

Prayer

Aim of the assembly

Communication is so much part of everyone's life nowadays. We communicate by email, whatsapp, facebook and twitter. Some of these skills had to be learned, but who is teaching us about communication with God? This too is a skill to be learned and there is lots to be learned about it. This assembly aims to introduce the children to a natural approach to informal prayer. We have stayed away from the more complex themes of answered/ unanswerd prayers but rather sought to emphasize prayer as a life-long habit of talking to God using: Thank you, sorry, please.

Props needed

Puppet and puppet stage, giant teaspoon, white board marker, mystery bag with three items to signify: Thank you, Sorry, Please.

Intro – Wendy and Bob

Wendy is telling us that it is good to be able to talk to people. It makes her happy to be able to talk to her friends and family. It used to be harder to talk to them when they went away on holiday. But now we have so many additional ways of staying in touch. She tells how she had to learn to use emails or using a mobile phone. Use link to learning in that some of the children have probably even had to teach their nans or granddads how to send texts or how to use the computer to communicate.

Bob: But do you know there is one way of communication that not so many people know about these days. It is really old, much older than emails or mobile phones...it is about communicating with God ...and people have done this for many hundreds of years. Does anyone know what we call it, when people want to talk to God? – Yes, that's right, it is called PRAYER!

Bob: Actually I have got a bag full of things to tell you a bit more about this, where did I put it? Bob off stage to stay behind the screen to do Chip skit.

Chip sketch

Chip: OWWWWWW!

Wendy: Oh Chip, are you ok?

Chip: (Subdued) Yes, I guess I am.

Wendy: What happened?

Chip: I just got poked by my very sharp pencil again. It really hurts!

Wendy: How did that happen?

Chip: It was in my back pocket and I sat down!

Wendy: Chip, why are you carrying a pencil in your pocket?

Chip: I need it for my prayer list

Wendy: a Prayer list?

Chip: Yeah, a prayer list...I'm always thinking of things to pray about, but by the time bedtime arrives I forget most of them

Wendy: So, you've started keeping a list to help you?

Chip; That's right. I write the ideas down as soon as I think of them, then I don't forget!

Wendy: That's a really good idea Chip, but I think I have a better one for you.

Chip: (excited) really Lois? That's great, I'm tired of getting poked every time I sit down!

Wendy: Well, did you know that you don't have to wait until bedtime to pray about stuff!

Chip: Really?? I don't have to wait? What do you mean?

Wendy: In the Bible it tells us that we should be praying continually. You can pray about things whenever you think of them, that way, you won't forget them.

Chip: WOW!! What a great idea! I think I'm gonna try that right away!

Wendy: Great! Have a good day now Chip

Chip goes off and Wendy talks for a second to the children about how great it is that Chip wants to pray!

Chip: OOWWWWWW!!

Wendy: What's happened now Chip?

Chip: Well, Lois. I was doing just as you suggested, and I tripped over!

Wendy: Oh Chip, how did that happen?

Chip: Well, I closed my eyes and started to pray but I couldn't see where I was going and I bumped into something and fell over!

Wendy: Oh Chip, next time, if you're moving around and praying, maybe it would be better if you left your eyes open! You don't have to close your eyes when you talk to God you know!

Chip: Oh Wendy, what a great idea! I certainly will remember that.

Wendy: And here, before you go, I have a little present for you. A teaspoon! This will help you a lot when you are thinking about what to pray!

Wendy to children:

So Chip has learnt two things already this morning. He's learnt that we can pray at any time. And that you don't have to pray with your eyes shut if you're walking around. But I think there are a lot more things to be learned about praying and talking with God. Remember, people have been doing this for many, many centuries. And whenever something is this old, there is usually a lot to learn about it, don't you think so too?

Chip: (comes up with teaspoon on his head and tells Wendy that he really can't make it work!

Wendy: Chip, you are using it the wrong way. I will tell the children all about the teaspoon in just a moment, because they want to know too, so if you're quiet you will hear exactly how the teaspoon can help you! Go and find yourself a comfortable seat!

Mystery bag

Bob: Hey Wendy, I am back and I have brought my special "learn lots about prayer" bag here. Have a look!

They pull out the objects from the bag and discuss them. Initially each object mystifies them, what has it got to do with prayer...but then it becomes clear. Talk between us about objects in the bag.

- Bob gives Wendy the present – Wendy says thank you
- Wendy pulls out the broken tennis racquet – Bob says sorry he broke it accidentally
- Wendy pulls out the drill – Bob says please may he have it!

Bob to ask about the Teaspoon, still does not understand what it has got to do with prayer.

Wendy has a cut out of a giant teaspoon, made from silver carton. She writes on it with a white board marker!

Wendy to refer to the objects in the bag, putting the Thank You, Sorry and Please on the giant teaspoon. TSP – Teaspoon – thank, you, sorry, please!

King David Story

Bob: Wow, that ties in perfectly with our Bible story today. All about King David and the things he learned about praying and talking to God. We think that you probably have heard about him in the story of “David and Goliath” but he knew a lot more things than just how to kill giants!

Thank you

David had just had his 12th birthday. Instead of going to school like you do, David already had a job. He was a shepherd. Here he comes with his sheep...

David: Come on sheepies, come on Curlywurly, come on Fluffytail! I know just where to go today! Nice fresh grass, follow me sheepies...Come on!!

David was a good shepherd. And he liked his sheep. But it was also quite lonely to be out there in the fields every day, all by himself...and just the sheep. So David used to talk to God and sing songs while he was looking after the sheep.

David: Hey sheepies, come over here. Yes, you are right! Mr.David, the super cool singing shepherd dude is going to perform for you. Sit down and listen up...Yes, you guessed it! I have a new song. It is a special thank you God song. “Thank you Lord for this fine day, thank you Lord for this fine day...right where we are!”

See. David learnt about saying thank you to God when he was still quite young!

Sorry

When David was 40 years old, he had already been King for ten years. David was a warrior, but he was also a good and wise King. Here he comes...but I think, he is not feeling very happy today!

David: Oh dear God, I am so sorry. You made me king, you gave me a palace to live in, you gave me good friends and wise counsellors. And still I have made such a mess of things this last month. I want to be a good King, really I do. But right now I am upset. I have not been a good King at all. I am so sorry....

It is not easy to be a King. David really wanted to please God by being a good King too. But recently he had made a few very bad decisions. But the good thing was, he was sorry! And he was still talking to God and singing songs to him.

David sings: “Sorry Lord, I have messed this up. ...I won’t do it again!”

See: David learnt about saying sorry to God when he was a King.

Please

When David was almost 70 years old, he was thinking about his son becoming king after him. Here he is again:

David: Oh God, it is time for my son to become King. I have reigned for almost 40 years now and I am old. But I know it is not going to be easy for him. I have taught him what I could but I think he will really need your help to become a good King. Please, dear God, will you help my son! He needs your help!

David was learning again to say "Please!" in his old age. . Now he was asking God to look after his son and asking God to help him to teach his son to become a good and wise king. So David was still talking to God and singing songs to him.

David sings: Please dear Lord, I need your help...

See: David learnt to say please when he was talking to God.

Thank you, sorry, please! Three different prayers and David learnt them all in the course of his long life!

So we have learnt that we can pray at any time and any place, and the Bible also tells us that God will listen. And from King David's life we have learned a lot about how to pray.

Sing David's song, again, putting all three verses together, to help us to remember the TSP method of prayer.

Finish with prayer – asking children to repeat each line if they feel able to do so.