

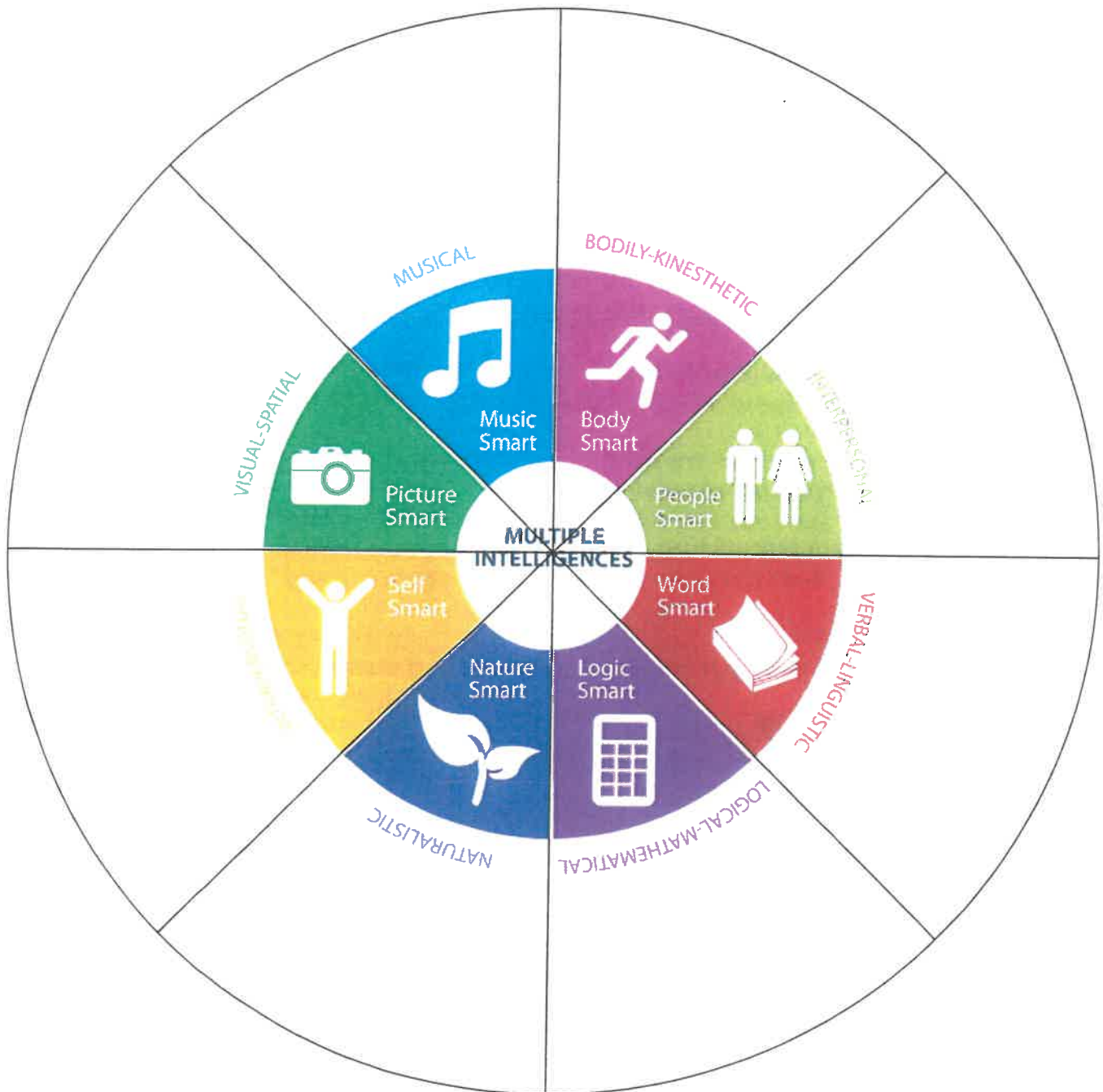
The Art & Soul of Praying

with Rev. Dr. Chris Denny, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Columbia, SC

"The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective" – James 5:16

Theory of Multiple Intelligences

Howard Gardner of Harvard has identified eight distinct intelligences. This theory has emerged from recent cognitive research and "documents the extent to which students possess different kinds of minds and therefore learn, remember, perform, and understand in different ways," according to Gardner (1991). According to this theory, "we are all able to know the world through language, logical-mathematical analysis, spatial representation, musical thinking, engagement in nature, the use of the body to solve problems or to make things, an understanding of other individuals, and an understanding of ourselves."



