Matthew 6:6)

Show a picture of Jesus praying alone. Use the verse on TRS A3/3 to discuss this aspect of prayer in Jesus' life. You are aiming to develop these concepts:

- When Jesus prayed he was talking to God, his Father in heaven.
- One of the ways that Jesus prayed was to go to a quiet place by himself.
- When Christians pray by themselves they may do any of these things: sit quietly and think about God; say prayers they know or just tell God how they are feeling; think about words from the Bible.

Students complete part one of TRS A3/3.

Prepare students for the experience of quiet reflection by practising periods of silence in the classroom first. Choose an appropriate time, eg after physical or mental activity. Use relaxation exercises to lead students to sit or lie quietly. Once students are settled, suggest they either listen to sounds around them, concentrate on their breathing, or just let their mind wander. Use quiet music or candles if you wish. Keep the time frame short at first (eg a minute) then gradually increase it.

Once students have developed skills in being silent, you could repeat the activity outside. If you are doing this, you will need to establish boundaries, a time frame and guidelines for being alone.

Students complete part two of TRS A3/3.

Optional activities: (which could also form part of the journal):

- Students use pictures from travel magazines to make a collage of places where people can be alone.
- Students illustrate and write about a place where they go to be alone.
- Students interview other people to find out if they like to be alone for prayer and how they use this time.

C. What Jesus prayed about

Jesus prayed before eating (Matthew 14:13–21)

Tell or revisit the story of the feeding of the 5000 people. Emphasise verse 19: *He looked towards heaven and blessed the food.* See TRS A3/1 for extra information about prayers in the Jewish home.

Record and teach a number of different table graces to use as lunchtime prayers. These could be collated in a class book.

Students complete TRS A3/4 part one.

Jesus prayed for other people

Show a picture of the last supper. The Bible tells that the night before Jesus died he said a prayer for his disciples (John 17:6–25). He also told Peter that he had been praying for him (Luke 22:32).

Show a picture of Jesus on the cross. The Bible tells that when Jesus was on the cross, he prayed for his enemies. He said: 'Father, forgive these people! They don't know what they are doing.' (Luke 23:34)

As a class construct a prayer list that could be used in class worship. Include people such as students and their families, staff, people in the community.

Students complete TRS A3/4 part two.

4. THE LORD'S PRAYER

When the disciples asked Jesus how to pray, he gave them the words we know as the Lord's Prayer. This prayer continues to be one of the best known and most frequently used prayers for Christians. See TRS A3/1 for extra information about Jesus' approach to prayer.

Use Matthew 6:5–13 as the basis for introducing the words of the Lord's Prayer. Record the words of the Lord's Prayer on a poster and read them together. Identify times and places where students may have seen, heard or used these words before. You could

- examine school worship orders that use the Lord's Prayer;
- provide prayer books for students to look through and find the Lord's Prayer;
- show students plaques, posters or bookmarks which have the Lord's Prayer printed on them.

In order to become familiar with the words of the Lord's Prayer, students could

- learn to sing the prayer. Song books such as the *Altogether* series have several popular versions. Match the words of the song to the text of the prayer;
- make up their own actions to accompany the prayer;
- hear books which explain the words of the Lord's Prayer in language appropriate for this band (see Recommended Resources Menu).

RESPONSE

5. COLLATING THE PRAYER JOURNAL

Select from any of the following activities. If students have been making a journal, this can form their final page.

- Use art books or old prayer books to show students some of the intricate lettering and borders used to illustrate the Lord's Prayer. Students illustrate and decorate their own copies of the Lord's Prayer.
- Make an 'autograph prayer page' on which students write prayers for one another.
- Students record or illustrate what they have learnt about prayer.

Students collate their journal, adding an appropriate cover. Encourage students to take these home to share with their parents.

YOU WILL NEED

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> non-fiction material about different forms of communication | <input type="checkbox"/> optional: copies of prayers that are frequently used in class or school worship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> blank A4 paper (if students are collating a journal about prayer) | <input type="checkbox"/> copies of table graces |
| <input type="checkbox"/> magazines for making collages or posters | <input type="checkbox"/> a poster of the Lord's Prayer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> an illustrated children's Bible | <input type="checkbox"/> photocopies of TRS A3/2,3,4 for student use |

INTEGRATING INTO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

ENGLISH: *Literature:* Distinguish between different text types (prayers). *Media:* Understand that the purpose of the media is to communicate; recognise features of media texts. *Everyday Texts:* Learn that language is important for communication; discuss ways talk can affect people, eg gesture, tone, language.

ARTS: *Visual Arts:* Draw or paint to express feelings and thoughts; use simple skills of visual communication, eg layout, design.

SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT: *Time, Continuity and Change:* Develop a sense of heritage, hear stories about remote times and places. *Culture:* Identify customs and traditions of the school

from the National Statements and Profiles

UNIT EVALUATION

Which activities worked well in this unit?

Which resources were useful in the implementation of this unit?

How did I respond to the range of students' understanding that prayer was an important part of Jesus' life?

How did I respond to the range of students' attitudes towards prayer and its importance in the lives of Christians today?

What would I do differently if I was teaching this unit again?

How will I use and build on knowledge, understandings, skills, attitudes, and values students have developed in this unit?



PRAYER CUSTOMS IN THE TIME OF JESUS

This TRS contains information for teachers about aspects of prayer in the time of Jesus. Adapt it as appropriate to share with your students.

PRAYER AND FORMAL WORSHIP

Jewish religious life was centred on activities that took place in the temple. Pilgrims came to the temple to attend religious festivals, and the temple was the centre for religious teaching. Small towns had a local synagogue where the people came to hear Bible readings and prayers. Jesus attended the local synagogue and the festivals in Jerusalem and expected his disciples to do the same.

