

## Outdoor Prayer Activities for Spring

The following prayer activities we hope you will be able to do as a family either: in your outside space (if you have any); or as part of your outdoor exercise during this Lockdown.

No need to do all at once, these are designed to be done individually at different times of day and in different weather!

Please do adapt these for the ages of your children, they should be accessible for any age.

These are written to be parent led or can be led by older children.

(Adapted from *Wild Lent*, by Rachel Summers published by Kevin Mayhew)

<p><b>Prayer Activity One</b></p> <p><b>Sunny Day</b></p> <p><b>Feel God's love on your face</b></p>	<p>There hasn't been much <b>sun</b> this winter! So take the opportunity when the <b>sun</b> comes out:</p> <p>Find a sheltered spot, perhaps against a wall and stand or sit so that the sun falls on your face. Close your eyes and see the brightness through your eyelids. <i>[Please do not look straight at the sun - it may damage your eyes.]</i> Feel the sun's rays on your forehead, eyebrows, cheeks, ears.</p> <p><i>Now imagine sitting or standing in the presence of God.</i></p> <p><i>Invite the Holy Spirit to come and rest on you as the sun has:</i></p> <p><i>Feel the sun's rays on your face and imagine basking in the love of God.</i></p> <p><i>Feel the sun on your shoulders and feel the warmth of God's love for you, relaxing your shoulders and taking any stress or tension away.</i></p> <p><i>Feel the sun's rays pouring over you and imagine the love of God pouring into you and filling you with peace.</i></p> <p><i>Thank God for the sun's rays which have travelled 150 million kilometers and about eight minutes through space to get to you. Thank God that he loves you so much!!!</i></p> <p><b>Extra:</b> Thank God for the sun's rays which have travelled 150 million kilometers and about eight minutes through space to get to you. Take a minute to reflect on that and how amazing the sun that God made is, think of all the life that it brings to our world!</p>
<p><b>Prayer Activity Two</b></p> <p><b>Rainy Day</b></p> <p><b>Let the rain paint a picture</b></p>	<p>Do we need to wait for the sunshine to be outside to enjoy ourselves? If it is raining, try your hand at some rain art.</p> <p>You'll need some <i>paper</i> and some <i>paint</i>. Cover your paper with some wet paint splodges and swirls and keep the paint as wet as you can. Put your paper down outside in the rain but <b>not</b> somewhere too wet, like a puddle. You may want to weigh it down with some stones or something heavy.</p> <p>As the rain falls on the paint it will create patterns and mix the colours. It's a joint effort between you and the rain. When you are happy with it, take it inside and let it dry.</p>

	<p>You can use this exercise to remember what it is like to do things with God:</p> <p><i>Can you remember some of the stories in the New Testament where Paul or the disciples ask for things in the name of Jesus or ask God for help? We can do this too - think of a situation where you can ask for God's help and make it a joint effort with him.</i></p> <p><b>Extra:</b> What can we do when we partner with God? Can you think of some of the times that you or others in your family have made joint efforts on something with God - how has it turned out?</p>
<p><b>Prayer Activity Three.</b></p> <p><b>Sunny Day</b></p> <p><b>Blowing Bubbles and Being Still</b></p>	<p>Get your hands on some bubble mixture and wands. You can either buy them ready made or make them yourself using things around the house (<a href="https://artfulparent.com">https://artfulparent.com</a> or google it as there are a number of recipes and instructions for wands).</p> <p><i>Now sometimes the excitement of bubbles is just too much, in which case just enjoy being joyful and playing. God delights in you!</i></p> <p><i>If you are able to slow down and pause, have a go at this:</i></p> <p><i>Watch a window of bubble mixture on your wand and imagine the bubble it is going to be and imagine it sailing away. You can use this little slow down prayer, while watching your bubble window:</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Be still and know that I am God. Be still and know that I am. Be still and know. Be still. Be.</i></p> <p><i>Now blow the bubble and watch it float around. Thank you God that we can live such joyful lives with you by just being in your presence!</i></p> <p><b>Extra:</b> Sometimes the bubbles we blow don't work. With each missed bubble, you get a sense of how to blow your best yet. As we walk out our faith, we sometimes stumble, we sometimes mess up and we sometimes wander off and get a bit lost - but we can always have a second chance, a time to start anew. Take a moment to reflect on a moment where you have stumbled or messed up this last week, ask God for his forgiveness and as you receive that forgiveness, feel the peace that God gives you - now try for another bubble.</p>
<p><b>Prayer Activity Four</b></p> <p><b>Rainy Day</b></p> <p><b>Sheltering</b></p>	<p>Soon we'll be able to enjoy the outdoors without needing to keep moving - although it may take a few more weeks for wall to wall sun. This is an easy way to enjoy the outdoors without needing to guarantee sunshine.</p> <p>You will need some <i>rope/paracord</i> and one or two <i>tarpaulins</i> - both can be picked up cheaply (think we got ours in Wilko).</p> <p>Go for a walk in a wooded area - or at least with two trees a comfortable distance away from each other - check the ground for prickles and dryness or use the second tarpaulin to counteract this!</p> <p>Tie one end of the rope around one of the trees. Apply tension and walk the long end of the rope across to the other tree. Wrap the rope around the trunk and knot it. Fling the tarp over the top and either peg down the corners or weigh it down on the ground. Climb inside out of the rain or colder weather. If raining you can enjoy listening and watching the water on the tarp.</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>As a family, where do you find your shelter?</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>God, in your love we find shelter and safety. As we live through the storms of life, help me to feel your love surrounding me and protecting me.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Amen</i></p> <p><b>Extra challenge:</b> Into the wilderness. Consider the area around you, notice the wild and untamed, the brambles and weeds - the things that we don't have any control over it. How does it make you feel? How much of the last year has made you feel like we don't have any control? Consider again where you find your shelter and safety? God has it for you whenever you need it.</p>
<p><b>Prayer Activity Five.</b></p> <p><b>Sunny Day</b></p> <p><b>Sunrise Breakfast Walk</b></p>	<p>Sunrise isn't <b>too</b> early at the moment. Set a date with your family and go for it - Saturdays and Sundays work best for us.</p> <p>Check what time sunrise is and work out a place nearby where you can face east - you might want higher ground - we find Wimbledon Common or Richmond Park is good for this one.</p> <p>Set out to arrive at sunrise and don't forget to wrap up warm and bring some warming drinks and breakfast/pastries. Arrive at your point and look east, you should see the sky brightening.</p> <p><i>Sunrise is a new start! The dawn breaks, the colours brighten and if you are quiet you'll hear the life around you wake up and move. We can notice God's love and peace at this moment.</i></p> <p><i>Pray as a family for God's love and peace, from the point where you are spreading out to your local area. Name the places, homes, buildings, woods etc you can see.</i></p> <p><b>Extra challenge:</b> Is this something that you and your family can incorporate into your rule of life? In Lockdown 1.0 we did this as a family once a week and we watched the Spring turn to Summer and enjoyed the space without people. It was one of our highlights! Also makes for some great photography practice.</p>