

Guidelines for the First Two Introductory Prayer Sessions with Mentors

These first two introductory prayer sessions focus on experiencing Companioned 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 introductory prayer 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 takes 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 sessions, the mentors do not experience the prayer themselves (they are not companioned).

Suggested Outline of the First Two Sessions

1st Session:

1. Opening: Welcome; opening prayer; and introductions.
2. About the learning experience: A brief overview of what happens when; read the Disclaimer and ask for questions; discuss confidentiality; discuss applicable Safe Environment principles; read Bishop Quinn's remarks and then hand out that page; and provide blank journals to participants who did not bring one.
3. Scripture reading: A scripture reading (1st Samuel 3:1-9) followed by shared reflections.
4. Mentors' testimonies: Share your own personal experiences of the prayer (and their significance to you).
5. How to pray: 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.
6. 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.

7. Group sharing/discussion: After everyone has gathered back into the larger group, individual optional sharing and discussion of their prayer experiences. Also invite and answer any questions, including any instructional feedback as necessary. Share a relevant personal Companioned Prayer story or experience. Refer to or quote a scripture passage appropriate to the group's shared experience or to the topic being discussed.
8. Closing: 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: Welcome; and opening prayer.
2. Scripture reading: A scripture reading (Matthew 11:28-30) followed by shared reflections.
3. How to pray: 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 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.
4. Mentors companion one person at a time: *[should be done in small groups]* 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.
5. Group sharing/discussion: After everyone is gathered back into the larger group, individual sharing and discussion of their prayer experiences. Also invite and answer any questions, including any instructional feedback as necessary. Share a relevant personal Companioned Prayer story or experience. Refer to or quote a scripture passage appropriate to the group's shared experience or to the topic being discussed.
6. Closing: There are no additional handouts at this time. Say a closing prayer.