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EXAMINE

PAUSE

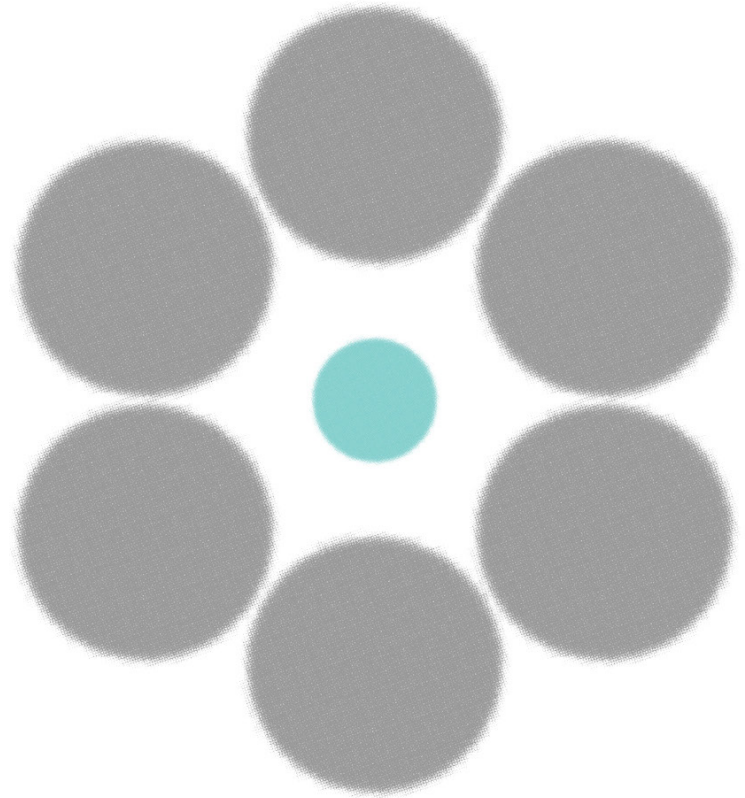
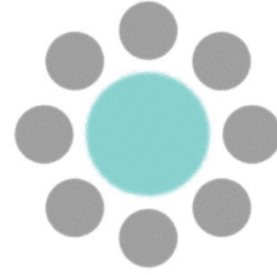
EAT

ASK

COMMUNE

EXAMINE

which mint circle is larger?



Neither — both are equally sized, but our eyes trick us. Only when measuring the circles against a standard can we see the truth clearly. Such is the way of our lives: it's all too easy to view ourselves by our surroundings, rather than calibrating ourselves to who we are in Christ.

EXAMINE

We invite Jesus to **Examine us daily through prayer and the reading of God's word.** God gives us the gifts of prayer and scripture, not as methods of earning his favor but as avenues to grow in our understanding of love and grace. St. Augustine prayed, "Lord Jesus, let me know myself and know you, and desire nothing save only you." Similarly, the psalmist asks, "Search me, O God, and know my heart" (Psalm 139:23-24), and Jesus declares that apart from him, we can do nothing (John 15:5). Christian worship throughout history has maintained these themes in various forms, inviting the Holy Spirit to change our hearts and redirect our desires toward God. Through the daily practice of Examine we listen to Jesus through his word and speak to him in prayer, always remembering that he lovingly accepts all who come to him in faith (Romans 4:5).

Several times during the day, but especially in the morning and evening, ask yourself for a moment if you have your soul in your hands or if some passion or fit of anxiety has robbed you of it.... If you have gone astray, quietly bring your soul back to the presence of God, subjecting all your affections and desires to the obedience and direction of His Divine Will.
— Frances de Sales

DAILY HABITS

TO HELP US PRACTICE PEACE:

CHALLENGE

Each month we focus on a new practice (Pause, Eat, Ask, Commune, Examine) while building on those from previous months. These practices are meant to be practical, fitting into the flow of our daily lives as we invite the Holy Spirit to change us and create new, sustainable habits.

