

MENU

BIBLE REFERENCES

1 God invites people to pray to him in Jesus' name

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|---------------------------------|--|
| A Christian prayer | Ephesians 3:14–21 |
| Pray at all times | Romans 12:12 1 Thessalonians 5:17 |
| The Spirit prays for us | Romans 8:26,27 |
| Pray for leaders and government | 1 Timothy 2:1–3 |
| God invites people to pray | Psalm 50:15a Matthew 7:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:17,18 |
| Ask in prayer | Philippians 4:6,7 |
| Be persistent with prayer | Colossians 4:2 Ephesians 6:18 |

Prayer as an expression of faith

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|---------------|------------------|
| Matthew 8:1 | Matthew 15:21–28 |
| Matthew 21:22 | Mark 11:24 |
| James 1:5–8 | |

Prayers in the Old Testament

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|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Abraham prays for Sodom | Genesis 18:20–33 |
| Moses prays for Israel | Exodus 32:1–14 |
| David prays | 2 Samuel 24:10b; Psalm 51 |
| Solomon prays | 1 Kings 3:1–15; 1 Kings 8:22–61 |
| Elijah prays | 1 Kings 18:20–39 |
| Psalm 8:1,2 | Psalm 23:4,5 |
| Psalm 30 | Psalm 31:1–5 |
| Psalm 36:5–10 | Psalm 42 |
| Psalm 54 | Jeremiah 15:15–18 |
| Jeremiah 20:7 | Daniel 2:20–23 |
| Daniel 6:10–23 | Daniel 9:1–19 |

David's experiences: occasions for prayer

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|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| David and Goliath | 1 Samuel 17:1 – 18:5 |
| Saul's jealousy of David | 1 Samuel 18:6–16 |
| David and Jonathan | 1 Samuel 20 |
| David spares Saul's life | 1 Samuel 24 |
| David is made king | 2 Samuel 1:1–16; 2:1–7 |
| Nathan's message to David | 2 Samuel 7 |
| David and Bathsheba | 2 Samuel 11 |
| Nathan's message and David's sorrow | 2 Samuel 12:1–13 |
| David and his son Absalom | 2 Samuel 18 |

Pray — because God is real

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| Psalm 139:7–12 | Isaiah 45:22 |
| Jeremiah 23:23,24 | |

Pray — because God cares

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|-------------------|-------------------|
| Psalm 139 | Isaiah 43:1,2,4,5 |
| Matthew 6:25–34 | Luke 11:5–13 |
| John 14:16–18, 26 | John 3:16 |
| 1 John 4:9,10 | |

New Testament prayers

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|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Mary's song of praise | Luke 1:46–55 |
| Simeon's prayer | Luke 2:29–32 |
| Jesus' disciples pray for guidance | Acts 1:24,25 |
| Prayer for Peter and John | Acts 4:23–30 |
| Peter | Acts 10:9–33 |
| Prayers for Peter | Acts 12:1–19 |
| Paul prays about his work | Romans 15:30–33 |
| Paul prays for the Corinthians | 2 Corinthians 1:3–5 |
| Paul prays for the Ephesians | Ephesians 3:14–21 |
| Paul prays for the Philippians | Philippians 1:1–6 |
| Prayers for the sick | James 5:13–16 |
| Come, Lord Jesus | Revelation 22:20b |

Praying in Jesus' name

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|--|-----------------------------------|
| John 14:6, 13,14 | John 15:1–17 |
| John 16:16–24 | |
| The power of Jesus' name | Acts 3:1–16; Acts 4:8–12,23–31 |
| Jesus has changed people's relationship with God | Romans 5:6–11 |
| Ephesians 2:18 | Ephesians 3:12 |
| Hebrew 10:19–22 | |

Corporate prayer

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| Matthew 18:19,20 | Acts 12:5 |
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Verses for reflection

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|------------------|---------------|
| Deuteronomy 31:6 | Psalm 8 |
| Psalm 23 | Psalm 51 |
| Psalm 63 | Psalm 67 |
| Psalm 139 | Psalm 121 |
| Isaiah 41:13 | Isaiah 54:10 |
| Matthew 4:18–22 | Matthew 11:28 |
| Matthew 28:20b | |

2

God promises to hear and answer prayer

God answers prayer

Psalm 6:6–10 Psalm 17:1
 Psalm 34:15,17 Psalm 50:15
 Psalm 55:16,22 Psalm 65:1,2
 Psalm 141:1,2 Isaiah 65:24
 Matthew 7:7–11

