



Revive

Equipping Lay Leaders to
be Spiritual Leaders

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Acknowledgments

Revive was developed with Forward Movement to help congregations facilitate growth in spiritual vitality. The program originated from Trinity Anglican Church, Aurora, Diocese of Toronto, and was created by the Rev. Canon Dawn Davis. Special thanks to the Rev. Diana McHardy for co-leading this program and guiding its formation over the years. Thank you to the Rev. Stephen Kern, Margot Secord, and Vic Redwood who were there at the beginning and who helped fan the flames of a small ember into life. Thank you to the parishioners of Trinity who embraced this program through their own formation and faithful spiritual leadership. Thank you to Tyndale University College for providing the academic discipline and rigor that fostered deeper understanding. Thank you to the Diocese of Toronto for a grant from the Our Hope, Our Faith Fund, which helped support the studies necessary for the maturing of this program. Thank you to the people at RenewalWorks and Forward Movement for believing in this project. Thank you to Alison Juurinen and the Rev. Canon Cheryl Palmer at Christ Church Deer Park, Toronto, Ontario, the Rev. Hillary Raining at St. Christopher's, Gladwyne, Pennsylvania, and the Rev. Amy Welin at St. Stephen's, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and their parishioners for participating in the *Revive* pilot and making the program even stronger with their wisdom, strength, and insight. A special thank you to the Rev. Catherine Thompson at The Annunciation, Lewisville, Texas, who, along with her parish, participated in the pilot and brought significant improvements to the program. And finally, a deep and heartfelt thank you to my family for being a vehicle of God's love in so many ways. David and Yohanna, my loving husband and daughter, you have both sacrificed so much to make space in our family life for my dreams. David, thank you for your generous and brilliant insight, and Yohanna, thank you for your sensible joy. You both have been instruments of God in my spiritual journey.

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Introduction

The difference between *knowing about* God and *being in a relationship with* God has been compared to the difference between reading a menu and eating the meal. The same can be said about our church work.

Busily working for the church does not necessarily mean we are being nourished by the life-empowering feast of faith. Being actively involved in the church does not automatically mean we are spiritually growing. Our church work is a loving response of stewardship to serve God's kingdom as a follower of Jesus. The work, however, can become so overwhelming that we miss the most precious gift the church has to offer. A relationship with God, framed by Jesus' teachings, is the most transformative gift the church can give our long-serving, dedicated servants of Christ.

But how do we find time for this gift? Buildings, budgets, social needs, changing demographics and staffing leave little space for God. Who can find space for the spiritual when there are so many urgent and immediate physical concerns? The sad truth is that we will never be the people—or the church—God is calling us to be if we rely solely on our own strength, merit, and effort. In fact, our self-sufficiency will only leave us feeling depleted, overwhelmed, and disillusioned.

Jesus did not come into the world so that we would have a church job; he came so we might know the freedom and full life that is found in a close, intimate relationship with the One who loves us beyond imagining. Jesus told us to make disciples and to be the light of the world, and that the empowerment of the Holy Spirit would help us accomplish more than we can ask for or dream of.

Introduction

How do we go from doing ministry *for* the church to being in a relationship *with* this life-giving empowering God? We quite simply have to stop. Stop the frantic busyness. Stop the intellectual analysis. Stop the self-reliance. Stop the anxious worrying, and let God renew and revive our hearts and minds. Being in a relationship with God, as with every other healthy relationship we experience, takes time and attention in order for it to grow and deepen. Otherwise, as with other relationships, our connection with God can shrivel and even die if it is left to languish. *Revive* aims to provide a supportive structure and community to help that relationship reignite and come alive!

Revive is offered as a gift of thanks for the dedicated service of people who have worked so hard for the church, yet feel like they do not know God as deeply as they desire. By accepting this opportunity, participants will grow in confidence as spiritual leaders who yearn to live a Jesus-shaped life.

