



Chagall Window at Chichester Cathedral

Week 5 - Excitement

The joy and excitement of prayer

Diocesan Lent Course

FOR YOUTH



YEAR OF PRAYER 2018

Week 5 - Excitement

The joy and excitement of prayer

Aim

To show that God loves and cares for us and that's really exciting. It's great to pray when we feel joyful, but even when we don't praying anyway can give us a boost of Joy.

Learning outcomes

Pray and praise God when things are good.

Be mindful of the gifts God has given us

God wants to be a part of all our lives and things don't need to be super serious when we're talking with God. God loves us to be joyful and loving life. He wants to be a part of that joyful life with us too.

Materials needed

- Screen and speakers with video cued up.
- Copy of Chagall Window either printed out large or ready to show on the screen.
- Bottles of diet coke
- Packs or mentos
- String and skewers
- Gift tags and Small tree/large branch
- Happy by Pharrell Williams song.
- Card blanks for writing thank you cards
- coloured pens and pencils
- People BINGO cards and pens

Any videos or downloadable resources needed in this session can be accessed from:

youth.chichester.anglican.org/lent

Alternatively; from the Diocesan youth website navigate to 'Year of Prayer' then 'Lent Course for Youth'

Breathe...Pray...Let's begin...

Quick recap

Last week we looked at how life changes and things change around us. The discussion was around what we have the power to change. Did anyone bring in a zero waste jar? How did everyone get on with reducing their waste?

If they took away a piece of map from last week, what have they learnt? What were they praying for? Ask them to share with the group.

Icebreaker

Write a Song about your youth leader or vicar.

Use the tune of Twinkle Twinkle little star and write your own lyrics. Once written get the young people to film themselves performing their rendition. Points are awarded for using a name, location and an interesting fact.

Play the videos up on your screen for everyone to see (if the young people are happy to!) Should be a great laugh. You can vote for a winner and give prizes if you want to.

Video

This video is called 7 ways to maximise misery. It's a satirical video that doesn't genuinely want to encourage misery but instead points out some of the trappings of living in the digital age <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LO1mTElo-j6o&t=260s>

This video is about 7 minutes long. Like I would recommend with all videos, I would recommend you watch it first to check it's suitability for your group. This is one that could lead to some great discussion. CGP Grey is a well known and popular YouTuber.



Creative Prayer Ideas

Diet Coke and Mentos (you may want to do this one outside!)

Spread out a whole load of mentos and some bottles of diet coke - enough for everybody in the group to have one for themselves. The young people take a mentos for each thing they want to thank God for. They then thread the mentos onto a string, poking a hole through the middle and threading the string through.

When everyone has prepared the mentos you take them outside with the bottles. The young people then take it in turns to drop the mentos on string into their bottle of diet coke and watch the eruption of praise to God.

This activity should bring a level of excitement. The young people in the group may want to coreograph the way they set off the diet coke, they may want to film or do it one at a time, you can let them decide how they want to do it. Make sure they're thanking God for the things they've written on their mentos as they drop them into the diet coke.

Thankful tree

Get a large branch or small tree which can be left in your church/youth centre.

Give young people gift tags which they can use to write on prayers of thanks or petition to God for anything they like. It could be something exciting in their lives, something they want to see happen in their community or something completely different. Once they've written their prayers they can hang them on the tree to be left up for others to see that may visit the building.

If you have space outdoors you may want to be a bit more creative with the decorations that the prayers are written on and hang them on a tree outside. Make sure it's a tree you own or have permission to hang things on!



An alternative way of doing the thank you tree may be to hang ribbons to represent the thank yous or the people that we're praying for. You can be creative with this activity depending on your group and what you think they'll engage with best.

Bible Reading

Psalm 150

Praise the Lord!

Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heaven!

Praise him for his mighty works; praise his unequalled greatness!

Praise him with a blast of the ram's horn; praise him with the lyre and harp!

Praise him with the tambourine and dancing; praise him with strings and flutes!

Praise him with a clash of cymbals; praise him with loud clanging cymbals.

Let everything that breathes sing praises to the Lord!

Praise the Lord!

Reflection

Play the song 'Happy' by Pharrell Williams which all the young people should recognise. This is an upbeat song about having a good attitude, what it's like to be happy and stay happy despite what's going on around you. You can find the lyrics here: <http://www.songlyrics.com/pharrell-williams/happy-lyrics/>

Whilst the song is playing put up the image of the Chagall Window at Chichester Cathedral either on a screen or a large print out everyone can see.

When the song has finished ask the young people:



What do you **think** is being depicted in the painting?

What did you **feel** whilst listening to the song and examining the painting?

What captures your **imagination** in this image?

How does this inform the way you understand who God is?

Game

Game of Phones

Play several rounds of challenges all relating the young people's mobile phones.

- Every young person has to text either their mum or dad who is the first person to get a reply? Phones on loud for this one!
- The person with the most organised apps
- Find their oldest (first) photo. Who has the most embarrassing/obscure/cute?

People Bingo

Download the people bingo game from the website, search for one on google or just make up your own. Young people each have a grid of attributes which they need to find in another person. They Run around the room trying to find someone that has what's written in each box. For example the boxes might include 'Like Pizza', 'Is wearing white socks', 'Plays football', 'has a cat'. When they find someone that does what the box says they get them to sign it. Give them a time limit and the most boxes signed wins, or the first person to get BINGO.

Discussion

What do we have to be excited about?

Think about some of the things that we have to thank God for. What has God done for us? What do we have in our lives to be thankful for? Even when we don't feel like we have much to be thankful for we know that God is always with us and Loves us deeply. Sometimes just repeating lines in prayer like 'Thank you God that you love me' or repeating a psalm or other encouraging bible passage can help.

How can we praise God and show him our Joy?

What about when we don't feel like praising God? We don't feel joyful? That's ok too. Prayer gets exciting when we see things happen, when we hear the answer or see God move. When we are thankful it reminds us of the things God has done, even if we didn't ask! It can keep us on track in times of trouble and sadness when we remember to be thankful first. How do we Worship God and what ways can we worship God during the week?

What sort of things can we ask God for?

We can remember to pray when we need something or something is going wrong. Most common prayer is God Help! But it's ok to ask God for stuff. He wants to be part of our everything. When we ask for something and then see an answer to prayer, that can be one of the most encouraging things for our faith and provides us with regular, real testimony that we can share with our friends and family and to encourage those around us that God loves and cares for us.

Takeaway

How often are we thankful to the people around us for the things they have done for us. Depending on how much time you have you may want to bring card blanks and allow some time for a craft activity where the young people can make a thank you card for somebody. They will then take this card away and give it to the person during the week. If you don't have the time then encourage the young people to send a text, write a letter or make a point of saying thank you to somebody in real life.

Pay it forward

Use the clip from the film pay it forward. Many people have been trying to commit an act of kindness every day during lent. The film pay it forward works on a similar principle. You do one big act for three people with the condition that they too do one big act for three more people. This snowballs very quickly to be acts of kindness committed to hundreds of people.