



**Episcopal  
Relief & Development**

Healing a hurting world



# Ministering to Teens After a Disaster

US DISASTER PROGRAM | RESOURCES FOR GRADES 9-12



## Acknowledgements

Episcopal Relief & Development wishes to thank the following, who reviewed and provided input for these materials:

Robin Bagby

The Very Rev. Canon Michael Bamberger

Judy Bezon Braune, Children's Disaster Services

Jayne Crisp, Association of Traumatic Stress Specialists

The Rev. Rob Dewey

Kathy Graham

The Rev. Stephen Harding

The Rev. Bill Livingston

The Rev. Karl Lusk

The Rev. Tamara Torres McGovern

The Rev. Storm Swain

The Rev. Carol Westpfahl

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## Introduction

**If your congregation has just experienced a disaster** – within the community, in the world, or even within the church itself – the church can serve as a place of listening and of grieving, but also of resilience as well. As you minister to children immediately after a disaster, you can share these qualities of Christian hope and presence with them, including:

- **A calm presence.**
- **A listening and attentive community where those affected may share their experiences, along with their grief and their pain and frustrations.**
- **A sense of resilience and hope for the future.**

This resource contains a number of options you may use in ministering to teens (grades 9-12) in the days immediately following a disaster, either in a regularly scheduled church school experience or in a specially designed event. These activities may also be used at other times. All are based on traditional Christian spiritual disciplines and are designed to assist youth in coping with the stress, confusion, sadness, and anger they may feel after a disaster has impacted their homes, their communities, or the world.

Choose the options that you feel comfortable using and that work with your group. Following are ideas for:

- **An introduction and Welcome**
- **A Prayer for Light – a prayer service based on the *Order for Evening* in the Book of Common Prayer.**
- **A Prayer beads art activity – an opportunity to enclose the names of people affected by the disaster in rolled paper beads that can be worn or used as prayer beads.**
- **Service with teens – a guide for helping teens determine how they would like to respond to a disaster.**

Additionally, the following handouts for parents and teachers are available at the end of this resource. Use these as part of your preparation for working with children after a disaster.

- **Tips for Working With Children and Youth After A Disaster (for teachers and others working with young people)**
- **Tips for Parents in Helping Children and Youth Cope with Disaster (for parents).**
- **Tips on Praying with Children and Youth (for teachers and parents).**
- **Helpful Books for Children and Youth (for teachers and parents).**



## Gathering and Welcoming

**TIME** 10-15 minutes

### GATHER

After a disaster, our Church can serve as a safe haven for those affected by the event. As you welcome your group to this time together, emphasize these points:

- This is a safe place to share our fears, our sorrows, our anger, and even questions we might have about our faith. Church is a place where we bring our whole selves – doubts and all. Anger at God and faith crises are normal reactions after disasters.
- As members of this faith community, we ask you to listen attentively to each other. This is not a time to “fix” each other; this is a time to honor the honestly held thoughts and feelings arising as a result of this disaster.
- As with all small group discussions, we ask that all personal information stay within the group, not to be shared with others. We want this timetogether to be a safe place to share and listen.

### WELCOME

Use your own words or the ideas to the right to invite the group to explore the events of recent days for signs of Christ's light, either times when light was received or times when they were light for others.

### DISCUSS

Use these or your own words to lead the group in the following discussion.

*Have any of you experienced some of that light this week – some care and help and comfort that lit the way for you? Did any of you find yourself in a position where they could be light for someone else? Provide time for the teens to share. Add your own experiences as well. Especially mention times that teens were a light to you.*

