

40 DAYS OF *prayer*

YOUTH DEVOTIONAL



THE ALLIANCE



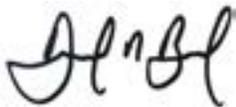
ALLIANCE YOUTH

40 DAYS OF *prayer*

INTRO

Prayer is the primary work of God's people. This long-standing Alliance mantra elevates the importance of prayer in accomplishing the work of God on earth. Prayer is an opportunity for God's children, you and I, to speak often, deliberately, and plainly with our Heavenly Father. It is the method through which the child of God experiences communion with God and with other believers. As we pray privately or together, we are affirming our dependence on God, much like children are dependent on their parents. I hope you find these intentional and deliberate prayer primers a helpful addition in your student ministry during the next 40 days.

Sincerely,



Dan Boal
Director for Alliance Youth



THE ALLIANCE



ALLIANCE YOUTH

40 DAYS OF *prayer*

RESOURCES

40 Days of Prayer is an initiative of The Christian and Missionary Alliance to increase the overall prayer life and therefore the effectiveness of believers who attend an Alliance church. We hope that each generation within The Alliance engages with reading Scripture and communing with their Heavenly Father in daily prayer to experience a transformed heart and mind that will help unleash a movement of God here on earth.

We have provided the following resources for you to share with the youth in your church to enhance their participation in this denomination-wide prayer movement.

1. 40 Days of Prayer Experience

This can be used as a supplement to your weekly teaching curriculum. It is designed to take 10 minutes of your youth program.

- Video Prayer Primers led by Dan Boal
- PDF Prayer Guide for youth to pray as a class or in smaller groups

2. 40 Days of Prayer Devotional

This five-day devotional is intended to help youth pray specifically for the filling of the Holy Spirit in sharing the gospel. It will be delivered to their inbox in the *AY Newsletter*. You can print the PDF for distribution or have youth sign up for the newsletter. This is the first in a 12-month series of 5-day devotionals brought to you by Envision, the C&MA's short-term missions office.

- Go to allianceyouth.com/connect/
- Scroll to the bottom of the page and subscribe to receive this monthly devotional.

3. On Our Knees: A Youth Worker Time of Prayer

We will be hosting and broadcasting a 30-minute virtual prayer event for Alliance Youth workers. The emphasis will be on praying for the next generation to have boldness, to cling to truth, and to be open to hear and receive that truth.

- January 28, 12 p.m. EST
- RSVP at facebook.com/cmallianceyouth/events
- Join Zoom meeting:
 - **Link:** zoom.us/j/97452075894?pwd=aEJ3YktpYzJFWU9VUzZaNFNMK01jQT09
 - **Meeting ID:** 974 5207 5894 **Passcode:** 544435
 - **One tap mobile:** +12532158782,,97452075894# US (Tacoma)
+13462487799,,97452075894# US (Houston)

WEEK 1: WORSHIP AND PRAISE

KEY TEXT

Matthew 6:9–10

SET-UP

Worship is more than music—it includes the words we say with our lips or in our hearts to praise a holy and wonderful God. When we approach God with prayers of worship, it accomplishes three things:

1. It puts our hearts in a position of dependence as we recognize that God has all authority in heaven and on earth and nothing happens unless He allows it.
2. It positions us to receive answers to our prayers.
3. It enables us to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit as we encounter Him through prayer and the reading of Scripture.

VIDEO

Worship and Praising Through Prayer

PRAYER PROMPTS

Take five minutes to pray the following Scriptures to God. You can do this in small groups or as a large one to orient your hearts to be dependent, receptive, and filled with faith.

1 Chronicles 16:10–12

Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always. Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced . . .

Isaiah 40:28–29

Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.

Psalms 95:1–5; 96:6–7

Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. For the Lord is the great God, the great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and glory are in his sanctuary. Ascribe to the Lord, O families of nations, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

Revelation 4:11

You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being. O my Strength, I sing praise to you; you, O God, are my fortress, my loving God.

Psalms 59:16–17

But I will sing of your strength, in the morning I will sing of your love; for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble. O my Strength, I sing praise to you; you, O God, are my fortress, my loving God.

WEEK 2: REPENTANCE

KEY TEXT

Matthew 6:11–12

SET-UP

We all have an internal life characterized by thoughts and desires that would be shameful and embarrassing if they were ever made public. Occasionally, that internal life also makes it into our external behaviors. The easiest way to combat that internal self from ruling our life is through repentance and confession of sin. Confession of sin produces the following outcomes in our life:

1. It allows Jesus to heal the parts of our mind, soul, and body stained by sin's effects (see James 5:16).
2. It enables the Holy Spirit to search our inmost being and reveal sin we may not even be aware is hiding deep in our hearts (see Psalm 139:23–24).
3. It produces within us a sense of gratitude as we experience forgiveness (see 1 John 1:19).

