



YMCA PRAYER GUIDE

#SpiritMindMonth #PrayInMay #PrayAsYouExercise

May is Spirit-Mind month at the YMCA. This month we recognize both the National Day of Prayer and Mental Health Awareness Month. Prayer and mental health may be more connected than we realize.

One large population study, led by Harvard Professor Tyler VanderWeele, found that young adults who prayed daily tended to have fewer depressive symptoms, and higher levels of life satisfaction, self-esteem, and positive affect, in comparison to those who never prayed. —Dr. Rob Whitley, "Prayer and Mental Health" (Psychology Today)

Prayer not only helps our mental health but it plays an important part of the Y's history. The very first YMCA started in 1844 with a group of 11 friends gathering for prayer. This prayer group was unique because in addition to meeting together, they also went into their community to meet the needs of their neighbors.

Today you are invited to pray to the God of your understanding, using this guide designed around the acronym PRAY as a reminder that prayer should prompt us toward action—in our world, our neighborhoods, our families and our individual lives. Join the Y as we pray in May together!

START YOUR PRAYER HERE

P – PAUSE

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him.
—Psalm 37:7

Begin with a prayer of pausing and being still. This can look like:

- God, help me be quiet...
- God, help me slow down and be present...
- Silence before continuing to pray or meditate...



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R – REJOICE

May all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you.

—Psalm 40:16

Then continue with a prayer of rejoicing with a Psalm, positive thought, or a grateful word. This can look like:

- God, you are great...
- God, the sunshine is beautiful...
- It's a delight to walk through nature...

A – ASK

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. —Philippians 4:6

Ask God for something. This can look like:

- God, please help comfort my community...
- God, please help give me rest...
- May I love my neighbor as myself...

Y – YIELD

For we are a workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which Christ prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. -Ephesians 2:10

Close with prayers of yielding to the God of your understanding's will in your life. This prayer can look like:

- God, please help me see your will...
- God, use me to help...
- May I have wisdom and guidance today as I...
(Modified from the Lectio 365 app)

END YOUR PRAYER HERE

Consider ending with Reinhold Niebuhr's Serenity Prayer:

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference. Amen.

Need Prayer? Email prayers@ymcamidtn.org

Learn about Spirit-Mind programs at ymcamidtn.org/spirit-mind

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