Archbishop Moon Hing of West Malaysia wrote in the 2016 Lambeth report *Intentional Discipleship and Disciple-Making*: “To follow Jesus of Nazareth ... is simply the most challenging, the most beautiful, the most costly, the most rewarding journey we could ever choose to begin.” Welcome to this journey! It is the most important and transforming gift the church has to offer.

Course Overview

Revive is a small-group discipleship program. Lay leaders join their minister in a safe setting, where they find words to describe their spiritual experiences and grow in intimacy with God as a follower of Christ. In ten months, this small-group program can help transform leaders of practical church ministry into confident spiritual leaders who desire to find new life in service and ministry.

Revive is comprised of an opening and closing retreat and three six-week modules:

- Module 1: Communicating with God
- Module 2: Engaging in Scripture
- Module 3: Called for Ministry

The program can be run over a year beginning in the fall or the new year, or the modules can serve as separate workshops. The program is most effective when there is consistent membership in the small group for a ten-month period.

WHO IS A LAY LEADER?

A lay leader is anyone who holds a church office, oversees a ministry, or has fiduciary responsibility for finance, property, or human resources. Usually a leader holds a medium or high level of screening associated with safe church protocols. Leaders include wardens, vestry members, property and finance officers, committee chairs, church school teachers, youth ministers, pastoral visitors, and liturgical ministers.

WHO IS THE FACILITATOR?

The facilitator of the program is a minister of the church who is leading the small-group sessions. We have purposefully used the word minister as a signal that the person can be ordained or lay. The facilitators do not have to be a spiritual saint or a master spiritual director, but they must be intentional about their own spiritual growth and open to a relational connection with God. It is advantageous for a minister to have a spiritual director (or be one) as it serves as a model for commitment to spiritual growth.

VIDEO OR LIVE PRESENTATIONS

Each session takes two hours and includes at least one presentation from a prepared video or a live talk from the facilitator. Notes are available to help guide the facilitator's talk. The videos



PARTICIPANTS:

- Learn about themselves and discern their life's calling
 - Explore their faith journey and enter into a relationship with God
 - Enjoy a sense of community and deepened relationships with peers
 - Gain confidence with prayer, scripture, and spiritual leadership
 - Discern gifts for their calling to serve God's world
-

Course Overview

are optional and only available to help provide the content and make the program easy to lead so that the facilitator can attend to hospitality, group dynamics, and facilitating discussions.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Participants observe the facilitator model a spiritual practice and are then given practical, hands-on experience with the practice. They then reflect on their experience of the new practice within the supportive small group. Each week participants are encouraged to continue experimenting with the new concepts and journal about their reflections.

OPENING AND CLOSING RETREATS

The opening and closing retreats take an evening and a day (e.g. Friday and Saturday) and are most effective when they are scheduled as closely as possible to the running of the modules. The retreats can be held at the church or at a retreat facility that is within reasonable driving distance. Participants can return to their homes on Friday evening or arrangements can be made for them to stay overnight. Saturday lunch can be a simple sandwich and fruit meal.

If the Friday and Saturday time slots are impossible, then here are two other options:

1. All-day Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (cut out the worship and make storytelling shorter by using smaller breakout groups and turn the spiritual preferences exercise into homework)
2. Two nights from 6 to 9:30 p.m. (cut out worship and focus on storytelling and turn the spiritual preferences exercise into homework).

WELCOME AND HOSPITALITY

It is important to create a warm and accepting environment within the small group so that the participants feel they are welcome and in a safe place for spiritual growth. Beginning the retreat with an opening meal or incorporating light refreshments will help the group connect and deepen. Decorating a center table with candles, flowers, or a display of sacred items is a lovely way to communicate gratitude for the participants' commitment to the program and their ministry.

PROGRAM COSTS

Along with the one-time cost of the *Revive* curriculum, the program costs include covering the expenses for craft supplies, light refreshments, and the Saturday midday meal for both the opening and closing retreats. If the participants do not purchase their own Participant Guide, then purchasing or weekly photocopying the Participant Guide for each participant will need to be covered.



