

Bright
PRAYER IDEAS
for families at home



A Creative resource for families at home



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An invitation for you and your family to join a global prayer movement...

Thy Kingdom come is an invitation for individuals, churches and families to pray.

Starting from 25 May and running for 10 days leading to Pentecost on the 4 June, we want to encourage people to pray in whatever way they feel comfortable and with whoever they want, for others to come to know Jesus Christ.

This resource hopes to help give you and your family a variety of creative ideas to join with others around the world in praying for your friends and families.



1. Kingdom Kit

The Kingdom Kit is designed to help your family create a space to remind you to pray that friends and neighbours will come to know Jesus' love.

The kingdom kit contains:

- Kingdom Kit instructions
- Lollipop sticks
- Balloon
- Smarties
- Key rings
- Paper Heart
- Straws
- Mustard Seeds
- Cress Seeds
- Raisins
- Bubbles
- Tea Light
- Bookmarks
- Colour-in Sheet

What to do

During *Thy Kingdom Come*, Christians all over the world will pray for people to come to know Jesus' love—and your family can join in!

Getting ready

- Create a prayer space by spreading out your red cloth.
- Put the cross and tea light in the centre of it. Make sure it's somewhere that the whole family can see easily—a table or a low shelf, maybe.
- Choose five people you would like to pray for—friends or neighbours, people at school, college or work.
- Write the names of the people you will pray for on the paper hearts—one name on each. Place the hearts in a circle around the cross in your prayer space.
- Write the names of the people you will pray for on the lollipop sticks—one name on each. Place each stick next to the heart with the same name.
- Blu tack the *Thy Kingdom Come* card to the inside of your front door. It will remind you to pray whenever you leave the house.

Getting started

- At the start of the day, gather by your prayer space. Light the tea light and pray the Lord's Prayer together as a family.
- Each person chooses someone to pray for that day and takes that person's lollipop stick. Put the lollipop stick in your pocket or bag. Whenever you see it or touch it during the day, pray,
- At the end of the day, gather by your prayer space. Light the tea light and have each person take out the lollipop stick they had for the day.
- Each person holds their lollipop stick and says who they were praying for. Put a sticker on the back of the lollipop.
- Place the lollipop next to the person's heart shape and pray,

'Dear God, please may [Name] come to know Jesus' love.'

'Dear Jesus, we know that you love [Name]. Please help us show them your love. Amen.'

- Finish by saying the Lord's Prayer together.

Carrying on

- Every day, each person chooses who to pray for.
- If there are more than five people in your family, add extra names and lollipop sticks.
- If there are fewer than five people in your family, have someone pray for two people each day.
- Send a surprise card to the people for whom you are praying.

2. Holiday prayer Ideas

Pebble prayers on the beach

Use pebbles to represent the people you are praying for, before throwing them into the sea.

You will need: a collection of pebbles, small stones or shells found on the beach; a large expanse of water.

Find a beach with stones or shells and make a small collection. Go up to the water's edge and, taking care that there are no people or wildlife between you and the sea, fling your pebble into the water as you shout out a prayer using simple words like,

'Please help [Name] know Jesus' love.'

You can adapt this activity for a lake, river or even a bucket of water in your garden.

Writing in the sand

Write or draw pictures in the sand for the people you want to know about Jesus' love.

You will need: a sandy beach with some wet sand; a stick.

Gather as a family and ask God to help each person think of a friend with whom you would like to share the love of Jesus. Using a stick, create pictures in the sand or write the names of the people you are praying for.

Ripple prayers

Watching ripples on a lake can remind us of how God's kingdom grows.

You will need: small stones; a lake, large pond or puddle.

Throw a small stone into a puddle, pond or lake and watch the ripples. Notice how the rings gradually spread out from the point where the stone entered the water. Talk about how God's kingdom grows and spreads out, a bit like in the parable of the yeast in Luke 13:20-21.

Now take turns to throw a stone into the water and pray aloud for each person in your group,

'Give [Name] the courage to start the ripple of God's kingdom in their home/nursery/school/college/work place.'

Finish by throwing a stone in as a family and ask God to show you where your family can be building God's kingdom. You might like to capture a picture of the ripples, as a reminder of your commitment to spread God's kingdom.

'What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough' (Luke 13:20-21).

Mountain top prayers

Carrying a stone up a mountain can help us remember the people that God has put on our hearts for prayer.