Each day at the temple began with the reciting of Bible passages and prayers.

Some prayers used by the priests are still used in Christian worship today, eg from Psalm 51: *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me;* and from Psalm 57: *Have mercy on me.*

The word *Amen* was used in the services at the end of prayers. It means 'It is sure', or 'There is no doubt about that'.

Festivals were an important part of Jewish life. As part of these ceremonies the people participated in prayer and song and heard again passages from the Bible (Old Testament) which recalled important events in their history.

At the *Day of Atonement* the whole nation confessed their sin and asked God to forgive them.

At the *Festival of Tabernacles* prayers were made for good rains in the following season.

People fasted as a sign that they were genuinely sorry for their sin. For a period of time the people did not eat or drink. Sometimes they would also tear their clothes, dress in rough cloths, throw dust and ashes on their heads and go without washing or without combing their hair. During the time of fasting people also spent time in prayer.

PRAYER IN THE HOME

Prayer was an important part of life in the Jewish home. Morning, afternoon and evening prayers were said. Each prayer would begin with the words *Blessed art thou, O Lord, king of the universe* and continued on with prayers of praise, prayers for healing etc.

Before every meal the father of the house said a prayer, eg: *Blessed art thou, our God, king of the universe, who created the fruit of the vine (or: who brings forth food from the earth; or: who creates the fruit of the tree).*

JESUS AND PRAYER

Jesus used the word *Abba* to address God. This is a word that children would use to address their dad. The use of this word models how Jesus taught people to relate to God in a personal way. He taught that people can come to God as children go to a loving and forgiving father. This was a new and revolutionary teaching and changed peoples' attitude towards prayer.

He taught his followers to pray *Our Father in heaven . . .*



JESUS PRAYED WITH OTHERS

The Bible tells that Jesus prayed with other people.

Illustrate times when Christians today pray with others.

Think of times when you have been at class or school worship.

Either write the words of a prayer that is used as part of worship or write your own prayer that you think could be used in worship.



JESUS PRAYED ALONE

Jesus would often go to a place where he could be alone and pray. (Luke 5:16)

PART ONE

Why do you think Jesus went to places where he could be alone?

What do you think Jesus prayed about?

Do you have a place where you can be alone? If so, where is it?

What do you do when you are alone?

PART TWO

Go to a place where you can be alone.
Use this time in the way that is best for you.
You may like to sit quietly and look at things around you.
You could close your eyes and listen to sounds.
You could think about things that are important to you.
You could think about words or stories from the Bible.
You could talk to God.

When you have finished, write about your time alone.



WHAT JESUS PRAYED ABOUT

PART ONE JESUS PRAYED BEFORE EATING

The Bible tells that Jesus prayed before eating.

Many Christians pray before or after meals to thank God for their food.

Write the words of a prayer that Christians use before eating, or write your own prayer that could be used at this time.

PART TWO JESUS PRAYED FOR OTHER PEOPLE

The Bible tells that Jesus prayed for other people.

Christians also pray for others. Illustrate people whom Christians could pray for, or write your own prayer that could be used to pray for others.

HANNAH

The Bible tells the story of Hannah.

Hannah's husband loved her very much, but Hannah was not happy. Hannah did not have any children, and this is what she wanted the most. When Hannah saw the children of other women she became even more upset.

One year when Hannah and her husband went to worship God, Hannah stood in the worship place by herself and began to pray. She told God exactly how she felt:

*Lord, I am so miserable. Please let me have a son.
When he grows up I will give him to you, and he will work for you.*

God answered Hannah's prayer, and the next year Hannah had a baby boy. She named him Samuel. How Hannah and her husband loved Samuel!

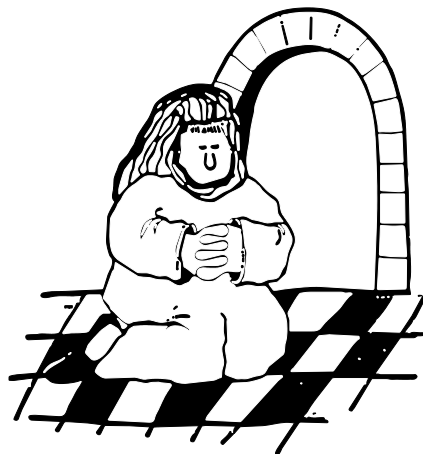
When Samuel was older, they again went to worship at the holy place. This time Samuel stayed there and learnt how to help Eli, the priest.

Hannah again prayed to God.

You make me happy, Lord. Now I can be glad. There is no other God like you.

Although Samuel lived at the place of worship, Hannah did not forget about him. Each year they would visit Samuel, and Hannah would take new clothes that she had made for him.

Later Hannah had three more sons and two daughters.



ACTIVITIES

1. Divide your page into two. On one side illustrate Hannah as you think she would have looked when she asked God for a child. On the other side illustrate Hannah as you think she would have looked when she was thanking God for Samuel. Add speech bubbles with words she may have said in her prayer.
2. Hannah was upset because she did not have any children. Write a list of things that can make people feel upset. Put a circle around the things that you think people could talk to God about.
3. Hannah also said a prayer which thanked God for the good things he had done. Cut pictures from magazines to make a collage of things for which people could say a prayer of thanks.
4. Use your imagination to think about Hannah. Think of how Hannah felt when she was making clothes to take to Samuel, or think of Hannah after her other children were born. Illustrate the things you are imagining and write a prayer that you think Hannah might have said to God at this time.

GOD HELPS PEOPLE PRAY

