

MEDITATION

Prayer Script

Written for anyone leading prayer aloud — a service, a small group, a podcast episode. Eight minutes following the classical four-movement shape of adoration, confession, thanksgiving and petition, with the wording kept open enough to carry a congregation of any size or tradition.

8 min · 4 segments

Eight minutes, four movements. The silences are where the room prays — leave them long enough to be uncomfortable.

BEFORE YOU RECORD

- The silences do the work. A prayer read straight through with no gaps is a monologue, and the room has nowhere to join you — count the pauses rather than feeling them.
- Say 'we' throughout, not 'I'. You're praying on behalf of a room, and the pronoun is what makes that true rather than a performance.
- Keep the petitions general enough that anyone can bring their own. The moment you name a specific illness or circumstance, everyone whose situation is different quietly steps out.
- Read it once beforehand and change anything that doesn't sound like you. A prayer in someone else's cadence is audible immediately, and a congregation forgives an ordinary phrase far sooner than a borrowed one.

01. Gathering

1 min 30

[unhurried — the room is still arriving, give it a moment before the first line]

Let's take a moment to be still before we begin. *[pause for 20 seconds — genuinely still, do not rush this]*

You can close your eyes, or keep them open and lower your gaze. Whatever helps you settle.

Most of us have arrived here from something — a journey, an argument, a week that hasn't gone the way we wanted. Let that be true, and let it be set down for a few minutes. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

02. Adoration and confession

2 min 30

[steady — do not soften the confession, but do not weight it either]

We begin by saying what we believe to be true. That we did not make ourselves. That we are held by something larger than our own effort. That the world is a gift before it is a problem to be solved. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

We admit the distance between who we mean to be and how we have actually behaved this week. Not in general — each of us knows the particular thing. *[pause for 30 seconds — the longest silence so far]*

For what we have done and left undone. For the words we chose and the ones we withheld. For the people we were too tired or too proud to be kind to. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

We're not asked to carry that any further than this moment. It can be put down here.

03. Thanksgiving

2 min

[lift slightly — this is the turn in the middle]

And now for what has been good. Let each of us bring one thing from this week — something small enough that we nearly didn't notice it. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

For food and for shelter. For work, and for rest from it. For the people who checked on us without being asked. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

For the fact that we are here at all, and able to be still together. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

04. Petition, and closing

2 min

[the last three lines return to a normal speaking voice — you are handing the room back]

We bring what we're worried about. Each of us knows our own list. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

For those who are ill, and those sitting up with them. For anyone here carrying something they haven't told a single person about. For those who are afraid of what this week holds. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

We don't ask to be spared everything. We ask to be accompanied through it. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

Amen. *[pause for 10 seconds before speaking normally again — do not run straight into the next item]*

USAGE

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