

**Children’s family prayer activity**

Kids know how to enjoy pizza, pets, games and ice cream – a parent rarely needs to teach them how! But helping your child discover a satisfying joy in God requires earnest prayer and deliberate effort. God is not looking for kids who dutifully behave, but for those who will know and love him. He encourages us to “Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him” Psalm 34:8.

How can we help kids enjoy God as they would their best friend? Children cannot see God with their eyes. We can help kids know God in his Word. God’s actions tell us who he is. As you read the Bible together, point out what God is doing. Then ask your children, “What did God do and what does his action tell us about him?”

For this week of prayer, I have put together some Bible stories and activities that can be used with your children at home, or even in church, to help them pray as part of our Presbyterian church family. You can pick and mix from the different prayer activities and use a children’s Bible, or a video clip to read the Bible story. There are also some suggestions of some children’s songs you can watch on YouTube.

As we approach this week of prayer, I hope you will encourage our children to pray with us, and pray that may they experience and enjoy God as they do.

**1. Enjoying the power of God**

**Key verse**

*“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might”*[*Ephesians 6:10*](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Eph%206.10)*.*

**Play:**

What is the most powerful thing you can do? See if they can lift heavy objects/ carry things for a distance/ arm wrestle etc. How does your strength and power compare to God’s strength and power? How does God use his power?

Play Simon Says.

In today’s story Daniel is being faithful to God and obeys him. God shows his power by protecting Daniel.

**Read:** Story of Daniel in the Lions’ Den (Daniel 6).

**Pray:**

**Jelly baby prayers**

Y*ou will need:* jelly babies.

Take out a coloured jelly baby and before you eat it pray

Green – Give thanks for how God shows his power in creation. Thank him for all your favourite animals and plants.

Red – Thank God for sending his son to die to take away our sins. Think of things that you need to ask God’s forgiveness for.

Yellow – Thank God that he has provided a home in heaven for us.

Pink – Pray for others who need to know God’s power. Pray for anyone you know who is sick, or sad, or lonely.

Purple – Thank God that we have his power and it helps us to tell others about him.

**Explosive prayers**

As you watch this experiment, and see it bubble over, pray that God’s power in your life would allow you to tell others about him. Place a narrow glass in the sink and quarter fill it with white vinegar, and a drop of food colouring. Think of a friend who needs Jesus. Add a tablespoon of baking soda (sodium hydrogen carbonate). As you watch the fizz, pray that the power and love of Jesus will touch your friend’s life.

**Listen:** *King of Me* (Rend Collective).

**Do:** Your light works because it gets power from electricity. Each time you switch on a light remember that God gives you his power to help you live for him!

**2. Enjoying the parenthood of God**

**Key verse:** “We know that we are children of God” 1 John 5:19.

**Play:** Cut out and stick a cross on a large piece of paper. Get everyone to dip a finger in some paint and make a fingerprint at the foot of the cross. Decorate the fingerprint to look like a face, and draw a body. Our fingerprints are special to us, and no one anywhere has a fingerprint like ours. We are special to God. He is our heavenly father who sent his Son to die that we might become his children.

Have a game of lost and found. Call out the names of some objects and first to find it scores a point. Today’s story is about someone who is lost.

**Read:** The Prodigal Son story (Luke 15: 11-32). Why not act it out?

**Pray:** Write the names of, or draw some people you are going to pray for on a strip of coloured paper. Pray that each person will become more open to God and will become a follower of Jesus. Fasten all the strips together to make a paper chain that you can hang. Pray that God would use you and your family to reach your friends and neighbours.

Decorate and make place names or pictures of the family and other people at your table at teatime. At dinner, swop place names and pray for that person.

Stone walk: Carrying a stone on a walk can help us remember people that God has put on our hearts for prayer. As you set out on your walk, ask God to help each person think of a friend with whom you would like to share the love of Jesus. Search around and find a stone that represents that person. Put the stone in your pocket. There will be moments on your journey when your family find the walk easy, and times when the going gets tough. Make use of these moments to pause, hold your stone and reflect on how there are times when sharing your faith can be easy and times when it’s really hard.

**Listen:** *I Am a Child of God* (Lifekids).

**Do:** Can you ask someone to come to Sunday club, Scripture Union, church or youth club with you this week?

**3. Enjoying the purposes of God**

**Key verse:** “I know the plans I have for you” Jeremiah 29:11.

**Play:** Talk about different maps – road maps, world maps, google maps. Why do we need them? It helps us plan how to get to our destination.

