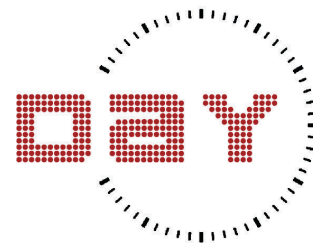




NIGHT

20th - 21st November 2010



Night and Day: Presence and Belonging.

An invitation to every Methodist Church, to
pray for the Church in mission.

ALL AGE WORSHIP IDEAS

NIGHT

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Children's Talk – Object lesson

You will need a long roll of string or ball of wool.

Hold the end in one hand and throw the other end to one of the children. Get them to hold on to the string in one hand but throw the ball onto another one of the children. Keep repeating this process. Whilst this is happening say something like, "It's always nice to know that you belong to a group, whether it is a group of friends, a family, a club or even a church."

When all the children are holding the string, go on to explain how we, as believers, are all connected to each other because of Jesus. Then explain that God wants us to be connected to everyone so that no-one would be left out. Remind them that one of the ways that we can do this is through prayer.

Read 1 Timothy 2v1 "I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone"

God asks us to pray for everyone. Ask them how it feels when they are left out of something. Ask them how they think the adults feel not being part of the string ring. Get them to throw it to one of the adults too and for them to continue the process as before.

"But we are not to just pray and reach out to the people already in the church we are also to reach out to the people not in this church and not even in this country. When we do we become connected with them, like we all are here with this big piece of wool."

Closing Prayer

Loving God, thank you for living amongst us and reaching out to others through us. Hasten the day when all the earth shall be as one home and all its peoples are one family. Amen.

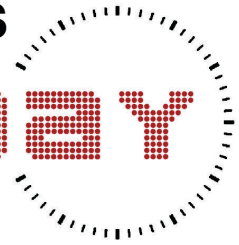
(adapted from Magnet Resources)

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Scriptures and Thoughts

Exodus 17v8-13 (Aaron and Hur raised Moses' hands in prayer leading to divine action; individual and corporate prayer)

1 Samuel 7v2-13 (They prayed and God went with them into battle (ref. chpt4 where they had arrogantly gone into battle without prayer). God worked through his people not apart from them.)

Psalms 95 (A possible call to worship)

Proverbs 21v13 (Prayer and social action are linked)

Isaiah 58v3-9a (Prayer, social action and righteous living are linked)

Luke 18v9-14 (A template for how we should and should not pray; also a reminder that we must leave the Temple and, being changed, go back to our homes)

Acts 1v12-14, 2v1-4 and 36-41 (They prayed constantly for 10 days and then entered into the community again (v14) to see great things happen)

1 Timothy 2v1-8 (Everyone should pray and everyone should be prayed for; raise our hands in prayer)

James 2v14-19 (Faith and social action – what can I do as I pray?)

Talk thoughts

"...the most intimate communion with God comes only through prayer." Bill Hybels

"Yet the Christian presence in the world is intended by God to lead to the Christian proclamation to the world." John Stott (Presence as the church in our communities)

"The Christian life is not firstly about more meetings or more songs. The Christian life is about justice and peace and righteousness and godliness and purity. It's reaching out to your neighbour at convenient times and inconvenient times. It's helping him when his tyre is punctured. It's helping him when he needs to get to the hospital. It's not firstly about giving money; it's about giving chunks of your life. And until we start practising that, we know very little of what it Jesus meant when he talked about being a disciple." George Verwer

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Prayers

Prayers of response.

O Jesus, meek and humble of heart, hear me.
Deliver me, Jesus,
From the desire of being loved,
From the desire of being extolled,
From the desire of being honoured,
From the desire of being praised,
From the desire of being preferred to others,
From the desire of being consulted,
From the desire of being approved,
From the fear of being humiliated,
From the fear of being despised,
From the fear of suffering rebuke,
From the fear of being forgotten,
From the fear of being wronged,
From the fear of being suspected.

And, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire
That others might be loved more than I,
That others may be esteemed more than I,
That in the opinion of the world others may increase and I may decrease,
That others may be chosen, and I set aside,

That others may be praise and I unnoticed,
That others may be preferred to me in every thing,
That others may become holier than I, provided that I become as holy as I should.

Jesus, may your will be done,
Amen.

Or

Work us together as contrasting colours
Join us together across divides of differences
Bind us together with loving connections
Unite us together combining our strengths
Knit us together in patterns of worship
Pull us together demolishing our barriers
Mould us together retaining our personhood
Cement us together softening our bitterness
Design us together to be communities of peace.
(Rev. Frances Ballantyne)

Prayers of intercession with children

You will need to draw, print off or cut out a large heart (preferably on card).

You will also need a supply of plasters – plain ones are probably best.

Dependent on the plasters used, writing the names of countries or people on the plasters could also be effective.

Offer a time after the children's talk for them to stick a plaster onto the heart, when they think of someone who is hurting or sad. This could be broken into topics such as the world, people they know, their families and themselves. Adults may also decide to respond similarly – if so make sure there are enough plasters. It may also be necessary to help younger children with the unwrapping of the plasters.

ALL AGE WORSHIP IDEAS

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Meditation

People all over the world reach out your hands touch one another
People all over the world, just understand and love each other
We have one life to live, so much to give and so much to share
There is love to be found, just look around, there is happiness there.

Mend a quarrel
Search out a forgotten friend
Show your loyalty
Share some treasure
Give a soft answer
Keep a promise
Find the time
Forego a grudge
Forgive an enemy
Apologise if you were wrong
Try to understand
Appreciate, be kind, be gentle
Laugh a little more
Deserve confidence
Express your gratitude
Gladden the heart of a child
Take pleasure in beauty
Worship God

Speak your love,
Speak it again,
Speak it still again,
Speak it still once again...