Deepen your relationship with Jesus and experience rootedness in the gospel by turning off distractions and tuning into scripture and prayer.

Read scripture and pray daily. *see pages 12–19 for inspiration*

Pray the Examen at night. *see pages 22–23 to learn more*

Keep the guidebook or a journal to help you track your growth in this area.

COMMITMENT

Prayerfully commit to small, sustainable steps in the practice of Examine, as Jesus invites us to be transformed together.

Establish a sustainable practice. How will you make scripture reading and prayer a daily rhythm? Consider when, where and what you will do.

Limit distractions. What do you need to remove or limit, to make time for Examine?

Tell someone. How can you share what you receive from scripture and prayer, with others?

DAILY HABITS_{CONT.}

PASS THE PEACE

Practicing PEACE fills us with the peace of Jesus, so we pass his peace to others. Because our city is in deep need and we are made to share peace with our neighbors, adopt one Hope for New York affiliate for the entire duration of practicing PEACE to extend the mercy that we have received to others.

Dream Center: Pack & distribute food boxes to families every third Friday of the month.

Young Life: Connect with & mentor teenagers on the Upper East Side.

Safe Families: Offer hope and encouragement to overwhelmed families through virtual connections.

The Bowery Mission: Meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness and hunger in the city.

The Open Door: Teach English or become a conversation partner with adult immigrants through virtual connections every third Saturday.

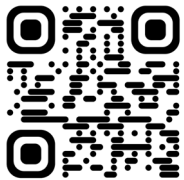
Ask yourself these questions:

Which ministry most resonates with me?

What does my schedule allow?

Do I feel comfortable with in person or virtual?

Scan to sign up to volunteer or donate online.



GOINGS ON

PEACE: An Invitation to Examine, with Diane Langberg

Sun, June 6, 8–9 p.m.

Join Diane Langberg, therapist and author of *Suffering and the Heart of God and Redeeming Power: Understanding Authority and Abuse in the Church*, to explore how God's word and prayer examines the human heart and opens us to the heart of God. Dr. Langberg will draw from her experience as a trauma therapist and follower of Jesus to reveal how the practice of Examine is a deep means of experiencing grace, growth and peace.

Virtual Noonday Prayer

Mon–Fri, All Month, 12–12:20 p.m.

In this time of great challenge, we must call on God together. Join us online for 20 minutes as we reflect on Scripture and ask God to provide for our city and world. Go to eastside.redeemer.com/prayer to join via Zoom.

Relating to God in Troubling Times

Wed, June 9, 7–8 p.m.

In the midst of disappointment, sorrow, or loss, we can be tempted to distance ourselves from God, trying to hide our wounded hearts from the only one who can truly heal us. In this class, we will explore practices of scripture reading and prayer that invite Jesus into our sorrow and that teach us to trust him as we walk through the darkness.

How to Use the Book of Common Prayer

Wed, June 16, 7–8 p.m.

This course is designed to introduce you to the Book of Common Prayer, the prayer book that Anglican Christians have used for centuries for public worship. We'll look at the services of Morning and Evening Prayer to offer one way you can practice Examine.

Circle the offerings that most interest you.

PEACE: AN INVITATION TO EXAMINE


with Diane Langberg, Sun, June 6

How has your perspective on the practice of Examine changed by what you heard?

What does this practice reveal to you about the reality of the Christian life?

A large grid of small, light gray dots arranged in a regular pattern, intended for handwritten notes or reflections.

My unexamined daily habit [of checking the cell phone] was shaping me into a worshiper of glowing screens...whether we examine our daily activities theologically or not, they shape our view of God and ourselves.
— Tish Harrison Warren, *Liturgy of the Ordinary*



*One who prays ceaselessly is one who combines prayer
with work and work with prayer. — Origen*

FRAMEWORKS FOR READING THE BIBLE

We often need tools to get us started when we learn a new hobby or skill, and Bible reading isn't too different. There are two simple frameworks below to help you get started with reading the Bible as you make space for Jesus to examine you. Before using either of them, pray that the Holy Spirit would open your eyes to notice wondrous things from the passage (Psalm 119:18).