TYPICAL SESSION AGENDA

- Welcome and Opening Prayer
 - Check-in and Reflection on Previous Week's Practice
 - Presentation
 - Group Discussion and Exercise
 - Closing Prayer
-

Preparation and Timeline

BY INVITATION

Lay leaders are invited by their minister to be part of *Revive*. The minister identifies leaders—or upcoming leaders—and sends them an invitation letter that is then followed up with an email. A sample Invitation letter and follow-up email is provided at the end of the Course Overview. The invitation letter establishes the date, time, and location of the retreat and sessions.

REGISTRATION AND GROUP SIZE

Registration is managed in advance and on a first-come, first-served basis to a maximum of 12 participants. It is important to cap the number of participants at 12 as the small-group process becomes more challenging for the facilitator as the group grows in size. Participants are encouraged to attend all sessions to enable the group to grow in trust. The whole group meets together at the beginning of the session for the presentation, then in small breakout groups, ranging in size from two to six, to try out a spiritual practice or for more in-depth discussion. The entire group then comes back together for discussion.

FACILITATION

The program is easy to facilitate. Videos cover the primary content. The minister/facilitator should read the session material at least one week before it is implemented to become familiar with and try out the spiritual practice. Sessions will often require additional materials, so it is important to prepare well in advance. The videos are about ten minutes each and cover the primary content, but the facilitator is encouraged to include personal anecdotes that are illustrative and do not distract from the focus of the topic. The facilitator should not participate in the breakout discussions but rather should allow the participants to work through the process and build confidence in their own reflections and abilities. If facilitators choose not to use the video and instead give live presentations, they should read the facilitator guide thoroughly. It is important to take a few minutes at the beginning of the session, before the participants begin to arrive, for personal prayer.



THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FACILITATOR ARE TO:

- Identify and invite lay leaders
- Prepare the meeting room and offer hospitality
- Read the weekly session content, acquire materials
- Undertake the spiritual practice during the week
- Model the spiritual practice
- Monitor group dynamics while facilitating discussion
- Encourage and mentor spiritual growth

Course Overview

CO-FACILITATION

Having two facilitators can be advantageous for modeling different spiritual strengths and preferences and for sharing responsibilities. If you choose to co-facilitate, it will be important to arrange, ahead of time, leadership responsibilities and meeting logistics.

TIMELINE *(assuming a fall start-up for the ten-month program)*

Week 1 (Mid Aug.)	Letter invitation, followed by an email, is sent Registration begins
Week 8 (Early Oct.)	Registration ends Opening Retreat: Introduction and Overview is held
Week 9 (Early Oct.)	Module 1: Communicating with God begins
Week 14 (Mid Nov.)	Module 1: Ends
Week 23 (Mid Jan.)	Module 2: Engaging in Scripture begins
Week 28 (Early March)	Module 2: Ends
Week 35 (Mid April)	Module 3: Called for Ministry begins
Week 41 (Late May)	Module 3: Ends
Week 42 (Early June)	Closing Retreat: My Next Steps

SMALL GROUP COMMITMENT

It is essential that a trusting and safe environment be established in the group in order to facilitate spiritual growth. The Small Group Commitment should be reviewed carefully and then signed to reinforce the significance of committing to a standard of behavior within the group. Participants keep their signed copy of the Commitment. It will be important for the facilitator to model and encourage the Commitment values such as using “I” statements when offering personal opinion and keeping comments succinct.

ROOM SET-UP AND MATERIALS

The meeting room should be in a private setting where conversation will not be overheard or interrupted by other groups or church activities. The room should be large enough to accommodate the group size (maximum twelve participants) and efforts should be made to make the room warm and inviting. The room should be ready at least fifteen minutes before start time. Refreshments or a light snack may be provided. Chairs should be placed in a circle with a central table for displaying flowers or sacred objects. A screen and a projector or TV will be needed in order to show the videos. Name tags should be available, especially for the first few weeks as participants are getting to know each other. Copies of handouts and Bibles should be readily available.

