

ROOM TO PRAY—Back to School 2018

This year, Room To Pray launched with a call to pray and fast during April as a way of preparing ourselves for our Women's Conference and its theme of *Come Thirsty | Drink Deeply ... because there's more*. You'll find that guide along with tremendous resources (Bible studies, blogs, links to articles and books) at baptistwomen.com/resources and in our March/April issue of *live* magazine (guide only).

Now we invite you to host Back To School prayer rooms in fall 2018 at your church.

To offer you some ideas on how to set up this prayer room, Monique Tatsu from First Baptist Church, Chatham took the lead, having conversations with 10- to 18-year-olds: her Sunday School class, her own kids and the high school youth who do a cooperative learning program at her workplace. She noticed several common concerns as they talked about school: technology, violence, peer pressure and self-esteem.

In Psalm 91 David gives us two images of God: a mother hen who covers our kids and youth with His feathers and under whose wings they find refuge, and a fortress, a God whose faithfulness is their shield and rampart. The prayer station ideas you see in this guide are based on Psalm 91 and on Monique's conversations.

These ideas can be used either for you to welcome children to pray, or for you to pray for your children and youth. (You may want to adapt some of the instructions.) Our prayer is that all visitors to Back To School prayer rooms will leave having met with God and having had a revelation of how loved they are, deeply valued and thus gifted with purpose and agency to make a difference in the world.

"I strongly encourage you to meet with your kids and youth and initiate some honest talks about what they are facing and how they'd like to see the prayer rooms. The more you involve them in the planning and creating, the more specific to your church the room becomes."

~ Monique Tatsu



ROOM TO PRAY

THE PROCESS

1. **Gather other interested people to be part of the planning.**
2. **If possible, invite children and youth at your church to be part of this process. Ask them:**
 - What are their concerns and thoughts as they go back to school in the fall?
 - How can the whole church pray for their concerns?
3. **Consider how the whole church can use the prayer room.**
 - **Start small:** Have one prayer station built each week, leading up to September and keep all the stations up for the first two weeks that kids/youth have returned to school.
 - **Designate a Back-to-School Sunday:** Have Sunday School children, youth and their teachers take as much of the service as possible. Set up the prayer room at least one week prior and invite the congregation to visit before that Sunday and on the Sunday itself.
 - **Have a Back-to-School lunch** on a Sunday in September. As part of that Sunday, have Sunday school and youth groups use their class time to visit the prayer room, then invite the adults to visit the prayer room after the lunch.

Visit baptistwomen.com/resources to find a prayer room guide with a list of helpful hints on how to set up a room.

Salt of the Earth

YOU'LL NEED

- A table covered with cloth
- Salt shakers (no more than 5, set on the table)



SCRIPTURE

to print out and place on station

"You are the salt of the earth. But suppose the salt loses its saltiness. How can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything. It will be thrown out. People will walk all over it" Matthew 5:13 (NIRV).

Instructions for visitors

Salt makes things taste better.
Salt preserves things.
Salt makes things more interesting.
Salt brings out flavours in food.

Put some salt in your hand and taste. Then pray about how you can be salt in this bland world, and what that means.

WHY THIS STATION?

My 10-year-old shared that kids at his school didn't seem to know what they wanted to do in the future; they didn't have a sense of how they could make a difference in the world. I found this station idea at ministry2youth.com.

~ Renée

Pray for Your School

YOU'LL NEED

- large picture of the schools and universities your church children and youth attend or a map of the city with schools and universities labelled
- corkboard
- small pieces of paper and pens
- push pins
- Bibles

Place the school pictures/map on the corkboard so that students can pin their prayers on top of them.

SCRIPTURE

to print out and place on station

"Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion" Ephesians 6:18a (NLT).



Instructions for visitors

There's a saying: *We don't talk to our friends about God because we don't talk to God about our friends.* Too often we forget to pray for our friends and for our schools.

In this verse, Paul is saying that God asks us to pray "on every occasion" not just in our homes or churches but at *all* times. You might be saying: *How do I do this?*

The answer: By praying quick, brief prayers throughout your day, in every situation. This allows God's desires and teachings to be with you through your whole day.

Find a place to be by yourself and **use the paper provided to write a prayer for your school and another one for your friends.**

When you are finished, **come back and pin your prayers on top of your school.**

If you can't find your school or university, just place your papers on the map. If you are not a student, pray for all schools and universities you see here.

WHY THIS STATION?

I created this station a few years ago when my kids were both starting new schools. They had anxieties over leaving, fitting in, making new friends, what to wear on the first day ... We talked about praying not only for their needs, but for the needs of all the students at both schools.

~ Monique

Leave Your Prints

YOU'LL NEED

- moon sand (available at a department store or toy store)
- several containers (at least the width of a hand-span and deep enough to hold a medium-sized bag of moon sand)

SCRIPTURE

to print out and display at station

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere, in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" Acts 1:8 (NLT).

