



Prayer Experience

Introduction

Prayer is a vital part of any International Women's Day observance. It is an ideal opportunity to raise awareness of the global issues women face and begin to *do* something about them through intercessory praying. The annual Global Women *Prayer Guide* is an important tool to use in helping guide times of prayer. Plan ahead and request an adequate number of copies from the GW office.

The purpose of a prayer experience is to provide an opportunity for pray-ers to use all of their senses in a unique setting and moving way. Think of it as a guided prayer time. The elements and ideas listed here are suggestions, using all or part of them along with your own ideas will make this a memorable part of your IWD.

Setting

A prayer experience can be set up in a room large enough for pray-ers to move about freely between each element or “station” allowing space for those who may want to sit and pray in the room. Consider a sign at the entrance with these or similar instruction: *Your prayer experience begins here. Please enter in a spirit of prayer and remove your shoes. (This is holy ground.)*

Elements of the Observance

Photographs of women who are part of GW projects or representative of women worldwide can be printed from the file included in the IWD Resources. A page with information about the person and/or project or specific prayer requests may be posted with each photograph.

Scripture can help bring focus to your prayer experience. Suggested scriptures are included in the Facilitator's Guide. These can be printed or written on paper of various sizes and posted throughout the room.

Thought provoking quotes may also be displayed around the room. Several to consider include:
Do all the good you can, By all the means you can, In all the ways you can, In all the places you can, At all the times you can, To all the people you can, As long as ever you can. John Wesley

Either we stop claiming we are children of Abraham, or we act as brothers and try to reconcile. And reconciliation cannot be in the form of slave and lord, powerful and powerless. Elias Chacour

Work as if everything depended on work and pray as if everything depended on prayer. William Booth

Give me the faith to leave old ways and break fresh ground with You. From Celtic Daily Prayer

Prayers may also be printed or written and displayed around the room. Several to consider include:

God of justice, call us to account. Inspire us, so that we may cast off our complacency and apathy and joining hands with people at home and abroad, we may make a stand for justice and righteousness, for all who dwell on the earth. Amen

*To those who hunger give bread; to those who have bread give a hunger for justice. Amen
O Dios, A ellos que tienen hambre, dales pan; y a ellos que tienen pan,
dales sed para justicia. Amén -- Latin American Prayer*

Music can be an integral part of your prayer experience. Having it playing softly in one area of the room can help call attention to how you want to direct praying at that point of the experience.

Visuals will help enhance the experience. Consider displaying a traditional international costume; pottery, tea sets, dolls, or other items from another country. Handmade items from other Fair Trade organizations or other internationally crafted items may also be displayed. Consider this for a sign for this “station” or area: *Pray for women who make crafts each day to support themselves and their families.*

Facts and statistics will appeal to some people who will take part in your experience. Several that can be printed or written and mounted throughout the room include:

- Women have no rights in many cultures; they are often considered mere property of their fathers or husbands.
- As many as 4,000,000 persons, mostly women and girls are sexually trafficked worldwide each year.
- At least one in every three women have been beaten, coerced or forced into sex, or otherwise abused in their lifetime.
- Female infanticide, pre-natal sex selection and killing or abandonment at birth has resulted in 100 million “missing” girls worldwide.
- Thousands of women become victims of stoning or so-called “honor killings” each year.
- Women make up over half of the 6.1 million refugees whose gender has been recorded.
- Every minute a woman somewhere dies in pregnancy or childbirth.
- When a woman is deprived of a basic education her children have a lower rate of survival.
- Women make up 70 percent of the estimated 1.3 billion people living on less than \$1 a day.
- In the US, the richest country in the world, the poorest are predominantly women caring for children.

Taste and smell can provide significant ways to experience other cultures. Provide bites of food from other countries. Small bowls or containers may be used to display spices prevalent in other countries for both taste and smell. Depending on the fire code of your location consider burning incense in the room. Situate near the map (see below) if that element is used. A sign or card with Psalm 34:8 may be used at this “station” or in this area: *Taste and see that the LORD is good.*

A map of the world can be posted on a wall or placed in the middle of the floor. Using the *Prayer Guide*, *VOICES*, or information from the GW Web and/or Facebook pages write out a few prayer requests and place them on the appropriate country. Provide paper and pen and encourage others to add requests for women and situations they are praying for. A sign or card may be used at this “station” or in this area: *Enjoy the aromas of each spice on the map. Use index cards to share a specific prayer request for women in the world. Place it where it belongs.*



International Women's Day

A mirror may be an effective way to help pray-ers think about their role as global believers. A sign or card with Psalm 34:8 may be used at this “station” or in this area: *Pray for the Global person you see in the mirror. Pray for opportunities to make a difference in the world.*

Homes are a setting where many believers in dark places meet, even in secret, to learn and pray. If there is room provide a home-like setting in your prayer experience. If possible have a computer set up with *The Lord's Prayer* in Arabic playing (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yGaKva8KLwY>). A sign or card with Psalm 34:8 may be used at this “station” or in this area: *Pray that Christian women around the world would open their homes and lives to other women.*

Tokens of remembrance may be left at the exit door. This can be as simple as a scripture printed in a language other than English (or the heart language of most of your congregation), a coin, a piece of candy such as rice paper candy from another country, or even an international cancelled postage stamp. A sign or card with Psalm 34:8 may be used at this “station” or in this area: *We are called to offer savor and sweetness to the women in our lives. Please take a small token as you depart.*

After the event

Get together with some of the women who participated in the prayer experience. What was most meaningful? What did people respond to? Were those in attendance motivated to pray for the needs of women even after March 8? What do you want to repeat next year? What do you wish you had included but didn't? Is there a desire to continue to investigate the global needs of women?

Tell Global Women about your observance! Share digital photos of your room and persons as they pray. Global Women wants to help tell your story!

Utilize the *Prayer Guide* year-round in personal and corporate praying. Add requests as you investigate the global needs of women throughout the year.

Global Voices Summit 2009 Prayer Experience

Perhaps seeing how this room was set up and used will help spark your planning and creativity!