PARTICIPANT GUIDE

Each participant should have a Participant Guide. The guide contains background information, instructions for how to do the spiritual practice, relevant scripture passages, questions for consideration, and space for notes. The Participant Guide can be purchased by the church or by the participant at www.forwardmovement.org. The Participant Guide can also be photocopied and placed into a binder.

HOMEWORK

Each week includes a modest homework assignment that usually involves trying out a particular spiritual practice a few times and reflecting on the experience in the Participant Guide. The use of stickers is an effective way to encourage participants to complete the homework and support their effort to spiritually grow. Any kind of sticker will work; you can find a wide variety at most craft or office supply stores.

FEEDBACK

We are always looking to grow and so your comments, thoughts, and reflections are invaluable. Please send your feedback to revive@forwardmovement.org. You will be helping *Revive* be more effective for others.



FACILITATOR CHECKLIST

- Book the room
 - Make arrangements for displaying the video
 - Set up the room with chairs, table, candles, flowers
 - Read the session
 - Make sure there are enough copies of the Participant Guide for each member
 - Get copies of handouts, nametags, pencils, Bibles
 - Do the spiritual practice at least once
-

Course Overview

ABOUT FORWARD MOVEMENT

Forward Movement inspires disciples and empowers evangelists. Our mission is to support you in your spiritual journey, to help you grow as a follower of Jesus Christ. We live out our ministry by publishing books, daily reflections, studies for small groups, and online resources, as well as by hosting conferences for formation and mission. Other ministries of Forward Movement include RenewalWorks, which helps transform congregations by inviting them to reflect on their spiritual vitality, and ChurchNext, which offers online courses for spiritual growth for individuals and congregations. Our daily devotional, *Forward Day by Day*, is read by Christians around the world and is also available in Spanish (*Adelante Día a Día*) and Braille, online, as a podcast, and as an app for your smartphones or tablets. We donate nearly 30,000 copies each quarter to prisons, hospitals, and nursing homes. We actively seek partners across the church and look for ways to provide resources that inspire and challenge.

A ministry of the Episcopal Church for more than eighty years, Forward Movement is a nonprofit organization funded by sales of resources and gifts from generous donors.

To learn more about Forward Movement and its resources, please visit www.ForwardMovement.org. We are delighted to be doing this work and invite your prayers and support.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

This program was developed by the Rev. Canon Dawn Davis, an Anglican priest with more than thirty years experience in a variety of parish and diocesan leadership positions. For ten years, she was director of ministry resources in the Diocese of Toronto and was a certified human resources professional specializing in training and development. She recently earned her doctorate in ministry from Tyndale College University in spiritual formation.

What Is Prayer?

ACTIVITIES

- Reflect on earliest memories of prayer
- Establish that prayer can be challenging for everyone
- Define prayer

“ You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you. ”

– Saint Augustine of Hippo

WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

The facilitator calls the group together, welcomes everyone, states the activities of the session, and then opens with prayer.



Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, you know our necessities before we ask and our ignorance in asking: Have compassion on our weakness, and mercifully give us those things which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask; through the worthiness of your son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

– The Book of Common Prayer

CHECK-IN AND ICEBREAKER (10 min)

The facilitator does a quick check-in with the question, “How is it with your soul?”

The facilitator asks the group to reflect on the questions:

- How do you define prayer?
- When do you most often find yourself praying?
- What is the focus of your prayers?

Presentation



Start Video 1A: *What is Prayer* (10 min) or the facilitator presents from content below.

WHAT IS PRAYER?

Most churchgoers report that they are dissatisfied with their prayer life. They know prayer is important, but they have difficulty finding the time to pray—and when they do, they are uncertain they are doing it right. And then there is the question about why some prayers seem to go unanswered. This sense of dissatisfaction with the fundamental spiritual practice of prayer runs across all denominations, ages, and genders, for both lay and ordained (Ellis Research Survey, “Facts & Trends” 5/6/05). Why is something that is so central to the Christian life so confounding?

