

PRAYING THE NEWS



Session 1: Prompted to Pray

Leader Pages

Leader Notes & Preparation

HERE IS THE WEBLINK & PASSWORD TO ACCESS ALL RESOURCES

Webpage: <https://prayerbench.ca/praying-the-news/>

Password: 27NewsStudy

You will need:

- a small table to create a focal area.
- plain newsprint or newspaper to cover your table.
- enough pages of a newspaper for each participant to have one or more.
- Advent candles to light each week. Other Advent symbols, but not a Nativity set (session 3).
- markers
- a bible, or the passage printed from Bible Gateway.

Things to do:

- Download the Audio Recording #1 from the Study webpage. Test to see if you need speakers for your laptop so all can hear.
- Download and photocopy Audio Script #1. Some listeners hear better when they have words and it is helpful for folk who find it hard to hear the recordings. Some like to take the script home for further study.
- Download and photocopy Participant Page #1. It has the questions and Steve's reflection.
- Read through the Group Spiritual Practice so you are familiar with it and able to lead it comfortably.
- Decide if you would like a song, hymn or chant to take you into the group spiritual practice.

This session is designed for one hour but you can adapt it for a longer or shorter time.

Preparing the Space

You may wish to create an "altar-table" and cover with a newspaper page (or use Advent-coloured fabric or burlap.) Place several folded newspaper pages on the table. There should be at least a page for each participant. Have a basket of markers nearby. You may want to light an Advent candle. If so, light the candle before participants arrive. It is already shedding light on the newspapers. Place other Advent symbols from your tradition on the table. It's important to build an image of news alongside Good News of the gospel.

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Gathering

As participants arrive, invite them to write their name on the newsprint or newspaper and set down their phones or devices. They become an image of our source for news. Participants can use them, if they wish, during the Group Spiritual Practice.

Check In

This is a time for participants to check in, make themselves present to the group and share their voice. There is no cross-talk or discussion. If the group does not know each other well, begin by sharing names. It is often helpful if you as leader begin.

Ask: What is one thing you waited for that you would say was truly worth the wait?
Go round the circle.

Norms

Take five minutes as a group to discuss the norms or expectations that would make this group a good experience for all. Ask questions like these: What helps you get the most out of a group like this? What helps you feel comfortable in a small group? What agreements help make this time safe and the best it can be for all of us? Record the responses.

Centering

Read: 1 Timothy 2:1-3 (preferably from the Message Bible.)
See Bible Gateway: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Timothy+2%3A1-3&version=MSG>

Silence: Allow silence for reflection.

Prayer for the Media: Adapt as desired.

(Free online resources from The Sanctuary - <http://www.thesanctuarycentre.org/>).

God who spoke the world into being and communicates with us still today;

We give you thanks for writers, producers, broadcasters and journalists, and all who work in the media. We thank you for their creative skills and technical abilities, and their persistence in seeking after truth. We ask that they may have wisdom, integrity, insight and judgement in their work.

May they be a voice for the powerless, a challenge to the powerful; bringers of knowledge and clarity to an uncertain and confused world. Help them to reach for the

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highest professional standards, especially when budgets are stretched, time is tight, and competition increasing. May they resist the temptation to follow the consensus, jump to easy conclusions, pander to prejudice or cut corners.

Help us, who read, watch, listen and contribute to the media, to play our part by being wise and discerning, so that truth and beauty will be the hallmarks of our media. We offer these prayers in the Name of the One who brought the Good News, declared himself as the Truth, and gave Himself for a world in need. Amen.

Listening to the Audio Recording

Prompted to Pray

Before listening to the Audio Recording #1, you may wish to ask the group if they want 3-5 minutes of silence at the end of the recording for journaling or jotting down notes.

Questions for Conversation

Choose 2-3 questions that are appropriate to your group and the time you have.

1. What did you hear in the recording that spoke to you today?
2. What do you think? Can praying the news make the world a more peaceful place, a more loving place?
3. If Jesus came to bring Good News, why is there still so much "bad news?" How do you hold together the message of Advent and the day's news?
4. The saying about 'praying with the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other' is attributed to the theologian Karl Barth. How do you understand this saying?
5. Refer to the participant page and read Steve Berube's reflection on praying the news. Has there been a particular news event that prompted you to pray and compelled you to action? What about the event caused you to pray?
6. In this time of waiting, what are some ways to keep your heart soft as you listen to the news?

