

PRAYER WITH CHILDREN



PYM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CONVERSATION

12.2.21

Quakers and Prayer

For many Quakers, prayer is part of our individual lives as well as part of Meeting for Worship.

Prayer

Prayer is simply conversation or contact with God where we open ourselves to the Divine presence. This can take different forms. Quakers may pray silently. We may formulate words or an image or just be. It is important that we listen for what God may have to say to us.

Some Quakers also use set prayers from the Bible or other spiritual writings when they pray.

Quaker Grace

Before meals, Quakers typically have a silent grace or a moment of silent thankfulness for the meal and for each other. The group often holds hands during grace.

Holding in the Light

During or after worship, a Friend may ask the group to "hold someone in the Light." The person may be sick, dealing with difficult life circumstances, struggling spiritually, or working to serve others.

To hold a person in the Light, imagine them being held in God's loving presence and offer prayers and love for them. Holding an individual or a group of people in the Light is often part of our practice of prayer.

(continued)

FOR ME, PRAYER IS
MORE ABOUT LISTENING
THAN TALKING. PRAYER
IS A WAY OF BEING WITH
GOD.

Deborah Fisch, 2010

PRAYING OUT LOUD!

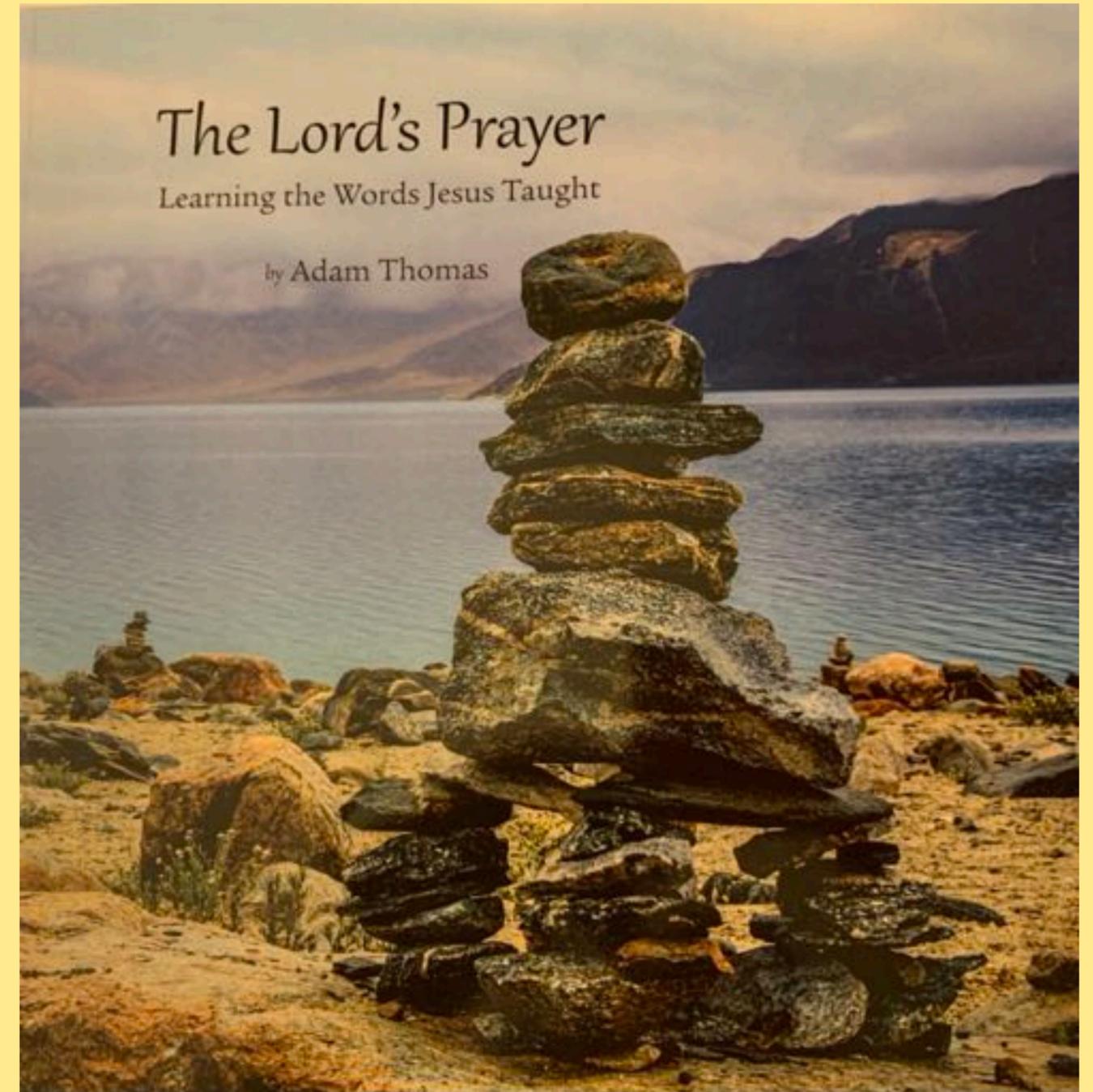
▶ The way Jesus taught his disciples to pray