The Lord's Prayer

Learn motions to this familiar prayer, and think about what the words mean.
Practice the motions through once, and then do them all together as you say the pray.

Our Father

(reach one hand up to heaven)

Who art in heaven

(raise the other hand up to heaven)

Hallowed by thy name

(bring hands down and together, as if praying)

Thy Kingdom come

(one arm out to the side)

Thy will be done

(other arm out to the other side)

On earth

(point open hands down toward the earth)

As it is in heaven

(bring hands pointing up toward heaven)

Give us this day our daily bread

(pretend break a piece of bread)

And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors

(pretend to wash hands)

And lead us not into temptation

(hold flat palm out in front of body in a "stop" gesture)

But deliver us from evil

(move stop hand to the side, as if opening a door)

For thine is the kingdom

(cup your hands in a circle as if making a crown on head)

The power

(make strong arms)

and the glory for ever

*(raise outstretched hands above head in a V shape
and spin all the way around)*

Amen

(Bring your hands down and together as if praying)

BODY PRAYER

Stand with your feet about shoulder width apart.

Begin gently to transfer weight from your left to your right foot.

Gradually rock in a more exaggerated way, until you feel where you are almost off balance.

There will be a feeling in the middle of your torso indicating your center of balance.

Experience your feet as rooted in the earth below

("as we are being rooted and grounded in Christ's love").

Raise your hands over your head.

Stretch to the sky above

("For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways from your ways.")

Ask to be made open, so that God's Light can stream through you.

Open your arms wide ("as far as the east is from the west"),

embracing all that this day promises to offer.

Widen the stretch of your arms to **include those close to you** in your prayer-family, friends, neighbors, etc.

Widen the stretch a little more to **include others who touch your life** or for whom you are responsible - colleagues, clients, fellow parishioners, etc.

Widen it a little more to **reach out to those who are difficult to love**, those who have hurt you.

Bend over from the waist (gently!),

making a table of your body.

Reach your arms out toward the far horizon giving to God the gifts you bring today.

Drop your head and arms downward (gently!)

in a gesture of **relinquishing and letting go**.

Letting go of sins and all that burdens you.

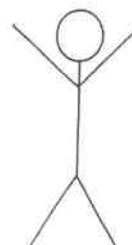
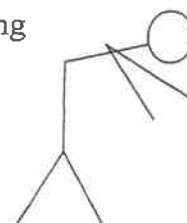
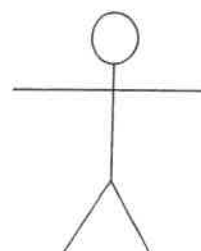
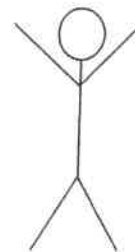
With each exhalation, relax your body a little more.

Come back up again gently, one vertebrae at a time.

Raise your palms heavenward in an expression of **gratitude**.

Lift your hands in thanksgiving for all the gifts of your life.

Optional: Take some moments to allow your body to move in any form of spontaneous prayer that feels right. Give yourself the safety and privacy to let your body take the lead and express what comes from within.



Prayer Walk

Gently stretch

your legs,

your arms,

relax your shoulders

Breathe deep and release.

breathe deep and release.

Close your eyes.

Let go. Let go. Let go more.

When you are ready,

Open your eyes to the world around you.

Ask God to show you something that is important for you to see.

It may be small or insignificant to others...

anything that for you holds meaning.

As you walk,

be aware of the rhythms

of your breathing

of your stride,

of your arc of your arms as they swing naturally.

Listen for more than words.

Pray for what you see... what you experience...

as you pass a room, pray that it would be a place of love and joy

as you pass an office, pray for their work and ministry

as you pass a water fountain, thank God for the gift of living water and

pray for those who thirst

as you pass a kitchen, give thanks for daily bread

pray for those who hunger

Pray for what you see... what you experience...

When you finish your walk,

Reflect back on your experience.

Use journaling or drawing to capture your experience.

