

Prayer Stations: *Gospel Beginnings*

SETUP NOTES

Around the space there will be 12 clearly identified Prayer Stations (1, 2, M1-4, L1-L6). These will predominantly be set out on top of tables. On each will be everything the participant needs to carry out any actions asked of them.

Each participant will be given a booklet to lead them around the space.

At the start there should be a waiting area with refreshments and participants sent through in no more than threes or fours to ease the flow through the stations. Participants will return to this point after passing through the stations.

At the end of this overview there will be a list of the resources and instructions for particular stations.

Rev'd David Coaker *Leyland URC & Penwortham URC*

Station 1 *The Gospel According to Mark*

READING Mark 1: 1-13

SET UP A4 sheets with blank letters to spell out KINGDOM and pens.

ACT On the table are the letters that make up the word KINGDOM. Within one of the letters write down your prayer, your hope, for how the kingdom would be made real in your life and in the life of the world.

Station M1 *Matthew - The Genealogy of Jesus*

READING Matthew 1: 1-17; Luke 3: 23-38

SET UP Twigs

ACT Take a piece of twig. Hold it in your hand and think about your family tree. Your parents, grandparents, children or grandchildren. Hold all of those lives before God. Place the twig in the centre of the table to create the shape of a tree.

Station M2 *The Birth of Jesus the Messiah*

READING Matthew 1: 18-25

SET UP Celtic cross and night-light

ACT On the table is a cross and candle, use them as a focus to help you pray. Watch the candle flame, trace the twists and turns of the Celtic knots, repeat the phrase 'Emmanuel, God is with us' quietly or in your mind, and listen for God.

Station M3 *The Visit of the Wise Men*

READING Matthew 2: 1-12

SET UP Coloured A4 sheets, pens, and star instructions (see end).

ACT What can you give? Take a sheet of A4 and write on the centre of it a word or phrase. What could you offer as a gift to the good news of Jesus? Follow the instructions to make a star with your words inside. Add the star to the pile on the table.

Station M4 *Escape to Egypt, massacre, and return*

READING Matthew 2: 12-23

SET UP Copies of Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule (see end).

ACT The foundation of the Jewish faith is the Ten Commandments and Jesus' summary is found in the Golden Rule. Copies of these are on the table. Reflect on these for a time.

Station L1 *Luke - Dedication to Theophilus*

READING Luke 1: 1-4

SET UP Jenga blocks.

ACT On the table are some wooden blocks. Take one and hold it in your hand. Look at it and roll it in your hand. Luke is interested in order and structure. He wants to write something that will clearly represent the truth. Take your wooden block and use it to build something on the table. Make sure the structure is stable and solid.

Station L2 *Births of John the Baptist and Jesus Foretold*

READING Luke 1: 5-38

SET UP Ramekins and scented oil.

ACT On the table there is some scented oil. Smell it. Read through the passages again and reflect on the messages from God that the characters receive.

Station L3 *Mary visits Elizabeth and sings*

READING Luke 1: 39-56

SET UP Copy of text and translations (see end).

ACT On the table is a large copy of the NRSV text of the Magnificat and several smaller copies from other translations. Read through a few of the translations. In the space around the NRSV copy draw something to illustrate the text or write a word or phrase to do so.

Station L4 *John is born and Zechariah sings*

READING Luke 1: 57-80

SET UP World map, post-it notes and pens.

ACT On the table is a map of the world. Think of countries, communities, or people you know, that need light to shine and peace to be found. Take a post-it note, write a name or a phrase on it, and stick it on the map in the appropriate place.

Station L5 *The Birth of Jesus*

READING Luke 2: 1-7

SET UP Doll and strips of cloth.

ACT On the table is a doll and some bands of cloth. Take a piece of cloth and wrap it around the doll.

Station L6 *Shepherds, Angels and Jesus is named*

READING Luke 2: 8-21

SET UP Cut out head and legs of sheep, A1 sheet, glue and cotton wool.

ACT Take a ball of cotton wool, add a dab of glue, and stick it on to the sheep outline.

Station 2 *The Gospel According to John*

READING John 1: 1-18

SET UP Nativity set and candle.

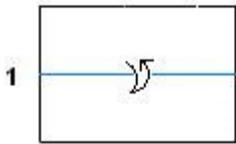
ACT On the table are a nativity set and a central candle. Reflect on the beginnings of the gospels we have explored. Which characters are from which gospel? What is their

significance? Feel free to hold them or move them around. Focus on the candle flame and the words from John's gospel:

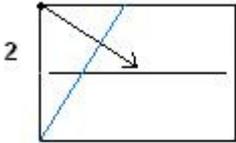
What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

Resources

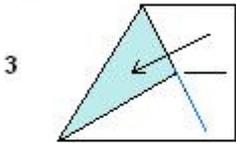
A1 sheet
A4 sheets (to make stars)
A4 sheets with blank letters to spell out KINGDOM
Candle
Celtic cross
Cotton wool
Doll
Glue
Jenga blocks
Magnificat text and translations
Nativity set
Night-light
Pens
Post-it notes
Ramekins
Scented oil
Sheep - cut out head and legs
Star instructions
Strips of cloth
Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule
Twigs
World Map



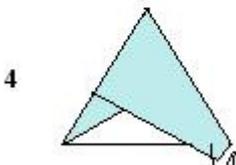
Start with a rectangular piece of paper.
Fold it in half lengthwise; unfold.



