

# A time to reach out

## Postcard Prayers

Choose a piece of postcard paper and write your own postcard prayer to someone you may or may not know.

Write them the message you think they most need to hear. Write them the prayer that you have for them and their life. You may wish to give the card to someone at the conference or mail it to a friend...or leave it somewhere for a stranger to find.

reach out in love

# a time for the cross

Spend some time looking at the crosses on the table.

Choose the one you are drawn to and hold it in your hand or focus on it.

Reflect on:

What message does this symbol bring to your life?

What message does this symbol bring the world?

How does the cross sustain your life? Your ministry?

What are ways that you could remember the message of the cross in your own life?

# A time to breathe

The word Yahweh, which is the Hebrew word for God, was created to use the least effort in the speaking of it. Yah-weh, two simple syllables.

Sit quietly and close your eyes.

Breathe deeply and slowly into your belly, filling your body with breath.

When you breathe in, say the word **yah** within your breath; when you breathe out, say the word **weh** within your breath.

Breathe in the very name of God. Continue this breath meditation for as long as you wish.

The breath of God has made me;  
the breath of God gives me life.

# A Time for Light

## Candle Prayer

Sit comfortably with the candle before you.

Spend some time focusing on the candle.

Breathe deeply into the stillness  
of this moment.

Focus on the energy and movement  
of the flame.

Repeat a phrase you make up or the one  
below:

“God, your light sustains me.”

Repeat this phrase over and over quietly as you seek to understand the constant moving energy of God’s presence in your life and the Light of God that sustains you.

# Praying with all that we are

## Body Prayer

Say the following words aloud or in your mind as you make these gestures. This is a way to pray with the whole body.

### God who creates us

*Extend your arms and draw a large circle by crossing your arms in front of your body and over your head until your arms are stretched out wide*

### Through Jesus calls us

*Keep your arms in the cruciform position*

### Embraced by the spirit

*Embrace yourself*

### Out into the world

*Extend your arms forward and outward*

Offer this prayer as many times as you wish;  
then say “Amen” either silently or aloud.

# Praying with all that we are

## Body Prayer

Say the following words aloud or in your mind as you make these gestures. This is a way to pray with the whole body.

From the dust of the earth

*Bend down to touch the ground (knee bending is fine, depending on flexibility)*

To the heights of the sky

*Straighten up and extend your arms upwards*

To walk with each other

*Extend your arms outwards slightly from your sides (as if to touch another person)*

God calls us to life

*Arms extended forwards*

Offer this prayer as many times as you wish;  
then say "Amen" either silently or aloud.

# There is a time for everything...

Look at the clock and read the inscription.

Is there time in your life...

For prayer?

For worship?

For caring for yourself?

For caring for those you love?

How might God be calling you to use this precious gift of time?

What do you most need to make time for right now?

Offer a prayer giving thanks for the gift of time.

Pray for wisdom in using your time so that you may be well – physically, emotionally and spiritually.

# Bringing light to the world...

Look at the map of the world.

Remember the words of Jesus:

“You are the light of the world.”

Consider those places in the world which need light.

Place a candle there.

Offer a silent prayer asking God to bring light where it is needed most.

Consider how you might bring light to those places.

Ask God to help you.

“Let your light so shine before others...”

## Hearts of stone

Think about someone you find difficult to love...



Someone who has let you down

Someone who has been unkind

Someone who has betrayed your trust

Pick up a rock and hold it in your hand.

Feel its hardness.

Ask God to help you to let go of the anger, hurt, pain, disappointment; whatever it is you feel towards this person.

Pray for this person.

If/when you are ready, place the rock in the water and feel its weight leave your hand.

Ask God for whatever it is you need (courage; trust) to move into the future without being weighed down by the heaviness of these feelings or this relationship.

## Claiming our belovedness

Spend a few moments before the icon of Mary and the infant Jesus.

Notice how closely the child is being held. He is beloved.

Now notice Mary's eyes. She is not looking at the child.

She is looking at you. You are beloved, too.

Hear the words spoken at Jesus' baptism:

"You are my beloved child. With you I am well pleased."

Hear these words spoken for you.

Ponder them in your heart...

Cherish them...

# Fruit of the Spirit

For the fruit of the Spirit is...

Love                  Joy                  Peace

Patience          Kindness          Generosity

Faithfulness          Gentleness

Self-Control

Which of these is abounding in your life?

Which is lacking?

Take a prayer stone.

Consider which quality you need most  
in your life right now.

Write that on the stone. Carry it with you.

Ask God for the growth you need.

# A Time to be Blest by Water

Water is an ancient thing.

The source of all our lives.

Water is a sacred gift  
from the creator of the universe.

Water sustains us, baptizes us,  
cleanses us, gives life.

Notice the water in the bowl.

Put some water on your hand  
or on your forehead,  
blessing yourself with this life-giving gift.

As you bless yourself,  
ponder what living water you need  
as you leave this place today.

# A Time to Reflect

This practice is adapted from the Ignatian Examen, a practice of reflection on the day past.

Be still.

Recall that you are in the presence of God.

Give gratitude for the day whatever it has been.

Review your day and notice your actions and being in the world on this day,

noticing the places in the day

where you felt God near

and noticing the places in the day

of feeling apart from God.

To end, give thanks for the day whatever it has been.

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# The Grass Withers

# The Flower Fades...

Look at the peonies near you.

Some are in full flower.

Some have already begun to die.

Some have gone to seed.

Yet some have not yet opened.

What parts of your life resemble the peonies?

What is coming to flower?

What is dying?

What is lying dormant, waiting to be reborn?

Thank God for the diversity of your life experience.

Thank God for the peonies and what they can teach you.

## Merton's Prayer

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going.

I do not see the road ahead of me.

I cannot know for certain where it will end.

Nor do I really know myself,

and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so.

But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you.

And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.

I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.

And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it.

Therefore I will trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.

I will not fear, for you are ever with me,

and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

*(Thoughts 51)*

Sometimes our light goes out but is blown into flame by another human being. Each of us owes deepest thanks to those who have rekindled this light.

Albert Schweitzer



# Living Water

Water is an ancient thing.

The source of all our lives.

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from the creator of the universe.

Water sustains us, baptizes us,  
cleanses us, gives life.

Recall the story of Jesus  
and the Samaritan woman at the well.

She asked: "Where do you get that living water?"

What about you?

Where do you get that living water?

What is the "living water" that sustains your life?

What "living water" do you need for today?

# A Time to Remember & Give Thanks

Remember the story of Mary visiting her cousin Elizabeth. Paul giving thanks...

Who has been a source of encouragement and strength for you?

Who reminds you that you are blessed?

Light a candle for someone

who has graced your life.

Offer words of gratitude to God

for that person and for their life

as you light a candle in their name.

# With Fear and Trepidation

Rossetti paints the Annunciation scene with Mary drawn back on a corner of her bed, looking frightened at the prospect of becoming the mother of our Lord. In other paintings, Mary looks calm and serene, often kneeling in prayer.

Which Mary do you identify with?

Have you known this kind of fear in saying “yes” to God?