

# Prayer Plots

By Heath Howe



Spending time in nature is a great way to develop and enhance our prayer life. This activity offers families an instructed way to listen to God's voice and notice God at work in the beauty of the natural world. God calls us to be stewards of creation. Spending time in it is a good place to begin.

## For

Young Families

## Season

Spring

## Needed

Pen or pencil, crayon (water colors may be used as well), paper or journal, a place outside or an indoor plant, a bell or chime.

## Prepare in Advance

- If art supplies such as water colors are to be used, mix ahead of time

## Activity Plan

1. Say the opening prayer aloud as a family

*Dear God, thank you for creating the earth. Thank you for the beauty and power it holds. As we sit among your creatures today, may we hear your voice, feel your love, or know you are with us. May our listening and our sharing bring us closer to one another and closer to you. Amen.*

2. Have each family member choose a journal or paper and a writing/drawing tool from the ones offered.
3. Explain that for the next ten minutes each person is going to spend some quiet time in nature just listening to God. During the listening persons may draw or write anything they hear or notice. If desired, prompt the listening by inviting each person to name an intention for their quiet time. For example, someone may have had a busy week at school and an intention of "peace" or "calm" might be helpful as they turn to quiet.
4. Ask one family member to keep time. This person will ring the bell, or sound the chime, to let everyone know when the quiet time is over.

5. Each family member should choose a small plot in the family yard where they would like to spend time listening. This might be under the maple tree, in front of a newly spun spider web, next to a flower, or in the garden. If a yard is not available have each member choose a flower box or houseplant. A family trip to a local park or beach could work as well.
6. Once intentions have been named and the plots chosen, have the timekeeper sound the chime or ring the bell.
7. Spend ten minutes listening. During that time draw or write anything that comes to your mind or heart. There are no right or wrong answers in prayer!
8. After ten minutes the bell or chime is sounded.
9. Gather and share what you heard or noticed. Share what you have learned about God and God's creation.

### **Variation**

This activity can be done several days in a row or several times a week. If so, encourage family members to keep the same prayer plot for a time as to note any changes in the plot. What might these changes have to say to them about God?