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Group Spiritual Practice The Three Essential Prayers

You may want to begin or end the group spiritual practice with a song, hymn or chant.

Pass out a newspaper page to each participant or invite them to take up their phone or other device to read a news app. You might want to say something like this: The writer Anne Lamott wrote a book called: Help, Thanks, Wow: The Three Essential Prayers. Take five minutes to scan your newspaper or online news mindful of these three prayers. Choose one headline to share in a group prayer. It might evoke a "help" prayer or petition. It might be a prayer of gratitude or thanks. It might be a prayer of praise or wow.

Allow about five minutes to find a story or news event. Be aware of a story that seems to invite your attention.

When everyone has a headline from one of the three essential prayers, gather in a circle. Invite the group to a moment of silence. As leader, begin the prayers by saying Help, thanks or wow and then reading the headline that invited your attention. The person on your right continues the prayer, simply saying help, thanks or wow and reading their headline.

Amen.

** End by inviting participants to bring in a cherished Christmas tree ornament for the next session.*

Closing Prayer

May this truth be always on our hearts
That the God who breathed this world into being
Placed stars into the heavens
And designed a butterfly's wing
Is the God who entrusted life
to the care of ordinary people
became vulnerable that we might know

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how strong is the power of Love
A mystery so deep it is impossible to grasp
A mystery so beautiful it is impossible to ignore.
Let us pray in silence and feel the Mystery. *(Pause)*
Amen.

(Unknown Source)

Notes

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Session 2: A Lens for Listening

Leader Notes & Preparation

You will need:

- colourful paper (think scrapbooking papers!) cut into 3"x3" squares and folded in half. It should be blank inside. Prepare prayer cards, (at least one for each participant) reflecting concerns for current world issues. See "An Intentional Practice of Praying for the World" on the study webpage. For prayer ideas, see the World in Prayer website. <http://worldinprayer.org/> There is also a page of prayer examples on the webpage.
- You may want to bring a current newspaper.
- a candle if you wish to have one lighted during the session. Some loved ornaments for the table
- markers
- a bible, or the passage printed from Bible Gateway.

Things to do:

- Download the Audio Recording #2 from the Study webpage.
- Download and photocopy Audio Script #2. Some listeners hear better when they have words and it is helpful for folk who find it hard to hear the recordings. Some like to take the script home for further study.
- Download and photocopy Participant Page #2. It has the questions and a reading for the group spiritual practice.
- Read through the Group Spiritual Practice so you are familiar with it and able to lead it comfortably.
- Decide if you would like a song, hymn or chant to take you into the group spiritual practice.

This session is designed for one hour but you can adapt it for a longer or shorter time.

Webpage: <https://prayerbench.ca/praying-the-news/>

Password: 27NewsStudy

Preparing the Space

If you created an "altar-table" you might want to add a world map, an atlas or other symbol of the world. Place 2-3 of your loved ornament on the table. Have a basket of beautiful papers for the prayer cards and markers nearby.

You may want to light another candle. If so, light the candle before participants arrive. It is already shedding light on the world prayers.

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Gathering

As participants arrive, invite them to note on the newsprint or newspaper on the "altar-table" a brief response to this question. What news story struck closest to home for you this week? Did it evoke a Help, Thanks, Wow, or other response?

Check In

This is a time for participants to check in, make themselves present to the group and share their voice. There is no cross-talk or discussion. If the group does not know each other well, begin by sharing names.

Ask participants to show their ornament and share a brief story about why it is so loved. *Go round the circle.*

Norms

Review the norms and ask if there are any additional ones to add.

Centering

Read: John 3:16 - read it a second time with great emphasis on the words, "so loved."
Silence: Allow silence for reflection.

Reflective Prayer

Earth, so loved.
There is so much we can't say about God.
There is so much we can't write about Incarnation.
We turn to the language of soul to give flesh
to a deep ancient sacred loving touched in us.
God so loved
the world
that
God so loved that
God said yes to earthly becoming,
making the invisible, visible
making the Divine, accessible.

We are getting ready to celebrate, not a once and one time event,
but a continual unfolding of Love Divine,
an on-going love affair.
Earth resounds with its heartbeat.

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There is probably no space where God is not
but this fragile Earth,
where loving is so costly,
is a brilliant place to express love.
So loved that.

(Written by Janice MacLean and used with permission from Advent Unwrapped.
2015 - <http://www.adventunwrapped.ca/>)

Listening to the Audio Recording

A Lens for Listening with Steve Berube

Before listening to the Audio Recording #2, you may wish to ask the group if they want 3-5 minutes of silence at the end of the recording for journaling or jotting down notes.

