



GOD IS always LISTENING



Pray & NEVER Give up



Pray ABOUT EVERYTHING



#PrayerAndCare

# FAMILY

PRAYER IDEAS

Churches Together in Beds and Herts



## PRAYER AND CARE IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

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# #PrayerAndCare ...FOR OUR WORLD

## SCRIPTURE READING: Isaiah 42:5-7



God, the Lord, said these things.  
He created the skies and stretched them out.  
He spread out the earth and everything on it.  
He gives life to all people on earth.  
He gives life to everyone who walks on the earth.  
The Lord says, "I called you to do right.  
And I will hold your hand.  
I will protect you.  
You will be the sign of my agreement with the people.  
You will be a light to shine for all people.  
You will help the blind to see.  
You will free those who are in prison.  
You will lead those who live in darkness out of their prison.

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## ACTIVITY

Find some old newspapers or magazines.  
Each family member cuts or tears out 2 or 3 pictures that show some aspect of the natural world.  
Allow time for each person in turn to say what they like about their pictures and why they chose them.  
If you have glue, you can piece them together into a collage on a larger sheet.



## PRAYER

Lord God,  
We thank you for our world.  
We thank you for the sunshine and the rain,  
For the land and the seas,  
For all the wildlife that lives on our earth.  
Help us to take care of the environment  
And help us to live in harmony and peace.  
Help our family to be a sign  
And a light for others  
So that they may see your works  
And come to know you more.  
Amen

## ACTION

Think of something positive that has come out of the time of lock down. There are reports that the air is clearer and that our planet is beginning to heal. Have you noticed other good things?  
Is there something that you have learned to do without that helps the environment to be greener? Maybe you have got used to walking or biking when you used to take the car? Resolve to keep it that way as things return to normal and help our world by trying to reduce the rubbish we generate and reuse and recycle where we can. There are ideas for living more simply on the CAFOD website <https://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Livesimply-award/Livesimply-ideas>



# #PrayerAndCare ...FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

## SCRIPTURE READING: Genesis 1:27-31

If you have a children's Bible that you like, you can read the story of Creation there, or you can read this version. Maybe you'd like to take turns and get different members of your family to read parts of it:



So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

### Questions to wonder about together:

I wonder what your favourite part of this reading was.

I wonder what the most important part of this reading was.

I wonder what it means to be "made in the image of God."

I wonder how God wants us to treat the earth and animals and everything else he made.

I wonder what it feels like to make something.

## ACTIVITY

### Perfect World

You will need: Paper,  
Drawing supplies (or pavement and chalk)

Ask every member of the family to draw their idea of what "the perfect world" would look like. How do you think God wants the world to be?

What is his Kingdom like? Share your pictures and talk about what's the same and what's different in your drawings. Then talk together about some things you can do to make the world more like your pictures.

### Gratitude Walk

You will need: Paper and pencils  
Access to outdoor space

If you are able to go outdoors, take paper and pencils with you and write down everything you see that you're grateful for, and why (such as, trees – they help clean the air, they give birds a home, etc). When you get back home, pray together in thanks to God for making all those things. How can you help take care of them? Note: You may see some things that are made by humans, which children will want to include – eg. their school building. Talk about how God and people worked together to make that. God made the clay, humans made the bricks out of clay and built the building. God and people work together to make things.





## Gardening

There are tons of ideas for helping children get involved in growing things. Many of these can be done in flats with a windowsill, if you don't have a garden. Talking about how we are made in God's image, and can help God with the work of creation by growing things, and about how God's creation sustains our life by growing food and giving us air to breathe, can help children make connections between these activities and a spiritual practice. You can explore many gardening ideas here – many of them only require items you may already have at home: <https://www.growingajeweledrose.com/2013/03/outdoor-nature-gardening-activities.html>

## PRAYER

*Creative God,  
You made the earth and the universe and everything in them.  
Help us to care for what you have made.  
Help us to love it and see that everything you made is very good.  
Help us to treat the earth, each other, and ourselves as your beloved creations.  
And help us to look forward to your perfect Kingdom  
Where all things will be made new and wonderful,  
And to make the earth more like your Kingdom in every way we can.  
Amen*



## ACTION

If you have access to a park, take gloves with you and go litter-picking on your next walk.

