

Interactive Lenten Prayers

Notes on Interactive Prayer

- These may be used in worship or during another time of prayer.
- They may also be set up in a special prayer room for use throughout the season of Lent as a “Prayer Installation.”
- In order to generate more interest and participation, I highly recommend giving all the instructions for prayer during worship or other large group gathering, and passing out some of the materials to every person. For example, with the sackcloth prayer wreath, you may give every person a small tag on which to write a prayer, and then leave the other materials at the station.
- You may provide time during worship to participate in the interactive prayer stations - perhaps even a whole service! This is a great way to structure an Ash Wednesday service –just make sure to include the imposition of ashes as a prayer station.
- The prayer stations can also be set up in a children’s worship area in the sanctuary for use by families during worship.

Sackcloth Prayer Wreath

Preparation – Make Burlap Wreath – (check out this video from YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EOVJOxmuB-g> – it includes instructions and materials),

You will also need chalk, ribbon, and small paper tags on which to write the prayers. I bought gifts tags and small chalk board clips at my local craft store.

Instructions for Prayer:

- Use the chalk as dust to draw a symbol, word, or name on the purple circles.
- You may tie your prayer to the sackcloth wreath, or leave it in the center and we will tie it.
- The prayers – *help, heal, forgive, and come* – are there to give you an idea of Lenten prayers, but there are many ways to pray.
- Pray with humility, honesty, and hope.

Prayer Ribbons

Preparation – Make Prayer Ribbons - You will need short (about 12”) dowel sticks, wide purple ribbon, and a hot glue gun. Cut the ribbon in lengths of about 2.5 – 3 feet. Place the ribbon perpendicular to the dowel and draw a vertical line of hot glue on the dowel that is the width of the ribbon. Place one end of the ribbon on the glue and let dry. Once the glue is dry, wrap the ribbon around the end of the dowel one time, and use the hot glue to secure it a second time. You may also use a staple gun to secure the ribbon.

Instructions for Prayer:

- Write or draw your prayers on the ribbons. When you move them during the songs, imagine your prayers going up to God.

Chalk Board Confession

Preparation – You will need a chalkboard (may be fixed to the wall or placed on floor/table). You will also need chalk and erasers. I decorated my erasers with cross stickers to symbolize Jesus. This prayer station would also work with a whiteboard, but I prefer the feeling of the dusty chalk during Lent.

Instructions for Prayer:

We all make mistakes. Sometimes our mistakes hurt other people or make them feel bad.

- Use the chalk to write or draw things you feel sorry about.

God always forgives us, but talking to God helps us learn how to be better and fix our mistakes.

- Decorate the erasers with stickers about God's love and forgiveness.
- Finally, erase your mistakes with God's help.

Variation on this station – Use individual chalk boards and have each person wash their board in the baptismal font instead of using an eraser. You can buy very small chalk boards that are used as tags or place cards at many craft stores. This is an inexpensive way to give everyone in worship a “chalkboard confession” experience.

The Sign of the Cross

Preparation – Gather crosses from around your church or from your congregation. Place them on a table along with flameless candles (or real candles if using with only 12yrs and up).

Instructions for Prayer:

Look at the crosses on the table. This is a symbol for Jesus. When we see the cross, we remember that God's love is stronger than EVERYTHING! You are God's child. When you wear a cross on your clothing, on your jewelry, or even on your skin, you are saying “I belong to God.” You may light the flameless candles to remember God's love, and to pray for people who need to feel God's love.

Variations on this station

- Include a poster board and finger paint so that people can make the sign of the cross.
- Set up a standing mirror (on a wall, or use one with an A-Frame). Have people use a whiteboard marker to make the sign of the cross on their own forehead in the mirror. They may say the words. “You belong to God” as they draw the cross.

Prayer Loom

Preparation – Use burlap twine to create a loom in your sanctuary or prayer room. Use the legs of a table (maybe even the communion table) or two other upright rods. Wrap the burlap twine tightly around the legs to create horizontal lines about 1 inch apart.

You will also need strips of paper, each about one inch wide. Varying colors within the same palette works well (like purples and blues). You may also use different colors for each week.

During Holy Week (before Easter) you will remove the looms and take the paper strip prayers out. Use Spray adhesive to glue the strips onto two sheets of poster board. Cut a butterfly wing shape out of each poster board. Use a third strip of poster board (or a piece of wood) to be the butterfly's body. Attached the two wings and hang in your worship space for Easter.

Instructions for prayer –

Our prayers are the fabric of our community. As we pray for ourselves and for the world, we weave our trust, faith, and hope into our lives. We are knit together into the body of Christ, the church.

Write your prayers on the paper strips then bring them to the prayer loom and weave them into the binding threads of the loom. As you do, remember that you are offering your prayers to God. Your prayers join those of your sisters and brothers in Christ to create the fabric of our faith.

On Easter

Remember to note that our prayers have been transformed into a butterfly, and ancient symbol of resurrection and new life. Just as the butterfly is completely changed into a new creation, so are we – as a community – transformed into the body of Christ.

*The idea for the prayer loom and butterfly is from Rev. Emily Owen.