VIDEO

Repentance

PRAYER PROMPTS

James 5:16a says, “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.” Take five minutes and break off into pairs. Use the following format to practice confession and repentance:

1 minute—Invite the Holy Spirit to search your heart and bring conviction of known or unknown sin in your life.

Pray privately, asking the Holy Spirit to reveal to you what you need to confess.

1 minute—Confess to your friend.

Confession doesn't require a story; it requires your ability to name the sin that the Holy Spirit has revealed. You can add as much context as you think is helpful. Then share why you believe the Lord is asking you to confess this sin.

1 minute—Have your friend pray over you.

James 5:16b says, “The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.” A righteous person is anyone who has a relationship with Jesus as their Savior and Lord. If your friend professes faith in Christ, then their prayers over you will break down spiritual strongholds and bring about not only forgiveness but also spiritual restoration.

Repeat the process regularly.

WEEK 3: BEING FILLED WITH THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

KEY TEXT

Romans 8:26–27

SET-UP

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead and gave Jesus His power to do miracles. He is also the same Spirit that you received the day you professed faith in Jesus as your Savior and Lord. He searches the heart and convicts the world of sin and of God's righteousness. He empowers the believer to act in faith and bring glory and honor to God. It is also the Spirit that will one day raise you from the dead when Christ returns to earth. If it is by Jesus' work on the cross that we are saved from death and have eternal life, then it is by the Spirit's indwelling that we have the ability to live as Jesus lived on earth and be united with Him in His Resurrection. Here are several aspects of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer:

1. He is the Spirit of Truth, and as you read Scripture, pray, and listen to sermons, He affirms in your heart the truth of who Jesus is (see John 16:13).
2. He is the counselor who brings us peace, wisdom, and conviction of sin and righteousness (see John 14:26–28).
3. He prays on our behalf when we don't know what to pray for or how to pray (see Romans 8:26–27).

VIDEO

Being Filled with the Holy Spirit

PRAYER PROMPTS

A Prayer for the Filling of the Holy Spirit

As a group, pray this prayer aloud.

“Jesus, fill me today with Your Holy Spirit so that I can hear what You want me to hear, say what You want me to say, and do what You want me to do, for our friendship and Your glory. Amen.”

The Challenge: For seven days pray this simple prayer every morning, then continue into three–four minutes of prayer. Using a pocket journal or cell phone, keep notes on what you heard from the Holy Spirit each day, and jot down how that influenced what you did. Did you hear from Him during prayer, when reading Scripture, or through what someone said to you? There are many ways in which the Holy Spirit speaks. Try to keep in tune with His voice and then come back the following week to share with one another the life-giving nature of following Jesus.

Repeat the process regularly.

WEEK 4: BEING A WITNESS

KEY TEXT

Romans 1:16; Acts 1:8

SET-UP

Many who attend church regularly have become so familiar with the word “gospel” that they fail to give credence to its meaning, “good news.” What is this good news? It is that anyone who has sinned and is separated from God—which is everyone—can now be forgiven of that sin and be reunited with God their Father, the only person able to meet all of their spiritual needs for today and forever. Yet though we have this amazing news, many are ashamed to tell others about it. They are ashamed because the world in which we live doesn’t believe the good news you have is true. I have more good news. It’s not your job to convince them but to tell them. The Holy Spirit will do the convincing. So who needs this good news?

1. Anyone who doesn’t know this “good news” in your sphere of influence. These are often the most uncomfortable people to share your faith with because they see your life. Our shame comes because we know, as they know, that we aren’t perfect—which is actually a perfect place to start! They can see your life, all that you have been forgiven of, and how gradually you’re becoming more like Jesus (see Acts 1:8).
2. Anyone whom you may be sent to in order to share the good news (see Romans 10:14–15).
3. Those whom you’ve never met but feel compelled to pray for so they may have eyes to see and ears to hear the good news (see Matthew 13:15, 28:19).

VIDEO

Evangelism

PRAYER PROMPTS

Read through the following prayer directives and fill in names of people you know. As a group, pray the directives aloud. Then pray them daily for the following week.

Threshold 1: Trust

1. **God, help me build a caring relationship with _____.**

Help me become whatever kind of Christ-like servant _____ can identify with so that by all possible means they will be saved (1 Corinthians 9:22).

2. **God, send people into _____’s life to witness to them.**

Send more believers into _____’s life who will exemplify Christ and cause them to want to know Him for themselves (Matthew 9:38).

Threshold 2: Curiosity

3. God, bring me opportunities to witness to _____.

Open doors for proclaiming the mystery of Christ to _____, even in our present difficult circumstances (Colossians 4:3).

4. God, give me boldness to witness to _____.

Enable me to speak your word to _____ with great boldness (Acts 4:29).