The Swedish Method

1. Read the passage aloud.
2. Ask a few questions:
 - What draws your attention or strikes you about the passage?
 - What's hard to understand about the passage?
 - What applies personally to your life?
3. Pray in response to the passage.

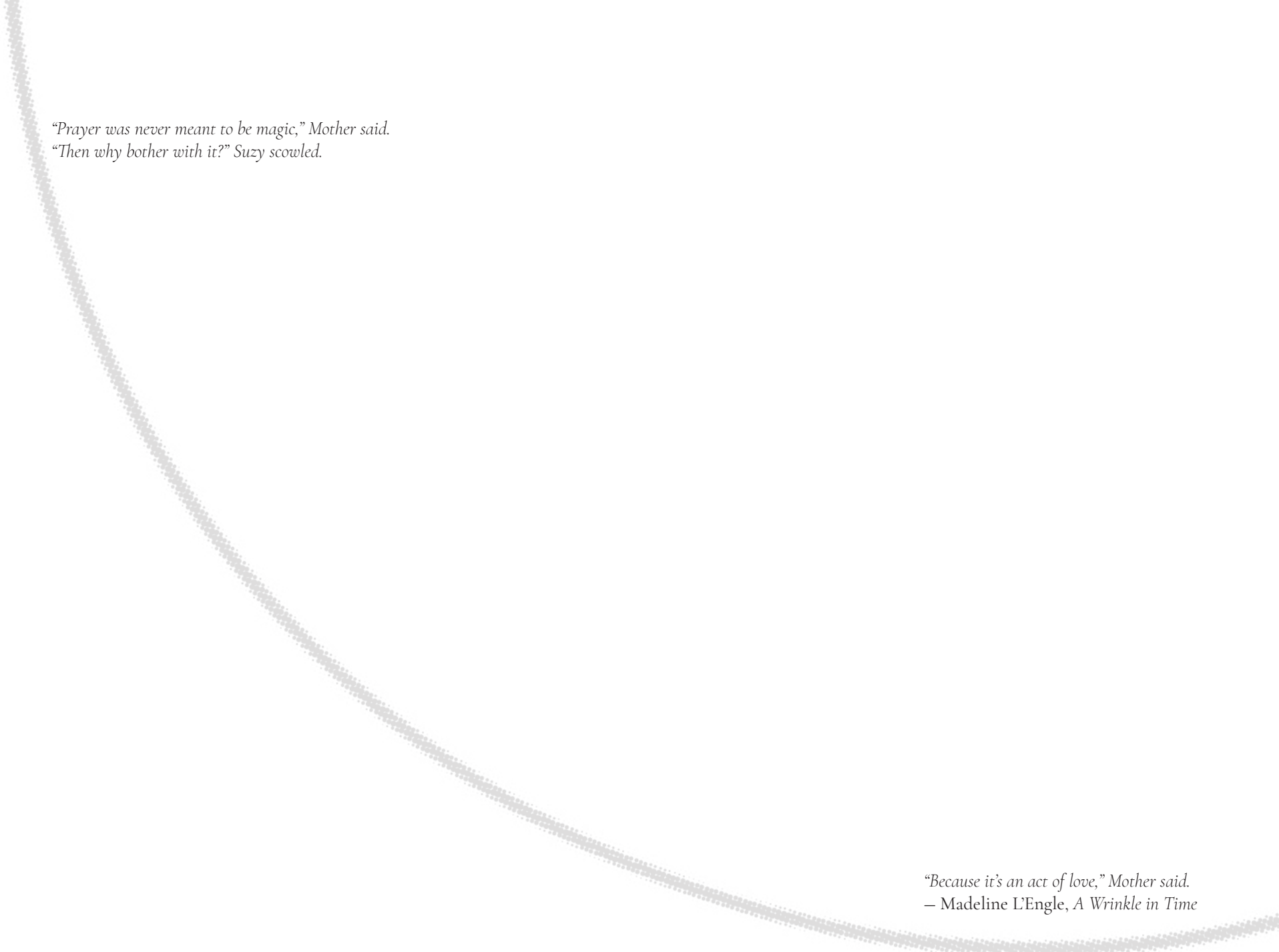
The COMA Method

1. Read the passage aloud.
2. Ask **COMA** questions.
 - Ask questions about **context**.
 - The genre? (poetry, letter, narrative etc.)
 - Historical circumstances?
 - What's happened so far in the reading?
 - Make some **observations**.
 - The main point?
 - Key words or repeated ideas?
 - Anything surprising?
 - Ask questions about **meaning**.
 - How does this text fit with the rest of the book?
 - How does it point to Jesus?
 - Summarize it in your own words.
 - Ask questions about **application**.
 - Does this challenge or confirm my understanding?
 - An attitude that needs to change?
 - A different way I should live?
3. Pray in response to the passage.

SCRIPTURE LOG

Use this space to log your personal scripture reading this month, trying out the Swedish Method outlined on the previous page. If you've never tried daily Bible reading before, try starting with one chapter from the Gospel of Mark each day for 16 days.

	What did you read?	What drew your attention or struck you?	What was challenging or confusing?	What applies personally to your life?
Week 1				
Week 2				
Week 3				
Week 4				



*“Prayer was never meant to be magic,” Mother said.
“Then why bother with it?” Suzy scowled.*

*“Because it’s an act of love,” Mother said.
— Madeline L’Engle, A Wrinkle in Time*

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO PRAYER

Many of us hope for more in our prayer life. Some of us wonder if we can ever have the fellowship and power that Jesus promises. Prayer is coming to a loving father in our daily circumstances, telling him everything and listening to him. Overcoming barriers in prayer is possible because we stand on the firm ground that God hears us, delights in us, and will give us grace and the Holy Spirit when we seek him (Zephaniah 3:17, Matthew 7:7–8).

Circle one or two of the most applicable statements under each barrier. Write more about them from your own experience.

Distraction: “Be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.” 1 Peter 4:7b

- Do I live a fast paced life with no time for quiet reflection?
- Do I let my perfectionism, control, fear, or any other idol take over?
