

A Framework for Prayer Ministry at Satellites

This week will be full of opportunities for us to pray with one another! Whether that's in our youth groups, with members of the pastoral team or with new people we've just met – we trust that God is going to do some great things, and prayer is one of those points of encounter, where we meet and engage with God.

Over-arching Principles

We've put together three simple principles as a guide for how this looks at Satellites. We all come from different contexts, so these guidelines are here to share some values for prayer which we can hopefully all agree to hold in common. All prayer at Satellites should follow these principles:

1. **ACTIVE:** The person praying, the person being prayed for, and God are all active participants in the prayer. Whatever you're praying about, give God all of your focus. If you are waiting or listening for what God might be doing or saying, wait actively and watchfully. There is always business to be done with God: to receive something from Him, to let something go, to say sorry, to say thank you – whatever He is prompting you to do, give it your all.
2. **OPEN:** There's almost always something that has prompted us to pray, and it's totally right to bring that before God. Once you've expressed it, be open to wherever He may be drawing your attention. When we pray, we're inviting God into our situation. We have two promises: He's always going to be present, (whether we feel or sense it or not) and He's always going to do something good. Trust in those promises and be open to whatever He has for you – sometimes when our expectations are so fixed on one thing, we can miss what God is doing somewhere else. Having said that, He'll never force His way in. It's for you to choose to open the door.
3. **ENCOURAGING:** Every person should leave a time of prayer feeling encouraged. Sometimes some tricky things can come up: heavy or difficult situations, times we've been hurt or times we've hurt others. If you feel that God is prompting you to explore something painful, or if you don't get the answer you were hoping for, know that His desire is always to give you peace, to show you His love and to encourage you. If you're praying with someone, the goal is for them to leave that time of prayer encouraged and confident that God really loves them. If you are left unsettled after prayer, please do chat to someone, whether a friend, a leader or member of the Satellites team.

God Speaks

Often when we're praying, a word, picture, memory, Bible verse or feeling may come to mind. This could be God or simply our own thoughts or a bit of both. We'd love to encourage people to be open to God communicating with and through us this week, but also ensure that we don't put words into God's mouth.

If you have a sense of something that might be a 'God thought' when praying for someone else, here are some helpful tips:

Check in – is this just me? Is it helpful, loving and encouraging? If you have any doubts, check it out with a leader before sharing it

Share it lightly – don't say "God says"; offer that as a possibility but encouraging the person to see what they think, and to drop it if it's not helpful.

What should I do with my hands?

In spite of what you may have heard, you don't need to put your hands together to pray. You don't even need to use your hands at all. You certainly don't need to waft them around or anything you may have seen someone else doing. Laying hands is biblical but not essential. It can be helpful to gently lay a hand on someone's shoulder, but only if they are comfortable with that and it's appropriate. And remember 'gently' there is nothing more distracting in prayer than heavy hands resting on you.

What should I do with my eyes?

If you are praying for someone else it can be helpful to keep your eyes open. It can help you get a sense of what's going on. For example, that could be that the Holy Spirit is obviously at work, or that they are getting upset or that they are bored and waiting for you to stop praying.

If you are being prayed for it is helpful to close your eyes. It helps you concentrate on God rather than the person praying for you and also stops any awkward looking at each other as you pray.