God answers prayers according to his will

Luke 22:39–46 2 Corinthians 12:7–10
 1 John 5:14,15

God’s will for the world

Matthew 21:22 John 6:35–40
 1 Timothy 2:3–6

Stories of answered prayer

Abraham’s servant Genesis 24:12–27
 Hannah 1 Samuel 1:9–20
 Solomon 1 Kings 3:4–15
 King Hezekiah 2 Kings 20:1–11
 A man with leprosy Matthew 8:1–4
 A Canaanite woman Matthew 15:21–28
 Bartimaeus Mark 10:46–52
 Men with leprosy Luke 17:11–19
 Paul 2 Corinthians 12:7–10

God answers because of Jesus

John 14:6,14 John 15:7
 John 16:23,24 Romans 5:2
 Ephesians 3:12 Hebrews 10:19–22
 1 John 2:1

3

Jesus taught people to pray

Jesus’ prayer life

At his baptism Luke 3:21
 In lonely places Mark 1:35; Luke 5:12–16
 Alone Matthew 14:22,23
 Before choosing the Twelve Luke 6:12–16
 The transfiguration Luke 9:28,29
 In Gethsemane Matthew 26:36–46;
 Mark 14:32–42; Luke 22:39–46
 On the cross Luke 23:34,46
 A life of prayer Hebrews 5:7

Prayers of Jesus

The Lord’s Prayer Matthew 6:5–15;
 Luke 11:1–13
 Jesus thanks his Father for what he did for the disciples Matthew 11:25,26; Luke 10:21
 Jesus prayer at Lazarus’ tomb John 11:41,42
 Jesus speaks to the Father about his death John 12:27,28
 Jesus’ prayer for his disciples John 17
 Gethsemane Matthew 26:36–46;
 Mark 14:32–42; Luke 22:39–46

Jesus’ prayer on the cross Luke 23:34,46

Jesus’ teaching on prayer

Pray for enemies Matthew 5:44
 Ask, seek, knock Matthew 7:7–11;
 Luke 11:9–13
 Where two or more are gathered Matthew 18:19,20
 Jesus warns against hypocrisy Mark 12:38–40
 Parable of the widow and the judge Luke 18:1–8
 Parable of the Pharisee and tax collector Luke 18:9–14

KEY BIBLE VERSES TO HEAR AND REMEMBER

Never stop praying, especially for others.
 Ephesians 6:18a (CEV)

*So I tell you to ask and you will receive, search and you will find,
 knock and the door will be opened for you.
 Everyone who asks will receive, everyone who searches will find,
 and the door will be opened for everyone who knocks.*
 Luke 11:9,10 (CEV)

Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest.
 Matthew 11:28 (TEV)

MENU

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

1 God invites people to pray to him in Jesus' name

FRIENDSHIPS Students in groups discuss ways in which people encourage friendships and relationships to grow, eg communicating regularly with each other about everyday and special experiences. Discuss:

- What sorts of things do you share with your closest friends?
- Why do you think people like to share experiences with friends?

Use this activity to lead into an investigation of prayer as a vital part of Christians' relationship with God. (1a)

IT'S ALL IN THE NAME To introduce an investigation of prayer in Jesus' name, discuss the question:

- How might you use someone's name to gain a favour?

Students work in groups to role-play situations in which someone's name gains them a favour. View and discuss the role-plays and tell students that Christians believe that Jesus' name gains them favour with God. (1b)

COMMUNICATION AND

RELATIONSHIP Students work in groups to role-play the way they communicate in different relationships, eg with friends, parents, teachers. Discuss with the students how the relationship we have with people affects the way we communicate with them.

- What is different about the way you communicate with your parents and with your friends?
- How does the relationship affect the way you communicate?

Go on to explore the way Christians can communicate with God because of the relationship they have with him through Jesus. (1b)

PRAY Listen to the rap song *Pray* by MC Hammer. Play the song again and ask students to record what it says about prayer. Students may be able to bring recordings of other contemporary songs about prayer. Use this activity to lead into an investigation of prayer. (1a)

SILENCE Provide students with a questionnaire about their experiences of silence, eg

- When do you like silence?
- When don't you like silence?
- Do you think it is important for people to have times of silence? Why or why not?