Perhaps it starts with the fact that when we pray, we are engaging with none other than the God of heaven and earth. When we pray we come up against the power, majesty, and might of an omnipotent God. When this happens, our masks and pretenses fall away. This can be profoundly humbling as we become aware of our relative limitations and powerlessness. Feeling inadequate before God seems to be a consistent dynamic. However, this same God reaches out to lift us up and empowers us to be in a relationship. As Jesus said, “I do not call you servants any longer...but I have called you friends” (John 15:15).

Secondly, for a long time, prayer was assumed to be the purview of the religious elite. Monks and nuns were set apart so that they could have the space and time to pray. Consequently, a vast treasure trove of prayer practices, developed over the centuries, has remained largely hidden from the mainstream church life and teaching.

Thirdly, we thought that by simply attending worship services the ability to pray would rub off. This assumption has left many with inadequate support and training. As a result, many people end up relying on the limited prayer teaching they received as children. But remember, even the disciples needed training from Jesus on how to pray. That’s how we received the Lord’s Prayer.

For many, the spiritual life is private and personal, so what happens in prayer is not frequently a topic of discussion. Most clergy are more comfortable asking about parishioners’ family dynamics than their spiritual experiences.

On top of all this, we live in an action, goal-oriented culture that rewards accomplishment and tends to devalue things that are not easily seen or measured, like spirituality and prayer.

All these factors contribute to a culture where we are busy *doing* ministry, while *being* in God's presence has long been sidelined.

Perhaps a good place to begin is to define what we mean by prayer. There are a lot of opinions about this but for the purposes of this program, we define prayer as communicating with God. It is entering into a spiritual conversation. As with all good and healthy communication, prayer helps develop intimacy with God and arises out of a relationship with God.

Martin L. Smith, an Anglican monk, wrote a wonderful book on prayer, *The Word Is Very Near You*. In his chapter entitled "God Is a Conversation," he observes that we do not initiate prayer. Instead, we are invited to join a conversation that is already underway between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Many of us were taught as children to kneel by the bed at the end of the day, fold our hands, close our eyes, and recite something like: "Now I lay me down to sleep...." Then we likely listed a litany of family members to bless until our parents had enough of the delay tactic. This was the full extent of prayer training for today's leaders of the church! As we have matured and our world has become more complex, our spiritual resources may not have grown with us.

Over the next six weeks, you will be introduced to at least ten different prayer practices. Some will fill you with unexpected joy while others may leave you bone cold. The great surprise is that the person next to you may have the opposite reaction. People respond differently to different prayer practices. Throughout the program, record your responses to these practices so you are constructing a prayer life that is tailored to your preferences and situation. In doing this experimentation and discernment, you will be responding to God's unique handiwork within you and Jesus' invitation to be part of the conversation.

Please take a few minutes now and offer your reflections on the statement: "Prayer is communication with God." Ask:

- What is the difference between saying prayers to God and being in a relationship with God?
- If prayer is communication, what proportion of the conversation do you spend talking and what portion do you spend listening?
- Seeing prayer as communication, what are all the ways you can communicate with God?

May you find your place in God's ongoing conversation.



Stop Video

DISCUSSION (40 min)

The facilitator forms breakout groups or facilitates a large-group discussion as participants reflect on:

- Prayer as communication with God.
- What is the difference between saying prayers to God and being in a relationship with God?
- If prayer is communication, what portion of the conversation should you spend speaking and what portion should you spend listening?
- Seeing prayer as communication, what are some of the ways you can communicate with God?

