

OCTOBER ROTATION UNIT 9 – PRAYERS

Rotation Objectives

- Children learn about prayer, and why it is important.
- Children learn about different ways to pray.

Weekly Kickoff Topics

- Introducing Prayer, and why it is important.
- Recap Prayer, and focus on the Lord's Prayer.
- Recap Prayer, focusing on daily prayer.
- Recap Prayer, focusing on finding your way to pray.

STATION 1 - SCIENCE

Station Overview: The children do the "elephant toothpaste" experiment as an illustration of God's overwhelming response to our prayers.

Supplies Needed:

- An empty, clear 16oz. plastic bottle for each participant
- A bowl, wide plate, or basin
- Measuring Cup
- Hydrogen Peroxide
- Liquid Dish Soap
- 1 Tablespoon, or one packet of dry yeast for each participant
- Warm water
- Food Coloring (optional)
- Small Funnel (optional)

Lesson Plan:

1. Remind the participants that we are talking about the power and importance of prayer.
2. Share with the participants that God loves to hear our prayers. And God responds to our prayers in more ways than we can even imagine. Explain that today we are going to do an experiment that will help us remember how God can respond to our prayers.
3. **SAFETY NOTES!**
 - a. **Do not play in the foam resulting from this experiment.** The hydrogen peroxide in the foam can irritate skin and eyes.
 - b. While older children can conduct this experiment, adult supervision is recommended for all elementary-age children.

- c. You may also want to conduct this experiment in a spill-safe location, such as a kitchen or outdoors.
4. Steps for the experiment:
 - a. Stand the clear bottle in the bowl, plate, or basin.
 - b. Measure 1/2 cup of hydrogen peroxide, and carefully pour it into the bottle.
 - c. Add a big squirt of dish soap into the bottle, and swirl gently to mix. Explain that this solution will represent God before he hears our prayers.
 - d. Optional step if using food dye: If you want to make your foam a single color, add a few drops of food coloring directly into the hydrogen peroxide, and swirl the bottle gently to mix. If you want to give your foam stripes like some toothpastes, put the drops along the inside rim of the bottle's mouth. Let them drip down the inside of the bottle, but do not mix.
 - e. In a measuring cup mix one tablespoon of yeast and three tablespoons of warm water. Stir for about 30 seconds. It should have the consistency of melted ice cream. Explain that this solution will represent our prayers.
 - f. Pour the yeast mixture into the bottle then quickly step back, and watch your reaction go!
 - g. Cleanup is easy, as the foam may be washed down the sink.
5. After the participants have a chance to do the experiment, ask the children how/what they think this experiment teaches us about prayer. Honor their answers. If they are young, or if they get stuck, here are some discussion points:
 - a. When we combine God and our prayers, interesting things can happen.
 - b. When we pray, God responds abundantly, giving us more blessings than we expect.
 - c. It often doesn't take much prayer to make big things happen.
 - d. Prayer is a thing of wonder. We may not understand fully how it works, but we can marvel at the results.
6. **NOTE:** For more information on the science behind the experiment, and for other ideas you can try, please visit:
<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/make-elephant-toothpaste>

STATION 2 – GAMES AND ACTION

Station Overview: The children explore different approaches to prayer and simple meditation while on a prayer walk.

Supplies Needed:

- None

Lesson Plan:

1. Remind the participants that we are talking about prayer and the importance of prayer.
2. Share that there are no limits on how you should pray, or when you should pray. People pray in lots of different ways, and every person needs to explore and find the way in which the best pray and have time with God.
3. Today we are going to go on a prayer walk, and try some different activities to help us pray along the way.
4. Start your prayer walk.
 - a. The purpose of a prayer walk is to incorporate an intentional prayer element into your thoughts as you walk. It should be a relaxed walk that allows occasional opportunities to stop as needed.
 - b. While teaching and modeling children to do a prayer walk, adults should verbalize their thoughts/prayers so the children learn how to do this.
 - c. Sometimes it is helpful for people to have something in hand (i.e.; a smooth stone, a stick/walking stick, an interesting leaf, etc.) to serve as a physical reminder or focus that the walk is centered on time with God.
 - d. Different approaches to the prayer walk may be taken:
 - i. Thankfulness: As you walk, look for things for which you are thankful. These can be direct (such as "I am thankful for this sunny day.") or indirect (such as "That birdsong reminds me I am thankful that I am learning how to play the piano.")
 - ii. Intercession: As you walk, say a prayer for the people you see as you walk. Try to make the prayer as specific as possible based on your brief observations. Some examples that may result from this activity include: "I pray that little boy who just fell off the swing is okay", or "I pray that family is surrounded by God's love", or "I pray that ambulance gets safely to the person that needs them."
 - iii. Equal Time: As you walk away from home or your vehicle, just talk to God about everything going on in your life, a problem or concern you have, the people in your life, etc. Then, when you turn around to go home, or at the halfway point of your walk, stop talking and start listening for what God might be saying to you. Pay attention to your thoughts and feelings as you walk in silence, and contemplate what the Holy Spirit is trying to share.
5. At the end of the walk, talk about your experience on the walk. What did you like about the prayer walk? How did it help you connect with God? How did the prayer walk make you feel?

STATION 3 – ARTS & CRAFTS

Station Overview: To help the children understand that our prayer time needs to be intentional and focused, the children will find elements to make a “prayer space” at their home, and will build a paper cross for their prayer table.

Supplies Needed for the Standing Paper Cross:

- Construction paper (2 different colors)
- Glue
- Scissors
- Clear scotch tape
- Pencil
- Ruler

Supplies Needed for the prayer space:

- A table or desk space
- A small piece of fabric or cloth napkin, any color
- A small candle (wax or battery-operated)
- A Bible appropriate to the age of the participants and/or printed prayers
- A Cross (see step 4 below)
- Optional: flower/artificial flower in a small vase
- Optional: a smooth stone (often helpful to pick up and use as a focus for kinesthetic learners)
- Optional: index cards with written prayer prompts for younger children (Say Thanks to God; Tell God You Love Him; Pray for Others; Ask God for Help; etc.) or short prayers and psalms for older children (i.e.; Lord’s Prayer; Psalm 23; the Birthday Prayer, etc.)

Lesson Plan:

1. Remind the participants that we are talking about the prayer and the importance of prayer.
2. Share that our prayers do not happen accidentally. We need to be intentional about taking time to talk to God and to share our life with Him.
3. Share that there are many, many ways to remember to talk to God. But today we are going to work on one way: creating a special “prayer space” in our home.
4. **Part A – Making a Standing “Rose Cross”**



- a. Help the student cut out a cross shape out of one of the pieces of construction paper. (It is easiest to fold the paper in half to ensure that the cross is symmetrical).
 - b. Use the remaining construction paper scraps to make an "edge" around the cross at least 1/2" high. Use glue and/or scotch tape to attach the pieces and keep them upright.
 - c. Cut the second color of construction paper into thin (1/2") strips. Wrap each strip tightly around the pencil to make a coiled shape. Slide the coil off the pencil to make a "rose" for the cross.
 - d. Fit the "roses" into the cross as you go to ensure that you make enough to fill up your cross. Make a few extra to have on hand in case they are needed after gluing starts.
 - e. Take the roses out of one section of the cross and carefully add some glue to the bottom. Quickly but carefully place the roses back in the cross before the glue dries.
 - f. Repeat this process for all sections of the cross until all roses are glued down. You may find that in re-positioning the roses that you end up needing more than you started with, so it would be a good idea to have a couple of extra paper roses on hand.
 - g. Stand the cross up. (Note: if the cross has trouble standing, you can tape it to a piece of cardboard, or carefully slide some coins to the bottom to help stabilize the cross.)
- 5. Part B – Preparing the Prayer Space**
- a. Remove any other items from the table/desk surface so there is an open and clean space.
 - b. Spread the colored fabric out on the table/desk. This will mark or set apart this space for your prayer time.
 - c. Set the Standing Cross, Candle, and other items on the colored fabric as you like.
- 6. Part C – Using the Prayer Space**

