

Discipleship Group

Seasonal Opening Prayers

From *Daily Prayer for all Seasons*

Advent

O Holy One, thank you for coming to us anew this day. Prepare our hearts and reawaken our love for you as we discern your call within us. May we join with you in making level the path for all people.
Amen.

Christmas

Light of life, you came in flesh, born into human pain and joy, and gave us power to be your children: Grant us faith, O Christ, to see your presence among us, so that all creation may sing new songs of gladness and walk in the way of peace. *Amen.*

Epiphany

Insistent God, by night and day you summon your slumbering people: So stir us with your voice and enlighten our lives with your grace that we give ourselves fully to Christ's call to mission and ministry.
Amen.

Lent

O God of love, you are the true sun of the world, evermore risen and never going down: We pray you to shine in our hearts and drive away the darkness of sin and the mist of error. We pray that we may, this day and all our lives long, walk without stumbling in the way you have prepared for us, which is Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

Holy Week

God of steadfast love, light of the blind and liberator of the oppressed, we see your holy purpose in the tender compassion of Jesus, who calls us into new and living friendship with you: May we who take shelter in the shadow of your wings be filled with the grace of his tender caring; may we who stumble in selfish darkness see your glory in the light of his self-giving; we ask this through him whose suffering is victorious, Jesus Christ our Savior. *Amen.*

Easter

Jesus, our way, our truth, and our life: As the gift of this new day unfolds, open our hearts and minds to you, that we may see you clearly and follow where you lead; to you, risen Savior, we offer praise, now and always. *Amen.*

Ordinary Time

Creation: God of faithful surprises, throughout the ages you have made known your love and power in unexpected ways and places: May we daily perceive the joy and wonder of your abiding presence and offer our lives in gratitude for our redemption. *Amen.*

Rest: God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time; accepting hardship as a pathway to peace; taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it; trusting, O God, that you will make all things right if I surrender to your will; that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with you for ever in the next. *Amen.*

Group Facilitator's Guide

Gather (15 min) 7:30

(people arrive and gather, get something to drink, introduce one another, until it is time to begin)

Begin Meeting (5 min) 7:45

Opening Prayer

Welcome to tonight's meeting of the Young Adult Mentorship Program. Would someone please read the opening prayer for *(insert season here)*?

(Seasonal prayer from Daily Prayer for All Seasons sheet)

Preamble

Each week we gather in fellowship to support one another on our lifelong spiritual journey. We focus on spirituality, discernment and sharing the joys and challenges of our lives. We commit to creating a brave space for discussion and sharing, using only "I" statements and not repeating what is shared outside the group. We commit to following a rule of life that we have found helps us grow in awareness of God's movement in our lives.

Our Rule of Life (15 min) 7:50

Would someone please read the group Rule of Life?

(Someone with the rule of life sheet reads the rule)

These are the practices we find help us most on our lifelong spiritual journey. We take time each week to check in with each other about these practices, and offer space for sharing about personal discernment, service opportunities and invitations we have extended to others. We can also, in this time, share any concerns we have about the life of the group, keeping in mind the potential for growing, branching and continuing to respond to the needs of those present. The floor is now open for sharing and discussion of our group rule of life.

Read and Respond to Sacred Words (20 minutes) 8:05

(Bible Study, Book Study, Sermon Questions, etc.)

Individual Sharing (20 minutes) 8:25

We now take time to share with one another times in the last week when we could feel God's presence moving in our lives, which we call consolations, and times when it was challenging to see where God was moving, which we call desolations. Everyone is invited to share for up to 5 minutes, though no one is required. In the silence between sharing let us hold gently the stories we have heard and remain silent until someone else feels called to share. In this time, we listen deeply to one another but do not offer any response or advice. We open our sharing by saying, "I have a consolation and /or desolation to share" and end by saying, "Thank you for listening." Together we respond, "Thank you for sharing." The space is now open for those who would like to share.

Pray Together (5 minutes) 8:45

As we close our time of sharing and our meeting comes to an end we stand and pray for our own needs and the needs of other, as well as for those we hope to invite into this space with us in the future.

Leader Opens Prayer

Let us remember that we are in the presence of God.....

God, tonight/today, we pray for.....

For whom else shall we pray? (intercessions added)

God, we lift up all these prayers to you, both said and unsaid, and ask that you send us safely out into the world to do your work and bring us safely back together next week. In your name we pray.

Amen

Break Bread (10 minutes) 8:50

(group gathers to share dessert/snacks and depart)

Rule of Life

In our lifelong spiritual journey, we find these practices help us most on our path of following Jesus:

We pray by taking on a daily spiritual practice

We rest by taking time for weekly sabbath and yearly retreat

We share our stories and listen to the stories of others

We discern God's call in our lives through reflection and sharing

We invite others who may benefit from this group as we have

We serve Christ in all people

This is our rule of life, the practices we have taken on as a community to deepen our connection to one another, to ourselves and to God.