**Note: From this opening discussion you can move into the Prayer for Light on page 5, or into another activity.**



- *Some of us may find that our lives are pretty upside-down right now. It can be hard to get back to our typical routines and our familiar patterns. Familiar and comfortable would be really nice right now.*
- *That's why in our darkest times we often gather at church and as a Church. Our faith family is all about familiar rituals and patterns. They are not only comforting and familiar when everything is a bit messed up, but they remind us that God is with us in the mess. We believe that God's love for us doesn't change, even when the world around us does.*
- *God's love and concern for us has fueled all the kindness and care and the help we've experienced this week. God's love is like a light in the darkness. That's why we always light candles in our worship services. They remind us that Christ's light is with us, especially in our darkest times. And we can go into the world carrying that light to others, like lamps filled with Christ's light.*

## Prayer for Light

This time of prayer and reflection can be used to open or close a youth activity. It is adapted from "Order for Evening" and "Prayer for Light" (*Book of Common Prayer*, pages 109-112) and from "Night Prayer" in *A New Zealand Prayer Book - He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa* (pages 167-186).

Incorporate the teens thoroughly in the planning and celebration of this service, inviting them to offer the welcome, officiate, proclaim the scriptures, offer instrumental accompaniment, select and sing anthems and meaningful songs and write or offer spontaneously prayers of intercession. Hold this service in a chapel, the main worship space, or in a meeting room that is arranged for group prayer.

### IN PREPARATION FOR THE SERVICE

Use the text below to create a simple order of service for participants.

- Open a Bible to Corinthians 12:14-26 so the reader can find it easily.
- Ensure that the prayer space is dark or partially so at the start of the service.
- Provide all participants with an unlit taper, which will be lit during the service.
- Have matches or a lighter available to initiate the candle lighting.

### OPENING SONG (OPTIONAL)

#### WELCOME

**Officiant:** *What does it mean for us to be people of hope when disaster strikes? What does hope require of us? What is its cost? Today, hope asks that we gather in the comfort that friends and faith community afford. That we insist that even a little light defeats a lot of darkness. And that we cry out to God in prayer, in scripture and in the fullness of our hearts. Hope knows that after the darkness of night there is dawn. Its cost: to believe that this is so until the light returns.*

*Let us Pray.*

**Officiant:** Light and Peace in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**People:** Thanks be to God.

**SCRIPTURE** Corinthians 12:14-26 (see text at right)

**Reader:** A reading from Paul's Letter to the Corinthians

**Reader (After):** The Word of the Lord



Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many.

If the foot were to say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body.

If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be?

But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be?

As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.'

On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this.

But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. (NRSV)

**People:** Thanks be to God

**Officiant:** *Be present, Spirit of God, within us, Your dwelling place and home, that this house may be one where all darkness is penetrated by your light, all troubles calmed by your peace, all evil redeemed by your life, all pain transformed in your suffering, and all dying glorified in your risen life. Amen.*

**Note:** At this point, light everyone's candles and any candles on the altar or in your prayer space. An appropriate anthem or psalm may be sung, an instrumental played, or silence kept during the candle lighting.

**All:** O Gracious Light (*Phos Hilaron*) (recited or sung, see text at right)

### CHRIST BE OUR LIGHT: A LITANY OF PRAYER

**Officiant:** *The Apostle Paul today reminded us in his letter to the Corinthians that "If one member of the body suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it."*

*This week our body, the Body of Christ, has suffered. And it has also known moments of self-giving and kindness so honorable that there was even some joy. So we're going to spend some time now naming those instances of suffering and of rejoicing. I invite you to pray aloud for people who you are suffering with this week or to name people who helped or whom you are thankful for in light of the week's events.*

*After each prayer, we'll respond: **Christ be our Light.***

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Officiant:** (When the litany is complete) *Let us pray in the words our Savior gave us...*

### CLOSING PRAYER

**Officiant:** Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers and mothers, creator of the changes of day and night, giving rest to the weary, renewing the strength of those who are spent, bestowing upon us occasions of song in the evening. Be with us in the coming night; keep us from every sin, every evil, and every fear, for you are our light and salvation, and the strength of our life. To you be glory for endless ages. Amen.

### CLOSING SONG (OPTIONAL)



O Gracious Light,

Pure brightness of the  
everliving Father in heaven.