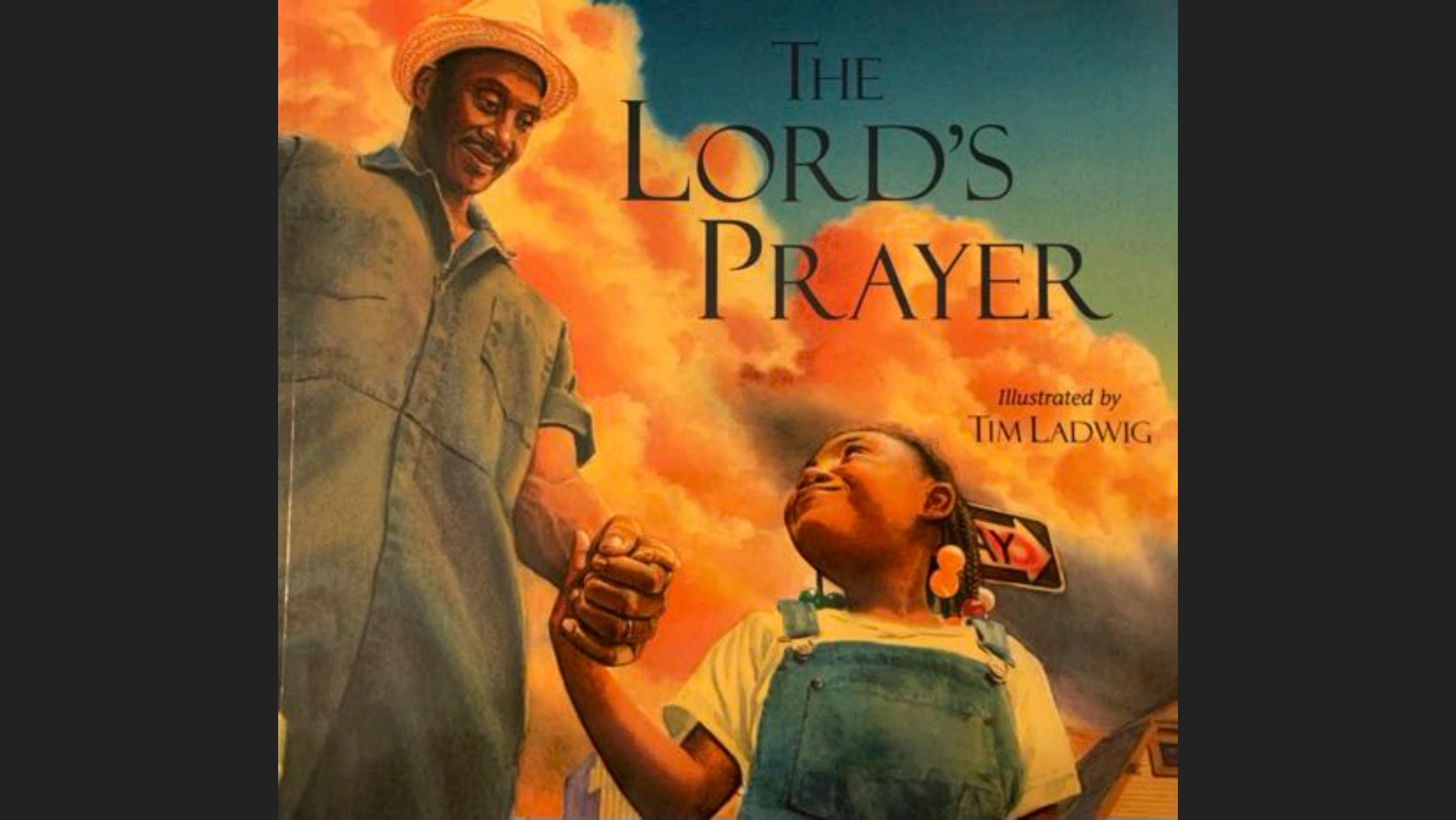
▶ **Illustrated Ministry:** 6-part exploration of Matthew 6:9-13

An invitation to experience this well-known prayer through art, reflection, and discussion. Through the use of *inclusive language* and *meaningful theology*, children have opportunities to explore our belongingness and connectedness to each other, the world, and God. Not only that but how that belongingness and connectedness means we must also collaborate with God to bring God's kingdom into the world.