Threshold 3: Open to Change

5. God, open _____'s spiritual eyes.

Break the blindness off _____'s mind caused by the god of this age. Help them see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God (2 Corinthians 4:4).

6. God, help _____ realize their spiritual hunger and desire for change in their life.

Break complacency in _____'s mind and help them to want to see change in their life (John 4:15).

Threshold 4: Seeking

7. God, make _____'s heart receptive to your Word.

Like the seed that falls on good soil, give _____ a noble and good heart and help them hear the Word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop (Luke 8:11–15).

8. God, give _____ ears to hear.

Help _____ see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their heart, and turn so that You will heal them (Matthew 13:15).

9. God, set _____ free from spiritual captivity.

Help me gently instruct _____ when they are in opposition to You, in the hope that You will grant them repentance, leading them to the knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape the trap of the devil (2 Timothy 2:25–26).

Threshold 5: Following

10. God, give _____ faith to believe.

Help _____ make a radical life-change before God and an equally radical trust in their Master, Jesus (Acts 20:21).

11. God, give _____ the will to respond to you.

Bring _____ to the point that they declare with their mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in their heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, and they will be saved (Romans 10:9).

12. God, provide an opportunity to invite _____ to a relationship with you.

You want your house full, so give me opportunity and boldness to invite _____ to come home to You (Luke 14:23).

WEEK 5: MARGINALIZED PEOPLE

KEY TEXT

Matthew 25:39–40

SET-UP

Take some time to research the demographics of your community and local church. What countries predominantly make up the immigrant population of your community? What is the primary language spoken, aside from English? How many people with special needs are in local schools or care facilities? How many single parents are in your church? How many people are living in poverty according to federal and state guidelines?

The church is not just a place where “like attracts like.” Ideally, it is one that facilitates healing, serving, blessing, helping, and loving people from differing demographics. Unfortunately, many churches miss out on amazing opportunities to be the hands and feet of Jesus because they don’t take time open their eyes and hearts to the often overlooked and underserved people within their communities. Here are a few ideas you can try to get familiar with some overlooked people groups in your community.

1. Go to joshuaproject.net/countries/US. Explore the red, yellow, and light green dots that indicate people groups in the United States who are unreached or under-reached. Which of them are near you?
2. Make a list of organizations in your community that support people in poverty, immigrants and refugees, single-parent families, those with special needs and their families, efforts to promote racial reconciliation, and service members. How you can pray for and/or partner with these groups?

VIDEO

Marginalized People

PRAYER PROMPTS

Intercession is praying for a specific demographic or person. This is praying to God on their behalf or for their benefit. Jesus shows us examples of intercession in John 17 and Luke 23:34. After identifying marginalized people within your community or organizations that serve them, intercede for these people and organizations. Pray that these individuals may be open to hearing and embracing the gospel. Also, ask God to meet their tangible needs.

WEEK 6: ALLIANCE MISSIONS

KEY TEXT

Matthew 28:18–20

SET-UP

Jesus gave us the gospel, but it wasn't meant to be kept to ourselves—it was meant to be given to the world. That's why in The Alliance we are people who are sent. We are sent to our neighborhoods and the nations. Even if you aren't personally sent globally, you are still a necessary part in the expansion of the gospel around the world. Each Alliance church is an active participant in the sending of the gospel when your church gives to the Great Commission Fund or prays for our international workers. Today, as you actively pray, give, and maybe consider if God is calling you to go yourself, you are partnering with The Alliance to help lost people become found people anywhere they are. To learn more about Alliance Missions, here are some helpful resources to explore the gospel-advancing partnership your church has with The Alliance:

1. Go to www.cmalliance.org/updates/ and subscribe to *Alliance Life* magazine. This resource shares stories from around the world of how The Alliance is making a difference.
2. Go to www.cmalliance.org/video/ to watch short videos from our international workers and hear the stories of those who have found Jesus because The Alliance was faithful to send.
3. Are you feeling called to Alliance missions or ministry? Go to www.cmalliance.org/serve/highschool to learn the next steps you can take to serve with The Alliance someday.

VIDEO

Praying for Alliance Missions

PRAYER PROMPTS

“Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Matt. 9:38). We are told to pray specifically for men and women to respond God's call on their lives to reach the lost with the gospel. Let's take time to pray for our Alliance international workers (IWs). Most Alliance churches have several whom they support. Which Alliance international workers does your church partner with? Where are they serving? How can you pray for them?

Write a prayer: Take out a sheet of paper and write down prayers for the international workers your church supports. If possible, scan the letters and send a PDF to your IWs to encourage them, or send them by mail if possible.

Action Step: Set a reminder or alarm on your cell phone for 9:38 a.m. daily to remind you to pray for workers in the harvest field.