

The Lord's Prayer - Church School Setting

The Church of England in Birmingham is wonderfully diverse, with worshippers from many different countries. Some have lived here all their lives, and some are newly arrived and, of course, this includes lots of children. This video has been produced so that people in churches can be led in saying 'The Lord's Prayer', by children whose families have come to Britain from across the world. It can also have a place in church schools, in collective worship and in religious education. The producers' hope is that pupils and adults will be excited by the diversity represented here, but with the bonus that some will see people who look like them in the film. This doesn't fully reflect the diversity of the church, but it can remind everyone of it, particularly in the saying of this prayer, central to the life of the church.

There are two versions of the Lord's prayer each comes with and without musical backing.

1. English language version. The credits frame lists the countries of origin of the families.
2. Multiple languages version. The children say the first phrase: "Our Father" in their home language. Each language used can be seen in the credits frame.

Collective worship

Pupils can be invited to pray 'alongside' these children, either silently, or out loud, joining together in the words as they appear on the screen.

When using the film for the first time, play it first asking the pupils to listen and reflect on whether any phrase stands out for them. Hearing the prayer said in phrases, is different from hearing, or participating, in a collective recitation. Give pupils the opportunity, with a talk partner, to comment on which phrases they have heard anew – or have noticed for the first time, or which ones they have questions about (There are helpful explanations listed at the end of this document and a Christian leader could assist with the process. Hearing the pupils' thoughts can build up a school community's understanding of the prayer, and what it can mean when they are invited to say it together.

Further questions to pose for pupils

- Does it make any difference to speak to God as 'Our Father', and not just 'my Father'?
- Why did the filmmaker invite the children to say 'Our Father' in their home language: does that change how you hear it?
- How does it feel to know that each of these children calls on God as 'Our Father', just as pupils and teachers in the school may?
- How do you think the children in the film feel when they say the prayer: do they think about each line, or do they just link it all together?
- Why do you think this prayer matters to them?
- Do you think they feel closer to God when they say it or, perhaps, connected to their family?
- I wonder if they feel thankful for what they have? What have you got to be thankful for?
- I wonder if they think about the things they have done that they are ashamed of? Have you had to say sorry recently?
- I wonder if they think about the awesomeness of forgiveness? What do you think forgiveness means?

How do you think about the Lord's Prayer, now that you have seen other children lead it?

Following the model of the film, could pupils in your school lead everyone to say the prayer? Could you even make your film?

A simple explanation of the Lord's Prayer, and what it can mean today, can be seen below. There are many others. For suggestions for further reading, see underneath.

The Lord's Prayer

1. "Our Father in Heaven, Hallowed be your name"

Jesus called God "Father": one of many names he used. In Jesus' time and culture, most people felt that the name of God was holy and precious. This line is asking that God's name, and therefore God, be honoured by people everywhere.

NB some pupils do not use this title for God. If there are pupils who would rather not join in the words for this part of the prayer, do not insist.

English speaking Christians use 'God' to speak about the divine, the Almighty. There are lots of different names for God in the Bible. How many can you collect and display? Arabic speaking Christians refer to God as Allah, as this is the Arabic word for 'God'.

What different names for God do people know – particularly, but not exclusively, from the Bible?

2. "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven"

The kingdom of God is not just one place; his kingdom is wherever God's love is being shared and God's ways are being lived out.

What does it mean to ask for God's kingdom to come? What is God's kingdom like?

3. "Give us this day our daily bread"

This is asking that God will give what people need for the day ahead – just what is needed, not luxuries or wealth. We know that if we take more than our fair share of the earth's resources, then there will be many around the world who will go without.

What would people really like, as opposed to really need? When gathering a selection of ideas, do pupils have a shared idea of what people need?

4. "Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us"

Praying this means that people need to do something. This asks people to forgive others, in the same way, that God forgives people.

Is there anything I need to ask for forgiveness for? Is there anything I need to forgive others for? What does forgiveness look like? What does it feel like?

5. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"

Everyone is tempted from time to time to behave in a way that is hurtful to others and dishonouring to God. This line of the prayer is asking for strength to make the right choices and take a stand against bad things.

What are temptations in school? What is it important to stand against/stay away from?

6. “For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever”

The end of the prayer is a reminder that everything in creation is made by God and that one day everyone will know God’s power and glory. (based on words from Roots and Fruits 2 – see below)

For further reading see:

[Living the Lord’s Prayer: Turning the School Upside Down – Grove Books](#)

[Roots and Fruits 2 - Imagine](#)

[The Lord's Prayer Unplugged: A wealth of ideas opening up the prayer i – BRFOonline](#)

[The Lord's Prayer in movement - Barnabas in schools \(anglican.org\)](#)

Adults may wish to consider this blog for what the lines of the prayer mean: [Seven reasons to ban the Lord’s Prayer - Bishop Steven's Blog \(anglican.org\)](#)

Families to use at home

You could provide families with a copy of this to their smartphones or via email, encouraging them to use it as part of saying prayers at night, or as a way to learn this beautiful prayer as a whole family.

Religious education

When teaching about this important Christian prayer, use the film to illustrate the fact that it is said by families all over the world emphasising the international nature of Christianity. The countries from which the children’s families come are listed in the credits. Ask pupils to find the countries on a map, as an illustration of where Christians can be found. Older pupils could research the breakdown of the religious affiliation of each of the countries represented and calculate whether the family was in a religious majority or minority in the country.

You may like to compare the film with this one [Lord's Prayer Just Pray Ad Church Of England - YouTube](#). Made by the Church of England in 2015, it was intended to remind people about the different reasons that people might have for praying the Lord’s Prayer. What are the similarities and differences between the two films? Could either of them be used in a service of Christian worship? What would be the advantages and disadvantages of each?

Additionally:

As a resource for teaching about the **Kingdom of God**, the film can be shown to aid consideration of the clues in the prayer, for Christians, about what the Kingdom of God might be like? Schools using the Understanding Christianity resource may find the film a useful stimulus here.

As a resource when teaching about **Pentecost**, the ‘multiple languages’ film is a good illustration of people with different languages coming to understand each other.

To access all the films in their different versions click [here](#)