Talk about how this is part of caring for God's creation.

Plant bee-friendly plants, if you have a garden or a balcony.

Write to your MP and encourage them to take action on environmental issues that concern you.

If you have spare income, make a donation to a charity that works on protecting the environment or endangered animals.



# #PrayerAndCare ...FOR OUR SCHOOLS

## SCRIPTURE READING: Isaiah 4:10

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."



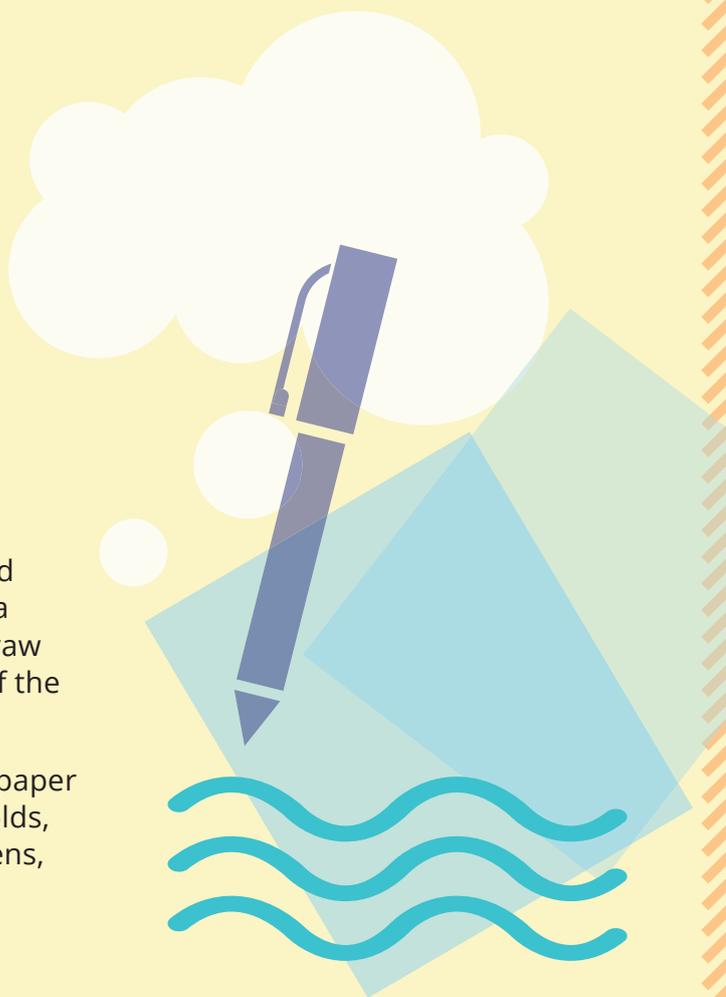
## ACTIVITY

School has probably looked very different for you in the past weeks, whether you have still been going into school or learning from home. You might have enjoyed this time, or maybe you have missed your friends and usual routine.

However you are feeling right now, the bible verse above tells us that we do not need to be afraid, because God will never leave us. He promises to help us when we are finding things tough, and He is with everyone in our school communities at the moment.

Think about the things or people at school you would like to say thank you or pray for. Write each one on a piece of square paper (you can also decorate it or draw pictures if you wish). Fold each of the four corners of the square to meet in the middle.

Fill a sink or tub with water. Gently place the folded paper squares into the water, and watch as the paper unfolds, revealing what you wrote inside. As each square opens, say a prayer for what is written on it.



## PRAYER

*Dear God,  
Thank you that you promise to always be with us.  
We pray for your protection over our school community - for our teachers,  
parents, and everyone else working hard to support our learning in new ways  
at this time.  
Help us to show love and patience to one another.  
Amen*



## ACTION

Think about how you could encourage your school. Maybe you could write them a letter or email thanking them and letting them know that you are thinking of/ praying for them at this time. You could even show them a video or photo of some work that your teacher has set you or an activity you have done that you feel particularly proud of.