WHY THIS STATION?

This is a Pinterest idea that illustrated the chat I had with high school students who do cooperative learning at my workplace—a senior living facility. Their high school is right next door to the facility. We had been discussing seniors, the wisdom they'd learned from experience and how seniors leave strong legacies. One student said: "I wonder what we will be leaving behind." That led us to talk about the power of their generation and what their legacy will be.

~ Monique

Instructions for visitors

Right before He went back to live in Heaven, Jesus commanded His followers to take His truth around the world.

Spend a moment making impressions in the sand.

As you press the sand, notice how you leave your fingerprints.

As you move through your life, you leave your prints on the people around you. You impact them. So... are you impacting them for good or for evil? Are you pointing them toward God or away from Him?

As you make impressions in the sand, ask God to mould your life into one that points people towards Him.

Pray that God will help others see the truth about who He is and that He will use you to make an impact in their lives.

Sparrows

YOU'LL NEED

- small table with tablecloth
- nature items—birds, bird nests, twigs, feathers etc. to decorate the station
- *Where's Waldo?* book
- magnifying glass

SCRIPTURE

to print out and display at station

"Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows"
Luke 12:6-7 (NIV).

WHY THIS STATION?

Our Sunday School class had been talking about being special in the Lord's eyes. One student asked: "But if there are billions of people in the world all speaking at the same time, how can He just hear me?" I'm sure kids must feel small (as do we). I created this prayer station to show them that God is omnipresent.

~ Monique

Instructions for visitors

Do you realize how special and loved YOU are? God loves you so much He sent his only Son to die for you and me!

Think about your busy day-to-day routine at school.

Do you ever feel that you are just lost in the crowd? A small fish in a big ocean? It is easy to feel that way sometimes.

When you do, remember this. Even with all the people in the whole world, God can easily find you and be with you at every moment. If His eye is on the sparrow, He is—for sure—watching you!

Look at the *Where's Waldo?* book and try to find him. Think about how God finds you in the world and keeps His eye on you at all times. You are never alone!



Come Away



ministry2youth.com

YOU'LL NEED

- a carpet, big cushions, pillows
- some Bibles, journals/pens on a coffee table
- heart paper (you'll find this at a dollar store or create your own)
- dollar store battery candles and tealights

Create a quiet space with mood lighting where youth and kids can just lie, kneel, sit ... and be still.

SCRIPTURE

to print out and place on coffee table or on wall near space

"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done" Philippians 4:6 (NLT).

"Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path" Psalm 119:105 (NLT).

"Come to me, all of you who are tired and are carrying heavy loads. I will give you rest" Matthew 11:28 (NIRV).

WHY THIS STATION?

Sometimes it's hard for kids, youth and even young adults to express their thoughts. Even in my conversations with kids I felt they were still holding back some deep thoughts that perhaps were too personal or that they just couldn't express.

~ Monique

This station is a combination of ideas from Monique and ministry2youth.com. We hope this space gives everyone, especially our kids and youth, some space to rest, pray, be alone with God. God will meet us there.

~ Renée

Instructions for visitors

Rest. Sit or lie down and rest.

Read from the Bible.

Pray. Just think of three people in your life, maybe some kids at your school, who need to know the love of God. Write their names on some heart paper

and just pray for them. No gimmicks. No tricks. Just pray.

Journal, doodle, write a note to God, or just sit and be still in the presence of God.

Stay here as long as you like.

Wipe Your Sins Away

YOU'LL NEED

- a large picture of the crucified Jesus (or any art depicting Jesus' death) to hang on a focal wall
- poster board taped to the wall near the picture of Jesus
- 3 or 4 small dry erase boards
- dry erase markers, felt pens and Sharpies
- sponges to wipe erase boards
- small table on which to arrange supplies

SCRIPTURE

to print out and place near the station

"You are tempted in the same way all other human beings are. God is faithful. He will not let you be tempted any more than you can take. But when you are tempted, God will give you a way out so that you can stand up under it" 1 Corinthians 10:13 (NIRV).

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" 1 John 1:9 (NIV).



ministry2youth.com

Instructions for visitors

The picture on the wall is of Jesus on the cross. He died on the cross so your sins would be wiped away, and you would be made clean.

On a dry erase board write something that separates you from God. It may be a sin you struggle with, someone you need to forgive (at school or wherever) or an attitude about something you need to get rid of.

Once you have written it down, wipe it clean.

Look at the clean board and remember that Jesus makes your soul as fresh and as clean as that board you've just wiped.

On the poster board write a note of thanks to Jesus for what He did.

WHY THIS STATION?

I wish I'd had an opportunity to do this prayer when I was a teen. The words I'd have written on a dry erase board: anger, guilt, doubt, fear.

~ Renée