Share and discuss students' responses. Go on to explore the experience and benefits of silent meditative prayer. (1c)

COMMUNICATION Ask students to work in pairs and to find as many ways as they can to communicate to their partner that they like them. Each pair chooses their favourite means of communication to share with the class. Discuss the importance of communication:

- How important is communication in relationships? Explain your answer.
- What might happen to a relationship if the people never communicated with each other?

Tell students that Christians have a relationship with God and prayer is a way in which they communicate with God. Go on to explore the psalms as an example of people having a relationship with God and communicating with him. (1a)

JOURNALS AND DIARIES Display a range of journals or diaries (see Recommended Resources Menu).

Read selections from different journals and diaries. Discuss the types of things people record in their journals or diaries.

Show students a Christian prayer journal or introduce the concept of a prayer journal. Tell students that Christians can use these to record their prayers, thoughts and feelings.

Go on to explore the book of Psalms as the prayer journal of some of God's people in Old Testament times. (2b)

MY IMAGE OF PRAYER Students individually write or draw what they think of when you say the word *prayer*.

Display and discuss students' responses.

As a class make a list of what students know about prayer. Go on to explore a range of prayer experiences to expand students' concept of prayer. (1a,1b)

SPIRITUALITY (1) As a class read and discuss dictionary definitions of the word 'spirituality'. Develop a class definition.

Students individually reflect on their own experiences of 'spirituality'.

Provide students with a range of books about spirituality from the local library. Include New-Age-type books, since these express the 'spirituality' of many people today. Students read the blurbs and contents pages to list the type of information provided in such books. They identify what each book says is the source of fulfilment, eg New Age: self. Discuss:

- What do the books suggest it means to be spiritual?
- Why do you think people are so interested in spirituality?

Go on to investigate prayer as a vital part of the spiritual life of Christians. (1a)

2

God promises to hear and answer prayer

PRAYER BOOKS Provide students with a range of prayer books. After skimming through the prayer books, students make a list of questions they have about prayer.

Develop your investigation around the students' questions, including basic questions such as:

- What is prayer?
- Why do Christians pray?
- What do Christians pray about? (2c,1a,1c)

THE RIGHT PERSON FOR THE JOB

Display pictures or photos of people to whom we look for help, such as a fireman, dentist, doctor, teacher, lawyer. Write situations like the following on cards and ask students to match the best person for help in each situation:

- You are being sued by your neighbour because your dog barks at night.
- You bite into your favourite chocolate bar and your filling falls out.
- You are trying to make toffee apples at home and the toffee catches on fire.

Discuss:

- How do you decide which person to go to when you need help?
- What happens if the person's response is different from what you expect?

Students imagine one of the situations and the different people they could go to for help. Discuss how relationships with people determine to whom we go for help.

Go on to explore the Christian belief that prayer and trust (faith) belong together. (1a,2a)

IN GOOD TIMES AND BAD Give each student a piece of paper. They divide the paper into two sections labelled 'In the Good Times' and 'In the Bad Times'. Ask students to draw or write about what they do and who they share their feelings with in the good times. They also draw or write about what they do and who they talk to in the bad times. Students share these in groups and discuss:

- What common things do people do in both good times and bad times?
- Why do you think people react in this way?

Go on to explore ways Bible characters, such as David, responded to good times and bad particularly in their prayers. (2b)

A GOOD PARENT Students work in groups to discuss the statement:

A good parent gives you whatever you want.

Groups decide whether they agree or disagree with the statement and prepare arguments in support of their opinion. Ask each group to share their views.

Go on to explore the Christian belief that God answers prayer according to his good and fatherly will. (2a)

NATIONAL CHURCH LIFE SURVEY

In the 1995 National Church Life Survey Protestant church attenders in Australia were surveyed about their prayer life. The statistics showed the following:

- 6% said prayer was unimportant in their daily life.
- 26% said they pray in times of need, eg stress, gratitude.
- 20% said they have a regular time for prayer each day.
- 28% said they pray at various intervals during the day.
- 20% said they use a combination of the last two.
- 72% of church attenders over fifty years of age pray regularly.

Students survey church attenders in the local congregation to gain information about the prayer life of people in the local congregation.

Go on to interview people over fifty years of age to explore the way in which they pray and the role of prayer in their lives. (2b,2c)

TRADITIONAL SONGS AND POEMS

Take students to the library and ask them to gather a collection of traditional Australian songs and poems. Share these as a class and discuss:

- What makes a poem or song 'traditional'?
- When do people use traditional songs and poems?
- What are the benefits of using traditional poems and songs in groups?

