

**Ideas for a congregational evening of prayer and praise**

The following material is suggested as a range of prayer topics fitting the aspects of the Moderator’s theme, Enjoying God. It is possible to use these interactively as separate prayer stations. In this format there is a Bible passage to read, a variety of praise songs to watch or sing (usually including an option for kids) and an activity for practical prayer. Alternatively, you can simply pull the prayer points out of this material and use them more traditionally in a midweek setting. Again, while there are seven topics given here, you don’t need to use them all, and you are free to pick and mix!

# 1. Enjoying the power of God

**Bible readings**

Ephesians 1:18-21

Isaiah 40:12-31

Matthew 9:1-8

The power of God has been variously described in the pages of the Bible – you can think of the creation story and how out of nothing came everything! This is the same power that parted the Red Sea, destroyed the walls around Jericho and ultimately raised Jesus from the dead. This power is not remote from us and is available to us in prayer. Nothing, no one is beyond the scope of the prayers of God’s people!

**Sing/watch suggestions:**

*Indescribable*

*God of Wonders*

*How Great Thou Art*

*What a Mighty God We Serve*

**Activity**

Fear can paralyse us, so provide a picture of a mat which represents the mat the paralysed man lay on (Matthew 9). Write the things you are fearful of on the mat and give these over to God, acknowledging his power over everything.

**Pray for:**

* God to dispel our low expectations of answers to prayer and that we might have the confidence to express big bold prayers, laying hold of God’s grace.
* God to pour out his Holy Spirit on your church.
* Any barriers and excuses that a non-Christian friend of yours might offer as reasons they cannot become a believer, and that these might be overcome as they understand the message of love presented in the gospel.
* A change in the spiritual temperature of our land and that our denomination as a whole might be used by God to enlarge his kingdom.

**2. Enjoying the parenthood of God**

**Bible reading**

Psalms 139:13-18

As Christians we are aware of the intense love that God has for us as individuals and also what we together share within the family of God. There is truth and wonder in the knowledge that the Father of the universe is also my own personal Father. We have intimacy of relationship. May that motivate us to pray more passionately for those who have not experienced that love themselves and those who remain distant to God, that they may come to the joy of knowing God.

**Sing/watch suggestions**

*Who You Say I Am*

*Good Good Father*

*Praise, My Soul, the King of heaven*

*He Knows My Name*

**Activity**

Have a selection of Lego bricks. Look at one brick and note its unique size and colour – pray thanking God for you as you are. Look at another unique brick and pray for another person who comes into your mind. Connect the bricks and pray, thanking God for how he puts us in family and relationship.

**Pray**:

* For Christians you know, that their experience of the love of the Father may become an infectious witness to everyone around them.
* That your church would have increasing opportunities to show the Father’s love and that it would be faithful and bold in speaking God’s Word into the lives of those with whom it has direct or indirect impact.
* For those within our churches who have heard so much about the love of God as a Father yet still are reluctant to commit themselves to become a follower of Jesus. Pray that their eyes might catch a glimpse of the glories of becoming a child of God and that they might take that step of faith.

**3. Enjoying the purposes of God**

**Bible reading**

Read Ephesians 2:1-10

God has a plan and he is actively working on it. Nothing is haphazard or accidental, nothing blindsides God nor takes him by surprise. What is even more amazing is that each and every believer has a place within the grand purpose of God – that gives meaning and purpose to what we do. May the thought of being able to find meaning and purpose in life be the very encouragement to someone finding faith in Jesus.

**Sing/watch suggestions**

*If We Are the Body*

*By Faith We See the Hand of God*

*O Church Arise*

*This Little Light of Mine*

**Activity**

Give thanks for the work your church is engaged in within the kingdom of God. Write short prayers of thanksgiving which might be collected and read aloud.

**Pray for:**

* Every member of your church, that they would feel the burden to proclaim the gospel – shaking off apathy – and be filled with a compassion for the lost.
* A particular person who seems to be resistant to the gospel and who has shown little interest in Jesus, that they might suddenly see their need of Jesus and take the next step of faith.
* Grace to warmly embrace everyone confident that the gospel changes and transforms anyone.
* The fact that while we might always gravitate to folks just like us, pray that the Holy Spirit would push us out of our comfort zones and that we might be eager to share the good news.

