

Prayer Adult First Day School 7/19/20

“Prayer is simply a conversation or contact with God where we open ourselves to the Divine presence.” --- Friends Meeting at Cambridge

“Since Friends have no prescribed form of prayer, we are free to discover those practices and words that meet our individual and communal needs. Prayer can be sung, thought, spoken, or expressed through the work of our hands or the movements of our bodies. We may use formal prayers, such as The Lord’s Prayer, or our own heartfelt words. We may simply “be” in the Presence where words are unnecessary.” --- [Philadelphia YM Faith & Practice](#)

“The true warrant for prayer is the sense of need...” ---London Yearly Meeting, 1888

“We live and move and have our being in God; we are bound up in the bundle of life in Him, and it is reasonable to believe that prayer may often find its answer, even in outward things, by the reaction of mind upon mind. Prayer is not given us to make life easy for us, or to coddle us, but to make us strong ... to make us masters of circumstance and not its slaves. *We pray, not to change God's will, but to bring our wills into correspondence with His.*” ----William Littleboy, 1937, Britain YM Faith & Practice

“When I read that I was supposed to make 'a place for inward retirement and waiting upon God' in my daily life...I thought: "Oh, those stuffy old Friends, they don't understand! Do they think I'm going to be able to sit for an hour, or half an hour...or for any time at all, in my very busy life, just to have some kind of feeling 'inward retirement'?" I felt irritated and misunderstood, and I tried to put the whole thing out of my mind. At last I began to realise... that I needed some kind of inner peace, or inward retirement, or whatever name it might be called by.... I began to realise that prayer was not a formality or an obligation; it was a place which was there all the time and always available.” ---Elfrida Vipont Foulds, *Britain YM Faith & Practice*, 1983

“We ‘Pray the Ordinary’ in three ways: first, by turning ordinary experiences of life into prayer; second, by seeing God in the ordinary experiences of life; and third, by praying throughout the ordinary experiences of life.” --- Richard J. Foster, *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*

“Oh Lord, may I be directed what to do and what to leave undone.” ---Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845)

“Too many times we pray for ease, but that’s a prayer seldom met. What we need to do is pray for roots that reach deep into the Eternal, so when the rains fall and the winds blow, we won’t be swept asunder.” ---Philip J. Gulley

“...A Friend who had missed meeting for several weeks told us that she knew we had been praying for her before we said so; she had felt it and been sustained by it...We are seldom given guarantees that it is effective, just hints along the way; but they are hints we cannot ignore. We cannot prove the effectiveness of prayer, but nor can we cast scorn on examples of the kind I have given.” ---Diana Lampen, 1979

“...All intercession is a self-offering, a self-giving, a longing that what we ask for others may be done, if need be, through ourselves.” ---Edgar G. Dunstan, 1946 Britain YM F&P

“To pray is to listen to the One who calls you my beloved daughter, my beloved son, my beloved child. To pray is to let that voice speak to the center of your being, to your guts, and let that voice resound in your whole being.” ---Henri Nouwen (Catholic priest, writer, theologian)

Queries

- Do one or two of these quotes speak to your condition?
- What is your experience of prayer? What prayer practices do you find most helpful for conversation or communion with God/Spirit/Source?
- What difficulties or doubts do you have with prayer?