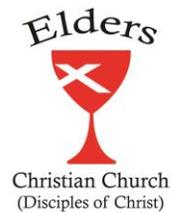


Growing Spiritually as an Elder

Ritual Prayers



Disciples Pray

In the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) we gather at the communion table each week to remember the body of Christ broken and shared with us. In addition, other Christian rituals, of lesser significance but of deep meaning, can be a part of the community life for your group of Elders.

Footwashing:

For centuries the church has practiced the service of footwashing to remember Jesus as a servant washing the feet of the disciples. This ritual can be adapted to a service of handwashing as this reflects the modern times in which we live. You may choose to do this with soft music, singing together, or in silence. Reading the story of Jesus washing the disciples feet found in John 13:1-20 would be a good lead in. You might perfume the water with bath salts. You can make your own bath salts with 1 part epsom salt, 1 part rock salt to which you add scent and/or dye from a craft store soap making section. Put this in a jar, shake it one a day for a week, and then use it. You might also have a running small fountain going at the same time to signify the living water that is Jesus.

Anointing:

In Mark 6:13 we read of the disciples anointing people with oil. A service of anointing can be done for healing prayers or blessing. Using oil or water one person draws a cross on the forehead of another and prays for them in Jesus name.

Items of remembrance:

In the Roman Catholic tradition the rosary is used to remind persons to pray in a pattern that is for the centering of the spirit and in petition for others. In the Protestant part of the church people sometime make a string of beads to remember a set of concerns or a group of persons. When the beads are handled one at a time, they become the reminders of prayers to be said. Your group may choose to make such a string of beads to remember to pray for one another.

Crosses and Icons:

Religious symbols and pictures can be a source of centering prayer when they are used as a focus for your vision as you pray. Your group may choose to make a cross together out of any material that you have and use it as a worship center. You may attach prayer concerns to your cross each week as a gathering or leaving ritual together. Your library has books on the icon as a religious symbol for prayer.

Ringling of bells:

Church bells ring to call people to prayer in the countryside. You might also use a chime or a bell to call yourselves to prayer. You can also use windchimes and a fan to hear the wind of the Holy Spirit with you.