Use the activity to lead into an investigation of traditional prayers of the church. (2c)

3

Jesus taught people to pray

SURF THE NET Search the Internet for information about the Lord's Prayer by using the search 'Christian Lord's Prayer'. Students use the information to develop a list of questions about the Lord's Prayer. Use the questions as the basis of an investigation of the Lord's Prayer. (3a,3b)

TRUE OR FALSE Provide students with a range of statements about prayer and ask them to classify them as either true or false. Statements could include:

- People don't need to pray because God already knows what they need.
- You need to close your eyes and fold your hands to pray.
- The Lord's Prayer is the only prayer people need.
- Prayer is the way Christians communicate with God.

Discuss students' classifications and use the discussion to initiate an investigation about prayer. (1a,3a)

VERSIONS OF THE LORD'S

PRAYER Listen to or sing a range of songs based on the Lord's Prayer. After each song ask students to record their thoughts about the song and its emphasis. Discuss:

- Why do you think there are so many translations of the Lord's Prayer?

Go on to explore the meaning of the Lord's Prayer and how it can be used as a framework for prayer. (3a,3b)

WHO TAUGHT YOU? Write on the board a list of skills, eg tying your shoelaces, writing your name, riding a bike. Ask students to reflect on the list and to record who taught them each skill. Share these as a class and discuss:

- How did these people teach you?
- What makes these people able to teach you?
- How would your learning have been different if you had had a different teacher?
- What do you think was the best thing someone taught you?

Use this activity to lead into an investigation of Jesus' teaching about prayer. (3a)

MENU

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

1 God invites people to pray to him in Jesus' name

JESUS' RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS FATHER

Conduct a study of Jesus' prayer life. Assign selections from the Bible Resources Menu (Jesus' prayer life) to groups. Students list when and where Jesus prayed and what they think he talked to his Father about. Students could record the prayers on a time line of Jesus' life or create a mural of images of Jesus praying. As a class discuss:

- What do the stories reveal about Jesus' relationship with his Father?
- What can people learn about prayer from the stories?
- How does prayer affect Jesus' relationship with the Father in heaven?

Students individually reflect on what they have learnt. (1a,3a)

PRAYING TO THE FATHER Discuss with students the belief of Christians that God is their perfect parent who loves them unconditionally and provides for their needs.

Students read and record what the Bible teaches about praying to God the Father. Readings could include Psalm 50:15; Matthew 7:7–11; 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

Also use Luther's *Small Catechism* and songs from the *All Together* series to explore what Christians believe about praying to God the Father.

Students use an art medium such as sculpture to depict the Christian understanding of praying to God the Father. (1a)

COMMUNICATING WITH GOD Read a range of Bible stories to explore situations in which people such as Moses, Elijah, David and Paul communicated with God (see Bible References Menu). Students record:

- the situation
- what the prayer reveals about the person's relationship with God
- how God answered the prayer.

Members of local Christian congregations could share information about situations in which they communicate with God and how they communicate with God, eg prayer journal, verbal prayers, conversations with God, reading prayers. Students prepare a booklet entitled 'Communicating with God'. (1a,2b)

THE PSALMS Conduct an investigation of the book of Psalms, eg the authors and message of the psalms. Then choose from the following options:

- Explore the emotions expressed in selected psalms. Encourage students to reflect on times when they have felt similar emotions. Students find a psalm which expresses an emotion they can relate to. They copy significant verses of the psalm in their books and explain its message for them.
- Students read and study selected psalms to explore the qualities of God described in the psalms. What images do the writers use to describe God? What images might contemporary writers use to convey a similar idea?
- Study psalms that are prayers. Students suggest the situation in which each psalm/prayer appears to have been written. What is the content of the prayers? What seems to have been going on in the life of the writer and/or in the world around the writer? In what situations could these prayers be used today?
- Compare modern paraphrases and interpretations of selected psalms (*Australian Psalms*, *Psalms Now*, *Psalms for Teens*) with the Bible translation. How has the author interpreted the psalm? Students write their own interpretation of one of the psalms.
- Conduct guided meditations on a selection of psalms, eg Psalm 8, 23, 51, 63, 67, 139. Students make themselves comfortable. Play some appropriate music and slowly read the psalm with pauses for reflection. After each meditation provide opportunities for students to express in writing or artistically the message the psalm conveys to them. (1a,2c)

