

CREATION
FEST

RHYTHMS
OF
FAITH
Prayer

A RHYTHMS GUIDE BY CREATION FEST

MAY 2023

RHYTHMS OF FAITH

This summer at Creation Fest, we will be exploring Rhythms of Faith. These monthly rhythm guides are designed to explore a particular aspect of what it means for us to walk in daily rhythms. In our third guide, we'll be exploring Rhythms of Prayer.

"LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY"

LUKE 11:1

Our prayer is that these guides would enable you to find new ways to rest deep in the rhythm of the created and creating God, the one who has designed us for relationship and is walking daily with us.



A RHYTHMS GUIDE PREPARED BY

Zach Vestnys and the Creation Fest team
ZACH VESTNYS - MAIN STAGE SPEAKER AND ARTIST 2023

RHYTHMS OF PRAYER

in Scripture

One of the most note-worthy features of the life of Jesus was the way it was defined by prayer. More than miracles, more than teaching, His followers observed how the source and power of His remarkable life was prayer. So the request of those closest to Him was that He teach them to pray.

This is the greatest need and longing of Jesus' followers today. Many of us have read the stories of what God has done through prayer. We've heard the promises of what God will do if we pray. But we still live with a deep sense that there is more to be desired regarding prayer in our lives. As we bring these longings to the Lord, let's make the request of Jesus' first disciples ours today and say, "Lord, teach us to pray." Let's listen and look at the life of Jesus on the pages of Scripture and seek for His life of dependence on God in prayer to be formed in us.

WAYS TO PRACTISE

Rhythms of Prayer

I was raised in a Christian tradition where a formal approach to prayer was often seen as something to be suspicious of. Making a formula out of prayer was religious and lacked any spiritual significance. Prayer was seen as more spiritual if it was spontaneous. But I have noticed what many others have known for some time. A vibrant, fulfilling prayer life is usually the right blend of strategy and spontaneity. As we talk about the rhythms of prayer, I want to give you a picture and then a practical way to practice what will bring new depth, freedom, and power to your life in prayer.

THE PICTURE

The picture is of Abraham ascending a mountain in Genesis 22 to do what you and I consider unimaginable. God had called him to offer his only son on an altar. The text says that Abraham told his son Isaac that they were going to worship, and we can see a powerful picture of prayer. Abraham hears from God, and as he responds in obedience, he knows that his journey requires preparation. He needs his son, the wood, fire, ropes to bind the sacrifice, and a knife to make the offering. In fact, at one point, Isaac sees all of these preparations, making him wonder why they have everything needed for the offering except a lamb. But even as Abraham prepares to go through with what we cannot comprehend, he remains open to God. Thus there is a beautiful spontaneous change of plans at the most crucial moment. God speaks, Abraham hears, Isaac is saved, God's provision is revealed, and Abraham's heart communes with his heavenly Father in a way that is so personal and profound. This presents a powerful picture of how the rhythms of prayer can look in our lives. The right blend of strategy and spontaneity. What would it look like to have a strategy for prayer that opens us to the spontaneous working of the Spirit?

FIRST, A WORD ABOUT STRATEGY:

We often need a better strategy to succeed in prayer. It is too easy to wander aimlessly. Our minds wander, and we repeatedly say the same thing and are easily distracted and discouraged. So it seems that the simple strategy of having a purposeful place and time set aside to pray, an appointed place to meet with God, will allow us to be much more successful in prayer. Another strategic preparation is to bring words, whether praying through Scripture, or prayer books, that will fill our minds with fuel to burn in the process of prayer, like the wood that Abraham brought for the altar.

A WORD ABOUT SPONTANEITY:

With all the right strategies, we still need a spark. For our prayers to not become monotonous and repetitious, we need to be ready in the moment for God to spontaneously speak and reveal His heart so that we can commune with Him. It is only in knowing that we are in the presence of the living God that our prayer times come to life.

THE PRACTISE

To make this as practical as possible, I recommend the following practice of rhythms of prayer in your daily life. Remember that these are recommendations, and you are encouraged to supplement, expand, or substitute these suggestions with anything that will enrich your time in prayer.

TIMES:

Set aside three times daily to pray (morning, mid-day, and evening). Start with something realistic and easily achievable to grow your capacity and excitement. I recommend just 5 minutes, to begin with. Let the first minute be in silence and then four minutes following where you are offering your heart in prayer.

WORDS:

Don't come empty-handed. Have your bible or a prayer book. As you read the words of others, pay attention to the sparks that start to ignite. The words of others will often spark spontaneous thoughts that become personal prayers. In this way, formal prayers become the fuel for the prayers flowing from our hearts.