- Am I going through a season of loss, grieving the loss of a person, job, or dream?

Unrepentant Sin: “If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.” Ps 66:18

- Am I intentionally justifying sin in my heart or behavior, refusing to turn from it?
- Where are my words and actions misaligned, especially in my private life?
- Am I deeply angry or hurt over something or someone that I can’t “get over?”

Burdens and Doubts: “Father, I believe; help my unbelief!”

Mark 9:24

- Am I currently feeling overly responsible for someone or something, doubting that anyone else cares as much as I do?
- Do I tend to be a fixer or doer? Do I try to resolve prayers through my own ideas or actions?
- Am I having difficulty seeing how God could possibly bring good out of this situation?


Selfish Motivations: “Not to us, LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory.” Ps 115:1a

- Is my identity wrapped up in my reputation? Am I susceptible to seeking others’ approval?
- Am I using prayer to further my agenda or point of view?
- Is what I am praying for consistent with the character of God and the spiritual benefit of myself and others?

You may also experience the barriers of tiredness or depletion, escapist behaviors, spiritual dryness or anger with God. Identifying these barriers can go a long way, as can simply bringing them before our loving Savior.

Use this prayer to guide your confession to God, knowing that he meets you with forgiveness through Jesus.

Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a burden of guilt and shame. Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed and healed; and grant us grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image; through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.



Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself? Take those thoughts that come to you the moment you wake up in the morning. You have not originated them, but they start talking to you, they bring back the problems of yesterday, etc.

Somebody is talking. Who is talking? Your self is talking to you. Now [the psalmist's] treatment was this; instead of allowing this self to talk to him, he starts talking to himself. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" he asks. His soul had been depressing him, crushing him. So he stands up and says: "Self, listen for a moment, I will speak to you."...

