# Prayer Labyrinth

## 1. Awareness Examen[1]

The purpose of this exercise is to become more aware of the Holy Spirit and for us to become more fully present in our relationships. Over time, as you reflect on these questions, you will become better attuned to the movement of the Holy Spirit in your life.

**Take a moment to reflect on and answer the following questions:**

*For what moment am I most grateful today?*

*For what moment am I least grateful today?*

Pray about both

## 2. Identify your major distraction in prayer

What is a hindrance or distraction for you in prayer?

Can't sit still

Fall asleep

Put other things first

Never learned how to pray

Holding on to a hurt from the past, or an unanswered prayer

Mind keeps turning to something else—what specifically?

Other

Center your thoughts on God, on Jesus, and ask Him to clear your mind of whatever is hindering or distracting you

## 3. As you sit in the Circle of Thanksgiving

Think of all the things you want to praise God for and thank him for.

*Colossians 2:6-7, So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness (NIV)*

Think of things you longed for and prayed for which God blessed you to have or accomplish or enjoy. Thank Him for his bountiful blessings.

## 4. Scripture Reading and Meditation

Read one of the four passages on a card on the table or choose your own. Slowly read through the passage of scripture and meditate on its meaning. Allow God to speak to you.

Pray after the reading and meditation.

One way is to turn the scripture itself into a prayer. For example—turn Romans 8:26-27 into a prayer: *Lord, thank you for your Holy Spirit. He helps us in our weakness. Thank you, Father, that your own Spirit intercedes for us in ways that surpass words. That reassures me, and comforts me. I praise you Lord.*

## 5. Washing feet (we are not actually washing feet, but meditating the meaning)

Jesus washed the disciples' feet the very night he was betrayed and arrested, knowing his suffering was coming. Pray about what it means for you today.

If you want to, read the passage to remember the story.

*John 13:1-17, Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. 2 During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, 3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, 4 rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around* his

[1] Adapted from Mark Yaconelli's *Contemplative Youth Ministry: Practicing the presence of Jesus*

*waist. 5 Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. 6 He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" 7 Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." 8 Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." 9 Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" 10 Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you." 11 For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."*

*12 When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? 13 You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. 16 Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. (ESV)*

## 6. Communion as Jesus gave it to us to remember:

Slowly read this scripture: When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, *"I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God." And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed, but woe to that man who betrays him." They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this. Also, a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. (Luke 22:14-25 NIV)*

Take some bread and a cup of juice, and pray as you eat and drink:

Jesus, we see you in the bread and in the cup, your love, your sacrifice for us. We, like the disciples, want to understand, to let you fill us completely, to become your body on earth. But we, like them, are selfish, thinking about ourselves and the success and status we long for. We are also fearful that we might betray you by not representing you to the world. Forgive us, cleanse us, mold us into your image.

O Jesus, let us see you in the bread and the cup as we eat and drink. Let us be eager to eat and drink with you and with our brothers and sisters every time we share this meal. May we always remember this last meal with your disciples and the special meaning you gave to it.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

## 7. Garden of Gethsemane

Slowly read this passage of Scripture:

*He walked away, about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." Then an angel from heaven appeared and strengthened him. He prayed more fervently, and he was in such agony of spirit that his sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood. At last he stood up again and returned to the disciples, only to find them asleep, exhausted from grief. "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation." (Luke 22:41-46 NLT)*

Pray and surrender to the Father's will. Seek the strength which Jesus received in prayer.

Pray for strength in the time of our trials.

Pray to stay awake to the devil's schemes, and not to enter into temptation.

## 8. Crown of thorns, whip, purple robe

*Mark 15:15-20, So to pacify the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip, then turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified. 16 The soldiers took Jesus into the courtyard of the governor's headquarters (called the Praetorium) and called out the entire regiment. 17 They dressed him in a purple robe, and they wove thorn branches into a crown and put it on his head. 18 Then they saluted him and taunted, "Hail! King of the Jews!" 19 And they struck him on the head with a reed stick, spit on him, and dropped to their knees in mock worship. 20 When they were finally tired of mocking him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him again. Then they led him away to be crucified.*

Think about the thorns, the flogging, the mockery of the scarlet robe. Pray and thank Jesus for what he went through for you. Take a moment to realize it was because of your sins that he did all this, and it was out of unimaginable love and grace.