In life it is harder to plan things. Where will I go to school? What will I be when I grow up? God doesn't always give us the answers to those questions right away.

But God is still taking care of you and he will reveal the road to your next stop in his own time. God has plans for you too. So next time you look at a map, remember that God is looking at one too – the map for your life.

Do a jigsaw together – every piece is important and there is a plan about how it all fits together. We can't see the whole picture, but we can trust God knows and holds all the pieces in his hand.

God has a plan for your life. Just as he had for Joseph.

**Read:** The story of Joseph being sold (Genesis 37).

**Pray:**

* Thank God that he has big plans for you. Ask him to help you work hard at church, school, and every part of your life so you are prepared to serve him.
* **Skittle painting prayer.** *You will need:*a bag of Skittles; a plate; hot water (not hot enough to scald, but hot enough to make the colour run).

Choose a Skittle for each person you are praying for. Arrange the Skittles on the plate. Alternatively, you might want to make the initial letter of your prayer person’s name out of Skittles. Pour some hot water on to the plate to cover its surface. Pour it carefully so that the Skittles stay in place. Wait and the Skittles will gradually release their colour. As the colour is released, pray that Jesus will surround the people you are praying for with his love.

* Thank God for your minister and your Sunday school teachers who enjoy serving God by teaching you the Bible so you can learn more of his plan for your life.
* Look in the mirror today and thank God for all the things he helps you with and give him a smile as you thank him for making you such a special person.

**Listen:** *I’m Trusting You* (Lifetree Kids).

**Do:** Make a thank-you card and give it to your minister, youth leader or Sunday school teacher.

**4. Enjoying the provision of God**

**Key verse:** “Great is your faithfulness” Lamentations 3:23.

**Play:** Get some newspapers, magazines or catalogues. Cut out things that God provides for you – food, clothes, toys. Stick and make a collage.

Give each person a piece of newspaper. Start a timer – see how many pieces you can tear one sheet of paper into in one minute. Do you think you could tear it into 5,000 pieces? If so, how small would each piece be? What would you do if I told you to feed everyone at church (or school) with the same amount of food you eat for lunch? Jesus asked his disciples to feed 5000 people.

**Read:** The story of the Feeding of the 5000 (John 6:1-14).

**Pray:**

* Put some marshmallows and grapes on a skewer – eat one marshmallow and notice the sweet taste. Name some good things God gives you. Thank him for the good things in your life. Then eat a grape and thank God for all the food and drink he gives us.
* **Prayer pot people**. *You will need:*cress seeds, paper cups, markers, cotton wool. Draw a face on a paper cup and fill it with cotton wool. Sprinkle some cress seeds on top and water. They will grow and form hair! Watching seeds grow over a period of time can help us remember how God’s kingdom grows. Pray for God’s kingdom to grow in your area and through your family to your friends and neighbours. Pray for your church and all the people in it. Pray that they would enjoy fellowship and friendship. Help us to sit beside others and get to know them, and that we may reach out to others who don’t know Jesus personally.
* Thank God for the leaders who teach you in Sunday school, Bible class or youth organisations. Write their name on a lollipop stick and keep them on the table, to remind you to pray for them each day.

**Listen:** *Supernatural* (Vineyard Kids)

**Do:** Take some food to a foodbank to show God’s love and provision to others.

**5. Enjoying the pleasure of God**

**Key verse:** “The Lord your God is with you, the mighty warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you’ Zephaniah 3:17.

**Play:** Set out some chairs or cushions as obstacles and time children doing an obstacle course while carrying real eggs on spoons, or balloons between their legs. Did they have fun?

Play a favourite game, for example, Guess Who, Snakes and Ladders, Phase 10.

What other things do you enjoy doing?

Eric Liddell was a gold Olympic medallist. He said, “I believe God made me for a purpose. But he also made me fast. And when I run, I feel his pleasure.” He was able to do great things because he truly did all for the glory of God. What are some things we try to do on our own or for our own glory, when we could be honouring God? How can we put him first?

**Read:** 1 Kings 18:30-39. God showed the people his great power because he wanted them to worship only him. We know who the true God is and that *we can praise him.*

**Pray:** God, we want to praise you because we love you and because of how awesome and wonderful you are.

**Prayer flags**

*You will need:* paper straws and sheets of paper.

Make a triangle flag and draw on it the things that you like to do. Pray that you will do these things for God’s glory. Stick the triangle onto the paper straw and add some paper streamers!

Draw all the things you enjoy in church on a paper cup. Put some dried pasta inside and use a napkin and elastic band to seal. Pray that all the children, babies, young people and older people who go to your church would give God thanks and praise him with joy. Play a song and praise God with your flags and shaker.