Questions for Conversation

Choose 2-3 questions that are appropriate to your group and the time you have.

1. What did you hear in the recording that spoke to you today?
2. Recall some of the shared news stories (or others): How does asking, "Where is God in this story?" affect what you hear?
3. Again, recall some news stories. Think about who is affected indirectly in the story. Whose voice are we not hearing? How are other-than-human creatures affected? Can you think of examples where, as Steve, says, "the media carries a bias that is tilted toward power and privilege."
4. What are some of the lenses you use to listen to the news? What do you think is "fake news?" How might the label "fake news" be used to support a particular bias?
5. When you listen to news, who do you feel yourself drawn towards? Who do you feel a resistance toward? Sometimes our mind creates an "us" and "them" or a "good" and "bad" mentality. How can we seek to understand the perspective of another?
6. What is one thing you might do this week (or Advent) to live more fully in a world God so loves?

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Group Spiritual Practice

An Intentional Practice of Praying for the World

You may want to begin or end the group spiritual practice with a song, hymn or chant. Invite the participants to take one of the prayer cards from the basket.

You might want to say something like this: It is yours to carry in your pocket or place in a spot that will remind you to pray. Perhaps you will be called to study the place or situation on your prayer card. Perhaps other action will rise in you. This is your prayer for the world.

Divide the participants into two groups. (1) and (2) and read the words on the participant handout.

(1) As people of faith, we hope for a world of peace, justice, fair distribution of resources, respect for all of creation, respect for all peoples...

(2) Everyday we hear stories and see images of the many places in our world where there is pain, suffering, hunger, violence, disasters, despair....

(1) And we hear God's call for *prayer and action* to bring hope and healing to these places of brokenness and pain.

(ALL) Prayer and action... two sides of the same coin.

(2) One way of offering prayer for each particular issue might be to simply take the words of your prayer card into your heart each time your eyes rest on it, and with your in-breath, hold it in God's love and light, and with your out-breath, release it as you imagine it joining God's prayer.

(1) Over and over, little bursts of prayer energy, released into the universe.¹

In a time of quiet, invite each participant to pray aloud the words on their card.

The group might decide to write additional prayers and take a basket of "prayers for the world" to the next worship service and invite the faith community to share this practice of prayers for the world. See the brochure, "Praying for the World" on the study webpage. Amen.

¹ Written by Marilyn Burrell in the "Praying for the World" brochure prepared for Sackville United Church, Sackville NB

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Closing Prayer

You may want to end by singing or listening to the Canticle of the Turning. See <https://youtu.be/F9QeTmRCpW4> (also posted in the resource section.)

Notes

Session 3: A Space for Lament While We Await Wholeness

Leader Notes & Preparation

You will need:

- a small table to create a focal area.
- plain newsprint or newspaper to cover your table.
- a current newspaper.
- a candle if you wish to have one lighted during the session. Many tea-lights, depending on Group Spiritual Practice option chosen.
- A NATIVITY Set
- markers
- a bible, or the passage printed from Bible Gateway.
- Depending on option chosen, You might need a number of bibles or Book of Psalms for pairs or triads. If you have them available you might want to have Psalm books like: [Ancient Songs Sung Anew: The Psalms as Poetry](#) by Lynn Baumann or [Psalms for Praying](#) by Nan Merrill. Alternatively, you can print several lament Psalms from <https://www.biblegateway.com> or see also <http://psalmsforpraying.com/>

Things to do:

- Download the Audio Recording #3 from the Study webpage.
- Download and photocopy Audio Script #3. Some listeners hear better when they have words and it is helpful for folk who find it hard to hear the recordings. Some like to take the script home for further study.
- Download and photocopy Participant Page #3. It has the questions and Group Spiritual Practice.
- Read through the Group Spiritual Practice so you are familiar with it and able to lead it comfortably. This spiritual practice might take longer than others. Adjust your time accordingly.
- Decide if you would like a song, hymn or chant to take you into the group spiritual practice.

This session is designed for one hour but you can adapt it for a longer or shorter time.

Webpage: <https://prayerbench.ca/praying-the-news/>

Password: 27NewsStudy

Preparing the Space

If you created an “altar-table” you might want to add a bowl of water, a picture of a tear drop, a newspaper image that makes you sad, or other symbol of the pain of the world. Set up a nativity set in the midst of it.