## 9. At the cross, confession and forgiveness

Take a few moments to center your thoughts on Jesus. Look at the cross as you meditate

Ask God to reveal any sin in you that needs to be confessed right now.

Pray Psalm 139:23-24, *Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

Write the sin on a card, repent before God, ask for His forgiveness and for His help to overcome the sin.

Fold the card. Take a hammer and a nail and nail the card to the cross. Accept God's forgiveness. The sin is gone!

Turn Psalm 103:11-13 into a prayer of thanksgiving:

*For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;*

## 10. Resurrection

*Mark 16:4-7, But as they (the women) arrived, they looked up and saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled aside. 5 When they entered the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a white robe sitting on the right side. The women were shocked, 6 but the angel said, "Don't be alarmed. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He isn't here! He is risen from the dead! Look, this is where they laid his body. 7 Now go and tell his disciples, including Peter, that Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you before he died." (NLT)*

Imagine coming to the empty tomb. Praise and thank God for the resurrection.

Because He lives, we have hope of eternal life. Christ has conquered sin and death!!

## 11. Ascension. Live in forgiveness, clean conscience

(on the stage around a low table, kneeling for those who can)

Thank God for Jesus ascending into heaven and now seated at the right hand of God!

*Hebrews 9:14, Just think how much more the blood of Christ will purify our consciences from sinful deeds so that we can worship the living God. For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins. (10:22) Let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water. (NLT)*

Pray thanking God for forgiveness and new life. Accepting this. Allow a few moments for it to sink in that we are free of sin, loved, clean, and holy.

**12. Pray for someone in another state or country of the world, for missionaries, for places you have been on a mission trip.**

As you pray, place a glass rock on the state, country

Write the name and location on a sticky note and place it somewhere around the edge of the map

**13. Pray for our city, for a person or family, a neighborhood, workplace, or school.**

As you pray, place a glass rock on the location.

Write the name, neighborhood, school, or business on a sticky note and place it somewhere around the edge of the map

**14. Pray for the future of Holland Park Church.**

Pray for decisions about additional staff to help us believe, grow, and serve together. Thank God for the land and the facility, including the undeveloped shell, and ask the Lord to lead us to do what He wants for His glory. Pray for the elders and for all of us for wisdom and guidance and for courage to move forward.

**15. Oneness**

*John 17:20-21, "I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me through their message. 21 I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me. (NLT)*

Pray for us to be one with the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and with each other. Pray for us to love each other as Jesus loves us.

**16. Ministries**

Pray for whatever ministries come to you mind: Released Time, Mission Backpack, School Mentoring, Coffee and Muffin Drive-Thru, Women's Ministry, Forge Men's Ministry, Greeting Ministry, Adult Education, Praise Team, SALT Team, Safety Team, Small Groups, Youth Group, Children's Ministry, Marriages, Bible Classes, Prayer Ministry, Southeastern Children's Home, Triune Mercy Center, and anything else you think of.

Ask the Father to fill us with the Holy Spirit to carry out the great commission.

**17. Hindrances that slow me in carrying out God's mission**

(outside around a fire pit)

What keeps you from witnessing to others, or from participating in ministries of the church in ways you know you can and/or want to?

Write it on a card. Pray for God to remove this. As you pray, think about these scriptures.

*Romans 12:11, Don't burn out; keep yourselves fueled and aflame. Be alert servants of the Master, (MSG)*

*1 Thessalonians 5:19, Do not put out the Spirit's fire. (NIV)*

*2 Timothy 1:7, God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. (NLT)*

Throw the card in the fire and believe the Lord will work in your life to take away anything that slows us down in His mission.