

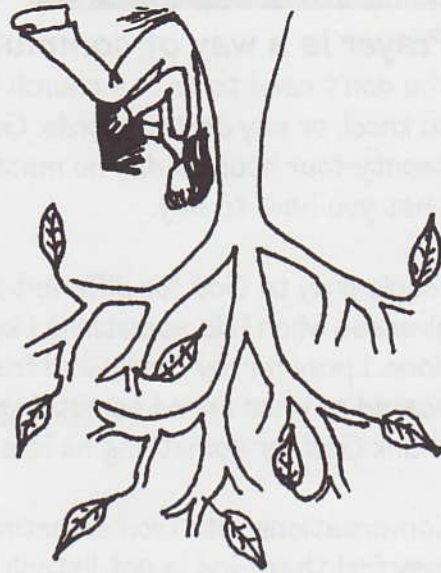
# Spiritual Life



—Psalm 25:4

Make me to know your  
ways, O Lord; teach me  
your paths.

M



SESSION 1

SPIRITUAL LIFE

## Prayer: Talking to God



# words to remember

Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

—Hebrews 4:16

## prayer

**O God, whose Son Jesus is the good shepherd of your people: Grant that when we hear his voice we may know him who calls us each by name, and follow where he leads; who, with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Fourth Sunday of Easter  
*The Book of Common Prayer, p. 225*

COMMENTARY

Prayer is a way of communicating with God.

You don't need to be in a church to pray. You don't have to kneel, or say certain words. God is ready to listen twenty-four hours a day no matter where you are or what you have to say.

People pray to God for different things. I pray for forgiveness when I do something I know I should not have done. I pray for my family and friends. I pray when I'm scared or when I need something. I pray when I want to thank God for something he has given to me.

Conversations with God sometimes feel one-sided. You may feel that God is not listening because you don't get a straight answer or you don't get what you wanted. I prayed that my grandpa would get better, but he died. I prayed for a new CD that I still haven't gotten. Sometimes it seems that God isn't answering your prayers, but maybe you weren't listening hard enough or didn't want to hear the answer.

No matter what the outcome, God is always listening. God loves us and wants us to pray.

—Emily, Grade 9

Youth prayer

Dear Lord, thank you for listening when I pray. I sometimes pray for myself before I pray for others, or I ask for things I don't really need. But no matter how or what I pray for, you always give me your full attention. Help me open my eyes and ears to hear your answer. Help me to be patient when I forget that you may not answer right away. Thank you, Lord, for being there when I need to talk to you. Amen.

—Emily, Grade 9

DAILY DEVOTIONS

reflections

Monday—II Chronicles 6:12-14
Tuesday—Psalm 9:1-2
Wednesday—Matthew 6:5-15

Thursday—Mark 11:24
Friday—Colossians 1:3-4
Saturday—James 5:13-20

voices



Rewards for prayers said by people assembled together are twice those said at home.

Mohammed

If radio's slim fingers can pluck a melody
From night—and toss it over a continent
or sea;

If the petalled white notes of a violin
Are blown across the mountains or the
city's din;

If songs, like crimson roses, are culled
from thin blue air—

Why should mortals wonder if God hears
prayer?

Ethel Romig Fuller

Perhaps I ain't relijus,
But when I say a prayer,
I sort er feel inside er me
That God is always there.

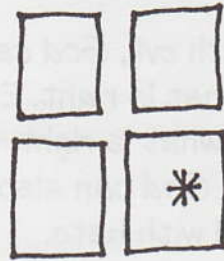
Morgan Shepard



—Psalm 62:5

For God alone my soul  
waits in silence, for my  
hope is from him.

F



SESSION 2

SPIRITUAL LIFE

## Prayer: Praying Alone



# words to remember

Know that the Lord does wonders for the faithful;  
when I call upon the Lord, he will hear me.

