

JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER



DAY 1 - GOD'S SPECIAL GIFT!

So be very careful how you live...Live wisely. I mean that you should use every chance you have for doing good, because these are evil times. (Eph. 5:15, 16, ICB)

What's the greatest gift anyone ever gave you? Maybe it was a pet, a bicycle or something else you wanted! One of the very special gifts that God gives every one of His children is the gift of time. We can't see time, or touch it, or unwrap it. As soon as we are alive, we have all the seconds, minutes, hours, and days of our lives. We can use this amazing gift to learn about God's love, to grow our loving characters, to bless others and do many wonderful things.

Jesus spent time with His Father, praying and listening. He taught His disciples, so that they would become amazing missionaries one day. He was always looking for ways to bless others with His stories, kindness, and healing. He visited His friends, had dinner with people, and told them amazing things that changed their lives! He even cooked breakfast on the beach for His disciples! He did all His ministry in about three and a half years.

Petra listens to Bible stories on the way to school. Davie practices guitar because he wants to help with the music in Sabbath School.

Lilia and Linus have chosen to have only ten toys at a time, so they spend less time tidying up, and have more time to help Mom.

Jose helps his parents after school. They grow food for themselves and give the extra vegetables to people who are hungry.

The Andersen family limit their screen time to 30 minutes a day and then they walk through the forest for another 30 minutes. They are all making good and different choices about how to use their God-given gift of time.



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LET'S DO THIS!

- How do you use your time? Think about yesterday. How much time did you talk to God, think about Him, learn, eat, care for your needs, do chores, travel, read, play, bless others, etc.? Make a chart of how many minutes you spent doing each activity.
- Look at your chart. What can you learn from it? What would you like to do more of and what would you like to do less of?
- Pray that God will show you how to use His precious gift of time wisely and well



LET'S PRAY!



- Dear Father God, I praise You for the incredible gift of my life!
- I thank You God for the precious gift of time to spend in so many wonderful ways.
- I am sorry God for the time I have wasted doing things that don't bless and help me or other people.
- Please help me to make good choices about how I use Your great gift of time.
- I pray that everyone will understand the value of their precious gift of time and use it to help other people feel loved and happy.



JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER



DAY 2 - SLOW DOWN!

He said to them, “Come with me. We will go to a quiet place to be alone. There we will get some rest.” So they went in a boat alone to a place where there were no people. (Mark 6:31-32 ICB)

The disciples were exhausted! For many days they had walked in twos from village to village, telling people about Jesus, and the wonderful story of God’s love. They looked out for people who were sick and struggling. They listened to them, asked them what they needed, and did everything possible to be kind and helpful. The disciples wanted everyone to see and feel God’s amazing love, and not just hear about it.

Now they were all together again, chattering excitedly to each other about all the things that had happened! Some people had been rude to them. But many people had welcomed them. Even though they had amazing stories to tell, Jesus could see that they were worn out, exhausted, and hungry. Before they could do anything else, He took them to a quiet place to be with Him, so they could rest, eat, sleep, and take care of themselves.

Tom and Sara found a special way to have their own peaceful time with Jesus. Every evening they each find a quiet space to sit. They read a Bible verse about God’s love and imagine how much God loves them. They think about three things that went well during the day and thank God for helping them.

Tom writes the three things in his journal. If something didn’t go as well as they hoped, they ask God how to make it better, and to show them what they could do differently next time. Sara draws pictures of things that fill her with wonder, like a flower or a butterfly. Thinking about these lovely things in the evening, and talking to Jesus about them, helps them to go to sleep feeling loved, peaceful, and happy.



JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

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LET'S DO THIS!

- Imagine you are on the beach with Jesus and the disciples, resting after a busy time. What do you think He will do to help them rest?
- Make a list of Bible verses about God's love. Write each one on a separate card. Decorate them and choose one each day to read and think about.
- Ask each other about three things that went well each day. Thank God for the way He is helping you to learn, and to grow wise and kind.
- When something difficult or sad has happened, comfort the person, and tell them how much you care. They just need you to listen and be kind.