O Jesus Christ, holy and  
blessed!

Now as we come to the setting  
of the sun,

And our eyes behold the vesper  
light,

We sing your praises,  
O God: Father Son and Holy  
Spirit.

You are worthy at all times to  
be praised by happy voices.

O Son of God, O Giver of life,

And to be glorified through all  
the worlds.



## Prayer Beads

In this exercise, participants write prayers, situations or the names of people they are thankful for on the blank side of paper strips. They then roll the strips into beads that can be strung on twine. These can be fashioned into a necklace, anklet, bracelet or hand beads as the participants desire. Note, once the prayers are rolled into beads they cannot be opened to be read later. Rather the beads “remember” for us the people that we carry in our hearts and remind us that God, too, knows the needs curled deep within us that we can’t always find words to express.

While this is a prayer activity, the time for constructing the beads should be a relaxed opportunity for conversation and creativity. As the participants make their beads they may find that they want to discuss people who need their prayer, or tell stories about the disaster. As a youth minister, this is a time to be present to their stories, their laughter, their lighter side. A more reflective time for blessing the beads is included at the end of this activity.

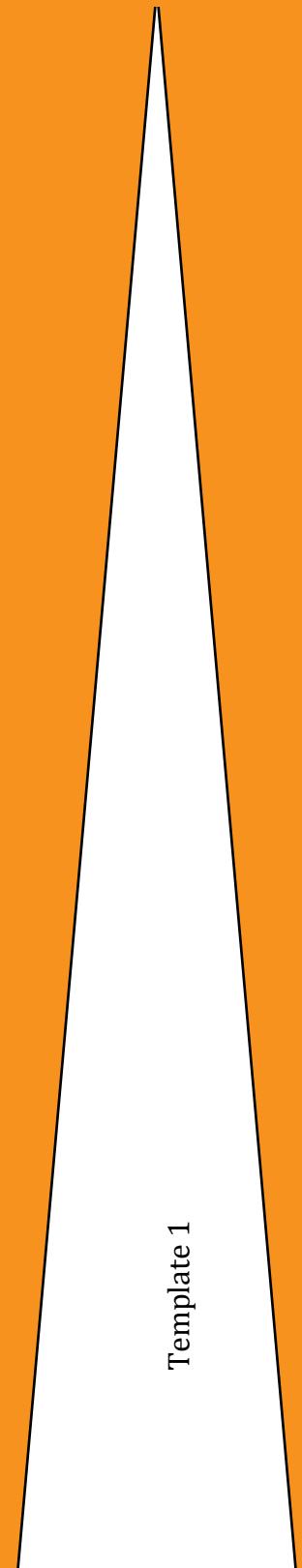
**ESTIMATED TIME** 20 minutes

### MATERIALS

- Scrapbook paper that is blank on one side and patterned on the other. Cut in strips about 1.5 inches by 8.5 inches. The best shape to use is an elongated triangle. (See template 1 at right). You can either precut the strips, or provide several templates that the participants can use to cut their own strips.
- Craft beads for embellishment.
- Balls of twine. Participants can cut the lengths they desire. Make sure the twine will fit through the coffee stirrer or drinking straw that will be the base of the bead.
- Plastic, hollow coffee stirrers, pens, scissors and glue sticks.

### DIRECTIONS

- Select a strip of paper. On the blank side write a short prayer, or the name of a person or situation that you want to pray for. You might also mention a person you are thankful for.
- Use the glue stick to completely cover the side with writing on it. Make sure there is glue on the ends of the strips.
- If using a long triangle shape, place the short, non-pointed end along one end of a coffee stirrer. Carefully wrap the strip around and around the stirrer, ending with the point of the paper. Add a little more glue to keep the pointed end down.
- Trim the coffee stirrer on either end of the bead. You can use the rest of the coffee stirrer for more beads.
- Select a length of cord and string the paper beads. Add additional craft beads for spacers.