The facilitator then asks the group to list all the ways people communicate with God. Here are various forms and types of prayers the group might consider:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collects • blessings • hymns, song, canticles • litany • daily office • meditation • contemplation • centering • examen • praying with scripture • prayers • <i>lectio divina</i> • journaling • dance • yoga • body prayers • labyrinth • prayer walks/pilgrimage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fasting • anointing with oil using a home altar rosary and prayer beads icons • Lord’s Prayer • conversations w/friends • table grace • visual art • stained glass or painting • through sacrifice • stations of the cross • vigil • through architecture • arrow prayers • extemporaneous/public prayer • others... |
|---|---|



RESOURCES

- *The Book of Common Prayer* (Church Publishing)
- *Saint Augustine’s Prayer Book* (Forward Movement, 2014)
- *The Word is Very Near You: A Guide to Praying with Scripture* by Martin L. Smith (Cowley, 1989)
- *The Practice of Prayer*, Margaret Guenther (Cowley, 1998)
- *Prayer: Finding the Heart’s True Home* by Richard Foster (Zondervan, 2002)
- *How to Pray: Alone, With Others, At Any Time in Any Place*, Stephen Cottrell, (Church House Publishing, 2011)
- *Practicing our Faith* by Dorothy Bass (Jossey-Bass, 2010)
- *The Path to Your Door: Approaches to Christian Spirituality* by Ellen Clark-King (Continuum 2011)

“ Deep calls to deep. ”

– Psalm 42:7

Let Us Pray

ACTIVITIES

- Learn about, see modeled, experience, and reflect on the Everyday Prayer
- Commit to praying the Everyday Prayer at least three times the following week

“ But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, ‘Where are you?’ ”

- Genesis 3:9

PREPARATION LIST

In addition to the list included in the Course Overview

- Paper and pencils/pens

ICEBREAKER (10 min)

The facilitator asks the group to reflect on the questions:

- Who taught you to pray?
- What were you taught to do and say, when you prayed?
- What were the first prayers you learned?

Presentation



Start Video 1B: *Let Us Pray* (10 min) or the facilitator presents from content below.

LET US PRAY

Many of us have never prayed in front of other people except silently during Sunday worship. Fewer still have led prayer, out loud, in public. Many perceive prayer as a very private and personal activity so the thought of praying with others seems awkward at first. But in this session, we are going to pray together. It will be important to respect each other's privacy and to create a safe space in which to learn and experience God's presence.

Let's assume the immediate area around each person is a private prayer space. The Jewish tradition was to draw a prayer shawl over the head to mark private space for prayer. Perhaps you might imagine such a shawl over your body and those of your peers.

We will commit to honor each other's personal space of prayer by either closing or lowering our eyes to the floor when we pray. When we are finished praying or if we find we can't pray for some reason, then we will keep our eyes lowered until the prayer is concluded with "Amen." Then (and only then) will we lift our eyes and rejoin the community space. This will make it easier for us to comfortably enter into prayer with others around us.

Today we are going to learn how to pray the Everyday Prayer. This is a form of prayer that we can use anytime, anywhere—hence, the name Everyday Prayer. It contains many of the common elements we find in most traditional prayer forms.

PRESENCE

To begin, it is important to settle yourself so as to make the mental, physical, and emotional shift needed for communicating with God in prayer. As the psalmist says, "deep speaks to deep." Sit comfortably, with good posture and with both feet on the floor. Let your hands rest on your legs, palms down or up, as desired. You might want to experiment with both ways over the next few weeks. Relax your body and be aware of any feelings of apprehension, tension, excitement, contentedness, or other emotions.

Do a body scan and be aware of how your body feels. Relax the muscles of your face and let your shoulders fall. Drop your gaze to the floor or gently close your eyes. Now take five deep, slow breaths. Be mindful of your breathing. Shift your mental focus to God. Still your thoughts and bask in God's peace. Continue to breathe deeply and slowly. Stay present to this moment.

THANKFULNESS

Begin with thankfulness. Recall something you are thankful for. Perhaps you are thankful for family members who love you, the food you enjoy daily, or the beauty that surrounds you. More and more, psychologists extol the benefits of gratitude in improving everything from physical health and sleep patterns to emotional resiliency. Perhaps they are catching on to what the faith traditions have known throughout the ages.

“Prayer should be the key of the day and the lock of the night.”