You will need: a stone you are prepared to carry on a long walk; a mountain or hill to climb. Check the weather forecast and wear appropriate clothing, taking plenty of water and snacks for the journey.

As you set out on your walk, gather as a family and ask God to help each person think of a friend with whom you would like to share the love of Jesus. Search around and find a stone that represents that person. Put the stone in your pocket and set out on your adventure. There will be moments on your journey when your family find the walk easy, and times when the going gets tough. Make use of these moments to pause, hold your stone and reflect on how there are times when sharing your faith can be easy and times when it's really hard and you might prefer not to be carrying anything extra!

As you reach the top of your mountain, enjoy the moment of elation, the view and the bigger picture in front of you. Find a cairn (a stack of stones) or start your own. As you add your stone to the pile, pray for the people you have metaphorically been carrying. Ask God to show you how best to connect with that person.

Campfire prayers

Campfires or bonfires can create special family moments to pray.

You will need: a safe place to build a fire (beach, garden, open field), remembering to check for local hazards or restrictions; sticks to burn; newspaper, firelighter and matches to get the fire going; a bucket of water for safety. Optional: paper and pencil; marshmallows and other food to share.

As a family, gather sticks and build your fire. Get an adult to light the fire. Supervising younger children at all times, spend some time watching the flames and feeling the warmth of the fire. Talk about God's love and how it can be like a warm feeling inside. There might be things going on in our lives that stop that warm glowing feeling, so this is a good opportunity to say sorry to God. Sorry prayers can be written on bits of paper and then thrown into the fire to be burnt, reminding us that God forgives us when we do wrong things.

Then take the marshmallows and toast them on sticks. Notice the sweet taste and thank God for the good things in your lives. Finally, think of another family or person that you want to share God's love with and pray for them, that they would know the warm glow of God's love in their lives too.

Prayer walk

Pray as you walk around your urban setting, park or countryside for God's kingdom to grow and be in these places.

You will need: a comfortable pair of shoes or boots; a drink and snack to share at the end of your walk. Optional: plastic gloves; litter picker; litter sacks; hand gel.

Start by walking in silence for a short while; walk really slowly and pay attention to everything you hear and see. When you reach the agreed point (a lamp post, gate or tree, depending on your setting), pause to share what you've seen or heard. Give thanks for anything beautiful and say sorry to God if things are spoilt.

If it is safe and you have a wide open space, stride out or run to the next agreed stopping point and feel the exhilaration of living in God's amazing world. Share how it felt to run freely and give thanks to God that we can live freely as Christians in this country.

Next, think about how to share God's kingdom in your setting.

If you are in an urban setting, pray for the people (by name if you can) in the houses, schools and shops that you pass—that God's kingdom will come in these places.

If you are in an urban setting or the countryside, ask God to show you how to look after his beautiful world and restore his kingdom. You may like to start by clearing up any litter. Be ready to share why you are doing this with interested passers-by.

'Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven' (**Matthew 6:10**).

Finally, find a spot to share your drink and snack, remembering all the good gifts that God gives us.

'The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it' (**Psalms 24:1**).

Puddle prayers

Splashing in puddles is so much fun and you can pray at the same time.

You will need: a rainy day with puddles; wellies; waterproof clothing or a towel and change of clothes.

Next time you are out in the rain, don't steer away from the puddles. Instead, spend time splashing around. Imagine each puddle is a different situation or person that you want to know the love of Jesus. As you jump, say the person's name out loud and see how big a splash you can make. Ask God to give you the courage to splash out his love into those places and people.

Planting seeds

Watching seeds grow over a period of time can help us remember how God's kingdom grows.

You will need: some seeds such as cress, mustard seeds or sunflower seeds; small flower pots; small stones; compost; water.

Fill your plant pot with a small layer of stones to help with drainage and then fill up the pot with compost. Take some seeds—for younger children or those that like to see quick results, choose some quick growing seeds such as cress or lettuce seeds. If you have more time and patience, go for sunflower seeds. As you plant your seeds in the pot, think about when Jesus compares the kingdom of God to a mustard seed:

'Then Jesus asked, "What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air perched in its branches." (**Luke 13:18–19**).

Pray for God’s kingdom to grow in your area and through your family to your friends and neighbours. Each seed might represent a different person that you know.

Once planted, remember to water your seeds regularly and care for them. If you are growing sunflower seeds, you may have to tie the growing stem to a stick for support. Keep a watch out for garden slugs. Caring and nurturing the plants can be a useful reminder that we need to continue to care and nurture the people that we are praying for, although Paul reminds us in his letter to the Corinthians that it is God who brings the growth:

‘I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow’

(1 Corinthians 3:6).