LET'S PRAY

- Dear Father God, I praise You for inviting me to have quiet times with You.
- I thank You God for the different ways I can spend quiet time with You.
- I am sorry God for the times when I have not put You first.
- Please help me to slow down, listen to You, and experience Your love for me.
- I pray for all the people who feel tired because they are caring for others. Help them to slow down and rest, so that they can experience Your loving care for them.

JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

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10 DAYS OF PRAYER



DAY 3 - BEING STILL WITH GOD

God says, “Be still and know that I am God.” (Psalm 46:10, ICB)

Luka’s mom was working in the garden while he played. Suddenly he noticed that she sat down on a chair. She smiled peacefully and took some deep breaths. Luka watched her carefully...Was she OK? Maybe she was just tired?

She looked around, then she tipped her head as if she was listening. She rubbed some lavender in her hand, and then she took a deep breath and wiggled her nose as she smelled the fragrance on her fingers. She licked her lips slowly, wrapped her arms around her body, and gave herself a big hug! “Mommy? What are you doing?” Luka giggled.

“I am being still and thinking about God,” she explained. “I like to sit still and think about How much He loves me! Then I look around to see the wonderful things He has made. I listen quietly to the sounds of the wind, and the birds, and they remind me of God’s love. Then I touch a leaf or flower that He has made, to feel its texture, and breathe in the beautiful fragrance. I like to taste what He has made, and I can still taste the strawberry I just picked. And then I give myself a big hug from God, because if He were here with me, I know He would give me a hug!”

“Wow!” said Luka, “Can I be still with God too?”

“Yes! You can always remember that God is close to you. It’s a wonderful thing to do!” Luka smiled! It was good to know that God was always with him in so many ways!



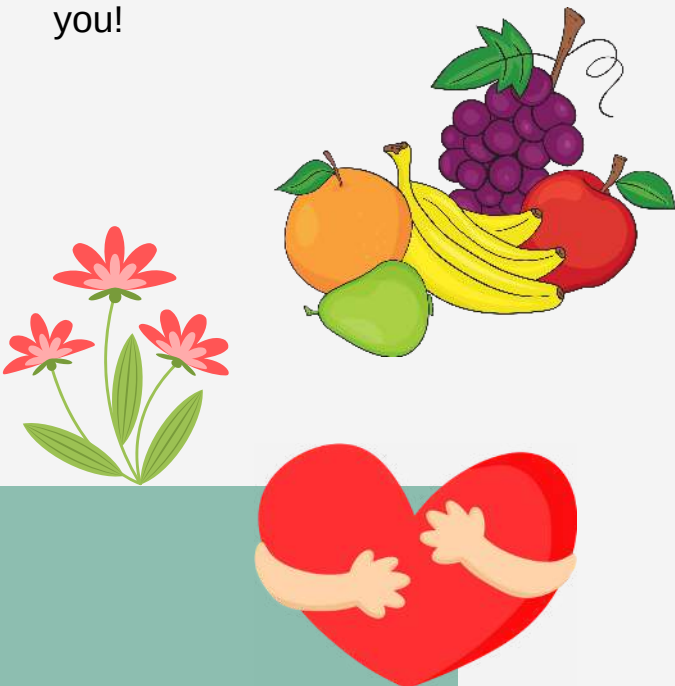
JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER

LET'S DO THIS!

- Name 5 things God made that you can see. How do they fill you with wonder?
- Name 5 things you can hear. What do they tell you about God's love for you?
- Find 5 different textures to touch. You have nails, skin, and hair on your own body! Praise God for His attention to detail!
- Smell something God has made – fruit, flowers, vegetables, herbs... Can you smell the fragrance of His love for you?
- Give yourselves a big hug from God and remember how much He loves you!