You may want to light another candle. If so, light the candle before participants arrive. It is already shedding light on the world prayers.

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Gathering

As participants arrive, invite them to pick up the newspaper pages from the altar-table and, using a marker circle a story that hurts their heart.

Check In

This is a time for participants to check in, make themselves present to the group and share their voice. There is no cross-talk or discussion. If the group does not know each other well, begin by sharing names.

The Advent/Christmas stories are full of human struggle and sadness. Is there one figure you are particularly fond of? Why? *Go round the circle.*

Norms

Review the norms and ask if there are any additional ones to add or any that need review.

Centering

Read: Luke 1:78 & 79

Silence: Allow silence for reflection.

Reflective Prayer

The following prayer is from Julia Esquivel's "Threatened with resurrection" - b. 1930, Guatamala, a writer and human rights activist, driven into exile. She holds together Good News and sadness in her poetry.

The Word, for our sake, became poverty clothed as the poor who live off the refuse heap.

The Word, for our sake, became a sob a thousand times stifled in the immovable mouth of the child who died from hunger.

The Word, for our sake, became danger in the anguish of the mother who worries about her child growing into adulthood.

The Word cut us deeply in that place of shame: the painful reality of the poor.

The Word blew its spirit over the dried bones of the churches, guardians of silence.

The Word awoke us from the lethargy which had robbed us of our hope.

The Word became a path in the jungle, a decision on the farm, love in women, unity among workers, and a Star for those few who can inspire dreams.

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The Word became Light,
The Word became History,
The Word became Conflict,

The Word became indomitable Spirit, and sowed its seeds upon the mountain, near
the river and in the valley,
and those of good will heard the angels sing.

Tired knees were strengthened, trembling hands were stilled, and the people who
wandered in darkness saw the light...

The Word became the seed of justice and we conceived peace...

The Word made justice to rain and peace came forth from the furrows in the land.

And we saw its glory in the eyes of the poor transformed into real men and women.

And those who saw the Star opened up for us the path we now follow.

Listening to the Audio Recording

A Space for Lament | Janice MacLean

*Before listening to the Audio Recording #3, you may wish to ask the group if they want
3-5 minutes of silence at the end of the recording for journaling or jotting down notes.*

Questions for Conversation

Choose 2-3 questions that are appropriate to your group and the time you have.

1. What did you hear in the recording that spoke to you today?
2. How might you imagine your favourite Christmas figure responding to what seems like daily "bad news?" How do you understand your calling to pray the news?
3. What makes it difficult to voice our sorrow and bring the anger we experience to prayer or conversation with others?
4. Is there a difference between having our hearts broken and having our hearts broken open? What might this difference look like?
5. How do you pray for enemies?
6. Does your church offer a Longest Night or Blue Christmas service? How might this time help people stay present to the Christmas story? What else might faith communities do to practice lament?

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Group Spiritual Practice

There are two choices here. You will know which is best for your group.

You may want to begin or end the group spiritual practice with a song, hymn or chant.

(1) Praying the Psalms as Intercessory Prayer

Invite the participants to work in pairs or triads. Each group needs a Bible or Book of Psalms or print copy of a lament psalm from one of the websites mentioned in the notes for leaders.

Assign one of the Lament Psalms to each group. Here are some examples of Lament Psalms: Psalm 13, 30, 88, 94, 130, 137, 146

You can refer Participants to the Participant Page for this information.

The Book of Psalms is a prayer book. Sometimes we see ourselves, and our own heartache, in the words of the Psalms. Sometimes we can pray for others by imagining someone who needs the words. When we find our hearts broken open by a situation, we can pray a Psalm on behalf of another who is suffering injustice or violence. We ask who in a news story that I'm aware of needs me to pray this Psalm for them today?

Each pair or triad is invited to:

- 1. Feel free to use a newspaper or news apps on your devices to draw you into a story you want to hold in prayer.*
- 2. Read your Psalm aloud (once or twice).*
- 3. Talk: What feelings, longings, hopes are evoked in you as you pray this Psalm?*
- 4. Discern: Who in this season needs the words of this Psalm (or a portion of this Psalm)? Who have you heard about in a recent news story that might make this Psalm their lament? Use your imagination to put yourself in another's place. On whose behalf will you pray this Psalm this Advent?*

Gather as a circle for a time of prayer. Each pair or triad may read a verse or two of their Psalm and say, "We offer pray on behalf"

For example, in Psalm 94 we read, "They kill the widow and the stranger, they murder the orphan." This might bring to your heart the story of an act of violence against an innocent person or a act of aggression that hurt many, including children. (Be specific about your person, place or situation.) Amen.