PRAYER JOURNALS During an investigation of prayer and prayer experiences, students keep a journal in which they can write their own prayers, collect and glue in copies of prayers they like and write their own thoughts about prayer. Encourage students to be creative and to make their journals unique. (1a,1c, 2b)

JESUS' NAME Christians believe that Jesus is their Saviour and has changed the relationship between people and God (see Ephesians 3:12; 1 Timothy 2:5,6). All who believe in Jesus as their Saviour are God's children and can come to their Father in prayer. Jesus said to pray in his name, that means believing in him. Choose from the following suggestions to develop this concept:

- Skim through prayer books to identify prayers which end with 'in Jesus' name'. Discuss with students what Christians believe Jesus has done for all people and the difference it makes when Christians pray in Jesus' name.
- Read the Bible story of Jesus preparing the disciples for his death and resurrection and return to heaven, John 14:6,14; John 15:1–17 and 16:16–24. Students record Jesus' instructions to his disciples and how Jesus encourages his disciples to ask and pray to the Father in his name.
- Read Romans 5:1,2,8–11 and discuss:
 - What does the Bible say Jesus has done to change people's relationship with God?
 - Describe the way people might communicate/pray to God if they were God's enemies.
 - Describe the way people might communicate/pray to God if they were God's friends.

Students select and read contemporary prayers which express the new relationship with God believers in Jesus have.

- Read and investigate the message of songs from *All Together Everybody: In Jesus' name* (274) and *Because we bear your name* (292). Read also the Bible passage listed as inspiration for the song. Discuss: How do Christians bear Jesus' name? What benefits do Christians have because of what Jesus has done? (1b)

SPIRITUALITY (2) Christian spirituality comes from a faith relationship with God. Students interview members of the local congregation to explore what they believe is important in their spiritual life. Students ask questions about the prayer life of Christians, using the focus questions:

- What do Christians pray about?
- How do Christians pray?
- How important is prayer to your spiritual life?

Students use Christian reference texts such as *Finding Faith* or *Something You Can Stand For* (see Recommended Resources Menu) to further investigate the questions. Discuss:

- In what ways is prayer an important part of the spirituality of Christians?

Students prepare a report about Christian spirituality. (1a)

TOGETHER AND ALONE Students read prayers that are used by groups of Christians gathered together, eg the prayer of the church in the *Lutheran Hymnal*. They compare these with personal prayers found in prayer books. They list the features and content of the different prayers.

Students interview Christian teachers to explore the purpose and benefits of praying together with other Christians and of praying alone.

They explore Jesus' teaching in Matthew 18:19,20.

Students compile a book of prayers with samples of both group prayers and individual prayers. (1c,2b,3a)

2

God promises to hear and answer prayer

ACCORDING TO HIS WILL This is a difficult and complex concept for adults and students to grasp. Be careful about presenting a simplistic view of prayer. Christians believe that God always answers prayers offered in faith in Jesus. They also trust that God knows what is best for them. So they leave it to God to decide how and when he answers their prayers. Sometimes God's answers may be 'no' or 'wait'. This does not mean that God does not care if people are suffering. The Bible says that God will comfort and strengthen people in times of suffering (2 Corinthians 12:7–10).

Choose from the following options to explore this concept:

- Read and study the context and story of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, Luke 22:39–46. Why was this a difficult time for Jesus? What does Jesus pray? How does Jesus' prayer show trust in God the Father? How did the Father answer Jesus' prayer?
- Explore what 1 Timothy 2:5,6 and John 6:35–40 say about God's will for the world.
- Read Luther's explanation of the third prayer in the Lord's Prayer in the *Small Catechism*.

Discuss with students: What does the Bible say is God's will for all people? If people know that God loves them, how might this influence the way they pray? How might this influence what they believe about God answering prayer? (2a)

PRAYER STIMULUS During the course of the unit make available to students a number of prayer stimuli, eg objects such as a flower, a leaf or a rock, symbols such as a cross, a candle, pictures of people from around the world, pictures from newspapers, song lyrics, Bible verses or short Bible stories. Show how such objects can be starting points for prayer.