LET'S PRAY

- Dear Father God, I praise You for filling the world with so many things for me to explore and to help me enjoy Your creativity and love.
- Thank You God for making me with all my different senses, to give me such lovely ways to experience this amazing world.
- I am sorry God for rushing past Your wonderful creation and love so many times, without being still and taking time to appreciate them.
- Please show me and my family different ways to pause, be still and experience Your love, peace, joy, and wonder.
- I pray for all the people who are feeling very overwhelmed sad and worried. Please help them to understand the importance of slowing down.

JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER



DAY 4 - CHOOSING WELL

When you give up eating, don't put on a sad face like the hypocrites. They make their faces look strange to show people that they are giving up eating...When you give up eating, comb your hair and wash your face. Then people will not know that you are giving up eating...Your Father sees what is done in secret, and he will reward you. (Matt. 6:16–18, ICB)

In Jesus' time people fasted for special festivals and when they were praying for something important. Usually, they went without food for a while, or they just ate very simple food, like bread and water. Fasting helped them to focus on God, and to show that they were putting Him first in their lives. But Jesus knew that some people liked to show off when they were fasting, so that other people would think they were very holy. When they did that they were putting themselves first, and not God, or other people.

“Today people fast in all kinds of ways. Some people only eat after sunset. Some people miss a meal, some people don't eat food for several days. Other people only eat fruits and vegetables. Some people choose to “fast” from their electronic devices because they are their biggest temptation. Everyone is different and it is not always good to fast from food, especially for children and people with certain health conditions.

But we can all choose to go without something we like for a while, such as dessert, or snacks, or playing on our devices. Choosing not to do something we enjoy helps us to grow our self-control “muscles”. Self-control is a very important skill to learn. Children who learn to say “no” to things they would like, or who learn to wait for what they want, learn to put God and others first. They are making good choices that help them to be healthier, kinder, and wiser.

Name one of the biggest temptations in your life that God can help you “fast” from.



JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER

LET'S DO THIS!

- Make a list of some of your biggest temptations, or the things you find hard to stop eating or doing.
- Think of fun ways to help you resist the temptation and be self-controlled. You could do something else to distract you and choose fruit instead of candy. You could spend special time with God, or helping others, rather than spending time on your devices.
- Ask God to help you make a good plan and ask Him to help you every time you are tempted.



LET'S PRAY

- Dear Father God, I praise You for being so incredible and loving.
- Thank you for putting us first and sending Jesus to show us Your love.
- I am sorry when I do what I want, without thinking about You or other people.
- Please help me learn how to control myself, so that I can make good choices that don't hurt me and other people.
- I pray for people struggling with addictions to the things that hurt their minds, their bodies, their relationships and especially their experience of Your love.



JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER



DAY 5 - PRAYING LIKE JESUS

So when you pray, you should pray like this: “Our Father in heaven, we pray that your name will always be kept holy. We pray that your kingdom will come. We pray that what you want will be done, here on earth as it is in heaven. (Matt. 6:9, 10, ICB)

Jesus was very happy when His disciples asked Him how to pray! He was delighted that they wanted to talk to their Father in heaven just as He did.

Jesus started His special prayer with “Our Daddy!” When we pray, we often put our hands together. But we can also give ourselves a big hug from God and imagine His delight whenever we take time to talk to Him! He welcomes us with a BIG hug, and then He sits us on His BIG lap, ready to listen to us, just like the most wonderful daddy on earth!



Jesus praised God for being Holy – perfectly wise and loving. Jesus wanted God’s wisdom, love, joy, peace, and grace to be experienced on earth, just as it is in heaven, so that everyone could see and feel how wonderful it is to live in God’s forever-kingdom.

Jesus prayed for enough food for one day. He didn’t give God a long list of “wants”. Then Jesus prayed that we would forgive other people, just as God forgives us, so that we can share His love with others.

Finally, He asked God to help us make the good choices that lead us towards His wise, loving, and peaceful ways, and to rescue us when we make bad choices. Our loving Father God knows that we are human, and we will make mistakes. But He will always be there to help us because He loves us!