## Blessing the Beads

Either at the end of the activity, or at the end of the entire youth event, invite the participants to bring their beads together for a blessing.

Invite anyone who wants to briefly share some of the intentions contained in their beads.

When all have shared, invite the participants to hold up their beads as you say this prayer:

*Lord Christ, you suffer when we suffer and you rejoice when we rejoice, because we are part of your body. Receive and bless these prayers of our hearts. Bring healing where there is pain. Forgiveness where things are broken. Hope where light is dimming. And your loving presence in needs so deep we can barely speak them. We pray this in your name, O Body of Christ.*

*Amen.*



## Service with Teens

Helping others after a disaster can help teens battle the self-absorption that can sometimes beset them when they are involved in a difficult situation. Interacting with their peers and brainstorming positive and doable responses can provide hope and meaning, and a sense of agency. Teens have a great deal of resource when it comes to responding to disasters. They can raise money, clean and fix things, babysit, visit people, and transport goods and people. They need to know that they are trusted and supported. And they require some wise facilitation, as well.

In this exercise, participants develop a service activity that appropriately responds to the disaster-related needs in their community.

**ESTIMATED TIME** 30-60 minutes

### DIRECTIONS

Rather than laying out one activity that all will do, invite the teens to discuss what they know about the disaster and its effects, what needs they see arising and what possible solutions they want to be part of. This can be a facilitated discussion with flip chart paper to capture their ideas.

**See the suggested discussion questions to the right.**

Make sure that the service activity is one that can be completed very soon after the teens plan it. This helps teens, who can have a short attention span at this time, to stay interested. And it also ensures that the planned activity is appropriate to the stage of the disaster response.

To help teens get an even better sense of the most appropriate responses following a disaster, check in with volunteer coordinators in your area who are responding to the disaster and know what is most needed. The most helpful responses might change over time. In the first weeks after a disaster, stocking food pantries may be a priority, while clothing drives might not be helpful. Local volunteer groups that don't require housing can be helpful in cleanup shortly after a disaster. But volunteer groups that need to be housed, fed and organized might not be welcome until a community has the capacity to shelter and organize them.

If the parish or community already has some responses in place, let the teens know so they can determine if they want to be part of these. And if there are other ways for individual teens to get involved outside the group, make sure that the teens have numbers to call to learn more about offering assistance.



### DISCUSSION TIPS

- What immediate needs are the teens aware of in the wake of the disaster?

**Note: This discussion honors their experience of the disaster and helps them process what they have witnessed and know about. Be prepared to carefully and respectfully correct any misinformation that may surface.**

- Whom do the teens want to help? (Other teens? People who are poor or most vulnerable? Animals affected by the disaster? People no one else is helping?)
- What resources do the teens have to offer? (Physical labor? Fund-raising skills? The ability to talk and visit? Ability to help fill out forms? Transportation?)
- What do the teens want to do most or do first? Do they want to respond once or in an ongoing way?

## TIPS FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH AFTER A DISASTER

If you are teaching young people soon after a disaster, your main mission is to comfort, listen, and point children towards a path of resilience. Familiar relationships with kind, consistent adults are very important for children coping with a disaster. Familiarize yourself with these tips as you prepare to respond to children in the weeks after a disaster or trauma.

