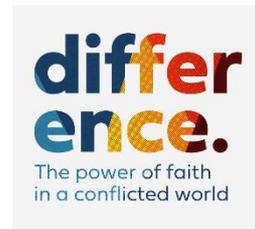




Discipleship at
Leicester Cathedral



THE COMMUNITY OF THE
TREE OF LIFE



DIFFERENCE //

A SUGGESTED 60-MIN PRAYER GUIDE

Below you will find a breath prayer, links to artwork & suggested prayer activities. Please feel free to use what you want. Permission to dip in & out, follow the suggested timings or go at your own pace.

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You may need a Bible, pen and paper, journal, a device with Wi-Fi, selection of stones, clay or play dough. Scroll down to find out more before entering prayer.

INTRO

The Reconciling Leaders Network (RLN) is working to mobilise a generation of peacemakers and reconcilers for a just and flourishing society. As part of this vision, they have produced a 5-session course called [Difference](#), which explores what it means to follow Jesus in a divided and complex world, seeing transformation through everyday encounters.

“Reconciliation is not the ending of all difference, but the transformation of how we deal with difference”
- Archbishop Justin Welby

A transformed world starts with transformed relationships. The Difference Course suggests three habits that help us encounter others well, cross-divides and see society transformed. This month, we are going to use these three habits to shape our prayer.

Habit // Be Present_

Encounter others with authenticity and confidence.

Habit // Be Curious_

Listen to others' stories and see how the world looks through their eyes.

Habit // Reimagine_

Find hope and opportunity in the places where we long to see change.

CENTERING AND SILENCE [5 MINS]

Get into a comfortable posture and pray,

'As we enter prayer now, we pause to be still, slow our breathing, and centre ourselves in the abiding presence of Christ'

Bring your attention to your breath. Treat each breath in as an arrival. Breathe in God's presence. As you breath out, imagine letting go of future worries and responsibilities to God. Become present.

Breathe deeply. You may like to pray this breath prayer,

[AS YOU BREATHE IN] *I am reconciled to God.*

[AS YOU BREATHE OUT] *I say 'yes' to God's call.*

PRAYER HABITS

In each of the following 'prayer habits' sections, there is an invitation to choose your own journey. Go at your own pace. Read the Bible passage in the same version or multiple translations. 'Rest with' or skip over the pieces of art. Reflect and Respond in your own way.

READ_ the parable of the Prodigal Son, found in Luke 15:11–32

REST WITH_ a piece of art based on the parable of the Prodigal Son

REFLECT_ on a couple of questions

RESPOND_ by writing, drawing, thinking and/or creating

PRAYER HABIT // BE PRESENT_ [15 MINS]

Our encounters with others are inseparable from our relationship with Jesus.

READ_

Slowly read the parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15, aloud or in silence.

REST WITH_

Click on the link below to view a painting by N.C. Wyeth called 'The Prodigal Son'

>> <https://collections.brandywine.org/objects/10963/the-prodigal-son?ctx=35f21e98-1289-48a1-ab5a-bef38fbf5a90&idx=134>

REFLECT_

Spend a few minutes asking yourself...

Where do you see 'presence' in the passage or painting?

When have you sensed 'God with you' recently?

RESPOND_

You may like to write down your reflections.

You may like to scribble or doodle your reflections.

You may like to sit in silence with these questions.

You may like to get creative.

Find some stones or rocks and spend some time stacking them – building a memorial to the presence of God. Each time you stack a stone remember a time when you felt God was with you. Thank God for his presence.

PRAYER HABIT // BE CURIOUS_ [15 MINS]

Every person is made in the image of God.

READ_

Slowly read the parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15 again, aloud or in silence.

REST WITH_

Click on the link below to view a painting by Charlie Mackesy called *The Prodigal Daughter and her mother*

>> <https://twitter.com/charliemackesy/status/515570942475374592>

“This is the story of the prodigal daughter – it should really be called the running Father who waited every day for his girl to come home – the daughter who had rejected him so badly – but when he saw her from a long way off – he ran to her and hugged her and kissed her” – Charlie Mackesy

REFLECT_

Spend a few minutes asking yourself...

What reflects 'the image of God' to you, in the passage or painting?

Who has reflected Gods image to you recently, and how?

RESPOND_

You may like to write down your reflections.

You may like to scribble or doodle your reflections.

You may like to sit in silence with these questions.

You may like to get creative. Record your reflections...

Open the 'voice memo' app on your phone, press record and vocalise your reflections. Take some time to listen back.

PRAYER HABIT // REIMAGINE_ [15 MINS]

God is making all things new and we are a new creation, the old has gone and the new has come.

READ_

Slowly read the parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15 for a third time, aloud or in silence.

REST WITH_

Click on the link below to view a painting by *Vie de Jesus Mafa*

>> <https://godspacelight.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/prodigalsonCameroon.jpg>

Vie de Jesus Mafa (Life of Jesus Mafa) was an initiative undertaken in the 1970s to help teach the gospel in Northern Cameroon. French Catholic missionary François Vidil worked with Mafa Christian communities in Cameroon to create an enormous catalogue of paintings depicting the life of Jesus as an African man. The plan was to build a resource that would help Mafa people to teach from the bible in a way that connects with their community.

REFLECT_

Spend a few minutes asking yourself...

Where do you see hope in the passage or painting, what does it look like in practice?

Bring to mind a person or situation you are currently praying for. Use your imagination, what does hope and change look like?

RESPOND_

You may like to write down your reflections.

You may like to scribble or doodle your reflections.

You may like to sit in silence with these questions.

You may like to get creative.

Find some clay or play dough. Spend some time shaping and reshaping the clay in your hands. What does hope look like?

CLOSING PRAYER

Slowly read this prayer, aloud or in silence.

God of creation, who is reconciling all things,
Give us the guts to respond to Your call.
May we hear You gently whispering our name.
We are caught up in Your cosmic purposes
Emphatically entangled with eternity
With a unique gift to offer.

Present. Curious. Reimagined.

God of the people, who has imaged every person,
Give us courage to cross-divides.
May we discover the divine hiding in dissent,
and those we may distrust and disagree with.
Eradicate our echo chambers.
Expose our walls, and
Enlarge our image of You.

God of relationships, whose dynamic dance is love,
Give us grace to navigate disagreement.
May we learn to lean in to tension -
Humbly, holding out empty-hands
Ready to receive, respond and rhyme our strides.
Forging friendships from fractures
Beauty in brokenness.

God of second chances, who has already forgiven us,
Give us strength to practice forgiveness.
May we become more open to the possibilities of forgiveness.
Learning to let go and liberate,
Trusting the trajectory of Your topsy-turvy kingdom.
Teach us to fall upward.

God of transformation, who promises life,
Give us the energy to risk hope.
May we be changed as we challenge values and power structures.
Unlock our imaginations
Unravel our preconceptions
Uncork celebration

For Yours is the present and promised kingdom,
the original and ultimate power,
and the unfolding glory.
Eternally.
Amen.

[Prayer written by Matt Long, October 2021]

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>> Take a moment to give us some feedback about this prayer resource: <https://us19.list-manage.com/survey?u=cbd6384064124b364f971d785&id=86cdc9720a&attribution=false>

>> For more downloadable 60-minute prayer resources: leicestertreeoflife.org/prayer/

>> For more information about Difference Course: difference.rln.global/