The main art in the matter of spiritual living is to know how to handle yourself. You have to take yourself in hand, you have to address yourself, preach to yourself, question yourself. You must say to your soul: "Why art thou cast down"— what business have you to be disquieted? You must turn on yourself, upbraid yourself, condemn yourself, exhort yourself, and say to yourself: "Hope thou in God"— instead of muttering in this depressed, unhappy way. And then you must go on to remind yourself of God, Who God is, and what God is and what God has done, and what God has pledged Himself to do.

Then having done that, end on this great note: defy yourself, and defy other people, and defy the devil and the whole world, and say with this man: "I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance, who is also the health of my countenance and my God."

— Martin Lloyd-Jones on Psalm 42

PRAYING THE EXAMEN

Sometimes we divorce our world from God's presence. The Examen was a form of prayer developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556), founder of the Jesuit Order, to help Christians become more aware of Christ's presence daily. The goal of this adapted Prayer of Examen is to better understand our emotional life in the light of grace. Emotions are an important part of what it means to be created in God's image as seen throughout Scripture. Though we may feel emotions all the time, often they are over- or under-expressed, leading us away from God's truth and grace. By becoming more aware of our emotional lives, we know ourselves better, experience grace, and see how God is active and present in our lives.

Directions

The Prayer of Examen was originally practiced twice a day — once at noon and at the end of the day. Most people will not be able to do this two times a day, so start by praying this either at the start or end of the day.

02 min • **Opening prayer of invitation: becoming aware of God's presence.**

- Sit comfortably in stillness for these minutes.
- Be reminded that our God brings structure out of the chaos of our days.
- Invite the Holy Spirit who searches our hearts to guide you through this prayer.

03 min • **Reviewing the day's events.**

- Remembering that each day is a gift from the Lord, review your day.
- Does any particular event, meeting, conversation, or place stand out to you? In the rush of our days, it is easy to overlook so much. Think about the things you ate, saw, smelled and heard. Remember that God is even in these details.

03 min • **Considering your emotions.**

- Our emotions are an important expression of the desires in our hearts; however, we can become unaware of our emotions given the frantic pace of our lives. When we are not aware of our emotions and the desires that underlie them, our idols can gain strength and power in our lives.
- Reflect on the day's events and list the feelings that you experienced throughout the day—fear, anxiety, boredom, happiness, resentment, elation, hope, anger, compassion, etc.

05 min • **Praying over one feature of the day.**

- As you examine the events and emotions of the day, ask the Holy Spirit to guide you to something that God wants you to pay a bit more attention to. This can be something unexpected or seemingly insignificant at first glance. It can be something positive or negative.
- Pray about this particular thing. How would God want you to pray for this? What could God be wanting you to know or learn? How could he be affirming you or leading you to change?
- Remember that the gospel is at work in this issue.

02 min • **Closing prayer: looking towards tomorrow.**

- Remember that God patiently leads us each day. Today's mistakes are redeemable and today's victories do not guarantee success tomorrow. How might you be able to apply what you've learned today into tomorrow?
- How can you celebrate God and the triumph of His grace?
- What action can you take tomorrow as an expression of faith and dependence upon God's abounding grace?
- Ask that you would be more aware of God's guiding presence tomorrow.

Does God have a set way of prayer, a way that He expects each of us to follow? I doubt it. I believe some people—lots of people—pray through the witness of their lives, through the work they do, the friendships they have, the love they offer people and receive from people. Since when are words the only acceptable form of prayer?

— Dorothy Day

QUIET PLACES IN THE CITY

As you take time to practice Examine this month, try visiting one of these quiet, special spaces around our wonderful city in order to read, pray and rest. As this list mostly centers around the East Side, pray for our church's neighborhood when you visit.

Ford Foundation Atrium

Tudor City ◦ *43rd St, between Second & Tudor City Pl*

With a tropical garden planted in a 12-story glass atrium, the building offers a chance to recharge.

Greenacre Park

Turtle Bay ◦ *51st St, between Second & Third*

Tucked between two buildings on an ordinary Midtown block sits Greenacre Park, a pocket of serenity and urban solitude.

