

A great source on many topics related to our spiritual lives is the General Board of Discipleship (GBOD) of the United Methodist Church. This week I conclude a multi week series based on the article: "Re-energize Your Prayer Life" written by Joe Iovino and published Feb 20, 2015 at the GBOD website.

Disciple Life

The Wesleyan Way

Week # 27

"Labyrinth Prayer

A labyrinth is another helpful tool for focusing prayers. A labyrinth is a path marked out in a field, painted in a parking lot, or shown on a carpet that you walk while you pray.

While a labyrinth may look like a maze, it is not. It is a single path leading participants into the center, and back out.

While entering the labyrinth, prayers are focused on confession. Participants then pause in the center to read scripture, sing, or worship another way. On the way out of the labyrinth prayers for others, self, and anything else that occupies the mind are offered.

Since labyrinths are not readily available, a finger labyrinth makes a great substitute. You can pray this three-part prayer while slowly tracing the path with your finger. Print a finger labyrinth and give it a try.

Or, if you would rather walk, pray similarly while strolling around your neighborhood or on a nearby hiking trail.

(In case you did not know, the Episcopal church in Big Stone Gap has a labyrinth and the welcome its use by anyone in the community.)

Praying scripture

Another great source of prayer is the Bible. Praying the scriptures has a long tradition among the faithful.

Prayerfully read a passage by stopping every line or so, and praying what comes to mind. This can stretch us to bring before God petitions we might not think of on our own.



Start the
Conversation:
Provoke One
Another in Love

PROVOKING QUESTION:

This week, you are encouraged to ask a church member the following:

**Have you ever prayed while walking in a labyrinth? Would you like to try?
Contact the pastor for more information.**

Praying the Psalms, for example, calls us to address every emotion. Praying Mary's Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) will lead us in prayer for the poor and oppressed. Many scriptures such as Jesus' healings and parables, Paul's letters, and others, may deeply speak to our needs, help us to praise, or remind us of a promise of God.

Pray by checking in with God

You may also pray by simply checking in with God at the end of the day. As you might call a friend or family member just to chat about what is going on in your life, you can have the same conversation with God.

Ignatius of Loyola, a 16th century cleric and theologian, taught what he called the Daily Examen. The Examen asks the believer to share with God that for which you are thankful, moments you recognized God's presence in the events of the day, your shortcomings, and to ask God to prepare you for the day ahead.

Find your way

As there are many ways to communicate with those closest to us, so too there are numerous ways to pray. This list is not comprehensive, but rather a place to begin exploring prayer methods.

Spend some time developing a richer prayer life by finding what works for you. This will allow you to re-energize your conversations with God. "

Carry the cross  **and follow me.**
Luke 14:27, NRSV