



Best Practices “Nuggets”

CANDLE PRAYER: WORD SQUARES

Where to use?:

As a devotion or conversation starter in the home, or in a small group setting like youth group or a council meeting at church.

Resources needed:

- Make copies of your word square sheet or use standard graph paper,
- Candle and lighter

Suggested use:

(What is offered here is simply a suggested use, but feel free to be creative and find ways to use this that best fits your ministry setting)

- Consider this background and share what is helpful:

Christ is often referred to in scripture as a source of “light” in a darkened world. Using a candle to represent this light has become a part of our Christian experience. In some small groups and youth group settings, gathering around a lit candle to pray has become a tradition. As 21st Century Americans, lighting a candle while dimming all other lights in the room, including turning OFF the TV, cellular devices, and computers, can serve to truly focus us as a family or a small group, in the moment. The singular light of the candle penetrating the darkness can become a sacred space for you and your family or you and your small group. Particularly if you allow for this time together to be a time of listening intently for God, while sharing with one another in the stillness.

- Light a candle and encourage everyone to turn off all mobile devices, computers, and lights, as a method for helping us focus on our time together.

- Read the scripture

“This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin”

1 John 1: 5-7 (NRSV)

- Ask everyone to share a way they have experienced the “light” of God in Christ today, or this week?
- Get out your graph paper or word squares and explain that this will be a tool for helping us to put our prayers into words.
- Encourage each person to write a word or a person’s name for whom or around which they’d like to offer a prayer .
- Have them write the word on the page using one block for each letter. As the sheet gets passed around the circle, encourage everyone to allow the words to intersect.
- If each individual is open to offering a little prayer about their word or name, do so. If not, offer a single prayer for all the people and things on your page this day.
- Spend another moment in silent reflection before closing.

Follow up:

- Post your word square in a prominent place so that throughout the week, words can be added and prayers offered. Or, use your word square every time you gather for up to a month, adding words and prayers as you go.
- Discuss the ways our lives and prayers intersect

