

Family Prayers

Chalice or Candle Lightings

Flaming chalice, burning bright,
now you share with us your light.
May we always learn to share
with all people everywhere.

EVA M. CESKAVA, ADAPTED

We light this chalice for the light of truth.
We light this chalice for the warmth of love.
We light this chalice for the energy of action.

MARY ANN MOORE

May the light of this chalice give light and warmth to our family,
On good days and bad, happy and sad,
And may we feel the warmth spread from our family circle
to wider and wider circles,
Until we feel our family part of the one circle of life.

BETSY DARR

In times of light and times of darkness
May this small flame
Kindle what is good
In us and in the world.

SARAH GIBB MILLSPAUGH

We light this chalice to celebrate the love within us, among us, and all around us.

DAVID HERNDON

May the light we now kindle
inspire us to use our powers
to heal and not to harm,
to help and not to hinder,
to bless and not to curse.

JEWISH PROVERB, ADAPTED

Graces

Blessings upon you,
Blessings upon me,
Blessings upon every living thing,
Blessed be.

MONICA L. CUMMINGS

Loving spirit, be our guest,
Dine with us, share our bread,
That our table might be blessed
And our souls be fed.

GARY KOWALSKI

Blest be the hand that plants the seed,
Blest be the Earth giving all that we need.
Blest be the food we share among friends,
Blest be the love that never ends.

JOYCE POLEY

May we hold hands quietly for a moment
Feeling love flow around us and through us,
Knowing that as we give love away
There is always more within.

ANONYMOUS

For the sun and the dawn
Which we did not create;
For the moon and the evening
Which we did not make;
For food which we plant
But cannot grow . . .
We lift up our hearts in thanks this day.

RICHARD FEWKES

May we be connected to all things loving,
Protected from all things evil,
And guided in all ways gracious.

RIKKITY

We lift our hearts in thanks today
for all the gifts of life.

PERCIVAL CHUBB

Prayers

May good befall all.
May there be peace for all.
May all be fit for excellence.
May all experience the holy.
May all be happy.
May all be healthy.
May all experience what is good.
May no one suffer.

TRADITIONAL HINDU PRAYER,
TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED BY
ABHI JANAMANCHI

We breathe in faith
And exhale hopelessness
We breathe in gratitude
And exhale indifference
We breathe in Beauty
And exhale insensitivity
We breathe in joy
And exhale sadness
We breathe in kindness
And exhale harshness
We breathe in forgiveness
And exhale resentment
We breathe in love
And exhale isolation.

EDWIN C. LYNN

Oh God,
You are peace.
From you comes peace,
To you returns peace.
Revive us with a salutation of peace,
and lead us to your abode of peace.

ISLAMIC PRAYER

The Value of Prayer

Parents are eager for ways to take our faith home. Family rituals such as a shared meal, a prayer before bed, or a time of silence and meditation can have a profound effect on religious formation. In one simple ritual for the home, a family lights a candle at the dinner table, holds hands, and names things for which they are grateful that day.

The importance of prayer is well-expressed by Unitarian Universalism's pre-eminent religious educator, the late Sophia Lyon Fahs:

“Many of the past generation and many today have found three abiding values in prayer:

the quiet meditation on life,
the reaching out toward the universal and the infinite,
and the courageous facing of one's profoundest wishes.

Let parents sense and share with their children the glory and mystery of everyday things.
Let them look with sympathy upon humanity's age-long dilemmas.
Let no question be taboo.
The next generation can ill afford to have the deeper values deleted from the book of life.”

I hope you enjoy this collection of prayers and graces in your home.

IRENE PRAEGER

Irene Praeger serves as the director of religious exploration at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Marblehead, Massachusetts.

For Further Reading

Some of these resources are available from the UUA Bookstore: 1-800-215-9076;
www.uua.org/bookstore.

Cox, Meg. *The Book of New Family Traditions: How to Create Great Rituals for Holidays and Everyday*. Philadelphia: Running Press, 2003.

Hurd, Tracey L. *Nurturing Children and Youth: A Developmental Guidebook*. Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2005.

Nieuwejaar, Jeanne Harrison. *The Gift of Faith: Tending the Spiritual Lives of Children*, 2nd Edition. Boston: Skinner House, 2003.

Pickett, Helen, ed. *Rejoice Together: Prayers, Meditations, and Other Readings for Family, Individual, and Small-Group Worship*, 2nd Edition. Boston: Skinner House, 2006.

Searl, Edward, ed. *Bless This Child: A Treasury of Poems, Quotations and Readings to Celebrate Birth*. Boston: Skinner House, 2006.