

Guidelines for the First Two Companioned Prayer™ Learning Sessions with Mentors

These first two learning sessions focus on experiencing the prayer (being companioned) by mentors (experienced companions). If mentors are not available, see the material for sharing the prayer without mentors.

These guidelines are for mentors who are facilitating the first two learning sessions of Companioned Prayer. Typically, when breaking into small groups, there will be only one, two, or sometimes up to three people who are learning the prayer, per mentor. The first session usually can take up to two hours. An hour-and-a-half should be available for each of the other sessions, or two hours if there are three people per mentor. If a person misses the first session, they should not participate in the second, but should be encouraged to start again when another first session is offered.

Note that during the first two learning sessions, the mentors do not experience the prayer themselves (they are not companioned).

Suggested Outline of the First Two Sessions

1st Session:

1. Opening: *[can be done in a large group]* Welcome; opening prayer; scripture reading; and introductions.
2. About the learning experience: *[can be done in a large group]* A brief overview of what happens when; read Bishop Quinn's remarks and then hand out that page; read the Disclaimer and ask for questions; discuss confidentiality; discuss applicable Safe Environment principles; and provide blank journals to participants who did not bring one.
3. Mentors' testimonies: *[can be done in a large group]* Share your own personal experiences of the prayer (and their significance to you).
4. About Companioned Prayer: *[can be done in a large group]* Very briefly discuss how companioning works, i.e., praying with a companion. Explain that we learn the prayer primarily by praying it. Do not describe each prayer movement. (If you find it is necessary to review the prayer movements, do not go into detail beyond that in the supplemental handout "The Companioned Prayer Movements.") Read out loud the "Guidelines for Praying" but do not read out loud the sixth bullet about sharing symbols. (In this first session, do not provide any instruction regarding the sharing of symbols.) Do not yet share the printed prayer form.

5. Mentors companion one person at a time: *[should be done in multiple small groups of, e.g., a mentor and two learners]* Use the standard Companioned Prayer form for Ordinary Time regardless of what time of year the sessions occur. Immediately after each person is companioned ask them questions or provide observations intended to help them reflect upon their prayer experience and its significance to them. See the separate document titled, "Guidelines for Reflecting the Prayer Experience." Do not use this individual time after each prayer for instruction in the prayer. Include time for individual journaling after each person's prayer reflection.
6. Group sharing/discussion: *[can be done in a large group]* Individual sharing and discussion of their prayer experiences. Also invite and answer any questions, including any instructional feedback as necessary.
7. Closing: *[can be done in a large group]* Hand out the Companioned Prayer Disclaimer, the "Confidentiality and Sharing" handout, the CP form for Ordinary Time (and let them know that there are other forms as well), and the "Guidelines for Praying"; and say a closing prayer. Do not provide additional handouts at this session.

2nd Session:

1. Opening: *[can be done in a large group]* Welcome; opening prayer; and scripture reading.
2. How to pray: *[can be done in a large group]* Brief Q&A. Discuss sharing of symbols (hand out the Companioned Prayer form again); read out loud the sixth bullet about sharing symbols in the "Guidelines for Praying." For this learning session, encourage sharing of symbols when in the small group. Discuss the *BEING OPEN TO GOD'S SPIRIT* movement: review cycling and following any changes; respond to "b" with a "yes" or "no"; and review how to let your companion know when you are finished with this movement.
3. Mentors companion one person at a time: *[should be done in a small group]* Use the standard Companioned Prayer form for Ordinary Time regardless of what time of year the sessions occur. Immediately after each person is companioned ask them questions or provide observations intended to help them reflect upon their prayer experience and its significance to them. See the separate document titled, "Guidelines for Reflecting the Prayer Experience." Do not use this individual time after each prayer for instruction in the prayer. Include time for individual journaling after each person's prayer reflection.
4. Group sharing/discussion: *[can be done in a large group]* Individual sharing and discussion of their prayer experiences. Also invite and answer any questions, including any instructional feedback as necessary.
5. Closing: *[can be done in a large group]* There are no additional handouts at this time. Say a closing prayer.