MY TOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO HELP YOU WITH THIS PRACTICE ARE:

1. The Bible
2. Phyllis Tickle's "The Divine Hours – A Manual for Prayer"
3. The "Lectio 365" App

As I write this, I'm praying that you will be inspired to seek new rhythms of prayer and that the strategy and spontaneity of your prayer life will lead you to more profound experiences of communion with our heavenly Father.

RHYTHMS OF PRAYER

Resources and Tools

ENGAGE WITH LECTIO 365 AND PRAY EVERY DAY WITH 24-7 PRAYER

Turn your biggest distraction (your phone) into a place of prayer. Inspired by Lectio Divina, Lectio 365 is a way of meditating on the Bible that's been used by Christians for centuries: follow daily Bible readings, thoughts and prayers that follow a simple P.R.A.Y rhythm: P:ause to be still. R:ejoice with a Psalm and R:eflect on Scripture. A:sk for God's help Y:ield to His will in your life. On Sundays, stop to pray a special Sabbath prayer of rest, and journey through special seasons including Advent, Lent and current events.

[LECTIO 365 AND 24 PRAYER](#)

SIGN UP FOR CREATION FEST PRAYER NEWSLETTER

Sign up to the Creation Fest Prayer Newsletter for monthly updates on what's happening at Creation Fest, from major festival updates to our school and youth work whilst being inspired by some of the great moves of God. This is a great way to partner with us as you join us in seeking the heart of God for our community to the praise of His glory.

[SIGN UP FOR THE CF PRAYER NEWSLETTER](#)

WAYS TO PRACTISE

Rhythms of Prayer

WITH FAMILIES

Exploring the rhythms of faith with our families is one of the most important parts of our spiritual journey. Alive Family Worship resources help families set aside precious time to pray together. This resource has practical and creative ways to engage in prayer with your family.

ALIVE FAMILY WORSHIP

We also love the tools available from Lectio for Families, a free app for families to do together. It features daily Bible readings, a weekly memory verse, engaging questions to pause and talk about, and prompts for reflection and prayer.

The app can be downloaded by parents and carers onto a mobile device. Families can then choose to either listen to the audio content together, wherever and whenever they are together, or they can read it as they pass the device to each other.

LECTIO FOR FAMILIES

PARTNERS WHO CELEBRATE

24-7 Prayer is an international, interdenominational prayer movement, with a vision to revive the church and rewire the culture through non-stop night and day prayer. Starting in 1999, a simple student-led prayer vigil went viral and groups all over the world joined in to pray. Now, thousands of communities have taken part in 24-7 Prayer in churches, communities and cities in over half the countries on earth.

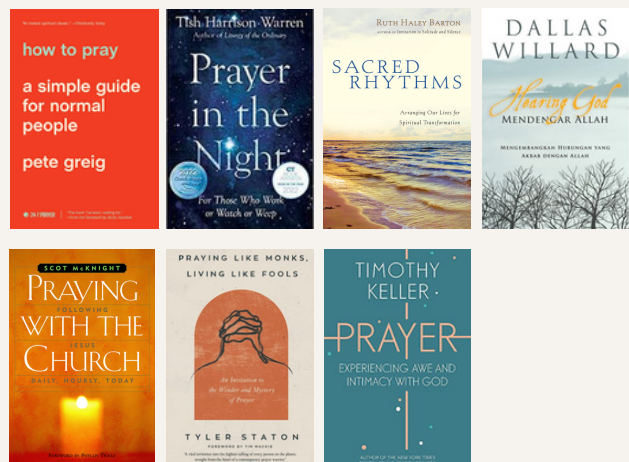
24-7 PRAYER

Carry The Love exists to reach a lost generation with the message of Jesus and activate believers to a lifestyle of love and evangelism. They are running all of our youth venue worship and afternoon teachings at Creation Fest this summer.

CARRY THE LOVE

BOOKS TO READ

How to Pray by Pete Greig
Prayer in the Night by Tish Harrison Warren
Sacred Rhythms by Ruth Haley Barton
Hearing God by Dallas Willard
Praying with the Church by Scot McKnight
Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools by Tyler Staton
Prayer by Timothy Keller



RHYTHMS OF FAITH

At Creation Fest this summer, our time will include an opening session from Zach Vestnys on the Rhythms of Prayer as we consider what it means to live in relationship with the God who loves us, longing for the new creation and working towards restoration in what God has given us. See you there, 3-6 August 2023 and find out more at creationfest.org.uk.

3-6 AUGUST 2023
ROYAL CORNWALL EVENTS CENTRE, CORNWALL
CREATIONFEST.ORG.UK

**If prayer is “beating on heaven’s door with
bruised knuckles in the dark” (Buttrick),
today is a good day to invite my friends to
knock on heaven’s door with me.**

Sarah Yardley