- Listen and share a sense of compassion, and serve as a calm presence.
- Don't try to "fix" problems; just try to help children find a place of serenity and security.
- Allow children to express their thoughts and feelings about the disaster, but don't force them to do so.
- Using simple materials of plain paper and markers or crayons, allow children time to freely draw or write their thoughts and feelings.
- Encourage parents to accompany their children in this class if they are feeling insecure. Also appreciate that parents may need their own time to process their thoughts and feelings with other adults.
- Try to set a tone of hope in your time with the children. A sense of hope at this time will help children in finding resilience.
- It is common in times of sorrow for children (and adults) to express anger at God or doubt in their faith. Children might be comforted in knowing that these reactions are indeed typical. Again, don't try to talk children out of these reactions; just give them a safe space in which they may express themselves at this time and reassure them that they are not alone.
- If possible, ask adults with good pastoral care skills or who have training in mental health services to attend group meetings with children. Emotions of sadness, fear, and grief may be expressed by the children during your time together. Adults with good pastoral care skills may be helpful in speaking with children about these emotions. Make sure that any adults working with children have the appropriate background checks and have attended *Safeguarding God's Children* trainings.
- If you are able, you might lead children in taking an action to help their community or others. Such an activity can help children feel more confident and able to cope with the disaster.



## REACTIONS TO TRAUMA BY AGE-GROUP

Caregivers can provide much-needed comfort and security to children affected by trauma. Many of their reactions will stem from the event, their history of crisis, their age and developmental stage, their support system and their perception of the event.

### Preschool Children

**Reactions:** Shorter attention spans, confusion, loss of appetite, overeating, bowel/bladder problems, sleeping disturbance, nervousness, anxiety, fearful reminders, clinging, disobedience, thumb sucking, bedwetting, re-enacting trauma.

**Need:** To establish safety and security and self-control.

**Response:** Provide physical comforts, assure and provide adult protection, let the child sleep where he/she feels safe, clarify the event as well as misconceptions and misunderstandings and, most importantly, stay calm.

**Time:** Caregivers providing psychological first aid to pre-school/kindergarten age children should not spend more than 15 to 20 minutes at a time working with the child.

### Elementary School Children

**Reactions:** Confusion, inability to concentrate, headaches, stomachaches, vision problems, itching, sleep disturbances

**Need:** To relieve guilt, to re-establish productivity, to feel safe and to build self-esteem.

**Response:** Encourage children to talk about their feelings, validate their reactions, reinforce age-appropriate behavior, provide structure, clarify misconceptions and provide opportunities for the child to succeed and feel good.

**Time:** Crisis response strategies should not take longer than 30 minutes to an hour for each session.



### Junior/Senior High Youth

**Reactions:** Problems concentrating, headaches, skin rashes, loss of appetite, depression, anxiety, withdrawal, antisocial behavior, drug or alcohol abuse, survivor guilt.

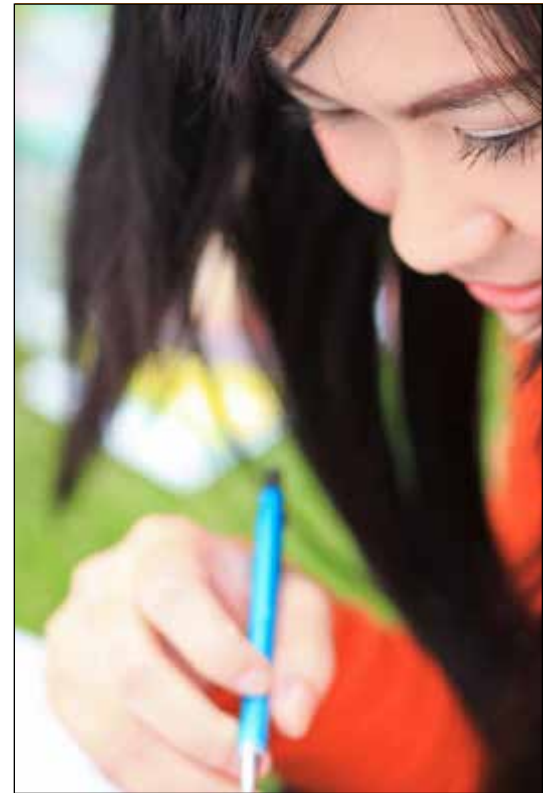
**Need:** To be reassured about normalcy, to understand direction in life and meaning of event, to receive help with stress reduction, to prepare for additional reactions, to clarify information

**Response:** Encourage discussion, validate reactions, provide opportunity for positive action, provide guidance and future contact, provide opportunity to conceptualize the incident and reactions to situations.