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(2) Lighting a Candle is a Prayer

Have a number of tea lights (2-3 for each participant). Sit in a circle.

You might say something like this: You are invited to light a candle for a person, place or situation in your life or the life of our world. You can come forward and name your prayer in words as you light a candle, or simply light a candle holding your prayer in silence.

Closing Prayer

This is no time for a child to be born,
With the earth betrayed by war & hate
And a comet slashing the sky to warn
That time runs out & the sun burns late.

That was no time for a child to be born,
In a land in the crushing grip of Rome;
Honour & truth were trampled by scorn-
Yet here did the Saviour make his home.

When is the time for love to be born?
The inn is full on the planet earth,
And by a comet the sky is torn-
Yet Love still takes the risk of birth. - Madeliene L'Engle

NOTE

Session 4 takes a different format from the previous three. It is offered as a contemplative model for a small group ministry for Praying the News. If there is interest, it might be opened to the community and continued as a monthly gathering in the New Year.

Depending on how you will view or read news together (see page 16), you might ask the group to bring a news story that rests on their hearts from that day.

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Session 4: Praying the News

This session takes a different format from the previous three. It is offered as a contemplative model for a small group ministry for Praying the News. If there is interest, it might be opened to the community and continued as a monthly gathering.

Leader Notes & Preparation

You will need:

- a small table to create a focal area.
- plain newsprint or newspaper to cover your table.
- a current newspapers or news segment to watch together. See choices below.
- a candle if you wish to have one lighted during the session.
- a variety of materials for the time of response. Pencil crayons, clay or play doh, 2-3 pencils or pens, paper, atlas, magazines, informational brochures on any issues currently in the news, any other materials that help evoke creative expressive (prayer beads, shells, stones, icons, buddha boards, paints etc.) See Participant Page or page 17-18 of this guide.
- a Bible or Psalm book.
- Refreshments, if you've decided to end with them.

Things to do:

- Download and photocopy Participant Page #3. It has suggestions for intercessory prayer and creative response.
- Download and photocopy the Participant Evaluation.
- Note the Leader Evaluation is available to complete online.
- Read through the model for Praying the News so you are familiar with it and able to lead it comfortably. There are choices for Intercessory Prayer. See page 14. Choose which one you wish to use with your group.
- Decide if you would like a song, hymn or chant to use to begin or end the session.

This session is designed for one hour but you can adapt it for a longer or shorter time.

Webpage: <https://prayerbench.ca/praying-the-news/>

Password: 27NewsStudy

Preparing the Space

How you set up depends on your space. You might want a circle of chairs to watch the news in whatever format you choose. You might have one table with the materials needed for praying the news. Or you could set up prayer stations.

You may want to keep your altar-table and light a candle. If so, light the candle before participants arrive. It is already shedding light on the world prayers.

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Gathering

When participants gather, briefly describe the format for this gathering. Invite them to fully enter the experience and also open their heart and mind to discern if this might be a small group ministry offered to the community on an on-going basis.

A Model for Praying the News as a Small Group Ministry

Opening

Invite silence for settling in to the presence of the Divine.

You might choose to use the Prayer for the Media used in previous sessions.

You might wish to read a Psalm or scripture reading from the weekly Lectionary.

You might choose to use a contemporary reading or poem.

And/or you might choose to gather with a song or chant.

View or Read the News Together

As a group, view or read the news together. Depending on your resources, you might watch a television segment, listen to hourly news on the radio, stream a segment online from a 24-hour news channel or news streaming site. You might also have a newspaper and invite a time of reading a few articles and headlines aloud or inviting participants to share news stories they have brought.

Individual Prayer Time

Handout the Participant Page and invite time for praying the news. (see page

Intercessory Prayer

Gather as a group. Choice one of the ways to pray together.

(1) Guided Meditation

(In the midst of the news today)

I invite you now to come to stillness.

Say to yourself,

here I am in the presence of God's love and care.

I come with this person in my heart.

I imagine this person surrounded by God's love

In the silence ask that God's desire for that person be fulfilled

There is no need to be more specific.

Now gently release the person into God's care

Give thanks to God in trust.

