

Creative prayer ideas

Creative prayer idea for interceding for prisoners

In the week commencing Monday 1 July 2013, our issue in focus was 'prisons and prisoners', and on the Friday morning we dedicated our main rhythm of prayer and worship for the day to it.

During the hour, we praised God for the freedom Christ has won for us, and then we spent the bulk of our time praying for specific Christians who are imprisoned for their faith and whose stories are made available by Christian Solidarity Worldwide (www.csw.org.uk),. And this was the context in which this activity was developed in (although we then went on to also pray for prisons and prisoners in the UK more generally using our blessing resource on prisons – you can download the ppt and pdf for this from the visuals section on our prayers page – www.thesanctuarycentre.org/whereworldandworshipmeet-prayer)

However, the activity could easily be adapted to pray for different prisons, for specific prisoners or ex-offenders and/or simply to pray general prayers of blessing around this issue. We found it a profoundly meditative way to pray around these issues, and to stand in solidarity with people.

We used a playlist with songs about freedom to accompany these prayers, although a time of silence would be equally powerful. If you need help thinking of some relevant songs for a playlist, you might like to check out our outward focused song index at www.thesanctuarycentre.org/whereworldandworshipmeet-othersongs

Praying for prisoners

1. Pre-cut paper strips from plain paper and make these available along with pens and glue sticks or staplers.
2. Give people some information to fuel their prayers – if you are praying for people persecuted and imprisoned for their faith, you will find the letter writing guides produced by organisations such as Christian Solidarity Worldwide particularly helpful for this. (e.g. see <http://www.csw.org.uk/connectandencourage.htm>)
3. Encourage them to write a different prayer for an individual and/or a situation on each strip, and to then begin to join them up together in a prayer chain – standing in solidarity, forgiveness and/or praying blessing, depending on the people and situations in question.
4. (You might also like to encourage people to think about praying for God's love to encircle the prisoners tangibly, as they curve each link round and fasten it in place.)
5. Join all the smaller chains together into one large chain, and place it on, or at the foot of, a cross as a symbol of the redemption and freedom Christ has won for us all (Galatians 5:1).