—Psalm 4:3

*The Book of Common Prayer, p. 588*

## prayer

Heavenly Father, you have promised to hear what we ask in the Name of your Son: Accept and fulfill our petitions, we pray, not as we ask in our ignorance, nor as we deserve in our sinfulness, but as you know and love us in your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Collect at the Prayers, No. 2  
*The Book of Common Prayer, p. 394*

## COMMENTARY

*Psalm 62 is saying that when you pray, your soul is open to God and to God alone. No matter where you are, God will be there for you watching over you through the good and the bad.*

*When we are faced with evil, God can give us the strength to do what is right. Even when it is hard for us to see what is right, God will help us find the right way. God can also help us find love when we are filled with hate.*

*Like the person who wrote the Psalm, we hope that God will answer our prayers or at least listen to them. God can help us find beauty even when life is dark.*

—Shannon, Grade 9

## Youth prayer

**Lord, watch over me all the days of my life and fill them with joy. When evil comes into my life, give me the strength to turn away. When temptation blinds me, help me to see. And when hate enters the depths of my heart, help me to find love. So I ask you dear God, lift me up when I fall and keep me forever in the beauty of this life and the next to come. Amen.**

—Shannon, Grade 9

## DAILY DEVOTIONS

# reflections

**Monday—Joshua 7:6, 10-11**  
**Tuesday—Psalm 146:1-2**  
**Wednesday—Sirach 39:5-6**

**Thursday—Matthew 6:9-13**  
**Friday—Mark 11:25**  
**Saturday—I John 1:9**

# voices



**[They] pray well who are so absorbed with God that [they] do not know [they] are praying.**

*St. Francis de Sales*

**A memory of yesterday's pleasures, a fear of tomorrow's dangers, a straw under my knees, a noise in my ear, a light in my eye, an anything, a nothing, a fancy, a chimera in my brain, troubles me in my prayer.**

*John Donne*

**Prayer is the burden of a sigh  
The falling of a tear,  
The upward glancing of an eye,  
When none but God is near.**

*James Montgomery*



—John 4:24

God is spirit, and those  
who worship him must  
worship in spirit and  
truth.

G



SESSION 3  
SPIRITUAL LIFE

## Worship: Praising God



# words to remember

I will give thanks to the Lord with my  
whole heart;

I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.  
I will be glad and exult in you;

I will sing praise to your name,  
O Most High.

—Psalm 9:1-2

## prayer

Come, let us sing to the Lord; let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving and raise a loud shout to him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the caverns of the earth, and the heights of the hills are his also. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands have molded the dry land. Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, and kneel before the Lord our Maker. For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!

Venite

*The Book of Common Prayer, p. 82*

## COMMENTARY

There are many rules of life. Following them is a very important skill. It can help you stay out of trouble or even save your life. If you follow these rules, people will respect you.

Some rules are simple, while some are harder. It may be simple to be respectful and responsible. It can be harder to live up to your faith. For example, what do you do when a soccer game is scheduled on Sunday morning? The coach wants you to come, but you know you should be learning about your religion.

Living up to your faith includes not letting people put you down, or letting things get you down. The point of having rules of life is to keep your faith strong.

—Tony, Grade 6

## Youth prayer

Dear God, let us have a closer relationship with you. Help us to keep up our faith. Give us respect for ourselves and for others. Help us know that we are all equal in this world, and to live as if we are equal to others. Give us the strength to make this a rule for all of life. *Amen.*

—Kristin, Grade 8

## DAILY DEVOTIONS

# reflections

Monday—Isaiah 1:16-17

Tuesday—Matthew 7:12

Wednesday—Romans 8:2-4

Thursday—Galatians 6:14-16

Friday—Philippians 1:21

Saturday—II Timothy 1:13-14

# voices



How important it is not to treat people equally nor attempt to mould them into one set pattern. The Rule [of St. Benedict] demands that [people] be seen as individuals, each precious in the sight of God.

*Basil Hume*

My [child,] resolve to do the will of others rather than your own.

Always choose to possess less rather than more.

Always take the lowest place, and regard yourself as less than others.

Desire and pray always that God's will may be perfectly fulfilled in you.

A [person] who observes these rules should come to enjoy peace and tranquillity of soul.

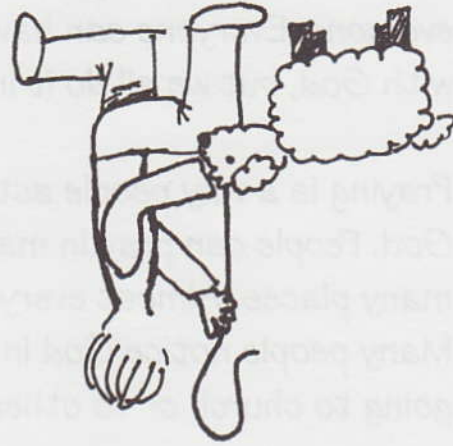
*Thomas á Kempis*

A few strong instincts, and a few plain rules.