**Ripple prayers:** Get some pebbles and decorate with permanent markers. Write the names of some people that you want to know the love of Jesus. Drop the pebbles into a basin or sink. Notice how the rings gradually spread out from the point where the stone entered the water. Pray aloud for the individual names on the pebbles. Talk about how God’s kingdom grows and spreads out, a bit like in the Parable of the Yeast in Luke 13:20-21. Pray for God’s kingdom to grow in your area and through your family to your friends and neighbours.

**Listen:** *Celebrate* (Rend Collective).

**Do:** Keep your pebbles flags and shaker as a reminder to worship God and pray for others.

**6. Enjoying the peace of God**

**Key verse:** "And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid" John 14:27.

**Play:** Musical statues – run/jump or do exercise to music but when the music stops you must be still.

Hide pictures of peaceful settings such as sunsets, sunrises, lakes, a contented kitten, a sleeping baby etc and non-peaceful settings – battle scenes, noisy children, thunderstorms. Allow children to hunt for the pictures and sort them into peaceful and stormy.

With God, we can have peace no matter where we are or what is happening.

**Read**: The story of Jesus Calming the Storm (Mark 4:35-41). Why not act it out – sit in a ‘boat’ and rock in the storm!

**Pray:**

* Name three things that make you afraid or worried. Ask God to help us to remember that just as Jesus calmed the storm on the sea, he can give us peace when we are worried or afraid. Put the peaceful pictures from the treasure hunt on the wall – today when you look at them, remember that God takes your worries and fears and gives you peace.
* Spreading hearts prayers. *You will need:*a tall glass with about two centimetres of water at the bottom; strips of kitchen roll or a coffee filter; felt-tip pens (non-permanent markers). Cut a long strip of coffee filter/kitchen roll – 10cm x 2 cm. Draw a heart about two centimetres up the strip and colour in with pen. Slightly above, write the initials of someone (or draw a face of someone!) that you would like to get to know Jesus. Put the end of the strip in the water. Leave for 10 minutes and watch as the water slowly climbs up the strip, and the ink in the heart spreads out over the face or initials. Pray that that person will come to know that Jesus loves them.
* Pray that you may show God’s peace at home and at school by loving and caring for one another and listening to one another, even when we don’t agree.
* Pray for children who have no food or who are frightened and live in fear.

**Listen:** *I’ve Got Peace Like a River*, *Not Afraid* (Rend Collective).

**Do:** Learn Philippians 4:6-7 by singing along to the Seeds Family Worship version on YouTube.

**7. Enjoying the presence of God**

**Key verse:** “I will never leave you or forsake you” Joshua 1:5.

**Play:** Take a big breath and hold it for three seconds. Is **there still any air left in the room? Of course! If you go into the other room, will there be air there?** (Yes!) Like the air we can't see, God is also there. God is everywhere, all the time.

Playa game of hide-and-seek. Who was the best ‘hider’? If you were playing hide-and-seek with God, he would win every time. There's no place we can hide where God is not already there. The great thing about God is that he doesn't try to hide from us! He is EVERYWHERE all the time, and he wants us to find him! We can never escape the presence of God. Are there times when you may be afraid? God will never leave you.

**Read:** Exodus 13:20-22. God was with the Israelites.

**Pray:**

* Thank God that he is with you always. Tell him about the things you are worried about. Pray for those who are sick or unwell.
* Static electricity prayers.*You will need:*small pieces of tissue paper; pens; a balloon.

Take a piece of tissue paper and draw or write the name of the person you want to pray for on it. Rub the balloon on your sleeve to build up static. Hold the tissue prayer close to the balloon and watch as it is pulled on to the balloon and sticks there. Pray that, as the paper sticks to the balloon, Jesus will draw those people close to him

* Prayer map: Make a map of your neighbourhood to help you pray for the people in it.

*You will need:*wool; ribbon; junk cardboard boxes; pens; coloured paper; card; markers.

Starting with your home, make a map of your neighbourhood stretching out the string, wool or ribbons to be roads and rivers, and using boxes and cardboard shapes to be buildings (schools, offices, hospitals, shops, farms and so on) or geographical features (hills, ponds, parks and so on). Talk about the people who live around you and pray for them to come to know Jesus, either by placing your hand on the place on the map where they live or work. Use simple words, like ‘Please help X know Jesus’ love’.

**Listen**: *You are Everywhere* (Vineyard)

**Do:** Draw a smiley face and stick it on the door, to remind you every time you leave that God is always with you.