

Breath prayers

Breath prayers are a way to become more aware of God's presence. The Holy Spirit is as near as the air we breathe.

A common way to practice breath prayer is silently repeating a single-line prayer with each breath.

Personal Breath Prayers: As you inhale, address God with something like, "Jesus, Son of God." Then as you exhale, express a request to God such as, "be merciful to me, a sinner." Other examples are, "(in)Creator God/(out)allow me to see your beauty around me," "(in)Holy Spirit/(out)let me feel your joy," "(in)O Lord/(out)show me your way," or "(in)Holy one/(out)heal me." Or you could try praying just the name of God, "(in)Yah/(out)weh," God is with us in each breath.

Confessional Breath Prayers: As you exhale, breath out personal failings or worries, and when you inhale, breath in the assurance of God's love. For example: "(out)Breath out worry/(in)breathe in stillness" or "(out)Take my anxiety/(in)grant me peace."

Breath Prayers for the World: As you inhale, breathe in the sins of the world, and breathe out corrections—You are the hands and feet of God in the world, working, with each breath, to right wrongs and bring love and justice. Examples: "(In)Injustice and suffering/(out)be now a beloved community." "(In)Fear and anxiety/(out)become love and peace." "(in)War and violence/(out)be no more." "(in)when relationships break/(out)draw us together again."

Repeat the prayer with each breath for several minutes. Listen for God. Take time for silence to practice breath prayers, but also try them as you go about the everyday work of life. Use your breathing/breath prayers to focus on God as you drive tractor, commute, walk the dog, garden, cut vegetables, or take a jog, etc.

United Methodist Church Website: www.umc.org/what-we-believe/re-energize-your-prayer-life-with-a-new-practice

Hacking Christianity: hackingchristianity.net/2014/06/breath-prayer-for-social-justice.html

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