Nought and crosses prayer

You will need: a grid of three squares by three square (the same as a noughts and crosses grid).

Choose a theme for your grid e.g. people, places, professions, problems, poorly people, praise and positives, promises. Write something to pray for related to your theme in each of the nine boxes.

Each day, someone different chooses something on the grid to pray for and marks it with their initials. The challenge is to get three in a row, but keep praying after that too!

If you want a greater challenge, pray for nine things under one theme on one day. The next day pray for another nine things on a different theme!

e.g. professions:

Teachers	Stay-at-home carers	Lunchtime supervisors
Office workers	Doctors and Nurses	Shop assistants
Bus Drivers	Dentists	Refuse collectors

3. Creative prayers to try at home

Melting crayon prayers

A colourful, hands-on way to pray for people to know the power of Jesus’ love.

You will need: wax crayons (wrappers off works best); strong glue (e.g. from a glue gun or superglue); canvas (this really doesn’t work on paper!); protective sheet; hairdryer.

Lay down the protective sheet where you will be working—there will be splatter! Choose a colour of crayon for each person you want to pray for. Glue the crayons vertically to the top of the canvas. Let the glue set firm. Set the hairdryer to the highest level and start blowing it across the bottom ends of the crayons. It takes a while, but they will eventually start to melt. Set the dryer down a heat notch and continue to melt the crayons. Use the hairdryer to direct the flow of the wax on the canvas and, as the crayons melt, pray that each of your chosen people will come to know how much Jesus loves them.

Skittles painting prayers

Use sweets to pray for Jesus’ love to surround friends and family.

You will need: Bag of skittles; plate; hot water (not hot enough to scald, but hot enough to make the colour run).

Choose a skittle for each person you are praying for. Arrange the skittles in the plate. Alternatively, you might want to make the initial letter of your prayer person’s name out of skittles. Pour some hot water on to the plate to cover its surface. Pour it carefully so that the skittles stay in place. Wait and the skittles will gradually release their colour. As the colour is released, pray that Jesus will surround the people you are praying for with his love.

Spreading hearts prayers

Watch as the hearts spread out to include those you are praying for.

You will need: cups with about an inch of water at the bottom; strips of kitchen roll; felt-tip pens (cheap and cheerful are good and definitely not permanent markers—you need the ink to run).

Draw a heart about two inches up the strip and colour in with pen. Slightly above and outside of the heart you have drawn, write the initials of someone (or draw a face of someone!) that you would like to get to know Jesus. Put the end of the strip in the water and pray that they will come to know that Jesus loves them. Watch as the water slowly climbs up the strip, and the ink in the heart spreads out to cover and absorb the initials/face.

Fizzy explosion prayers

Explosive prayers for the power of Jesus to touch lives!

You will need: Bicarbonate of soda; white vinegar; food colouring; eye droppers (can be bought very cheaply in chemist shops); baking tray or roasting tin. If you can't find eye droppers, you can dip a straw in the vinegar and let the drops fall from that.

Mix food colouring into white vinegar to colour it. Keep each colour of vinegar in a separate cup and assign a dropper to each cup. Cover the bottom of a baking tray or roasting tin with bicarbonate of soda. Add a drop of coloured vinegar on to the soda and watch the explosion! Invite everyone to choose a colour of vinegar that represents someone they would like to pray for. As they drop the vinegar on to the soda, pray that the power and love of Jesus will touch that person's life.

Static electricity prayers

A very visual way to pray that Jesus will draw people close to him.

You will need: small pieces of tissue paper; pens; balloon; hair or a woolly jumper.

Ask everyone who they would like to pray for and then ask them to choose a colour of tissue paper to reflect that person. They can write or draw on their tissue piece if they want to. Take it in turns to rub the balloon on a woolly jumper or on (their own!) hair. This will

build up some static on the balloon! Talk about giving our prayers to Jesus and ask him to show his love and power to each person. They can hold their tissue prayer close to the balloon and watch as it is pulled on to the balloon and sticks there. Pray that, as the paper sticks to the balloon, Jesus will draw those people close to him.

Lego prayers

Use Lego to pray for people to build a relationship with Jesus.

You will need: Lego baseboard; Lego pieces.