Tell students that the first (or last) five minutes of each lesson will be quiet time in which they can use a prayer stimulus to pray or reflect silently. All class members need to be aware of the prayer-time routine and respect it as quiet time. Encourage students who do not wish to pray to use the time for quiet reflection. (1a,2b)

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER Students work in groups to read a number of Bible stories about prayer, such as:

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| Abraham's servant | Genesis 24:12–27 |
| Hannah | 1 Samuel 1:9–20 |
| Solomon | 1 Kings 3:4–15 |
| King Hezekiah | 2 Kings 20:1–11 |
| Bartimaeus | Mark 10:46–52 |
| A Canaanite woman | Matthew 15:21–28 |
| A man with leprosy | Matthew 8:1–4 |
| Men with leprosy | Luke 17:11–19 |
| Jesus | Luke 22:39–46 |
| Paul | 2 Corinthians 12:7–10. |

Each group prepares a table with the following information: Bible reference; Who prayed; What was prayed for; God's answer. Discuss students' charts to highlight the following points:

- God always answers prayer.
- God's answer is not always yes.
- God promises to strengthen people when they are weakened by various situations.
- People can pray to God about all aspects of their life. (1a,2a,2b)

PRAYER RITUALS As a class make a list of prayer rituals, eg praying every morning or evening, praying before meal times, prayers during class worship. Discuss the benefits and difficulties with prayer rituals, eg they can help us pray regularly, they can become a just a ritual and mean nothing to the people praying.

To assist students develop a prayer ritual consider the following activity. Study a range of traditional and contemporary prayers and develop a list of topics for prayers and what people pray about in each topic. Provide a collection of beads that can be strung on wool or string. Ask students to choose topics they would regularly like to pray for and to choose a bead for each topic. These prayer beads can

be used to establish a regular prayer ritual. (2b,2c)

PRAYER TRADITIONS Invite speakers from the local Christian congregations to share information about prayer traditions and attitudes towards prayer in their denomination. Divide the class into groups and assign a guest speaker to each group. Groups could rotate to listen to each guest speaker. The speakers may bring copies of traditional or common prayers of their church. Students prepare a report about each denomination's prayer traditions. (2c)

PRAYER THROUGHOUT HISTORY

Gather a range of prayer books which contain prayers of Christians throughout history. Each student chooses a prayer and develops a profile on the author of the prayer, using encyclopedias and books such as *The Lion History of Christianity*. The profile includes information about their life and experiences. Students share their profiles in groups. The prayers and profiles could be made into a class prayer book. (2b,2c)

SO MANY PRAYERS In each Christian Studies session study and compare a traditional and a contemporary prayer. Students could

- list the features of each prayer;
- prepare a choral reading of the prayers;
- investigate the authors of the prayers, eg Traditional: Martin Luther, Francis of Assissi, Augustine. Contemporary: Bruce Prewer, Mother Theresa, Henri Nouwen;
- create a big book for the class which contains the prayers studied during the unit. Students could work in pairs to illustrate the prayers;
- keep a log for each prayer, identifying: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication (requests) (note: not all prayers have all elements);
- create their own prayer book with prayers and their own illustrations or photos. (2c)

3 Jesus taught people to pray

JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT PRAYER

Assign to students different Bible readings of Jesus' teaching about prayer, eg
 Matthew 6:5–8 Matthew 6:9–15
 Matthew 7:7–11 Luke 18:1–14.

Students record Jesus' teaching in their own words. Each group could design a series of prayer reminder cards (or charts or

bookmarks), eg 'Don't put on a show when you pray'. (3a)

JESUS PRAYED Students investigate prayers of Jesus, eg
 Matthew 6:9–13 Matthew 11:25,26
 Matthew 26:36–44 Matthew 27:46
 Luke 10:21 John 11:41,42
 John 12:27,28 John 17
 Luke 23:34, 46.