What a beautiful prayer! Whenever you pray, remember Jesus’ pattern for talking to His Father, and speak simply and openly to Him, remembering that He always loves you.

JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER



LET'S DO THIS!

- Make up some actions to Jesus' beautiful prayer. Try starting with these actions:
- Our Father (give yourself a big hug from God).
- Who lives in heaven (hands up to sky)
- Hallowed by your name (Hands come together in prayer and come down to chest)
- Watch a YouTube clip of Karen Holford sharing her actions for the Lord's Prayer (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wvb-OMf_Ulg)



LET'S PRAY

- Dear Father God, I praise You for the wonderful gift of prayer!
- Thank You, God, that I can talk to You whenever I want to!
- I am so sorry that sometimes I forget to listen to You and to say "I love You".
- Please help me to talk to You, and to listen to You, so that I can grow closer to You.
- I pray that more people will discover how to talk to You through prayer.



JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER



DAY 6 - DON'T GIVE UP!

We must not become tired of doing good. We will receive our harvest of eternal life at the right time. We must not give up! (Gal. 6:9, ICB)

Life had been tough for Joseph. His mother had died when his little brother was born. His big brothers knew that he was their father's favorite son, and that made them jealous. They were so angry they nearly killed Joseph, but they decided to sell him as a slave instead.

When he arrived at Potiphar's house, Joseph was sad, lonely, and afraid. But every day Joseph asked God to help him be a blessing. He worked hard. He tried to keep a smile on his face and to be kind to everyone he met.

One day Potiphar's wife asked Joseph to do something wrong. He refused to do such a terrible thing, so she told lies about him, and Potiphar sent him to prison. But Joseph still tried to be a blessing to others. He helped the prison guards, and he listened to people who were sad and confused.

One day Pharaoh needed help to understand some strange dreams. One of Pharaoh's servants had met Joseph in prison. He suddenly remembered how Joseph had explained one of his dreams! So Joseph was brought to Pharaoh, and God helped him to explain Pharaoh's dream. He was so delighted with Joseph's explanation, and his plans to prepare for a future famine, that he made him a great ruler!

Joseph persevered. He kept choosing to trust God and bless others even when his life was very sad and difficult. Finally, he understood that God had been working out an amazing plan in his life to help him save the people of Egypt, and his entire family.



Adventist Children's Ministries



JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER

LET'S DO THIS!

- Think about a challenge in your life. How can God help you to be a blessing in that situation?
- Do you know someone who is going through a difficult time? How could you be a blessing and encouragement to them?
- What are your goals in life? What can you do every day to take a step closer to those goals? You can read a few pages of a good book, write a Bible story in your own words, practice your skills, do your best homework, listen, be kind, help others, and choose to spend time with God.



LET'S PRAY

- Dear Father God, I praise You for being with me in difficult times and in happy times.
- Thank You God for turning my sad and tough experiences into something beautiful and wonderful at just the right time!
- I am sorry God for the times when I have given up too easily, and when I forgot to trust You when my life was difficult.
- Please help me to trust You and bless others, no matter what is happening in my life.
- I pray for the people who are facing big challenges. May they feel Your love and encouragement. Help me to love and encourage them too.



JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER



DAY 7 - KINDNESS RIPPLES!

All people will know that you are my followers if you love each other. (John 13:35, ICB)

Sammy held his lunch bag tightly. He was so hungry! He couldn't wait to eat mom's delicious bread and the little fish that he caught with dad yesterday. But he was listening to Jesus, and he was learning about God's love, and about being kind to each other...Sammy looked around. Nobody else had a lunch bag. Everyone must be hungry.

He looked at Jesus. He didn't have any food either. One of Jesus' friends asked Sammy if he had any food to share. His tummy rumbled, but he took a deep breath, smiled, and gave him his precious lunch. He watched the disciple take the food to Jesus. Jesus smiled, looked up to heaven and blessed the bread and fish.



