

Breath Prayer

I. Purposes:

- A. To open our hearts to God through breath prayer
- B. To share with each other what transpires for us as we pray.

II. Suggested procedure:

A. Opening (approx. 10 minutes)

1. Light the candle when all are gathered. It reminds us of God's desire to be known by us and of God's presence with us.

2. Review the basics aspects of breath prayer.

Close your eyes and recall the line "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10 RSV). Be still, calm, peaceful, open to the presence of God.

With your eyes closed, imagine that God is calling you by name. Imagine that God is actually asking, "(Your name) what do you want?" Like the blind man on the road to Jericho, Jesus kindly looks you in the eyes and asks, "What do you want from me?"

Give God a simple and direct answer that comes honestly from your heart. Write down the answer. If you have more than one answer, write them down. Your answer may be one word such as peace or love or help. It may be several words or a phrase such as "feel your presence" or "lead me into life." Whatever your answers, they are the foundation of your breath prayer.

Select the name that you are most comfortable using to speak with God. Combine it with your written answer to the question God asked you. Some people may have to compose several prayers before they find one which truly arises from their needs. So look carefully at your prayer. Does it reflect the heart of your yearnings and desires at the time of composition? This is your prayer.

Breathe in the first phrase/word (generally your invocation of God's name) and breathe out the second phrase/word (request or need).

Sample Breath Prayers:

- Jesus, let me feel your love.
- O Lord Show me your way.
- Holy one, heal me.
- Jesus Alleluia, have mercy.
- Holy Wisdom, Guide me.
- Father/Mother (Abba/Amma), let me feel your presence.

B. Leading Breath Prayer

1. Invite participants in begin praying (approximately 20 minutes)

2. Sharing time (approx. 20 minutes) - End the prayer time with "Amen."

Invite sharing about what happened in the prayer time: how God met them in the prayer, or not; what was most helpful in the process; what was most difficult, etc. Whatever happened is what people should relate. The process may have been wonderful for some and not at all good for some, and okay for others. Receive all comments with respect. At the end, ask if there are any insights or questions about the experience of breath prayer.

3. End the sharing time, as time permits, with open prayer within the group or a short closing prayer led by a leader.