## TIPS FOR PARENTS IN HELPING CHILDREN AND YOUTH COPE WITH DISASTER

*These are tips for talking with young people in your family about disasters and helping them to find resilience in overcoming stressful events in their communities and in the world. Although in the short term, children and youth may show signs of stress, young people often are able to find resilience in responding to disaster situations when they are well supported.*

- Spend time with your children. Hold and hug them. Tell them how much you love them and that you will get through this situation together. Perform small acts of kindness and generosity.
- Be honest. Do not sugar-coat a situation or tell a young person “everything will be fine” unless you can realistically say this. Give your child age-appropriate information about what has happened without overdramatizing the situation. Even the youngest verbal children need a simple explanation so they do not imagine or envision things that are even worse than they are.
- Reassurance is key! Tell your child often that you will do everything you can to keep him or her safe. Keep all promises you make to your child during the crisis. In other words, do not make promises you cannot keep. It is important that your child can count on you when all else is in chaos.
- It’s okay to tell your child that you don’t have all the answers to his or her questions. Validate their thoughtful questioning.
- One of the most important needs after a trauma is to talk about the event—often. It may be difficult for you to hear about, or you may tire of hearing the same story, but talking is a crucial part of recovery. Silence can make children feel isolated, and may convey the message that they should limit their grieving.
- Be supportive and sympathetic, but avoid overreacting. Don’t try to make it okay; let them express fears, thoughts, and worries. Sharing can be very healing for everyone. At the same time, don’t force them to share; let it come naturally.
- Allow the child to express all the emotions he or she is feeling. Children need to know that their feelings are normal grief feelings even though they might not be normal feelings under other circumstances. If feelings such as anger or guilt persist for many months, professional help might be necessary to help them resolve those feelings.
- Practice patience. Children who have experienced disaster-related stress often regress in their development. Small children may even regress in their potty training. Outbursts or tantrums may occur. These are typical reactions. Be understanding and stay calm.



Drawing a picture, telling a story, or acting out a drama may assist your child in emotionally coping with the disaster. Don’t be judgmental of these expressions. Encourage teens to write in journals, draw, or play music to express their emotions.

## TIPS FOR PARENTS, CONTINUED

- Turn off the television news to prevent overload of disturbing images. Also, monitor your child's conversations with other children and be prepared to gently correct misinformation.
- Practice patience. Children who have experienced disaster-related stress often regress in their development. Small children may even regress in their potty training. Outbursts or tantrums may occur. These are typical reactions. Be understanding and stay calm.
- Encourage teens and older children to check in with their friends. Social interaction with friends will help teens find comfort and stay connected with their peer group. Give liberty to teenagers around how they make themselves feel better, i.e. turning the stereo on loud, talking on the phone more than usual to their friends. Allow them privacy (both in physical space and to deal with their feelings) if they need it.
- You likely will need time to process and cope with the disaster yourself. If you can safely do so, allow another adult to care for your child while you give yourself time to seek support from others or even attend to clean-up or paperwork resulting from the disaster. Consider swapping out babysitting duties with friends or neighbors.
- Try to follow typical routines and daily schedules as much as you are able, in order to give your child a sense of familiarity and security. Pray. Pray with your children. Pray for your children. Practice your faith and model resilience in the face of hardship.
- Death in a child's life is inevitable and means different things to children at different ages. Young children (ages 1-5) grieve for the threat to their security, while children six years of age and older grieve more for the actual loss.
- If bereaved children indicate in any way that they want help or counseling, get it for them immediately. Most children are hesitant to ask openly for formal counseling, so if this happens, consider it a blatant cry for help.
- Don't expect your child to take care of your fears, i.e. don't keep your child home from school because you are afraid to be separated from him or her. Find help to cope with your fears.