▶ **Godly Play-style story**

▶ **Lord's Prayer in a Bag** – an interactive activity for children and also adults. Many “grown-ups” are afraid to ask for help understanding what this prayer means





THE LORD'S PRAYER

Illustrated by
TIM LADWIG

mother's prayer

our mother who art underfoot,
hallowed be thy names,
thy seasons come, thy will be done,
within us as around us,
thank you for our daily bread, our water, our air,
and our lives and so much beauty;
lead us not into selfish craving and the destructions
that are the hungers of the gluttons,
but deliver us from wanton consumption
of thy vast but finite bounty,
for thine is the only sphere of life we know,
and the power and the glory, forever and ever,
amen

ADAPTED
BY
REBECCA
SOLNIT

Today, pray the Lord's prayer with your body:



Our Father who art in Heaven,



hallowed be Your Name,



Your Kingdom come



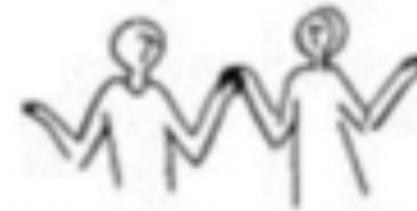
Your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven



Give us this day Our daily bread



And forgive us our trespasses



as we forgive those who trespass against us.



And lead us not into temptation



but deliver us from evil.



For the Kingdom, the power and the glory



are yours, now and forever.



Amen

PRAYING WITH OUR WHOLE SELVES!

- ▶ **Body Prayers**
- ▶ **Prayer beads**
- ▶ **Prayer cubes**

Help • Thanks • Wow

"I do not know much about God and prayer, but I have come to believe, over the past twenty-five years, that there's something to be said about keeping prayer simple."