Use the Lego to make the initial letter of the name of each person you are praying for. Either build a free-standing letter or make the letter on the baseboard. As you build, pray that your person will know Jesus at work in their lives and will build a relationship with him.

Prayer spinners

Spinning prayers to bring people to Jesus!

You will need: circles of card (one for each child); felt-tip pens; string.

Stick a pen or pencil through the middle of the circle to make a hole. Ask everyone to use the colouring pens to decorate the circle with bright colours. When they have done this, write the names (or draw a face) of each person you want to pray for. Thread a string through the hole and hold tightly to each end. Give a wrist flick and the circle should start to spin on the string. The coloured prayers will all blend together as the circle spins and you can picture leaving those prayers and those people with Jesus.

Rocket prayers

Pray for people to learn about Jesus and then release your prayers like a rocket.

You will need: Small slips of paper (roughly 5cm x 3cm); pens; tape; straws.

Get everyone to write and draw their prayers for people they would like to learn about Jesus on a small slip of paper (about the size of an average till receipt). Next, roll the paper tightly round a straw so that it sticks out a bit at the bottom, and secure it with tape. Fold the end that is sticking out and secure it with some more tape. The paper will now have made

a sealed pocket around the top of the straw. Talk together about releasing prayers to God and trusting in his love and his power. Say a short prayer, giving your prayers to God and then blow on the free end of the straw. Watch the prayer rocket fly as you release your prayers!

Wax resist painting prayers

Use wax and paint to pray that Jesus will be revealed to friends and family.

You will need: White card or paper; white wax crayons or white wax candle; watercolours (or watered down paints); brush

Write the name 'Jesus' or draw Jesus on the paper with the wax crayon or candle. Pray that people who don't know who Jesus is will come to discover how much he loves them. As you pray, paint over the wax and the picture or writing will be revealed in the midst of all the colour.

Fun prayer maps

Make a map of your neighbourhood to help you pray for the people in it.

You will need: lengths of string; wool; ribbon; junk cardboard boxes; pens; coloured paper; card; glitter (optional).

Starting with your home, make a map of your neighbourhood on the floor or table, stretching out the string, wool or ribbons to be roads and rivers, and using boxes and cardboard shapes to be buildings (schools, offices, hospitals, shops, farms and so on) or geographical features (hills, ponds, parks and so on). Talk about the people who live around you and pray for them to come to know Jesus, either by placing your hand on the place on the map where they live or work, or by sprinkling glitter over that part of the map (if you're brave). Use simple words, like 'Please help X know Jesus' love'.

4. Simple everyday ways to pray

Good times to pray together are those times you do something regularly, like brushing teeth, eating a meal or going to bed.

Keep prayer time short and simple, unless anyone insists on going on for longer.

Have a photo collage of family and friends to pray for and choose a different person to pray for each day.

Say thank you to God for one of the meals you eat each day. If you don't know any words to say, ask the children to say it.

Read a Bible story together and ask, 'What would you like to say to Jesus now?' and say 'Amen' at the end of whatever is said.

If you hear something tragic on the news, get into the habit of asking God out loud there and then to bless that situation, for example: 'God, please bless those people in Syria.'

If someone in the family talks about a difficult situation at work or at school, similarly pray for it briefly and matter-of-factly out loud there and then.

Lots of people like routine and ritual, so feel free to pray the same family prayer at the same time every day.

A good simple way of helping your family bring their concerns to God is to ask this set of questions each day (and be prepared to answer for yourself):

- What are you most thankful for today?
- What are you least thankful for today?
- When did you show love today?
- When weren't you kind today?
- What would you like to say to God about today?

5. Extreme prayer

Find some 'extreme' places to pray and film yourselves doing it.

You will need: smartphone or camera; appropriate clothing; software that lets you put the photos together as a film such as *Microsoft Moviemaker* (optional).

People in the Bible pray in all sorts of places. Your challenge over the holiday is to find similar places near you and take a photo or shoot a clip of a member of your family saying a prayer in those places, then to compile the shots into a film.

You can use these ideas if you would like:

'Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord' (Psalm 130:1).

What's the *deepest* or *lowest* place you can find?

Prayer: Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord, for [Name]

'The Lord said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain"' (Exodus 24:12).

What's the *highest* place you can find?

Prayer: I pray that neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate ... from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:39).

'Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in front of the whole assembly of Israel and spread out his hands' (2 Chronicles 6:12).

Where's the *busiest* place you can find?

Prayer: I pray for the well-being of ... and their family (Ezra 6:10).