## TIPS FOR PRAYING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Prayer is a main component of our response as Christians to disaster or other troubling times in our lives. The practice of prayer is important to young people as well and should be an important part of work with them after a disaster. Group prayer allows young people to voice and share their concerns with a supportive community. Additionally, practices such as centering prayer are calming techniques that they can use on their own in stressful situations.

### Welcoming Prayer Requests

- Please allow sufficient time for all in your group to make prayer requests if they wish. This is not a time to rush, but a time of quiet presence with God and with each other.
- Ask participants to sit in a circle (if they are not doing so already), preferably on the floor, where everyone can see each other. This method usually reduces restlessness or talking and promotes a reverent tone.
- Adult leaders should sit within the circle on the same level as the participants.
- Serenity on the part of the adult leaders is key! If adult leaders are calm and prayerful, participants will take their cues from these leaders as examples for their own behavior.
- For groups of very young children, at least two adults should assist with this prayer circle. If a child becomes squirmy or disruptive, an adult helper – not the leader – should quietly attend to the child. Children who do not want to participate should be able to choose another quiet activity.
- Be aware that you might hear some fairly serious prayer requests, as well as many more typical requests concerning pets and family members. Please acknowledge each request in a respectful manner, taking each child's prayer request seriously. Reply by praying for the person or pet named. For example, you might nod and say, "we pray for Jack's dog Max."
- If you hear of a very serious concern, such as something that affects a participant's health, safety or wellbeing, mention it to the appropriate pastoral staff person or youth leader, so that they can follow up. Otherwise, please keep the prayer request confidential. The purpose of this prayer circle is to provide a safe place where participants might offer their most heartfelt prayers to God. Also, don't try to "fix" problems at this time. You will best minister to young people at this time by simply listening and validating their fears and concerns.
- It is common for young people to express doubts or anger towards God in reaction to loss, sorrow, or disaster. Your ministry at this time is to simply listen. You might reply by saying, "Sometimes we do feel anger at God or wonder where God is. This is common after something bad happens."
- Close with a prayer that echos the participants' requests, and pray for each participant as well.





## CENTERING PRAYER TECHNIQUES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

**ESTIMATED TIME** About 1-3 minutes. Try only 30 seconds for early elementary-age children or for those new to silent prayer. Older children might be able to maintain up to 3 minutes of prayerful silence.

Centering Prayer is a silent, meditative prayer form that focuses on placing oneself in the presence of God. The following Centering Prayer techniques may be used with children or teens who experience stress in a post-disaster situation. They can be used both within Christian formation classes and at home or school. The goal of teaching these techniques is to give children tools for prayerfully coping with stress and finding a sense of calm and serenity.

Please be aware that if a disaster has struck recently, young people may express emotions of sadness, grief, or even fear during or after this time. This is common. If possible, ask adults with good pastoral care skills, who know the participants and have worked with them previously to attend your group time and be available to assist with anyone who might need extra attention.

### Tips for leading Centering Prayer:

- Ask participants to make a circle on the floor, either by sitting or by forming a circle with chairs. The adult leaders should take positions within this circle as equal co-participants.
- Participants should be asked to sit up straight, with shoulders relaxed, and feet on the floor (or crossed in front of them if they are sitting on the floor).
- Ask participants to close their eyes OR choose a specific point to focus on. You might light a candle or place a religious-themed picture or photograph or cross in the center of the circle upon which children might focus.
- Tell participants this is a time for them to simply be with God. Ask them to listen to God in silence.
- Ask participants to take deep breaths, filling up their lower bellies first, then their rib cages, and finally their upper chests. Exhale slowly.
- Ask participants to see how long they go without talking or squirming. You might use a chime, bell, or other sound to indicate the time to start and end this time of quiet.
- Model calm, serene behavior during this exercise. You will likely find that if you are very calm during this time, participants will be calm as well. Let a second adult keep watch for any disruptive behavior and deal with any problems. This second adult might also serve as a timekeeper.