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And now we pray for a place or situation in our world, our community (*raised for us in news stories today.*)

I imagine this situation or place surrounded by God's love

In the silence ask that God's desire for this place or this situation be fulfilled

There is no need to be more specific.

Now gently release this place or situation into God's care

Give thanks to God in trust.

And now for ourselves.

God's care is very present to us.

We come with the concerns of our own lives.

Who should we be? What should we do? How can we help?

We imagine ourselves surrounded by God's love.

In the silence we ask that God's desire for us be fulfilled.

We gently release our life into God's care.

And we give thanks in trust.

Catherine Smith, <https://hemofthelight.com> (*Italics added*)

(2) Circle Prayer

Share this information with participants: Sometimes we pray out loud with our words. Sometimes we pray inwardly in our heart. We will go around our circle to pray, and you choose whether you pray aloud or in quiet. Whichever way you choose to pray say "AMEN" out loud so the person next to you knows its their turn.

You might want to pray for the person, place or situation in the news story, or behind the news, that you spent time with in the silence or it might be a news story you have in your heart.

Again, remember whether you pray out loud or silently, just say "AMEN" at the end of your prayer. I'll begin and we'll continue with the person on my right.

(2) Prayer with Chant

Begin by singing a chant (one or more.) When the group is quiet and settled, invite prayers "popcorn style" for people, places or situations in the news, and behind the news. After each prayer offered, you may want to sing a chant. Many of the Taize or Iona Community chants are appropriate, such as "O God, Hear My Prayer," or "Stay

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with Me, " or "I Waited." (See Voices United #948-957 and there are many choices in More Voices.)

Closing

End the time of prayer with the Lord's Prayer, a song, or a blessing.

Your small group may want to enjoy refreshments together, complete their evaluation and debrief the experience of Praying the News with a view of offering a Praying the News Small Group Ministry to others in the faith community or wider community.

After you have read the participant evaluation, please complete the Leader's online evaluation. Thank you.

Notes:

PARTICIPANT PAGE Praying the News

This material is also found on Participant Page #4 on the study webpage

As a group you will have time to view or read the news together. After this, there will be a time for individual prayer and response. This offers us space to meet with God in the midst of a hurting world.

You might want to pick one image or story that seems to ask for your heart and attention. You might focus your prayer on it. Even as we focus on one story, one life or one situation, we are bringing Presence and compassion to all.

Your prayers might emerge in art, words, silence or movement. This is your prayerful response. You will not be sharing it with the group.

Here are some suggestions. Read through and see if there is one that is calling to you.

1. Browse the response materials and see if you are attracted to use any of them. Your soul will lead you. Don't worry about "making sense" of your response. You might just want to put colours together, make lines on a sheet, or meditate with clay or play doh. It's about the process of making space for prayer rather than creating a product.

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2. Take a pencil or colouring pencils. Write or decorate single words that come to you as you pray for a person, place or situation – such as comfort, healing or peace. Even if you think you aren't "artistic", you can decorate words and give time and space for your prayer.
3. Pick up a Bible or Psalm book and read the Psalms. As you consider the person, place or situation of your prayer, look for a Psalm you can pray on their behalf. You might want to write out the verses on a small piece of paper and place it where you will be reminded to pray during the week.
4. Use your phone or a computer, or browse any research or informational materials provided, to learn more about a situation in the news. Study is prayer.
5. Write a prayer or poem in response to the news you have heard or read. If you've brought a journal or there are notebooks or note paper provided, write what is in your heart.
6. Sit in silence using breath prayer. Create an affirmation you like or use a verse from the Psalms. "Here/ I am." (Isaiah 6:8 prayer of presence.). "God/Have Mercy." Inhale on the first word, exhale on the other. Let your breath carry you and your prayer during the week.
7. Create a mandala. Bring to heart and mind four prayers for the world for which you desire compassion and healing. Draw or trace a circle on a piece of paper. Divide the circle into four quadrants. In each section, draw an image or design or write words that represents each of your prayers. Slowly fill in the design. Know that you are concentrating time, energy and focus on praying for the world.
8. The Celtic tradition uses this pattern, called a Circling Prayer.
Circle Holy One. (*a person or a place in the news*)
Keep within. (*peace, happiness, or hope etc.*)
Keep without. (*fear, evil, illness....*)
Keep..... near. (*warmth, love, blessings,*)
Keep far. (*injustice, brokenness, suffering.*)

You can fill in the dots with whatever is on your mind to pray for. Memorize your circling prayer.