'Hannah was praying in her heart' (1 Samuel 1:13).

What's the most *silent* place you can find?

Prayer: Hear my prayer for... (Psalm 4:1).

'He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed' (1 Kings 19:4).

How many people can you fit *under a bush* to pray?

Prayer: Listen to my prayer for... (Psalm 55:1).

'Hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants' (Nehemiah 1:6).

What's the latest time of night you can pray?

Prayer: In your great love, Lord, draw [Name] closer to you (Psalm 69:13).

[A maskil of David. When he was in the cave. A prayer.] 'I cry aloud to the Lord; I lift up my voice to the Lord for mercy' (Psalm 142:1)

Can you find a *cave* or a dark enclosed place?

Prayer: May my prayer come before you for [Name] (Psalm 88:2).

'From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the Lord his God' (Jonah 2:1).

What's the *smelliest* place you find?

Prayer: I pray God's blessing on [Name] (Proverbs 11:26).

'Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed' (Mark 1:35).

Can you pray as the sun rises?

Prayer: I pray for help for [Name] (Daniel 6:11).

'Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him' (Luke 9:18).

What's the most private place you can find?

Prayer: I pray for [Name] to believe in God (John 17:20).

'All of them, including wives and children, accompanied us out of the city, and there on the beach we knelt to pray' (Acts 21:5).

Can you pray on a *beach* (or somewhere by the water's edge)?

Prayer: I pray that the eyes of [Name]'s heart will be enlightened (Ephesians 1:18).

'Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people' (Ephesians 6:18).

What's the most *unlikely* place you can find?

Prayer: I pray that [Name] will be rooted and established in God's love (Ephesians 3:17).

'The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of God's people, went up before God from the angel's hand' (Revelation 8:4).

What's the *holiest* place you can find?

Prayer: I pray for God's glorious riches to be given to [Name] (Ephesians 3:16).

6. Prayer ideas for families with additional needs

Use flame-coloured ribbons to dance with, reminding people of the flames of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Invite people to pray for someone they know while they dance.

Make collages of friends using differently textured and coloured materials, and touch each one as you pray for them to know Jesus.

Blow bubbles and invite people to watch one particular bubble and to pray for one person they know until the bubble bursts.

Blow up balloons and bounce them gently on a stretchy piece of material or a parachute held by family members. Have fun calling out names of people to pray for as each balloon bounces off the material.

Set up a fan blowing air gently and invite people to pray for the wind of God's Holy Spirit to fill the lives of people they know, as they feel the air on their hands or face.



7. Relay prayer game

As a family, pass the prayer baton by taking it in turns to pray each day between Ascension and Pentecost. Work together to create a prayer relay where everyone participates and each prayer matters! The relay is based on the idea of TSP: thanks, sorry and please prayers.

You will need: relay prayer chart; felt-tip pens; clock face (if you want to agree to pray at different times each day).

Before embarking on the relay, talk as a family about how you want to approach the activity. There is a range of ways that can fit in with your daily routine and lifestyle.

You could, for example:

- choose one time of day to talk about what you would like to say thanks and sorry for, and what you would like to ask for God's help with. Pray together. (Suitable for younger children.)
- gather together at the same time each day and assign each family member a different kind of prayer (thanks, sorry or please). Take it in turns to pray.
- assign each family member a different kind of prayer (thanks, sorry or please) and agree on a time during the day when each of you will pray e.g. morning, lunchtime, afternoon or evening. This can be the same time for everyone (wherever you are at the time), or each person can have a unique time so that your prayer relay 'runs' throughout the day. You may want to gather together each day as well to talk about the kinds of things you are praying for. (Suitable for older, more independent children.)

Don't forget you can be as creative as you like with your prayers: draw pictures, go for a walk or to the park and do active prayers, pray out loud or whisper quietly. There is no right way—maybe try different things that work well for you and your family.

