



PRAYER

PRAISE | LISTEN | ASK
TALK WITH GOD

EXPLORE, EMBODY, AND EXPRESS PRAYER

by Marlita Hill

In this spiritual exercise, we take time to explore, embody, and express prayer using our bodies. We'll be looking at the phrases of the song, *Create In Me a Clean Heart*.

This can be practiced over a period of three or four days (one phrase each day, then put it together), or in one long session.

Download the Lead Sheet, or listen to this song on YouTube:



[Lead Sheet](#)



[Listen on YouTube](#)

Start Here!

Look at each phrase individually, exploring it by asking questions and wondering together, and embodying it by creating movements that represent the phrase and/or how it makes you feel. Suggested discussion questions and movements are listed for each phrase.

Once you've gone through all three phrases, express your prayer by playing the song and using one of the following ideas (or your own!) to put it all together:

Express

- You can use some of the children's ideas and put them together in a dance, presentation, or experience, matching the movements they created with the words of the song.
- You can choose one of the student's movements and have them teach it to everyone else.
- You can create a movement embodying the concept and teach it to the students.
- You can co-create. You create something, and let them shape and/or edit it. Then you can ask the students, "Does this look like I'm caring for something special? What can I change or add to make it look like I am?"

1. Create in me a clean heart

Explore

- Imagine your heart is like a backpack or lunch box that's inside you. What do you think is inside your heart-backpack?
- (feelings, thoughts, emotions)
- Does your backpack or lunchbox ever get dirty or filled with trash from old papers or wrappers from your snack? What do you have to do to get your lunchbox or backpack clean again?
- What do you think God has to do to get our heart-backpack clean?

Embodiment

- Imagine you're shaping a lump of playdough. With your hands, show me how you would shape it.
- Imagine you're cleaning your backpack or lunchbox. Show me how you would clean or wash it.

Sample Movements

- Use your hands to twist, roll, stretch, squish imaginary playdough.
- Simulate washing a lunchbox or taking trash out of backpack, wiping off, etc.

2. Renew a right spirit

Explore

- Have you ever been really sleepy? How did you feel? Then how did you feel after you went to bed and woke up again?
- What is something really hard that you've had to do—something you wanted to quit but didn't? What made you keep going? How did you feel when you finished that hard thing?

Embody

- Imagine you're a toy that is running out of batteries or needs to be recharged. How would you move? Now imagine you got new batteries or got fully charged. How would you move?
- Imagine you're pushing a really big, heavy rock. Show me how you would push that rock. Pushing the rock was hard, but you didn't quit. Show me how you would stand after successfully pushing the big rock.

Sample Movements

- Sluggish, slow movements to fast and/or energetic movements

3. Within me, O God

Explore

- Where do you think your thoughts or feelings happen? Can you point to where you feel happy, excited, or scared?
- When God works on your heart, where do you think that happens?

Embodiment

- Point to or tap the place(s) where you think God works on our heart.

Sample Movements

- Point to, tap, or place hands over places God works on us.