

Creative ideas

For intercession inspired by the breadth and depth of God's character

An important part of the Sanctuary's daily rhythm of prayer and worship is our list of characteristics of God. We focus on a different one each day as part of our framework for prayer (alongside other rotating issues, Scriptures, and nations, and that day's news headlines).

This list has been created by the Sanctuary's community using well-known names from the Bible, character attributes explored in the scripture, and at times in helpful, modern imagery designed to provide new ways of describing God or his characteristics that still reflect solid Biblical truth. And it's constantly expanding as we find the more we understand and pray for God's world, the more we see of the breadth and depth of his character! You can see the current list here: www.thesanctuarycentre.org/resources/stimuli+for+the+cycle+-+our+rhythm+of+prayer+and+worship.pdf

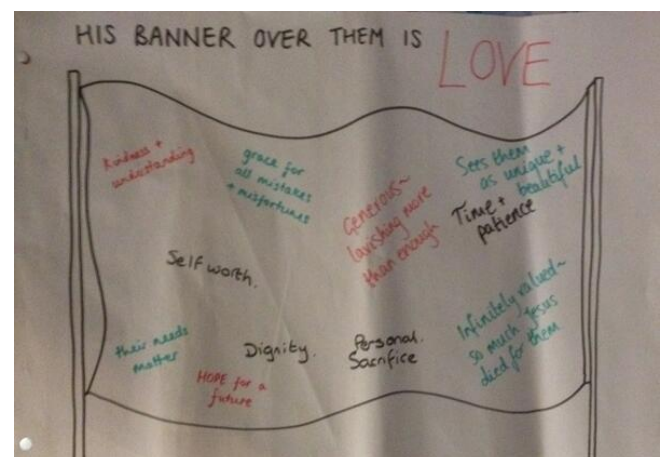
We also find that it's often invaluable to spend time together unpacking the day's characteristic and asking ourselves how this particular attribute of God, and our understanding of it, helps us to pray for others and for the needs of the world we see before us in today's headlines. So here we're sharing some of the ideas and tools that have come out of these times – we've picked a few of our favourite ones so far and will be adding to this resource over time as more ideas emerge! Click on the links below to jump to the relevant section

- [God is our BANNER](#)
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God is our BANNER:

Moses built an altar and called it "The Lord is my banner" (Exodus 17:15) and Solomon wrote "Let his banner over me be love" in Song of Songs 2:4.

- Spend some time reflecting on all the things that you are thankful for because God is your banner and his banner over you is love – and jot these down.
- Make a banner or draw one onto a large piece of paper, and write at the top the individuals, people groups or nations you want to pray for.
- Then inside the banner – and using your own list of things you are thankful for – write or pin onto it a prayer of truth and hope for these people, giving thanks that God is their banner too and that his banner of love flies over each one.



God is our BURDEN-BEARER:

In Matthew 11:30, Jesus says "My yoke is easy and my burden is light" – but many of us, and the people we know, are weighed down by the burdens of life.

- Take some time to read one or more of the following Bible verses in which God confirms that he is more than able to carry our burdens – and that he actually desires us to give them to him!
 - Philippians 4:6-7
 - Romans 8:26-27
 - Psalm 55:22
 - 1 Peter 5:7
 - Psalm 68:19
 - Matthew 11:28-30
 - Galatians 5:1
 - Galatians 6:2
 - Joshua 1:9

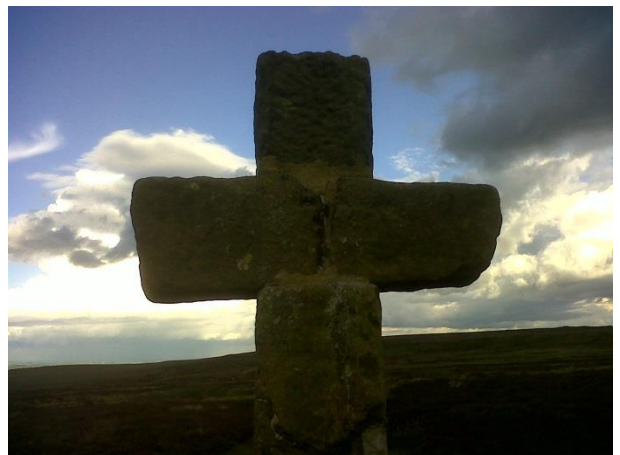


- Either for yourself or for someone you know (or both!), think about the burdens you/they are carrying.
 - Take a stone and using a felt-tip pen write that burden down on it.
 - Hold the stone and bring back to mind some of the verses you have just read – slowly place the stone at the foot of a cross*, praying as you do so that God would help you/they give him this burden.
- *NB. If you don't have a cross for this activity, another way we have done it is outside by water (river, lake/pond or sea would work!) and thrown the stones into the water to symbolise giving them to God

God is our CORNERSTONE:

"My hope is built on nothing less, than Jesus Christ, my righteousness..." (Edward Mote, 1834)

- The image of Jesus as 'Cornerstone' appears a number of times in the Bible – take a look at:
 - Isaiah 28:16
 - Psalm 118:21-23
 - Acts 4:8-12
 - 1 Peter 2:4-9
- On a large piece of paper, write out "Jesus is our Cornerstone"
- Now brainstorm what this truth means to you and how it helps us all pray for others – write each idea onto a smaller piece of paper and place it on top of the large 'Cornerstone' piece of paper, so that you slowly build up your wall of truth on top of Jesus your solid rock foundation.
- Finally, write out each of the local/national/global situations you want to pray for onto even smaller pieces of paper – and again lay these down on the top of the existing pile, praying as you do so that Jesus would be the cornerstone, and bring the breakthrough and restoration that is needed.



God is our LIGHTHOUSE:

We have found that thinking about God as a lighthouse who guides us to safety has been particularly useful when praying for nations that are going through stormy times, for situations that seem dark or unreachable, or for individuals who feel lost.

- Draw a picture of a lighthouse (or print out a photo!) and write down around it all the reasons why a lighthouse is so important for those out at sea, expanding the list outwards to include the reassurances of God as our 'lighthouse'.
- Imagine God as that lighthouse beckoning all to safety – and one-by-one lift to him the particular individuals, situations or nations, asking for his guiding light to bring them out of the storm and into the safety of his harbour.



God is STRONG:

This is a more commonly discussed characteristic of God – but how might it help us pray for others with more confidence?

- Spend some time thinking about the strength of God represented in any Bible stories you know – how did God's strength and power help those in need?
- Do you feel you can depend on God being strong when you or others are weak or vulnerable?
- Using these stories and reflections, jot down how praying to a strong God helps you intercede for difficult, protracted or dark situations.
- Using this list, bring the situations concerning you today to God, asking him to show you how his strength brings hope in each one.