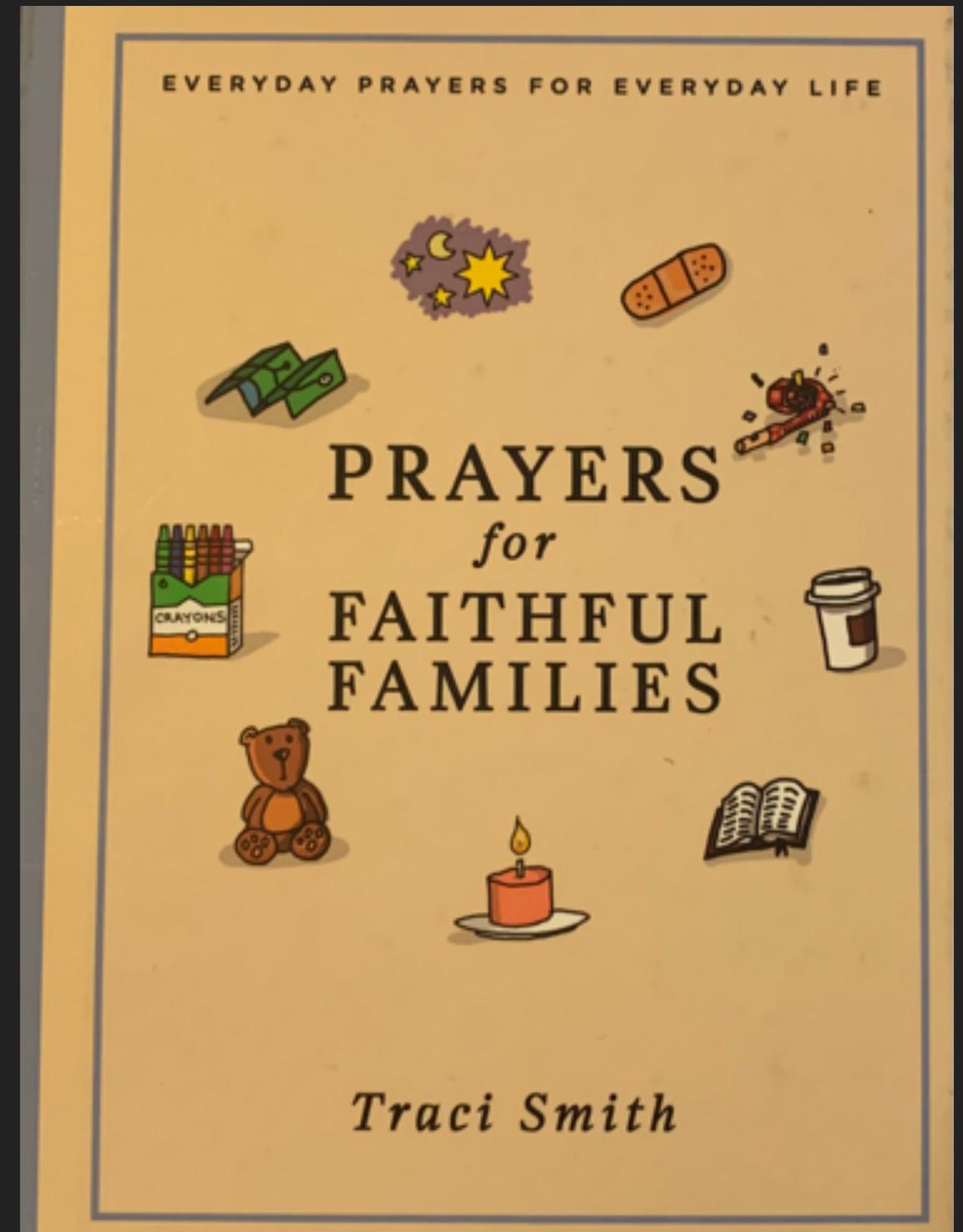
- Author Anne Lamott

Great ideas from Friends at Green Street Meeting

- ▶ We did some body movement as prayer with a Friend who is an actor, and singing as prayer with another Friend.
- ▶ We talked about how prayer can be something that you ask God for help for other people (or pets).
- ▶ We read the 23rd Psalm out loud.
- ▶ We made up a prayer in a circle - like the improv game where one person says one part of a story, and the next person has to keep it going.
- ▶ We talked about holding each person in the room in the Light as a way to center at the beginning of meeting for worship: a Friend who has that practice told us about it, then we tried doing it all at the same time in silence, and then that Friend demonstrated - she spoke it out loud about each of us around the table, and then we each drew a picture of people or pets in worship.

QREC “FAITH AT HOME” SECTION: SPIRITUAL PRACTICE RESOURCES

- ▶ <https://quakerrecollaborative.org/faith-at-home>
- ▶ Welcoming Children into Prayer
- ▶ Making Prayer Part of Daily Life
- ▶ Praying in Color
- ▶ A Body Prayer for Home
- ▶ Creating a Prayer Corner



LOVE FIRST LECTIO

- ▶ *Lectio Divina* is reading, meditation, prayer
- ▶ Love First Lectio is a way to read the bible on your own, with a sibling or child or parent, with your whole family either in person or through a computer, or with members of your larger community through your computer.
- ▶ It works like this: once you've chosen a reading, the process has three stages, **Lens**, **Mirror**, and **Window**, and (no surprise) in every stage the important thing to remember is *Love*.

The stages of Love First lectio




LENS

You are reading the lesson through the lens of love.

Read the text aloud.

- Where is love in this text?
- What kind of love is it?
- Who is being loved or loving?


MIRROR

You are seeing yourself through the mirror of love.

Read the text again, this time looking for yourself in the lesson.

- Does it remind me of the kind of love I've experienced in my life? If so, when was it and with whom?
- Have I missed having this kind of love in my life?


WINDOW

You are seeing the world through the window of love.

Read the passage a final time.

- How does the love found in this passage help you see love in the world around you – or where it is needed?
- Who or what do you see that you couldn't see before?
- How does the passage's message of love compel you to be more loving to others?



“PRAYER AND FRIENDS MEETING FOR WORSHIP”

A story about Friends gathering as a community to listen for God

Sometimes we talk to God. We can tell God anything, and sometimes God talks to us. Most of all, though, we listen in the stillness. This is called prayer. We can pray anywhere, at any time, and God always listens with love. We may say thank you or I love you. We may say I'm angry, God, or I'm afraid, or — help! Sometimes we spend time with God without using any words. This is prayer, too. There are many, many ways to pray. However we pray, deep calls to deep. Friends pray together, too. And when we come together to wait for God as a community, this is called meeting for worship. We wait in silence, in wonder and in love, in great expectation. We can do this in any place and at any time, but most often in a Friends meetinghouse.

Prayer is for everyone.

Prayer is for any moment, situation, or mood.

We get better at Listening for God, the more we do it.

Prayer changes us; it opens our hearts and our imaginations toward more loving ways of living.

Beth Collea

SOURCES

- ▶ “Religious vocabulary in children’s prayer language: a small-scale case study in three UK schools” Fay Rowland in Practical Theology (2019)
- ▶ *Children’s Spirituality: What it is and Why it Matters*, Rebecca Nye