

PRAYER ADVENTURES

21 Family Prayer Adventures for Children

Introduction and Explanation:

Prayer is such an important part of our lives as Christians. It also should be an important part of our families, especially in the spiritual development of our children. Often, however, during the childhood years, we as parents teach some short, cute prayers that our children repeat over and over again. Prayer can become something that our children do before a meal or bedtime, maybe at church unfortunately without personal connection or meaning.

Why not during these very important years of mental, emotional, social and spiritual development make prayer an adventure or something that is remembered and connected to things both simple or special. Here are 21 family prayer “adventures” for children.

1. Car Ride of Care

Take a ride together as a family to an area where you live that you normally do not go. Maybe even choose a neighborhood or area that is different than your own. Find out a little information about the area or people. As you drive share some information and prayer ideas, then as you drive around pray for the people and area.

2. Neighborhood Prayer Walk

After dinner or on a weekend afternoon, take a prayer walk around your neighborhood. As a family, take a minute or two in front of each house saying a short prayer for the family living there. Even have your children knock on the door, tell them what you are doing, and ask for a prayer request. Start on your own street or a few of the houses near you and then move out from there as you have time.

3. Spin Around the Globe

While you might not be able to be a real globetrotter traveling around the world, you can still take your child/children on a spin around the globe. Using a desktop globe allow your child to give it a spin and then put their finger down. Wherever on the globe your child’s finger lands closest to, do an Internet search of that country or region. Try to discover information about the area and also what might be some prayer needs. A great resource is “*Operation World*” (<http://www.operationworld.org>), to discover ways to pray for a country or region.

4. Pastor Prayer

Call the pastor of your church or if you have more than one pastor, pick a pastor on staff that your children know. Set up a time to come in to visit them, talk about what they do, and then ask them how you as a family can pray for them. If you have more than one pastor, consider doing it more than once. A great extra to add to the fun, make the pastor cookies or something special to say thank you for their hard work.

5. News Reporter

Depending on the age of your child or your level of comfort as a family, go through the newspaper

and an appropriate website to find things going on in our world in the news that you as a family can prayer for. Consider *"Time for Kids"*, *"Scholastic News"* or *"Smithsonian Tween News"* for age appropriate articles. Take these opportunities to teach and introduce our world to your children through prayer.

6. Backyard Blessings

Especially fun for younger children. Go into your backyard and have a scavenger hunt of blessings. Give your children a piece of paper and pencil and have them come up with a list of things in or around your yard that they can be thankful for or praise God about. If you have a small backyard, don't have a backyard, or for a bigger challenge, go to a local park or woods to see what blessings you as a family can discover.

7. Picnic of Praise

Turn the usual family picnic into a prayer and praise time. As a family, work together to make and pack a picnic. Give everyone an opportunity to make or be a part of making one thing for the picnic. Make your picnic special by not just having a quick prayer for the food before you eat. Make the whole time a time to think about ways and reasons to praise God. Even consider having everyone share one praise for every food item they get out of the basket/bag/cooler.

8. Server Surprise

Instead of leaving a gospel pamphlet or tract, consider every time you go out to eat as a family, before praying for your food asking your server for a prayer request. They will be sure to be surprised and you will be amazed at what they might share. At the end of the meal, of course, make sure to leave a generous tip. If it is some place that your family goes often, your family can follow up with your server to see how things are going with that request.

9. Hospital Visit of Hope

Go to your local hospital during regular visitor hours and get permission. Find a floor that would be appropriate for your family to visit. Go room-to-room or find out what patients haven't had many visitors, and pray for some of the people there. Consider as a family making a variety of "Get Well" cards to give to people whether or not they want to be prayed for. If you feel it would be appropriate for your family and children, think about visiting the pediatric wing, where your children can interact with other children their age and be able to pray for them.

10. Adopt a Block

Get some rubber gloves, a box of garbage bags, and choose a block of your town that needs some clean up. Spend time picking up trash and also praying for the people in that area. Look for opportunities to meet people who live there, and ask them how you as a family can pray for them.

11. Workplace Witness

Prepare lunch as a family for your spouse's or your workplace. Spend some time as you prepare the food to pray for specific people or needs. Have your whole family come in, set up the meal and serve it.

12. Rulers and Authority

Set up a tour or visit for your family to a local government building or office, like the mayor's office or a local member of legislation. As you take the tour, allow your children to ask questions and get to know the person's job along with some of the tough decisions they have to make. Make a list of prayer requests and over the next couple weeks at home take time as a family to pray for that person and their position.

13. Nursing Home Encouragement

Visit a local nursing home to encourage and show love to the residents. It is amazing how many residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities do not get many visitors. Take some of your family's favorite board games to play, if you like. As you are there, take time to pray with residents,

and also ask the staff how you can pray for them as well.

14. Teacher Appreciation

At the beginning or end of the year, or even on National Teacher Appreciation Day, think of creative ways to help and honor teachers at your local school. If you are homeschooled, pick the nearest school to your home. Have your family write personal notes of encouragement and prayers to all the teachers, including the principals and assistants.

15. Living Water Drink Stand

Instead of setting up the usual lemonade stand for the summer to make money, set up a prayer and drink stand instead. Beforehand write encouraging Bible verses and notes of prayer on all of the cups. Have fun as a family, decorating and making signs. When people stop by for a drink have a jar out, not for money, but for prayer requests. Collect a prayer request for every drink given out. Make sure over the next week or two to make time to pray as a family for each of the requests.

16. Rake and Request

In the fall, go out as a family with rakes and bags to rake up your neighbor's yards. Go to another neighborhood or drive around as a family looking for a yard in need of raking. Instead of accepting money, accept only prayer requests before you start. As you rake take time as family to pray the request.

17. Holy Hike

Find a park or nature trail to take a family hike. Instead of only hiking, make it a "holy hike" by spending the time in prayer, praise, and worship. Take time throughout the hike to think of or look for things that you can praise God for. While you hike, come up with some praise and worship songs that you can sing as prayers of praise.

18. Thanksgiving in July

Prepare a full Thanksgiving dinner, turkey with all the sides...in July. Make it a full Thanksgiving by inviting friends and family over. Since it is warmer in July, go outside and play football. Thanksgiving in November shouldn't be the only time family gets together and gives thanks. It might even turn into a special extra family tradition?

19. First Responders Requests

Whenever you are driving somewhere and you see an accident or see an emergency vehicle, take time to have a quick family prayer time. More often than not, if there is an accident your family is sitting in traffic anyway. Make those moments sacred family moments by taking time to pray specifically for the victim and also the hard working firemen, paramedics, and policemen.

20. Downtown Dedication

Take your family to "downtown" wherever you live. Take a walk or tour around the area. Before you go there, if needed, find out some information about the businesses, organizations, and even history. After a while find a bench or place to sit, taking some time to pray as a family for the area and people where you live.

21. Mini Missionaries

Find a local missions or Christian services organization that your family can volunteer with for a day, or even better, on a regular basis. Sign up for their newsletter or prayer request email. Go and serve with them, asking the organization for ways you can help, collect, and support them. As a family, become prayer warriors and servants for them. Allow your children to see the needs and ministry first hand, so they can learn to pray specific prayers for those people working with the organization.