

**SOUL
MATES**

IMYC
Irish Methodist Youth and Children's Department

**TO
GE
TH
ER**

**A programme for groups
for Soulmates 2022**

SUNDAY MORNING

A NOTE TO LEADERS:

This time together is designed to help you explore prayer with your children and to then put it into practice. Spend time talking with the group about the what, why and how of prayer and then go do it!

It may not be something that you even find comfortable to do out loud often, but remember our children follow our example - so show them what prayer looks like as you walk and talk. It doesn't have to be long or fancy - just simple conversation with Father God.

If you are up for it - we strongly encourage you to invite the rest of the church family to go for a prayer walk with you and really model what it means to pray together as the family of God - including all the generations!

SESSION OUTLINE:

At Soul Mates this year we have been thinking about the importance of 'Together' and how when we work together and gather as church, something special happens.

We build relationships and community, we support one another, we use our gifts to bless and care for others and we have lots of fun while doing it.

Another thing that we can do together as church that God tells us to do and that we believe makes a difference, is pray! That is what we are going to do now, together!

ASK AND EXPLAIN

ASK: So, what is prayer? (Ask children to answer and write it on Flipchart, get them to write it on a large piece of paper, or maybe draw)

EXPLAIN: When you have a relationship with someone, you want to spend time with them. Sometimes that means just being around them. Other times, it's having a conversation with words. The relationship between people and God works like this, too, and not just for adults. To put it simply, prayer means spending time with God, listening and talking to Him. When you are friends with someone, you might express that friendship by talking and listening. If you don't ever talk to that friend, you don't know what is going on in their life. The more you speak to that friend, the more you understand them, and the closer you become. It's the same with God. If you don't spend time talking with Him, you will not know much about Him. You won't be very close. And the more time you spend apart, the harder it will be to have a strong relationship.

ASK: Who are the people you talk to every day?

Their list most likely includes family members, friends, and teachers.

EXPLAIN: Conversation with God helps keep the relationship going. Challenge children to add God to the list of people we talk to everyday.

ASK: Why do we pray? (Encourage children to have a conversation about why they think we should pray)

EXPLAIN: Children are known for asking this one-word question: why? And although sometimes the answer parents or leaders might like to give is, "because I said so!" that's not the correct answer regarding prayer. The right response is, "because the Bible says so!"

When you're teaching kids what prayer is and telling them they should do it; you have to explain the why. Pointing to God's Word is the best explanation. From the beginning of time, people have been having conversations with God. Back in the Garden of Eden, it was out loud with Adam and Eve. Throughout history, the Bible tells us about people's relationships with God. These were all built through prayer. They talked with God about everything from asking for protection from enemies to praising Him for being the Creator.

ASK AND EXPLAIN

ASK: What does the Bible say about praying? (Take time looking up some of these Bible passages and explaining what they mean)

- **Pray because God listens.**

Jeremiah 29:12 says, "Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you."

- **Pray because it's real, and it works.**

James 5:16 says, "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."

2 Chronicles 7:14 teaches that prayer can change things. When Solomon was making sacrifices to God for the people, God responded to him by saying that if the people would humble themselves and pray, He would forgive and heal them.

- **Pray because Jesus said to do it.**

Jesus modelled how to pray. What is commonly known as the Lord's Prayer can be found in Luke 11 and Matthew 6. Both accounts give a great starting point to show kids to respect the Name of God as they are talking to Him, ask for needs, understand forgiveness, and petition for the temptation to stay away.

- **Pray a lot about many things.**

1 Thessalonians 5:17 simply says, "pray continually." Communication with God is an ongoing mindset. Ephesians 6:18 is a reminder to pray on all occasions about all kinds of things. Even though God already knows what is in people's hearts and minds, He wants us to verbalise it.

- **Pray, to help you when you are worried or anxious.**

Worry can be a huge part of a kid's life. They can learn that by talking to God, they can give their anxiety to Him and be filled with peace instead. (Philippians 4:6-7)

- **Pray even when you think you can't.**

It's not always easy to put into words what you're trying to say, so it's comforting to know the Holy Spirit can do that for you. Romans 8:26 says that the Spirit intercedes and deciphers for those who don't know what to say. That means sometimes it's ok if all we can do is say Hello to God and then tell Him we don't know what to say, or that we are sad, or that we sometimes maybe even cry. God has given us the Holy Spirit who helps us and prays for us too.

PUT INTO PRACTICE

When teaching kids what prayer is, you should give them opportunities to practice it. It's one thing to teach and read about prayer, but another to model what it looks like. Show them by example. It's good for kids to see and hear adults and teens praying. A church setting is a safe environment for kids to learn and practice.

Remember that prayer is also a time for God to speak to us. Sometimes God speaks to us through songs, pictures, other people, creation, the Bible or maybe just through our thoughts.

As you pray, ask God to speak to you and try to listen. God might give you a picture, word, Bible verse or song for someone else.

Again model this and encourage children and adults to listen and share anything God gives them for others.

So let's do it! PRAYER WALK TIME !

If you can, go on a prayer walk around your local community, stopping at places where people are 'Together' and pray for what happens there and that people will know God's presence as they come into relationship with Him.

Take some time to think about where you will go. Get children to draw their own map and identify the places on it that they want to pray. As you walk, talk about God and pray as you go. Stop at specific places and encourage a few people, young and old, to pray.

PRAYER WALK

Here are some ideas of where you might like to stop and prayer points to pray.

SCHOOL:

- For teachers, classroom assistants, cooks, admin staff, bus drivers and lollipop men/women For safety and learning**
- For children to know their value and worth, not just academically**
- For friendships and community**

COFFEE SHOPS/RESTAURANTS/PUBS:

- For those who gather with friends and share life over food**
- For laughter and people to listen**
- For people who are sad or lonely that need someone to see them and help them for the staff and businesses**

COMMUNITY CENTRE/SPORTS CLUBS:

- For laughter and friendships**
- For healthy bodies, hearts and minds**
- For volunteers and coaches who invest time in others**

HOSPITALS:

- For those who are ill; for healing and God's peace**
- For those who have lost people they love**
- For doctors, nurses, surgeons, office staff, cleaners and all who work there.**

CHURCH:

- For people to come to know God**
- For those who know God to be excited about their faith.**
- For community and family relationships to deepen and grow**
- For others to find their identity, belonging and healing in God**
- For fun and laughter**

PRAYER

Draw a map of your area with places where people gather together and where you can stop to pray.



Write down any prayers you have for people or places. Or maybe words or pictures God gives you for people.
