

How to pray for 60 minutes

If you are not used to praying on your own for a length of time, here are some ideas to help you structure the time and get used to the rhythm of it.

IDEA 1:

Choose a passage of Scripture such as a Psalm, or the reading set for the week of prayer (Deuteronomy 6:4-9)

- i) Commit the time to the Lord through prayer, asking him to open his word to you, that you might have your spiritual eyes and ears opened.
- ii) Read the passage through several times slowly. Jot down or underline words or phrases that stand out to you. Consider who the passage was originally written to.
- iii) Spend some time in quiet, reflecting on what God may be saying to you.
- iv) Respond through prayers of praise for God's presence and his guidance. You could write down what you've learnt or what you believe God is calling you/ us to do.

IDEA 2:

Take the guide for prayer for the day (set each day by a different church. It will be shared by your church and also you can find it at www.christchurchdownend.com)

- i) Begin with a time of praise and thanksgiving to God
- ii) Pray through the issues raised in the guide. Perhaps divide up the suggestions and spend 5 – 10 minutes on each one.
- iii) Use newspapers/ online news/ local newsletters/ your church news or online information to help you reflect and pray deeper into the themes mentioned.
- iv) Make yourself a prayer diary or add to your prayer journal with prompts to pray for anything you feel God is leading you to focus on.

IDEA 3:

Go on a prayer walk. (Alone or in company)

- i) Decide on a route – it could be to do your usual walk route, or is God drawing you to somewhere else? Pray before you set off, that the Lord will open your eyes and ears to see him at work. Pray that you will meet who he wants you to meet. Wrap up warm!
- ii) As you walk, imagine that God is walking beside you, showing you things that on your own you might have missed. Pray for the homes, the businesses, the services you pass. Consider what goes on inside. Pray for the natural environment and the people who look after it. Give thanks for the beauty you see, and sense God's sadness where there is ugliness or neglect – but also be prepared for God to show you beauty in unexpected places.
- iii) Sense where he wants you to linger and look closer, or if he is drawing you to smile at or speak to someone.
- iv) You could use your phone to take photos or record voice memos of ideas. Or when you return, jot down impressions and ideas for prayer.

IDEA 4: Engage your creativity in one or more of these ideas:

- i) Listen to a song or songs that uplift you. Soak in the music; dance; rest, whatever you sense will bring you closest to the Father.
- ii) Write your own song, psalm or poem inspired by the theme of the day or a passage of Scripture.
- iii) Print out a bible colouring verse or draw and colour your own.
- iv) Do something creative that you haven't done for ages: painting, embroidery, construction, planting, baking... As you do so, invite God into the process and keep a conversation with him. Perhaps turn off usual distractions of radio, music, tv and listen to your own thoughts and to your actions as you work with your hands. Enjoy his companionship and his joy in creating with you and through you.