Then He gave some food to His disciples, and they gave it to other people...Soon everyone on the hillside was eating bread and fish, including Jesus and Sammy!

"Wow!" thought Sammy! "I gave my lunch to Jesus, and now everyone has food to eat. They are even collecting all the leftovers!" Sammy took home more bread and fish than mommy put in his lunch bag in the morning!

Sammy discovered that kindness makes lovely, happy ripples. His shared lunch had rippled out to feed Jesus, and more than 5000 people! And the leftovers were taken to feed other people! Then all those people told the story of Jesus' love, and the miracle was multiplied! Whenever we do something kind, we have no idea how God will use our kindness to make ripples that will bless others with His love!

JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER

LET'S DO THIS!

- Make a list of ways that you can be kind to others. Try to do at least one kind thing every day and see how it makes you feel.
- You can smile, say thank you, offer to help someone, be encouraging, give a hug, and tell someone that they are special to you.
- Did you know that being kind to others makes you feel happier too? It is a gift that gives right back to you!



LET'S PRAY

- Dear Father God, I love You and praise You for Your loving-kindness! I want to keep learning more about Your love throughout eternity!
- Thank You God for showing Your love to me by...
- I'm sorry God that I struggled to be kind to...
- Please fill my heart with Your love so that I can share it with others.
- I pray that everyone who knows You will learn how to share Your love with others by being kind and loving too.



JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER



DAY 8 - THANK YOU!

So let us be thankful because we have a kingdom that cannot be shaken. We should worship God in a way that pleases him. (Heb. 12:28, ICB)

Mary was looking for a wonderful way to say Thank You to Jesus. She had made lots of mistakes in her life, and other people had treated her badly. But Jesus was always kind to her, and she loved Him so much. Mary enjoyed the times when Jesus came to her home and taught about God's amazing love for each person, no matter what they had done, or not done. He let her sit at His feet and learn because He wanted women to know that they could be His disciples too!

When her brother Lazarus died, Mary was heartbroken. She was so disappointed that Jesus hadn't come to heal him. But Jesus had an even better plan, and raised him back to life again! That was the most amazing gift ever! How could she ever say Thank You to Jesus for that amazing miracle? She wondered what to do. Then she found a bottle of very expensive perfume and poured it all over Jesus' feet at a dinner party. The guests didn't understand what she was doing, but Jesus knew that she was saying Thank You in the best way she could. He said that her Thank You gift was so special it would be remembered forever!

We can say Thank You to God in all kinds of ways, because every time we say Thank You to God, or to anyone else, it reminds us how blessed we are, and it makes us feel happier too!



JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER



LET'S DO THIS!

- Make a long list of the ways God is blessing you and your family today. Every breath you take is a gift. Every beat of your heart, every drop of water you drink, every mouthful of food, every hug, and every smile you share is a gift from God. Try to list at least 100 things before the end of the week.
- Look around you and thank God for everything you can see right now!
- Make a Thank You card for God. Even though you can't mail it to Him, He reads every word!



LET'S PRAY

- Dear Father God, I praise You for being so generous to me and my family.
- Thank You God, for the thousands of gifts You give me every day!
- I am sorry God, that I don't always notice the many gifts You give to me, and I am sorry for all the times I have forgotten to say Thank You.
- Please open my eyes to see all the wonderful things You are giving me and doing for me every day.
- I pray that everyone will learn to thank You for the many gifts You give us every day!



JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER



DAY 9 - GOD'S EVERY-WEEK BIRTHDAY GIFT FOR THE WORLD

You must not do what pleases yourselves on that holy day. You should call the Sabbath a joyful day...You should honor it by not doing whatever you please on that day...Then you will find joy in the Lord. (Isa. 58:13, 14, ICB)

God paused on the sixth day of creation to enjoy everything He had created. It had been amazing to make light shine, to create blue skies, and to sculpt the hills. He enjoyed planting delicate flowers, shady trees, and delicious fruits and vegetables. It was incredible to scatter stars on the sky. It was wonderful to see the fish swim and to hear the birds sing. He enjoyed creating the animals and watching the funny things they did together. And, best of all, He enjoyed creating Adam and Eve. Everything He had made was for their delight because He loved His precious children so much.