Park Avenue Plaza

Midtown ◦ *52nd, between Park & Madison*

Huge indoor waterfalls provide a soothing background for visitors, running all the way through mid-block.

6 1/2 Avenue

Theater District ◦ *Between Sixth & Seventh*

A series of mid-block crosswalks from 51st Street to 57th Street, connecting arcades within the dense buildings of Midtown.

The IBM Plaza

Midtown ◦ *57th & Madison*

There are birds flying around you and great art not only inside the atrium but also in the entrance lobby.

Albertine

Upper East Side ◦ *79th & Fifth*

Located at the back of the Cultural Services of the French Embassy, it's not exactly a likely place for a bookstore, but with a beautiful, well-lit space and a broad selection, it won't disappoint.

Harlem Meer

Central Park ◦ *Southwest of 110th & Fifth*

Picturesque lake surrounded by a gently-sloping landscape and walking paths.

Wave Hill Public Garden & Cultural Center

Riverdale ◦ *4900 Independence Ave*

Expansive, manicured public garden with wooded paths, benches and Hudson River views.

Elevated Acre

Financial District ◦ *55 Water St*

Park space with a lawn, boardwalk & seasonal beer garden atop a building amid downtown skyscrapers.

AT MONTH'S END

How did God extend peace to you and through you as you practiced Examine?

How will you continue the practice of Examine?

A large grid of small dots for writing, covering most of the page. The dots are arranged in a regular pattern, providing a guide for handwriting.

Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance. It is laying hold of His willingness.
— Julian of Norwich

KIDS ON

EXAMINE

MARK 2:16-17

When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners? On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

We return daily to God’s love and grace through the practice of Examine by inviting Jesus to speak to us daily through Scripture reading and prayer. We do not earn favor with God by doing good, reading the Bible, or praying more often. Instead we practice these methods of Examine because it draws us closer to God and allows Him to show us who He is, who we are, and who we become in Jesus. We allow Scripture point out our attempts to try and earn our way to God. Only then we can rest in the gift of grace and not in our accomplishments. In this way we listen to Jesus through his word and speak to him in prayer as a way of building our relationship and delighting in him.

Meet with Jesus daily by reading the Bible and praying. How will you make this a daily rhythm, and what distractions will you need to remove?

Do you need to remove distractions or limit something else you do to make time for Examine?

Pray the Kids Examen at night (See Wonder Time).

Keep a journal or use a kids devotional to write down what you are hearing from God.

Tell someone. How can you share what you heard from Scripture and prayer, with others?

PRAYER OF EXAMEN

The psalmist asks God, “Search me, O God, and know my heart” (Psalm 139:23-24). When we talk about the practice of Examine we invite Jesus to search our hearts and show us how we can grow more like Him and how He loves us. This can be a challenge! Use the guide below to pray the Prayer of Examen at the end of each day and allow Jesus to search your heart for 10 minutes!

01 min ◦ Opening Prayer

Become more aware of God’s presence throughout the day.

- Sit comfortably in stillness for one minute.
- Invite the Holy Spirit to guide you as you pray.

03 min ◦ Write Down The Day’s Events

◦ Remembering that each day is a gift from the Lord, think back over your day and write down the events in order of how they happened.

◦ Does any particular event, conversation, or place stand out to you? Think about the things you ate, saw, smelled and heard. Remember that God is even in these details.

03 min ◦ Think About Your Emotions

◦ Look over your day’s events and list the feelings that you experienced throughout the day—fear, worry, boredom, happiness, hope, anger, sadness, etc...

02 min ◦ Choose One Part Of The Day And Pray For It

◦ As you look over the events and emotions of the day, ask the Holy Spirit to to make something stand out that God wants you to pay a bit more attention to. This can be something small or large, good or bad.

◦ Pray for this particular thing. How would God want you to pray for this? What could God be wanting you to know or learn?

01 min ◦ Closing Prayer: Looking Towards Tomorrow

◦ How might you be able to apply what you’ve learned today into tomorrow?