Source: *Disaster Spiritual Care: Practical Clergy Responses to Community, Region and National Tragedy* edited by Rabbi Stephen B. Roberts, BCJC and Rev. Willard W.C. Ashley Sr., DMIN, DH, 2008. Permission granted by SkyLight Paths Publishing, Woodstock, VT, [www.skylightpaths.com](http://www.skylightpaths.com).



- When the quiet time has concluded, ask the participants to open their eyes. Ask: “what did you experience?” or even “what did you hear?” Young people often have profound spiritual experiences of hearing God in these times of silence. Take their comments seriously! Acknowledge each participant’s experiences by thanking them for sharing their experiences with you.
- Suggest that when participants feel sad, stressed, confused, or overwhelmed, they might try taking a few moments of Quiet Time at home, at school, or while playing.
- As with any small group, please keep these shared thoughts within the group. Don’t try to “fix” problems; just listen attentively. If you feel a group member needs special attention as a result of thoughts or feelings expressed during this time, please consult your pastoral staff or youth leader.
- End your quiet time together with a prayer for each participant, including their prayer concerns. A familiar song or hymn might also be sung.

## Helpful Books for Children and Youth

*Blackout* by Anne Rockwell. **Grades K-3.** In this story, a family works together to weather a power blackout.

*Carolina Hurricane* by Marian Rumsey. Stranded on an island off the Carolina coast, a boy and his dog struggle to survive the fury of a hurricane.

*Earthquake* by Matt Christopher. **Grades 4-6.** A boy and his horse experience an earthquake.

*Downwind* by Louise Moeri. **Grades 4-8.** An accident at a nuclear power plant forces a family to face their fears and each other's.

*Euphonia and the Flood* by Mary Calhoun. **Grades K-3.** Euphonia puts her motto, "If a thing is worth doing, it's worth doing well" to the test as she and her pig ride through a flood, rescuing animals whether they want rescuing or not.

*A Horse Came Running* by Meindert DeJong. **Grades 4-6.** The story of a boy who was home alone when a tornado came, and the challenges he faced in coping with both the storm and its aftermath.

*Little Toot on the Mississippi* by Hardie Gramatky. **Grades Pre K - 3.** Little Toot becomes a hero as he rescues animals on the flooded bayou.

*Michael* by Liesel Skorpan. **Grades K-3.** Michael's concern for a baby rabbit left outside in a thunderstorm helps him overcome his fear of storms.

*Sometimes I'm Afraid* by The Menninger Clinic. **Grades Pre K-1.** Early childhood fears are identified and normalized in gentle text and pictures.

*Teetoncey and Ben O'Neal* by Theodore Taylor. **Grades 5-7.** After a shipwreck along the Outer Banks, a young girl works through her fears.

*The Big Rain* by Francoise Seignobosc. **Grades Pre K-4.** A girl has to help move her family's belongings and make sure her grandmother is safe when a flood threatens her town.

*The Big Wave* by Pearl S. Buck. **Grades 3-6.** A child is the sole survivor after a tidal wave sweeps away his village.

*The Tenth Good Thing About Barney* by Judy Viorst. **Grades Pre K-2.** Barney the cat dies. In the process of holding his funeral, his owners face their feelings and sadness and loss.

*The Terrible Wave* by Marden Dahlstedt. **Grades 5-9.** One girl's experience during the Johnstown, Pennsylvania flood.

*Trapped in Slickrock Canyon* by Gloria Skurzynski. **Grades 5-9.** An exciting and very human story of cousins who are caught on a trail by a flash flood.

Source: *Disaster Spiritual Care: Practical Clergy Responses to Community, Region and National Tragedy* edited by Rabbi Stephen B. Roberts, BCJC and Rev. Willard W.C. Ashley Sr., DMIN, DH, 2008. Permission granted by SkyLight Paths Publishing, Woodstock, VT, [www.skylightpaths.com](http://www.skylightpaths.com).



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