Tomorrow He would rest. Not because He was tired. But because He wanted to spend the day with His new children. He wanted to show them the wonderful things He had made: the delicious fruits, the beautiful flowers, and the friendly animals. And most of all, He wanted to show them how much He loved them, so they would learn how to love each other, too.

So God created Sabbath. An every-week birthday gift for this brand-new world. A day of delight where everyone could stop being busy and earning money. A day where everyone could pause and explore the gifts of creation. A day where everyone could enjoy and share the best gift of all, God's incredible love for every human being.



Adventist Children's Ministries



JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER



LET'S DO THIS!

- Find a gift bag or box. Fill it with things that remind you of the gifts that God has packed into Sabbath: A candle - Sabbath brightens our week, a battery - Sabbath rest can give recharge our batteries, etc.
- Write "Happy Every-Week Birthday to the World" on the front of a blank card. Decorate it, and then write a Thank You letter to God for the Sabbath.
- Make a list of delightful things you can do on Sabbath to experience God's creation, show love to others, and learn more about His love for you.



LET'S PRAY

- Dear Father God, I praise You for the lovely gift of Sabbath every week, so that we can learn about Your love, share Your love with those in need, and be filled with wonder at Your amazing creation.
- I am sorry, God, for the times when I have seen Sabbath as a boring day and not as the delightful day You made it to be.
- Please help me and my family to plan and enjoy delightful Sabbaths that bring us closer to each other and to You.
- I pray that everyone in my church will make Sabbath a delight, so that others will want to share in the delightful day, too.



JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER



DAY 10 - LIVING TOGETHER IN LOVE

Let us think about each other and help each other to show love and do good deeds. You should not stay away from the church meetings, as some are doing. But you should meet together and encourage each other. (Heb. 10:24, 25, ICB)

Toni and Lydia loved going to their new church. They had a wonderful Sabbath School with a very kind teacher. They could tell that she loved Jesus very much! His love bubbled out of her when she talked about Him!

Every week children were involved in the worship service. Last week Lydia showed a beautiful shell she had found and explained how it filled her with wonder. Children also helped to make the scripture reading special. Once Toni drew pictures of the different verses to show the congregation. One week he sang a scripture song with the rest of his class.

Pastor James included children in his sermons. They would hunt for his illustrations, or he would show them an experiment. Everyone made sound effects to help him tell the story of the lost sheep.

After the service each of the children visited with a senior person. Toni talked to Mr Berg about birds, and Mr Berg would save stamps for Toni's collection. Lydia visited Mrs Gerito. She made her a bookmark with a Bible verse on it, and Mrs Gerito would lend her lovely books to read about missionaries or make cookies for Toni and Lydia's family. Then they prayed for each other.

What do you love about going to your church? What else could your church do to let you know that you belong of the loving family of God?



JANUARY 10 - 20, 2024

THEME: FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP

10 DAYS OF PRAYER



LET'S DO THIS!

- Make treats to give to the older people in your church.
- Adopt an older person in your church, invite them for dinner, pray for them, care for them and help them.
- Make a big poster of all the things you love about your church and ask if you can put it on the wall at church. Maybe other people will add their thoughts too!
- Ask the pastor what you and your family can do to make your church an even happier place, where people feel welcome and loved.



LET'S PRAY

- Dear Father God, I praise You for putting us in families, communities, and churches where we can care for one another and share what You are doing in our lives.
- I thank You God for the church where we worship. I especially enjoy....
- I am sorry God for the times when I haven't wanted to go to church.
- Please help me to find ways to be kind and loving to the lonely and elderly people in my church.
- I pray for the leaders of my church and all the members. Help us to be a place where everyone who comes can experience Your wonderful love.