◦ Look for different ways God is showing his goodness in your life.

TIME IN SCRIPTURE

Find a Bible reading plan and spend at least 5–10 min each day reading Scripture.



◦ Here is a plan you can use to read the Bible throughout the year or click here for a list of books and devotionals that will help you find a way to start reading through the Bible.



◦ List of additional Bible reading plans for kids.

As you read a passage write down the answers to these questions:

- What does it tell me about who God is?
- What does it tell me about myself?
- Mark verses, phrases or words that stood out.
- What is God showing me (about the world or myself) through this passage?
- My prayer.

A grid of 20 columns and 15 rows of small dots, intended for writing answers to the questions above.

JUST BREATHE

Learn a simple prayer verse or phrase to silently repeat while inhaling and exhaling. This is a great way to calm your spirit and/or help focus as you enter into prayer.

For example:

Inhale: When I am afraid,
Exhale: I put my trust in you (Psalm 56:3)

or

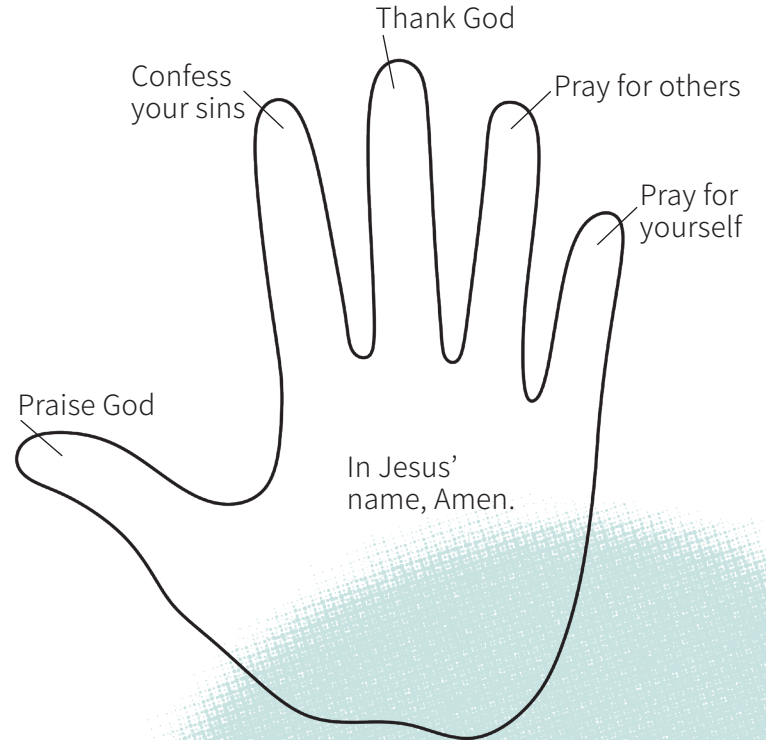
Inhale: Be still, and know
Exhale: that I am God (Psalm 46:10).

PRAYER JOURNAL

Write prayer requests in a notebook or on a calendar. Each day assign something to pray for in addition to your regular prayers. Some examples could be: family members, your neighborhood, your teachers, those who don't know Jesus, those who are sick, those who are poor, etc.

PRAYER HAND GUIDE

Use this prayer hand guide to help you have a regular rhythm of prayer.



PRACTICES OF PEACE

PAUSE

One day each week we Pause from our labors so that we can delight in Jesus (Matthew 11:28–30).

EAT

When we Eat with others, we reflect the joyful hospitality of Jesus, elevating ordinary actions into an expression of Christ’s restorative kingdom (Mark 2:16–17).

ASK

We Ask questions the way Jesus did, with a curious and compassionate posture, to spark rich, authentic spiritual conversations (Genesis 3:9).

COMMUNE

We Commune with at least two other Christians, committing to a small community that shares the mission of Jesus (Hebrews 10:24–25).

EXAMINE

We invite Jesus to Examine us daily through prayer and the reading of God’s word (John 15:5).



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