Students explore the context of each prayer and what each prayer reveals about Jesus and his relationship with God the Father. They also record information about what Jesus' own prayer life teaches people about how to pray. Students create a series of posters or pages for a big book entitled *Jesus prayed* with one poster or page for each of the prayers. (3a,1a)

VERSIONS OF THE LORD'S

PRAYER Students read Matthew 6:5–15 to investigate Jesus' teaching of the Lord's Prayer. They work in groups to compare and record the differences between the versions in Bible translations (CEV, GNB, NIV, RSV) and the contemporary version commonly used. Discuss the differences:

- What words are changed in the different translations?
- Why do you think the different translations have occurred?
- Which translation do you think explains best what people should pray for? (3b)

THE LORD'S PRAYER Students work in groups to explore what the Lord's Prayer teaches about praying. Use Luther's *Small Catechism* and assign a different prayer to each group. Each group reports on the meaning of each prayer and what it teaches about prayer. Students prepare a display about the Lord's Prayer for the entrance foyer or worship centre of the school. (3a,3b)

COLLAGE OF JESUS' PRAYERS

Students create a collage of drawings of Jesus praying. To develop their drawings, students investigate Jesus' prayers and references to where Jesus prayed. This could be displayed in the worship centre. (3a,3b)

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

BIBLE VERSE Students learn an appropriate Bible verse (see page 11).

SONGS Students learn songs related to the concept (see Music and Worship Ideas in the appendix).

TIME LINE (A recommended activity for Level 1) If the class is developing a time line for Christian Studies, put on the time line any Bible stories discussed.

GOD FILE (A recommended activity for Level 2) If the class is developing a God File, add information to the file about God's invitation to people to pray and his willingness to hear and answer prayer.

MENU

RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

1 God invites people to pray to him in Jesus' name

MEDITATION Students prepare a plan to help people in the class meditate. The plan could include: steps, rituals, Bible passages, suggested places for prayer, pictures for prayer stimulus. Place these plans in a box and make them available to class members. Consider having a regular 5–10 minute meditation time at the beginning or close of a lesson. (1a,2c)

PRAYER ART Tell students that many artists have created artworks to express the relationship between Christians and God. Show and discuss examples.

Ask students to reflect on what they have learnt about prayer in the unit and to design an artwork which shows what they have learnt about prayer. Students may choose to use a Bible verse as the inspiration. Display the artwork in the school worship centre. (1a,1b,1c)

PRAYERS FOR EVERY PART OF THE DAY Students design a prayer book which includes prayers for every part of a person's day, eg waking up, going to school, English and Maths lessons, lunchtime, sport/art/drama/ music lessons at school, after school, family mealtime, going to bed.

Students use what they have learnt about prayer to consider what prayers people might pray at these times. These prayer books could be used by younger students. (1a)

2 God promises to hear and answer prayer

PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD Students work in groups to skim through newspapers or view the TV news and list a range of topics that could be prayed about. Encourage students to list as many things as they can from each section of the news, eg

- international news: peace in war-torn countries, the poor;
- sport: teams, joy and celebration;
- weather: the sun, the rain, the seasons.

Each student chooses a topic and writes or finds a prayer about the topic. The prayers could be used in class worship. (2a,2c)

CONVERSATION WITH GOD Read sections from Judy Blume's book *Are You There, God? It's Me—Margaret*. Discuss the types of things students their age might pray about and how God might respond to their prayers.

Students write an imagined dialogue between a person their age and God. (2b,1a)

PRAYERS FOR SCHOOL PEOPLE

As a class list groups of people involved in the school community, eg children, mothers, fathers, teachers, principal, school assistants.

Students work in groups to list needs each group might have. They write prayers for each group of people in a book of prayers which could be made available in the class library. (2b,1a,1c)

PRAYER REQUESTS As a result of this unit students may want to respond to God's invitation and pray to him about their concerns for themselves and for other people.

To allow students to support one another in prayer, consider establishing a 'prayer tree' or a 'prayer box'. A prayer tree can be a small live tree or a branch in a pot to which students attach (leaf-shaped) papers with their prayer requests. A prayer box can be like a post box into which students can put slips of paper with their prayer requests. Students have the option of making the prayer requests anonymously or signing their names. You could

- designate a regular time at which the tree or box is cleared and all requests prayed for by the class or a small prayer group within the class;
- take responsibility as teacher to daily check the prayer requests, pray about them and (where possible) report back to the students that you have done so;
- encourage students in free time to take one prayer request and pray about it. (1a,1c,2a,2b)

3 Jesus taught people to pray

PRAYER SYMBOLS Students create a series of symbols for the class worship centre based on Jesus' teaching on prayer. The symbols could be introduced to the school community in school worship. The symbols could be the focus for class prayer times. (3a)

LITURGICAL DANCE Students work in groups and use what they have learnt about the meaning of the Lord's Prayer to develop a liturgical dance to the reading or singing of the Lord's Prayer. (3a,3b)

THE LORD'S PRAYER Students use what they have learnt about the Lord's Prayer to write their own translation of the prayer. Make available models of translations and versions of the Lord's Prayer from service orders and prayer books.