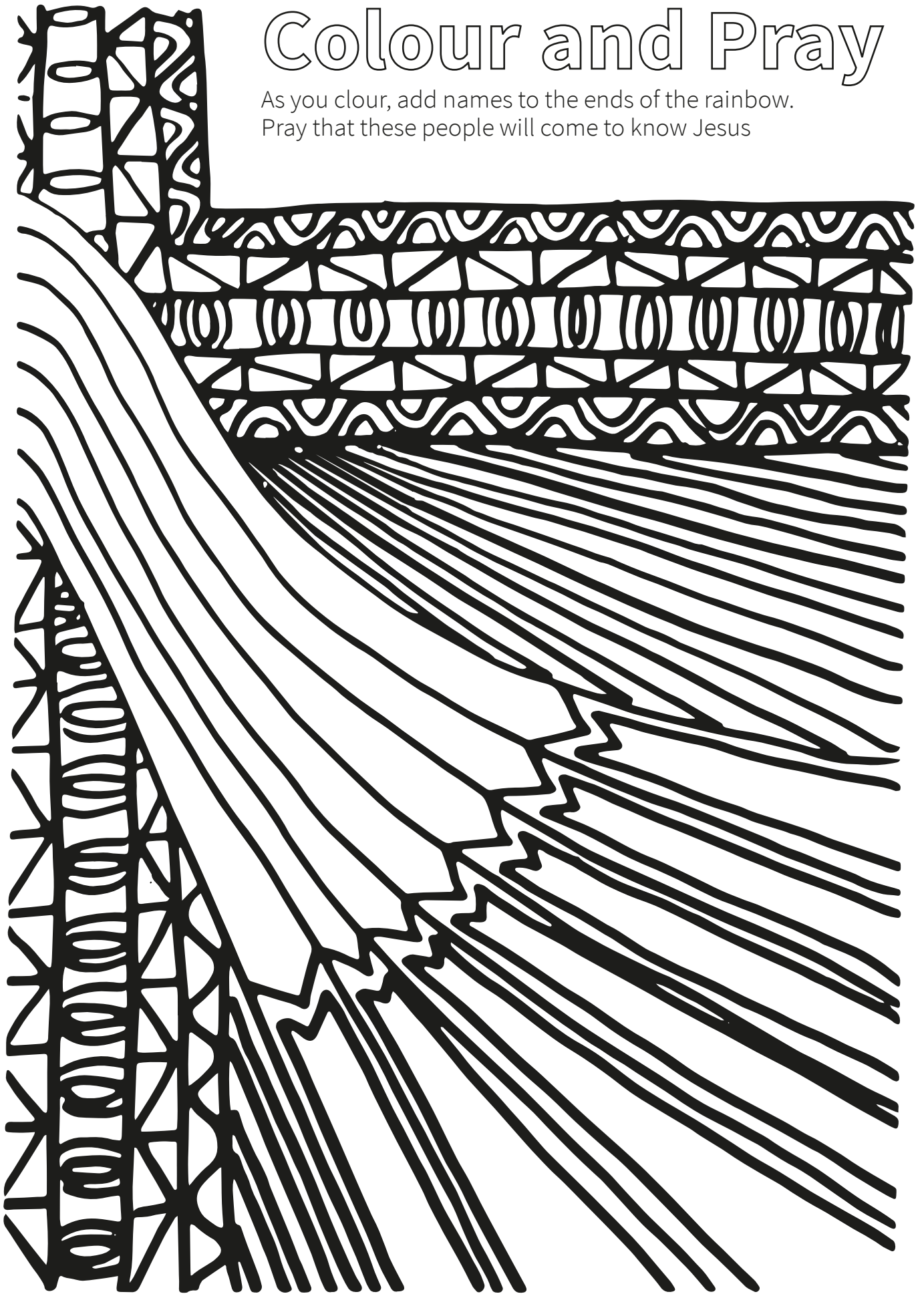
Each day, remember to colour in or put a sticker on the chart to show that you have prayed that day and played your part. Share with each other what you prayed.

When Pentecost arrives, look back on the whole time you've been praying. Have there been highlights? Were there moments of answered prayer or times when you met with God that stand out? Share these things to encourage each other. Why not treat yourselves to a reward or treat for completing the Relay Prayer?



Colour and Pray

As you colour, add names to the ends of the rainbow.
Pray that these people will come to know Jesus



These activities have been devised and generously contributed by individuals, many of whom provide ongoing resources for prayer with families. Their details and other useful family/faith resources and websites are given below.

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Also to:

Ben Mizen and Dotty, portsmouth.anglican.org

Anne and Richard Wise, St Mary's Church, Bishopstoke

Other useful websites resourcing or informing family faith include:

brf.org.uk/updates/introducing-parenting-faith

careforthefamily.org.uk

cgmcontheweb.com/?page_id=543

faithinhomes.org.uk

messychurch.org.uk

barnabasinchurches.org.uk

thetreasureboxpeople.co.uk

flamecreativekids.blogspot.co.uk

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