*William Wordsworth*



Examine yourselves to  
see whether you are living  
in the faith.  
—II Corinthians 13:5a



SESSION 4  
SPIRITUAL LIFE

## Rule of Life: Living for Christ



# words to remember

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.

—Colossians 3:14-15

## prayer

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated to you; and then use us, we pray, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

A Prayer of Self-Dedication  
*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 832-833

**COMMENTARY**

Faith and believing is different for everyone. Everyone can have a relationship with God, but we all do it in our own way.

Praying is a way people act out their belief in God. People can pray in many ways and in many places. Almost everyone notices God. Many people notice God in their lives by going to church or to other religious places.

As long as you know God for yourself and know he is real, I think God will know you believe and have faith in him.

—Nicole, Grade 8

**Youth prayer**

Dear God,  
Please know that I believe in you and have faith in you. I know you for myself instead of just having been told about you. Help me find you every day. *Amen.*

—Nicole, Grade 8

**DAILY DEVOTIONS**

**reflections**

Monday—Genesis 15:5-6  
Tuesday—Psalm 119:65-66  
Wednesday—Mark 9:23-24

Thursday—Luke 17:5-6  
Friday—Romans 14:1, 4  
Saturday—Hebrews 11:1-3

**voices**



Nothing in life is more wonderful than faith—the one great moving force which we can neither weigh in the balance nor test in the crucible.

*William Osler*

There is no great future for any people whose faith has burned out.

*Rufus Jones*

Behind everything stands God. . . do not avoid, but seek, the great, deep, simple things of faith.

*Phillips Brooks*

We act in faith, and miracles occur.

*Dag Hammerskjold*



Before Worship  
*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 833

O Almighty God, who pours out on all who desire it the spirit of grace and of supplication: Deliver us, when we draw near to you, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## prayer

—Matthew 21:21-22

Jesus answered them, "Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only will you do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' it will be done. Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive."

# Words to remember



## Faith & Belief: Knowing God

SPIRITUAL LIFE

SESSION 5



**N**o longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; . . .

—Jeremiah 31:34a

## COMMENTARY

God wants us to help others and to teach each other about God. He also wants us to be faithful to the people we help. By helping others we have can help ourselves to be better, more faithful people.

One way to serve God and help others is to clean up your community and make your town a better place. You can also raise money for a good cause, or volunteer to visit the elderly or the sick. Even though the things you do seem unimportant, they may be very important for the people you help.

By being helpful to others, you can show them God's love.

—Ariel, Grade 9

## Youth prayer

Dear God,  
Help us to be better aware of the problems others face. There are many people who need your help. Help us to be thankful for whatever service we can do, and help us to be strong when others need us. Show us how to reveal your love in all we do. Help us to be better helpers. *Amen.*

—Ariel, Grade 9

## DAILY DEVOTIONS

# reflections

Monday—Deuteronomy  
15:10-11

Tuesday—Psalm 41:1-3

Wednesday—Isaiah 58:6-9

Thursday—Matthew 20:25-28

Friday—John 20:21-22

Saturday—I Corinthians 9:22-23

# voices



You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.

*Kahlil Gibran*

Doing nothing for others is the undoing of ourselves.

*Horace Mann*

What the world lacks most today is [people] who occupy themselves with the needs of others. In this unselfish labor a blessing falls on both the helper and the helped.

*Albert Schweitzer*

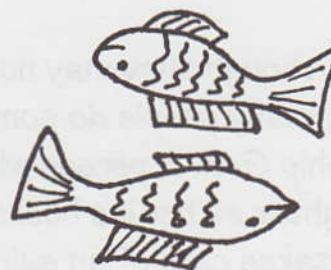
You have not done enough, you've never done enough, so long as you have something more to contribute.

*Dag Hammarskjold*



—Luke 10:2

[Jesus] said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."



SESSION 6  
SPIRITUAL LIFE

## Mission & Service: Finding God



# words to remember

Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

—Galatians 6:2

**prayer** Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son came not to be served but to serve: Bless all who, following in his steps, give themselves to the service of others; that with wisdom, patience, and courage, they may minister in his Name to the suffering, the friendless, and the needy; for the love of him who laid down his life for us, your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

For Social Service  
*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 260

## COMMENTARY

Many people on earth do not worship the same way we do, or maybe not at all. But the Bible says that people were created to worship God.