Walking the Labyrinth

Before entering the labyrinth

Quiet yourself

Become still and attentive

Notice the rhythm of your breath, in and out.

When you are ready,

Enter the path.

Walk purposefully.

Observe the process.

As you move toward the center,

Let go of your thoughts.

If they won't let go, don't let that hinder you.

If others are on the path with you,

Feel free to step off the path and go around them.

You may acknowledge each other with a smile or a touch as you pass,
or you may maintain your focus by refraining from eye contact.

When you reach the center,

Become aware of God's presence, God's healing, God's voice

Listen for God's Spirit, God's breath.

What does God want you to hear or feel?

As you are ready,

Retrace your steps.

Carry with you any insights or blessings you have received.

You are carrying God's grace with you.

As you exit,

Give an acknowledgement of ending.

Such as "**Amen.**"

After walking the labyrinth,

Reflect back on your experience.

Use journaling or drawing to capture your experience.

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Patterns for Praying

ACTS (L) Praying

A – Adoration/Praise

C – Confession of Sin

T – Thanksgiving/gratitude

S – Supplication/intercession

L – Lament/Crying out of distress

5 Finger Praying



Examen:

At the End of the Day
and thinking of tomorrow.

- Today, I felt good when...
- Today, I did not feel good when...
- Forgive me, God, and help me to...
- "Thank you God, for my family and friends and for..."

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A Way into Contemplative Praying using Psalm 46:10a

Be still and know that I am God

Be still and know that I am

Be still and know

Be still

Be

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WORKSHOP PLAN:

Time	Duration	Activity	Needed
0	5min	Welcome	
5	5min	Body Praying	<i>Space & handouts</i>
	5min	reflect	<i>What are some things you noticed?</i>
15	5min	like a .. poem	<i>Praying is like a... cards/pencils</i>
20	15min	MI & Prayer	<i>MI Worksheet</i>
35	5min	Picture Pairs	<i>Pairs/Triads, pictures</i>
	5min	reflect	<i>What are some things you noticed?</i>
45	5min	5 Figure Praying	<i>Handout</i>
	5min	reflect	<i>What are some things you noticed?</i>
55	12min	Pray as you go	<i>Smartphone, speaker</i>
67	5min	Read poem	<i>Cards from earlier</i>
73	2min	Benediction	<i>sing</i>
Review other handouts			

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Intro: What is Praying?

- Connecting with God; Encountering God; Being in relationship with God
- Our definition of Praying is shaped by our understanding of who the God is who hears our praying and who we are who pray.
- Our hearts speaking love to the very loving heart of God.
- Both something we do and something we receive.
- We pray because God invites us to pray, indeed, “**God is the breath beneath our breathing**” (quoting Rev. Dr. Martha Moore-Keish in her book *Christian Prayer for Today*)

Some Types of Praying

- Adoration (Isaiah 6:3)
- Confession (Psalm 51)
- Thanksgiving (Psalm 100)
- Supplication (I Kings 3:6-9)
- Lament (Psalm 22, Lamentations)
 - All of the above can be corporate or individual

4 Acts of Praying

- We speak.
- God listens.
- God speaks.
- We listen.

(thoughts from Walter Wangerin Jr's
The Four Acts of Prayer)

Does God answer praying?

- Yes, but not always the way we want
- Sometimes yes
- Sometime not yet, not now
- Sometimes yes in a different way
- Sometimes a profound NO

What does praying do?

- Change God?
- Change us?
- Release power for change?
- Enable us to become the answer to praying?

Some Ways to pray

- Words
 - Scripture
 - Headlines
 - Prayer books
 - Journaling
- Silence & Contemplation
- Images & Icons & Mandalas (coloring)
- Bodily
 - Labyrinth
 - Movement
 - Exercise
- *Examen* – French for Examination
 - Share High, Low --- One good thing, One Bad thing
 - Where did you see God at work today? Where do wish you had seen God at work today?
- Music
- Nature
- Acts of Compassion and/or Social Justice
- Solo voice
- With other voices

Some Tools to help us pray

- Almostdailyprayer.com
- Pray-as-you-go.org
- Taize
- Adult Coloring books
- Labyrinthlocator.com
- Bible
- Hymnal

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RESOURCES

<http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/arts/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/>

<http://www.textweek.com/>

<http://www.wingclips.com/>

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