- a. Talk with the student about using their prayer space to talk to God, to read a Bible story, or to simply “be still with God” for a little bit each day. Explain that you are going to start out by only taking a few minutes to pray, and that you will do it together.
- b. When ready to start, light the candle as a sign that you are starting your special time with God. It may also be helpful to dim other lights and to speak in softer voices to help create a more reverent atmosphere.
- c. Demonstrate to the student how they can pray, read a Bible story, use the prayer cards, etc. Note that it may take some time for the student to join you praying aloud. Many younger children will think and pray without verbalizing until they see spoken prayer modeled by others over time. This is when an index card with some written prayers or psalms can be helpful to help springboard children into spoken prayers.
- d. Conclude your prayer time by extinguishing the candle. Be sure to talk to the student about their experience, and your own, as they experience the intentional prayer time of their prayer space.

STATION 4 - KITCHEN

Station Overview: The children make a Personal Prayer Pizza to explore the different components of prayer and how these elements come together.

Supplies Needed:

- Baking sheet(s)
- Parchment or Wax Paper
- Pizza Crust of choice
- Pizza Sauce of Choice
- Shredded Cheese of Choice
- Variety of Pizza Toppings

Lesson Plan:

1. Remind the participants that we are talking about prayer and the importance of prayer.
2. Share that there are several different parts to prayers, and all of these parts come together to make prayers work. And today, we are going to make pizza to help us see all the goodness that can happen when those prayer parts come together.
3. Pre-heat the oven, and give each participant a piece of parchment paper to cover their pizza preparation area.
4. Crust: Cut and roll out the pizza dough so each participant can have their own crust. As this is happening, talk about the dough as the foundation for our pizza. It is the thing that makes a pizza a pizza; without it we just have a mess of

sauce and cheese! When it comes to our prayers, God is the foundation. God is the one to whom we send our prayers, and the one who hears our prayers. Just like our pizza would fall apart without the crust, our prayers would fall apart without God.

5. Sauce: Spread the sauce on the pizza crust. As you do, note the way that the sauce is going to flavor every bite of our pizza. And just like the sauce flavors all our pizza, there is something that flavors all of our prayers: God's love! Because God loves us so much, he loves it when we talk to him. It doesn't matter how or when we pray, God hears our prayers with love, and he blesses our lives with His love. God's love for us shapes every part of our prayer, just like the sauce is part of every bite of pizza.
6. Toppings: Add some toppings to your pizza. As you do, share that the toppings give the pizza different flavors and textures. For example, pepperoni adds a little spiciness to the pizza, while green peppers add some crunch and freshness, and pineapple adds some sweetness. The same thing happens in our prayers! The things we share with God gives a slightly different flavor to our prayer. For example, sometimes we are just telling God that we love him, or praising him for the world he made for us. Other times we might talking to God about something we did wrong and to ask God to forgive us. Each of these kinds of prayer (adoration, confession, thanksgiving, intercession, etc.) give our prayers different flavor. And just like you can change the toppings on your pizza to make it different each time, mixing up the things you talk to God about makes your prayers different as well.
7. Cheese: Add cheese to your pizza to finish it off. Note that as the cheese melts it gets sticky and hold everything together. It keeps the toppings stuck to the crust. And when it comes to our prayers, we are the cheese! As we pray more and more, we begin to "stick" to God better. We start to see how God answers our prayers. We start to hear God's voice when He talks to us. Our prayers bring us closer to God, and help keep us close to him. So just like the cheese will help hold the pizza together, taking the time to pray helps us stick to God!
8. Baking: After the individual pizzas are assembled, start baking. Remember that smaller pizzas may take less baking time than a full pizza would! While the pizza is in the oven, talk about how we have to wait for the pizza to cook to see how it all turns out. Share that it is sometimes like this with our prayers: we have to wait and see how God will answer those prayers. And sometimes the answer looks very different from what we expect...like when the pizza crust has an air pocket that puffs up while baking. Both pizza making, and prayers, require a little patience!
9. Eating: When done baking, pull the pizzas out of the oven and let cool a bit. Then enjoy the pizza! Talk about how the crust, sauce, toppings, and cheese work together to make something delicious. Close by sharing that the same is true with prayer: by combining God, and love, and all kinds of prayers, and time spent in prayer, we get wonderful blessings.