Even though they may not be in church or even pray, many people do something every day to worship God. A person who cheers for his daughter at her ice hockey game, or someone who takes care of an aging grandfather, or even the person who takes home a lost kitten is doing what God wishes.

God loves all people and expects us to care for each other and our fellow creatures. If we do this, we fulfill God's reason for creating us. After all, wasn't humankind made in God's image of spirit and truth?

—Ellie, Grade 9

## Youth prayer

Dear God, help us find ways to worship you by caring for each other and our fellow creatures. Help us remember that we can worship you anytime and at any place. Show us how to reach out to others to fulfill your reason for creating us. *Amen.*

—Ellie, Grade 9

## DAILY DEVOTIONS

# reflections

Monday—Exodus 4:29-31

Tuesday—Psalm 81:1-3

Wednesday—Isaiah 56:6-7

Thursday—Matthew 28:16-18

Friday—Acts 24:14-16

Saturday—Hebrews 13:15-16

# voices



I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment. . . . The worthier the object, the more intense this delight would be.

*C. S. Lewis*

Wonder is the basis of Worship.

*Thomas Carlyle*

For the Christian who loves God, worship is the daily bread of patience.

*Honore de Balzac*

It hain't no use to grumble and complain  
It's jest as easy to rejoice;  
When God sorts out the weather  
and sends the rain,  
Why rain's my choice.

*James Whitcomb Riley*





—Matthew 5:44

But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, . . .

**B**

SESSION 7  
SPIRITUAL LIFE

# Ethics & Morals: Living as a Christian



# words to remember

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

—Romans 12:2

## prayer

O God, the Father of all, whose Son commanded us to love our enemies: Lead them and us from prejudice to truth; deliver them and us from hatred, cruelty, and revenge; and in your good time enable us all to stand reconciled before you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

For our Enemies  
*The Book of Common Prayer, p. 816*

## COMMENTARY

**Being a Christian teenager in a public school** is not always an easy thing to be. Talking about God and Jesus around your friends may seem unusual, and you may feel awkward. I wear a bracelet that has the initials: WWJD. It stands for, "What Would Jesus Do?" When my friends notice my bracelet, they ask me what it stands for. I can tell them what the letters stand for, but it's hard for me to explain what it really means.

I use those letters to help me in different circumstances. If someone is mean, for example, I try to be nice to them. Standing up for someone else might not be the cool thing to do, but it is the right thing to do. Then it is not as hard to take the next step to love and pray for them.

—Cayce, Grade 6

## Youth prayer

Dear Lord,

We ask that you help us make right and sensible decisions as we go about our everyday life. Bless those people who hurt us. Help us to be comfortable talking about you to our friends. When others hurt us, help us to remember that you want us to love our enemies as much as we love our friends. *Amen.*

—Cayce, Grade 6

## DAILY DEVOTIONS

# reflections

Monday—Deuteronomy 1:17

Tuesday—Psalm 15:1-2

Wednesday—Psalm 51:10-12

Thursday—John 7:24

Friday—Romans 2:13-15

Saturday—II Corinthians 13:5

# voices



Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest.

*Mark Twain*

There is simply no other way of worshipping God than doing your duty and acting according to the rules of reason.

*G. D. Lichtenberg*

If your morals make you dreary, depend upon it they are wrong.

*Robert Louis Stevenson*

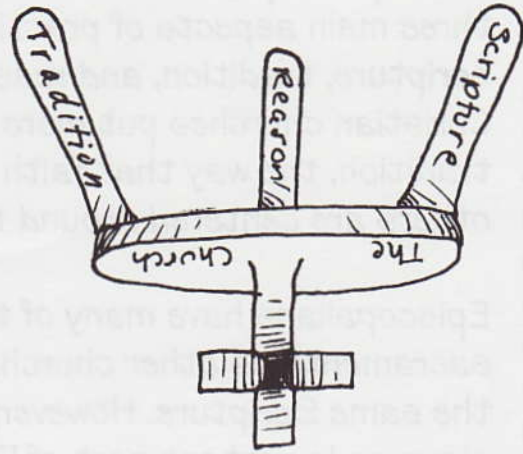
The voice of conscience is so delicate that it is easy to stifle it; but it is also clear that it is impossible to mistake it.

*Madame de Stael*



—Luke 4:21

When [Jesus] began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."