# #PrayerAndCare ...FOR NEIGHBOURS AND FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

## SCRIPTURE READING: Psalm 30

Sing the praises of the LORD, you his faithful people;  
Praise his holy name.

For his anger lasts only a moment,  
But his favour lasts a lifetime;  
Weeping may stay for the night,  
But rejoicing comes in the morning.



## ACTIVITY

### A Prayer Walk

As part of your daily exercise, why not walk around your neighbourhood and pray for God's Kingdom to come? Before you set off, check with your parent/carer, follow the current safety guidelines and take your phone. Remember that prayer is powerful. It can change situations and circumstances. Right now, more people are praying than ever before. Let's join them to change the world for good.

As you begin . . . pray for the families in the houses, terraces or flats you pass. Pray that God's Holy Spirit would bring peace, love and wholeness to these homes. Pray for any neighbours who are in pain and 'weeping' at the moment.

Look out for something from nature that catches your eye. Pray that our society would have the courage, strength and purpose to protect the natural world. Pray for more action on climate change, for strategies and vision for our leaders. Pick up a leaf to take home with you!

The Lord often speaks to us through the natural world, the wonder of stars, the warmth of the sun, the blossom of spring and birds that fly past. Do you pass anything like this? What might the Lord be saying? How might He be encouraging you through this today?

As you head back . . . Think about what you are thankful for today. Spend a couple of minutes thanking God. If you can't think of anything, thank him for the natural world, for birds, sunshine, rain and trees. Think of one way you could encourage your neighbours and one way you can help protect and support the environment this week.

## ACTION

Put your leaf somewhere prominent in your room as a reminder to pray for our world and those who struggle with less than us. Jot down your ideas for one way you could encourage your neighbours and one way you can help protect and support the environment this week.



# #PrayerAndCare ...FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

## SCRIPTURE READING: John 13:34-35

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."



## ACTIVITY

The Bible talks a lot about how important community is. God made us to live in community with others, even from the very beginning when he made the first ever man, Adam, and said 'it is not good for man to be alone' (Gen 2:18).

You may be a part of lots of different communities, for example church, school, your neighbourhood, a sports club, etc. In the above Bible passage, Jesus is telling his disciples to love one another. Even though we cannot meet with others physically at the moment, I wonder if you can think of ways in which we might show love to our communities by supporting and encouraging them from afar?

Make a paper chain of people.  
You can find instructions on how to do this here:  
[www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Paper-People-Chain](http://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Paper-People-Chain)

Think about the various communities you are part of. On each paper person, write down a different community, or the name of a specific person from one of your communities that you would like to pray for. Once you have done this, take time to pray for each of the communities/people you have written down.



## PRAYER

*Dear God,  
Thank you for the communities that we are a part of.  
We pray for the people within them, especially those that are struggling at this time.  
Help us to show them the same love that you have shown us  
To support and encourage them, even whilst we cannot meet like we normally would.  
Amen*



## ACTION

Think about how you might best be able to love your community at this time and put it into action! This could be writing a letter of thanks/encouragement to your church leader, reaching out and offering help to a neighbour who is self-isolating, or even fundraising for a local charity or project.



# #PrayerAndCare ...FOR OUR HEALTH WORKERS

## SCRIPTURE READING: Matt hew 8:1-3

When Jesus came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him. A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy.



## ACTIVITY

### Jesus our Healer

Write words, draw pictures or make marks to express your prayers today. Use colour to express the life and joy of God, even in tough times and dark places.

Make a list of some of the characteristics of God. Who is He? eg. kind . . . powerful . . .



## PRAYER

Which hospital is closest to where you live? Pray for it now. Don't forget to pray for the cleaners, technicians, managers and support staff who are so important in keeping hospitals going.



## ACTION

Write a prayer for health and care workers. Write one-word prayers for the sick.