– George Herbert, 16th century Anglican priest

There are times when it is difficult to find something to be thankful for. Like Jesus, we wonder why we have been forsaken. In these dark moments, sometimes we can only give thanks for the promise God has given us to be present.

ASK

The technical term for this is petition. Recall something you need help with or that you are concerned about. Ask God for that which is on your heart.

FORGIVENESS

This is called contrition. Recall that for which you are sorry and are holding onto in your heart. Offer it to God.

LISTEN

Now just listen. Simply be open and receptive to God as you sit in silence for a moment. For some, this can be the most difficult part of prayer. Focus on being still and attentive to God communicating with you.

END

Amen. Lift your eyes and slowly come back to the group.



If possible, ask participants to record their thoughts, feelings, impressions, insights, and experiences.

It is so valuable to reflect upon the spiritual experiences you have during your prayer time. Consider this question: How long do you think this type of prayer will take you each day? Three minutes? Five? Can you find three to five minutes in your day for this kind of prayer? It is always available to you and allows you to connect quickly with Jesus.

Anne Lamott, a funny and wise Christian writer, has said that we only need to know four words to pray: Wow! Thanks. Sorry. Help. Her insight overlaps with the traditional Anglican teaching of ACTS: adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication. The Everyday Prayer includes these elements but also invites silence and listening.

Now it is your turn. Your minister is going to lead you through the Everyday Prayer. May you be richly blessed by God's grace in prayer.



Stop Video

PRAYER MODELING (15 min)

The facilitator leads the participants through the Everyday Prayer using the Everyday Guided Prayer sheet (included at end of this session).

JOURNAL

Record in your journal or Participant Guide your reflections and experiences that have come from this prayer format.

DISCUSSION (15 min)

The facilitator forms breakout groups or facilitates a large-group discussion as participants reflect on:

- How was this prayer for you? Describe the experience.
- Did you feel like you connected with God? Describe the experience.
- What did you become aware of?

HOMEWORK

During the week, your homework is to set aside some time to try out the Everyday Prayer or the *Examen* from the Opening Retreat. Start with five to ten minutes, three times this week. Find a time that works best for you. Perhaps it is in the morning or last thing at night; maybe it's at lunch hour or while driving in the car or sitting on the train during a commute. If possible, record your thoughts and reflections. If you can do this, your minister has a special treat for you.



RESOURCES

- *Forward Day by Day* (Forward Movement)
- *St. Augustine's Prayer Book* (Forward Movement, 2014)
- *Walk in Love: Episcopal Beliefs & Practices* by Scott Gunn and Melody Wilson Shobe (Forward Movement, 2018)
- *Prayers for All Occasions* (Forward Movement, 2013)



CLOSING PRAYER

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings with your most gracious favor, and further us with your continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy Name, and finally, by your mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

- The Book of Common Prayer

Everyday Prayer Guide

PRESENCE

- Settle yourself. Make sure you are comfortable and sitting with good posture. Put both feet on the floor. Let your hands rest on your legs, palms down or up, as you desire. Relax your body and do a body scan. Be aware of your body and how it is feeling. Relax your muscles, especially those around your face and shoulders.
- Drop your gaze to the floor or gently close your eyes.
- Now be mindful of your breathing. Take five deep, slow breaths.
- Shift your mental focus to God. As much as you are able, still your thoughts. Let distracting thoughts and noises simply drift away. Continue to breathe deeply and slowly as you rest in God's peace. Silence (30 seconds at least).

THANKFULNESS

Recall one thing you are thankful for. Silence (30 seconds at least).

ASK

Recall one thing you need help with or that you are concerned about. Ask God for that which is on your heart. Silence (30 seconds at least).

FORGIVENESS

Recall that for which you are sorry and are holding onto in your heart. Offer it to God. Silence (30 seconds at least).

LISTEN

Now just listen. Simply be open to God as we sit in silence for a moment. Silence (30 seconds at least).

END

Amen.

Pause. Now lift your eyes and slowly come back to the group.