


# *Growing Spiritually as an Elder*

## *Gathering Prayers*

Disciples *Below are some ideas to give your group a sense of continuity from*  
 **Pray** *meeting to meeting. Rituals can become a source of deep bonding in a*  
*religious group.*

### **Worship Centers**

Have a worship center each time you gather. This could be on a table in the middle of the group, or to one side. Use a nice cloth, candles, a Bible, items of beauty or things you will use for the time you will share. Have some part of the center that stays constant for each gathering. You can then start your group by gathering at this center by:

- a) Lighting a group candle that burns while you are together.
- b) Lighting individual candles for each member of the group.
- c) Bless a loaf of bread as you gather that you will share at the end of the session.
- d) Bringing newspaper clippings from the week or items that represent joys and concerns and lay them on the table as you gather for prayer.

### **Gathering Sharing Prayers**

- 1) Have each person tell one joy and one concern they bring. Invite the person to their left or right to pray for their neighbor's concerns in a time of silence.
- 2) Make sandwiches for a homeless shelter, pack toiletry bags, grocery bags, baby layettes, sewing kits, kits for refugees, and as you do these things with music or silence, pass the items, look up at each other, and see the ministry among you.
- 3) Ask each person to lift up the **one word** that describes how they feel at the beginning of the session. Pray for the group mentioning their emotional states. Try not to correct how they feel or hope they will change during your meeting. Instead, offer them up to God however they are at the moment for blessing.