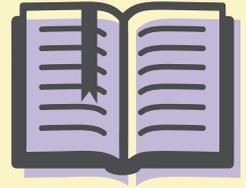


# #PrayerAndCare ...FOR OUR KEYWORKERS

## SCRIPTURE READING: Genesis 9 13 – 16

God said: 'I am putting my rainbow in the clouds. It is the sign of the agreement between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth, a rainbow appears in the clouds. Then I will remember my agreement. It is between you and me and every living thing. Floodwaters will never again destroy all life on earth. When the rainbow appears in the clouds I will see it. Then I will remember the agreement that continues forever. So God said to Noah, 'That rainbow is a sign. It is a sign of the agreement that I made to all living things on earth'.

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## ACTIVITY

Lots of children have been drawing rainbows and putting them in their windows as a sign of hope for the community during this time of lockdown. How many rainbows have you seen in people's windows when you've been out for a walk? Have you made a rainbow? Why do you think a rainbow might give people hope?

Usually we see a rainbow in the sky when it's been raining but the sun is breaking through the clouds – that gives us hope that the sun will come again.

Sometimes being in lockdown can seem like being in a dark cloud. The rainbows we see help us to remember that this won't last forever – we will be able to see our friends and relatives again soon, and that will feel as though the sun has come out.

The rainbows in windows are also there to show support for 'key workers' during this difficult time.

### Who do you think are the key workers?

Make a list of all the key workers you can think of. Pick one or two and write them a letter or draw them a picture to say thank you for the work that they're doing. You could also tell them that you're praying for them.

## PRAYER

*Dear Father God, we thank you for all the hard work that people do to keep us comfortable and happy. Thank you for those who make sure we have food to eat, and collect our rubbish; for those who deliver letters and parcels, and those who clean our streets. Thank for our teachers and carers who look after us and help us to learn. Thank you for those who keep us safe and healthy and for those who look after us when we're unwell. Bless them all Lord and help us to remember to give them a smile and say thank you to show how much we appreciate their work. Amen*



## ACTION

If you know any key workers you could give them the letter you have written or the picture you have drawn....eg. You could leave one on your front door for the postman, on the wheelie bin for the refuse collector or put one through the letterbox if you have any living near you.