SESSION 8

SPIRITUAL LIFE

# The Episcopal Way: Scripture, Tradition, Reason



## words to remember

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

—*Philippians 4:8*

## prayer

**O God our heavenly Father, you have blessed us and given us dominion over all the earth: Increase our reverence before the mystery of life; and give us new insight into your purposes for the human race, and new wisdom and determination in making provision for its future in accordance with your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

For the Future of the Human Race  
*The Book of Common Prayer, p. 828*

## COMMENTARY

The Episcopal Church emphasizes three main aspects of practicing religion: scripture, tradition, and reason. Other Christian churches put more emphasis on tradition, the way that faith is shown. Still others are centered around the Bible.

Episcopalians have many of the same sacraments as other churches and read the same Scripture. However, reason also plays an important part of Episcopal faith. Episcopalians are encouraged to use their intellect as part of their faith.

Scripture, tradition, and reason are in constant tension and harmony with each other. Together they are the foundation of Episcopal faith.

—Nancy, Grade 9

## Youth prayer

Dear God,  
Help us turn to scripture, tradition, and reason to guide us in knowing you better. Give us the insight to seek wisdom from all three. Remind us that to stay in harmony with you we must be in harmony with each other. In your name we pray, *Amen*.

—Nancy, Grade 9

## DAILY DEVOTIONS

# reflections

Monday—Psalm 73:16-17

Tuesday—Proverbs 21:28-29

Wednesday—Sirach 32:18-19

Thursday—I Corinthians 14:20

Friday—

II Thessalonians 2:14-15

Saturday—II Timothy 3:16-17

# voices



Reason is nothing but the analysis of belief.

*Franz Schubert*

Almost any fool can prove that the Bible ain't so—it takes a wise man to believe it.

*Josh Billings*

[Tradition] cannot be inherited, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labor.

*T. S. Eliot*

We know the truth, not only by reason, but by the heart.

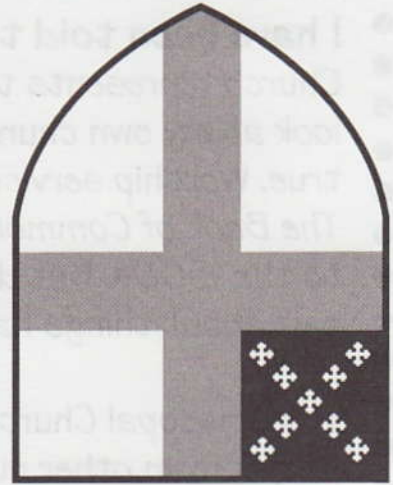
*Blaise Pascal*



—Wisdom 7:15

ay God grant me to speak with  
judgment, and to have thoughts  
worthy of what I have received;  
for he is the guide even  
of wisdom and the corrector  
of the wise.

M



SESSION 9

SPIRITUAL LIFE

## The Episcopal Way: Finding the Middle



# words to remember

Let the words of my mouth and  
the meditation of my heart  
be acceptable to you,  
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

—Psalm 19:14

## prayer

**O God of truth and peace, . . . Grant that we may maintain that middle way, not as a compromise for the sake of peace, but as a comprehension for the sake of truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Collect for Richard Hooker  
*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, November 3

## COMMENTARY

I have been told that the Episcopal Church represents the middle way. When I look at my own church, this seems to be true. Worship services on Sunday come from *The Book of Common Prayer* that dates back to the 1500s. But during the service we still talk about things happening today.

The Episcopal Church is also accepting of people from other cultures. My church, for example, is very multicultural. When I look at the congregation, I see people who come from many different groups.

I am glad the Episcopal Church takes the middle way and that I am a part of it.

—Christina, Grade 7

## Youth prayer

Dear God, we pray for the Episcopal Church and the people that are a part of it. We also ask that you open our hearts to see the middle way. Your wisdom and love is so strong. Show us how to be more accepting and loving toward others searching for your love. Bless our Church as we reach out to all people and welcome them. *Amen.*

—Christina, Grade 7

## DAILY DEVOTIONS

# reflections

Monday—Psalm 37:3-6

Tuesday—Proverbs 2:1-5

Wednesday—Isaiah 11:1-3

Thursday—John 17:22-23

Friday—I Corinthians 2:15-16

Saturday—James 1:5-8

# voices



Loyalty to petrified opinion never yet broke a chain or freed a human soul.

Mark Twain

There are many faiths, but the spirit is one, in me, in you, and in every [person.]

Leo Tolstoy

You will go most safely in the middle.

Ovid

That great [destination] of all common sense: compromise.

William Bolitho