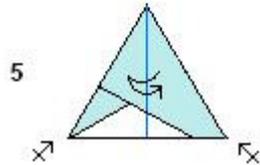
Bring the top left corner to meet the crease made in step 1.
Adjust so that the bottom left part of the paper forms a sharp corner point.
Fold.



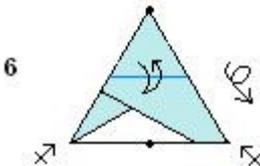
Fold the top right side over top the layers made in step 2.
You should see an equilateral triangle with a segment of paper overhanging the base of the triangle; the overhang is almost the length of the base of the triangle.



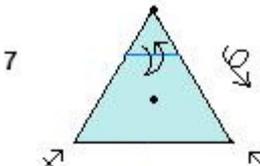
Fold and tuck the overhang in between the layers of paper.



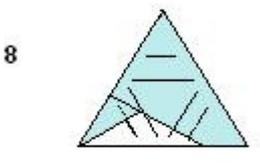
Make sure that the layers of paper do not shift.
Fold the triangle in half and then unfold.
Repeat this on the other two sides of the triangle.
These creases will be landmarks for the next step.



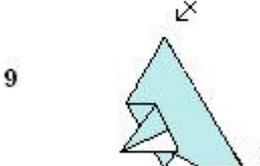
Fold the top of the triangle to meet with the base of the triangle, unfold.
Repeat on the other two points. Turn the model over.



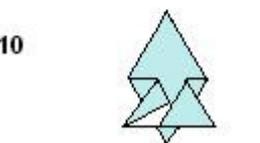
(Creases not shown.) Fold the top of the triangle to meet the middle of the triangle, unfold. Repeat on the other two points.



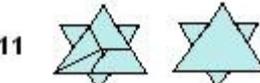
Creases made in step 6 and 7 shown.



Using the pre-creases, accordion pleat the bottom left corner of the triangle.



Repeat on the other two corners.



In the last pleat, tuck the paper under the first pleat.
Done.



Station M4 *Escape to Egypt, massacre, and return*

Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule

Exodus 20 Then God spoke all these words:

² I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; ³ you shall have no other gods before me.

⁴ You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, ⁶ but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷ You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

⁸ Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work. ¹⁰ But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

¹² Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

¹³ You shall not murder.

¹⁴ You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵ You shall not steal.

¹⁶ You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

¹⁷ You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Matthew 22: 37-40 “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ ³⁸ This is the greatest and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

Station L3 *Mary visits Elizabeth and sings*

Luke 1:46 And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. ⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

Douay-Rheims

My soul doth magnify the Lord.
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
Because he hath regarded the humility of his handmaid;
for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.
Because he that is mighty,
hath done great things to me;
and holy is his name.
And his mercy is from generation unto generations,
to them that fear him.
He hath shewed might in his arm:
he hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat,
and hath exalted the humble.
He hath filled the hungry with good things;
and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He hath received Israel his servant,
being mindful of his mercy:
As he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his seed for ever.

Book of Common Prayer

My soul doth magnify the Lord : and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For he hath regarded : the lowliness of his handmaiden.
For behold, from henceforth : all generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified me : and holy is his Name.
And his mercy is on them that fear him : throughout all generations.
He hath shewed strength with his arm : he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat : and hath exalted the humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good things : and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel : as he promised to our forefathers,
Abraham and his seed for ever.

The Divine Office

My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her lowliness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed.
The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy his name!
His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him.
He puts forth his arm in strength
and scatters the proud-hearted.
He casts the mighty from their thrones
and raises the lowly.
He fills the starving with good things,
sends the rich away empty.
He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy,
the mercy promised to our fathers,
to Abraham and his sons for ever.

The Liturgy of the Hours (ICEL)

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,

my spirit rejoices in God my Savior
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed:
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm,
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
the promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Common Worship

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;
he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed;
the Almighty has done great things for me and holy is his name.
He has mercy on those who fear him,
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm
and has scattered the proud in their conceit,
Casting down the mighty from their thrones
and lifting up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
He has come to the aid of his servant Israel,
to remember his promise of mercy,
The promise made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Eastern Orthodox Divine Service

My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior;
For he has regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden.
For behold, from this day all generations will call me blessed;
For the mighty one has done great things to me, and holy is his name.
And his mercy is on those who fear him from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts;
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones and has exalted the holy;
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent empty away.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
as he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his seed forever.