# #PrayerAndCare ...FOR THOSE WHO ARE HUNGRY

## SCRIPTURE READING: Isaiah 58:10

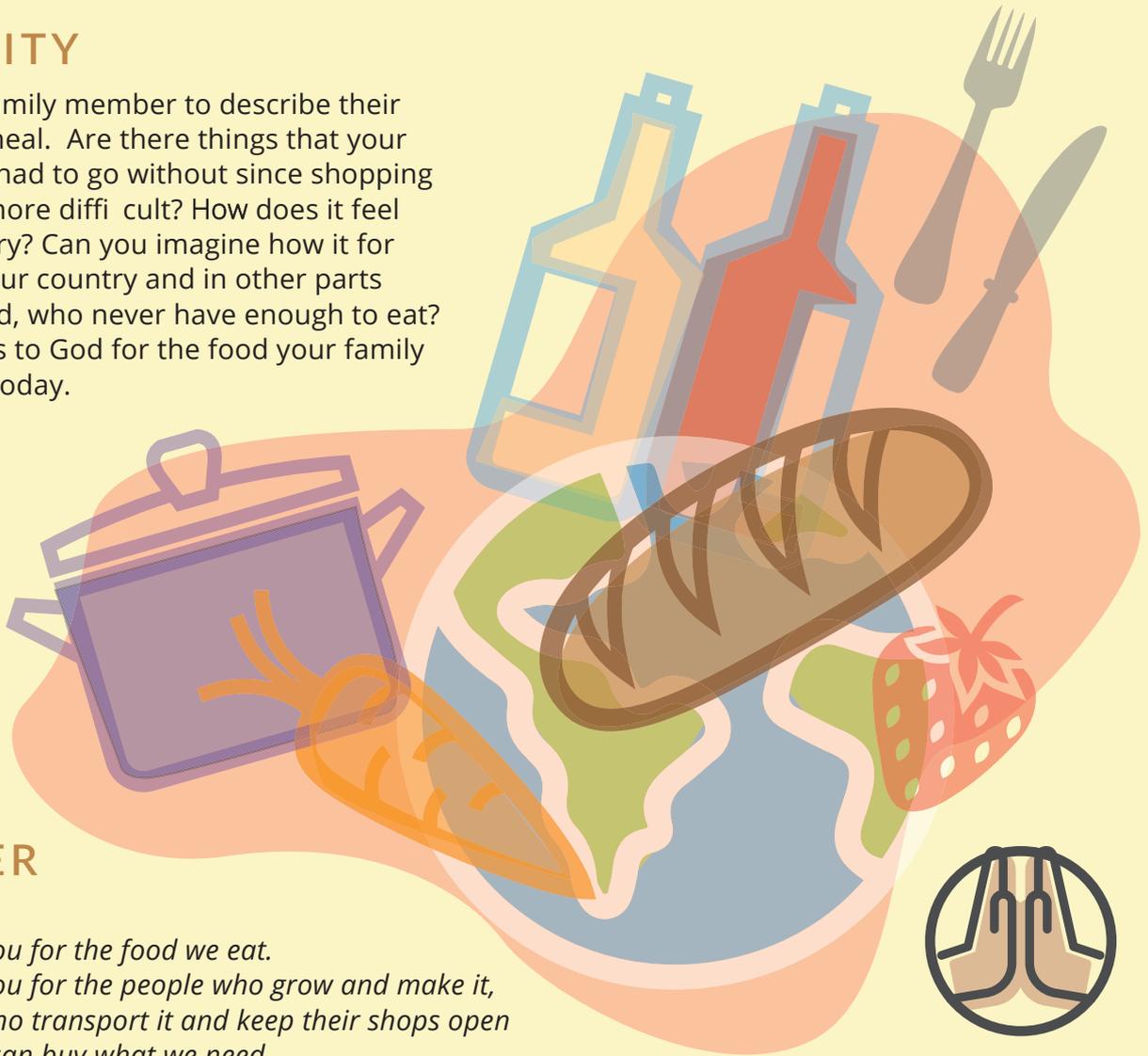
You should feed those who are hungry.  
You should take care of the needs of those who are troubled.  
Then your light will shine in the darkness.  
And you will be bright like sunshine at noon.

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## ACTIVITY

Ask each family member to describe their favourite meal. Are there things that your family has had to go without since shopping has been more difficult? How does it feel to be hungry? Can you imagine how it for people in our country and in other parts of the world, who never have enough to eat? Give thanks to God for the food your family has eaten today.



## PRAYER

Dear God,  
We thank you for the food we eat.  
We thank you for the people who grow and make it,  
for those who transport it and keep their shops open  
so that we can buy what we need.  
Help us not to be greedy or wasteful.  
Bless those who are hungry today  
and show us, and other people, how we can help.  
Amen



## ACTION

Decide as a family on one or more items that you can donate to the food bank next time you go to the supermarket.



# #PrayerAndCare ...WHEN IT'S TIME TO SAY SORRY

Living together can be difficult and sometimes we need to say sorry to God and to one another. Say the Lord's Prayer together giving special attention to the two lines 'forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors':

## SCRIPTURE READING: Matt hew 6:9-13

Our Father in heaven,  
Hallowed be your name,  
Your kingdom come,  
Your will be done,  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts,  
As we also have forgiven our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from the evil one.

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## ACTIVITY

Prepare a bowl of water. Find a stone, from your garden or when you are out walking. Each family member takes it in turn to think of something that they have done, or not done, in the last week that they would like to say sorry for.

If you feel able, you can say out loud what it is. Put your stone carefully into the water. Notice how much brighter and stronger its colour becomes. When we say sorry, God and other people forgive us and can become brighter and stronger people.



## PRAYER

*Dear God,  
Thank you that you forgive us when we say sorry.  
Help us to forgive one another  
and love each other just like you love us.  
Amen*



## ACTION

Think of something you can do to make up for whatever you did wrong. It might be helping with the housework, making a cup of tea or writing a sorry card to the person you upset.