Publish the students' prayers in the school newsletter or make them available for devotions as school or class. (3b)

SINGING THE LORD'S PRAYER

Students read and listen to different song-versions of the Lord's Prayer. They prepare their own song-version or liturgical dance based on the Lord's Prayer. They could use their song or dance in a school service (eg beginning or end of term). (3b)

MENU**RECOMMENDED RESOURCES**

The introduction to LIFE contains suggested general resources for all LIFE concepts.

The following resources may be used to develop a unit about *God helps people pray*.

Some of these resources may be out of print.

They are listed because they (or others similar to them) may be found in school libraries.

Preview these and any other resources you intend using to be sure that they are appropriate for your students.

LITERATURE — NON-FICTION**Prayer books**

Batchelor M (compiled by) *The Lion Book of Children's Prayers* 1977 Lion

Baynes P *Thanks Be to God — Prayers from around the World* 1990 Lutterworth

Beckett W *A Child's Book of Prayer in Art* 1995 Dorling Kindersley

Hutson J *Heal My Heart, O Lord* 1997 Eagle

Koch C (ed) *Dreams Alive: Prayers by Teenagers* 1991 Saint Mary's Press

Personal Prayers (series) Chi Rho Books, includes: *Personal Prayers of Famous People* 1991

Prewer B D *Jesus Our Future* 1998 Openbook Publishers

Prewer B D *Prayers for Aussie Kids* 1993 Openbook Publishers

Prewer B D *Brief Prayers for Australians* 1991 Lutheran Publishing House

Rock L *Glimpses of Heaven: Poems and Prayers of Mystery and Wonder* 1997 Lion

Famous Prayers 1987 Abingdon Press

Rock L *Best Loved Prayers* 1996 Lion

Schubert D *Days and Seasons* 1989 Lutheran Publishing House

Singer C *Gospel Prayers* 1992 Novalis

Watson C *365 Children's Prayers* 1989 Lion

Psalms

Brandt L F *Psalms Now* 1976 Lutheran Publishing House

Prewer B *Australian Psalms* 1970 Openbook Publishers

Prewer B *More Australian Psalms* 1996 Openbook Publishers

Weisheit E *Psalms for Teens* 1992 Concordia Publishing House

The Lord's Prayer

Johnson S *Talking with God* 1996 Christian Focus Publications

Books about prayer

Knowles A *Finding Faith* 1983 Lion Publishing

Osborne R *I Want to Know about Prayer* 1998 Zondervan Publishing House

Smith J *Something You Can Stand For* 1994 Joint Board for Christian Education

FICTION

Blume J *Are You There, God? It's Me — Margaret* 1995 Bantam Books

TEACHER RESOURCES

Abbott M *Igniting Sparks of Reconciliation and Compassion* 1996 Catholic Education Office Adelaide

Bretherton B *Praying with Children* 1995 Social Science Press

Fuller J *Dreams and Visions — A Way into Prayer for Young People* 1997 Kevin Mayhew

Glavich M *Leading Students into Prayer* 1993 Twenty-Third Publications

Heller E *The Kid's Book of Prayers* 1995 Pauline Books and Media

Lucado M *The Great House of God* 1997 Word Publishing (Lucado examines the Lord's Prayer as a model for living)

Nolan E *Christian Beliefs Book 1* 1994 JBCE

Pate J *Praying with Children* 1995 McCrimmon Publishing

Rust R *Making the Psalms Your Prayer* 1988 St Anthony Messenger Press

Wezeman P *Twenty Prayer Lessons for Children* 1996 Twenty-Third Publications

Prayer Resources for Secondary Schools, Australian Edition 1992 National Centre for Religious Studies New Zealand

Prayer meditations

Costello G *Prayer Services for Young Adolescents* 1994 Twenty-Third Publications

MUSIC

Rainforest Magic or Wilderness O'Connor T
Stephen Parish Publishers

INTERNET ADDRESSES

http://
www.blessedhope.org/Studies/stl/lesson2.html

http://
web.wt.net/~wayne/lordspr2.html

Put a plastic sleeve in this section of your LIFE binder to keep your own collection of clippings, cartoons, stories, photos, etc which you can use for these units. Add to your collection whenever you come across something that might be useful.