(Repeat opening 4 lines)

Puppet Sketch

My Missionary is broken (See Appendix)

This drama could be easily adapted to be "My minister is broken". It could also be performed as a regular drama – please don't let the puppets put you off.

(This could be inserted at the back of the pack)

Appendix

My Missionary is broken

Cast

Mr Fixit Old wise puppet, overalls, tack (sew) a pencil behind ear, small measuring rule in pocket. Do what you can to put him in character.

Boy Little boy puppet

Girl Little girl puppet

Support Crew

1 assistant to do sound effects and props changes.

Props

- Kite, a diamond of coloured paper or card with string tail and bows on tail (doesn't actually have to be flyable)
- String for kite
- Mobile phone
- Prepaid card for phone
- Cardboard body cut out with your missionary's head stuck on. (It'll make sense later)
Make the body the same size as your puppets – ie puppet life size.
- Nice Mr Fix-It sign to put above Mr Fixit's shop.

Scene

A counter or something with the sign Mr Fix-It above.

Script

(Mr F starts on stage behind counter, Boy enters with kite in hand/mouth)

Mr F: Good morning young feller, what can I do for you?

(put kite on counter if it is in your mouth)

Boy: My kite's broken.

Mr F: It don't look broken

Boy: But it doesn't fly.

Mr F: Ah, that's because you have no string on it. A kite needs a string to keep it connected to the ground, to help it pull against the wind so that it can lift, and to stop it from being blown away.

Let me look at that, son, I'll be back in a sec...

(Mr F retreats into workshop with kite and crash bang hammer, he returns with kite with string on it – Assistant can put string on kite and make sound effects)

Boy: Thanks Mr Fixit, I'll go and try it out

Mr F: Have fun, son.

(Boy exits stage with kite – perhaps woohoo, yippee etc)

(Girl enters stage with mobile phone in mouth/hand)

Girl: Excuse me Mr Fixit my phone's broken

Mr F: Give me a look young lass,

(Mr F opens phone, presses buttons (assistant can add sound effects from another phone near a hidden microphone if you like))

Mr F: Nothing wrong with this phone,

Girl: But it doesn't work, I can't call anyone.

Mr F: Ah, well it's not connected.

Girl: Silly, it's a mobile phone it doesn't need to be connected.

Mr F: Oh yes it does, a mobile phone only sends out a little signal, that's why the mobile phone company has all those towers around the place, they pick up the little signal and make it a big signal and send it off to where it needs to go. But you have to pay for it.

Hang on a minute

(retreat under counter and rummage around)

Mr F: Here, take this card, if you type that number in it will give you \$10 worth of calls, when it runs out, you'll have to get another card.

Girl: Thanks Mr Fixit, I'll go and try it out now.

(Girl exits stage with card and phone)

(Boy and Girl enter stage with missionary between them.)

B+G: Excuse me Mr Fixit

Mr F: Why hello kids, what have we here?

Boy: Well since you fixed my kite,

Girl: And you got my phone working too,

B+G: We thought, maybe you could fix our missionary, he's broken.

Mr F: Well, let me have a look, I never fixed no missionary before, but it sure would look good on my C.V. (or resume)

(Mr F stands missionary up (assistant may have to hold the feet or something) and inspects him (up close))

Mr F: Hmm, Uhuh, Yep, Mmmm.

Nothing wrong with this missionary.

B+G: But he doesn't work!

Boy: Nothing's happening over there.

Girl: There are no mass conversions and country wide revivals.

Mr F: Well, now hang on there just a minute. Aside form the fact that God does all that, not the missionaries. And he does it when he wants to and not when we want him to, let me ask you a couple of questions.

(to the boy)

Mr F: Was there anything wrong with your kite?

Boy: No

Mr F: So why didn't it work

Boy: It didn't have a string

Mr F: Well just like a kite needs a string to hold it up, a Missionary needs partners to support him and lift him up. The support team at home stop the missionary being blown away by the spiritual storms of their work just like the string stops the kite from being blown away and lost.

(to the girl)

Mr F: Was your phone broken?

Girl: No

Mr F: So why didn't it work?

Girl: I didn't have a network.

Mr F: That's right, and a missionary needs a network too. Your phone puts out a little signal, and the network makes it a bigger signal so that your phone can ring all the way across the world. Well your missionary can pray about his work, and God listens, but how much better would it be if there was a whole network praying too.

Girl: A whole lot better!

(to both)

Mr F: Let me explain a bit. Did you know that the Sydney Swans* have won all of their 3 home games against Fremantle, but only half of the games they played away, over there in Western Australia. Why do you think that is?

Boy: Because of the crowd supporting and cheering them on.

Mr F: That's right. A sports team has a coach, a trainer, a team doctor, a manager, a few agents and a whole crowd of supporters in the fan club, it's no wonder they play better when they are all there helping.

But we send our missionary off by themselves and forget about them, and which do you think would be harder, playing football or preaching the gospel in Africa in a whole different language?

Mr F: There's nothing wrong with this missionary, he just needs a network, a support team, some partners to back him up and pray for him and support his ministry over there. The apostle Paul knew that, listen to what the Bible says:

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

And how can they preach **unless they are sent?** +

Missionaries need someone to send them.

B+G: Well where can we get a support team?

Mr F: Good question, *(look at audience)* **where can we get a support team for our missionaries?**

(Curtain closes)

(by Michael Hutton, resourced from www.puppetresources.com)

*Put in a local or familiar team

+Romans 10:13-15