**4. Enjoying the provision of God**

**Bible reading**

Lamentations 3:22-24

“God is good, all the time. All the time God is good.” It’s easy to say that when things have been going well, but it’s not so easy when we’ve endured setbacks. One of the harder lessons God teaches his followers is that he is faithful even in the difficulties of life. Let’s trust the provision and faithfulness of God and be confident to share that with everyone we encounter.

**Sing/watch suggestions**

*Great Is Your Faithfulness*

*Blessed Be Your Name*

*The Good Song*, Psalm 34:10 (Seeds Family Worship)

**Activity**

List the blessings of God you have received, think particularly of blessings that come in the midst of difficulty.

**Pray that:**

* Thinking of an individual, pray that the Holy Spirit, who always points to Jesus, would show them that Jesus can provide for them.
* A brother or sister in Christ who is going through a hard time at the moment. Pray that they would be able to rejoice in the wonder of the gospel even when things seem to be going wrong.
* A friend who is not yet a Christian and who might be experiencing difficulties at the minute, that God might use these situations, which seem insurmountable, to draw them closer to him. Pray they might be able to place their hope on God and his grace alone.

**5. Enjoying the pleasure of God**

**Bible readings**

Zephaniah 3:17

Luke 12:22-32

It might be hard to accept this truth, in all its enormity, but here we are reminded of the undeserved aspect of God’s love expressed to us in Jesus. Here is joyous good news! Here is something we can share with those who as yet are outside the kingdom of God. God takes delight in us. What an incentive to belief!

**Sing/watch suggestions**

*Goodness of God*

*And Can It Be*

*Amazing Grace*

*I’ve Got the Joy, Joy, Joy*

**Activity**

Have copies of Zephaniah 3:17 on card which can be coloured or decorated, then give them out later in the week to someone who might need reminded how much God delights in them.

**Pray that**:

* As your church next gathers, there would be an unmistakeable expression of the delight and blessing of God upon its worship.
* Many more would respond to the gospel with curiosity, excitement and above all joy.
* As non-believers read the Bible and encounter Jesus through the Word of God, that they will be overwhelmed with the knowledge of God’s unconditional love and delight in his children.

**6. Enjoying the peace of God**

**Bible reading**

Psalm 46

There is a God who is above us, who is above everything, but is also always with us. It is he who brings us through trials for reasons known only to him. God knows what he is doing and is using our trials to transform us during the fierce storms we endure. May our testimony of peace even in the storm speak powerfully to everyone we meet.

**Sing/watch suggestions**

*God Is Our Strength and Refuge*

*Peace Be Still* (Lauren Daigle)

*Peace Like A River* (Listener Kids)

**Pray for:**

* A friend who is struggling to be content. Ask God that he might enable them to trust him and to find in him a peace that passes understanding.
* Your church, that it might so embody the peace of God, that it would be like a magnet drawing those on the periphery of your congregation and arousing their interest so they might in turn experience this peace themselves.
* For believers to become agents of peace in a society where sectarianism is all too prevalent and where difference of any sort is viewed with suspicion.
* Your work context (or school or wherever you spend a good part of your day) and that you might be a peacemaker and point to Jesus through your actions.
* That those ‘unlikely converts’ in your church might be used by God to speak to many more.

**7. Enjoying the presence of God**

# Bible reading

# Psalm 16

# What a profound truth that God makes his presence keenly felt by us on a daily basis. Yet how little we often reflect on that. The title given to Jesus, ‘Immanuel’ meaning ‘God is with us’, conveys this powerful truth, as does the image of the pillar of cloud (by day) and fire (by night) leading the people of Israel in the wilderness. This reality transforms and is exactly what searching and uncertain hearts crave.

# Sing/watch suggestions

# *All the Way My Saviour Leads Me* (Psalm 23)

# *You Are Everywhere* (Vineyard Lids UK)

# Activity

# Have bits of paper where people can record their typical day and think where you noticed and appreciated the presence of God.

# Pray for:

# God to make himself known in our land by a fresh outpouring of his Holy Spirit.

# Christians to be able to sense the presence and the leading of God in a situation where he has brought a friend or acquaintance to them who is searching for God, and that they might have the best words to use.

# Your church this weekend, that God would be unmistakeably present in the power of the Holy Spirit and that he would speak directly and draw some who meet there to saving faith.

# A family member who has drifted from an active faith in Jesus or perhaps one who has always shown a disinterest in faith. Pray for spiritual peace to take root in their hearts.