

Prayer Stations

(PST003)

Welcome

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WELCOME PRAYER STATIONS

Prayer Stations Aim:

To enable people to engage, in a multi-sensory way, with “God’s welcome” of them, so that they are able to offer a “ministry of welcome” to others.

Biblical Reference(s):

John 1:12-13, Luke 15:22-23, Galatians 3:26-27, Ephesians 4:4-6, Hebrews 4:16, 10:19-22a, Mark 9:37, 2 Corinthians 5:18-19, Isaiah 53:5, Psalm 118:22-23, Revelation 19:9

Outline of Prayer Stations

- Station 1: “Welcome back home”
- Station 2: “Welcome into God’s family – the church”
- Station 3: “Welcome into His presence”
- Station 4: “Our ministry of welcome”
- Station 5: “Rejected”
- Station 6: “Welcome to the wedding feast of the lamb”

Notes for the Prayer stations:

- These prayer stations work well if you leave plenty of space between each station.
- I used six foot “Gopak¹” folding tables for most of the stations, although smaller tables can work for some of the stations.
- I used three-panel folding display boards² 60cm x 90cm to fit on top of a table for most of the prayer stations. For stations three and five, I used a six panel folding display board 60cm x 90cm to stand alone.
- It can take anything from two minutes to ten minutes for people to engage with each prayer station.
- Prepare copies of the Prayer stations explanatory booklet. It has 8 pages and can be found on pages 22-29 of this document. It is designed to be printed as an A5 booklet and given to people as they arrive.
- As people arrive, invite them to go round the prayer stations in silence and in order ie beginning with “Welcome back home” and ending with “Welcome to the wedding feast of the lamb.”
- I have found it helpful to play some quiet instrumental worship music in the background to help people be more aware of the Lord’s presence and less aware of others around them. Music that I have found particularly helpful for prayer stations is Ruth Fazal’s “Songs from the River³” (Volumes I-IV)

¹ You can purchase Gopak tables here: <http://www.gopak.co.uk/>

² You can purchase Display boards from a number of places for example “xld displays” which can be found here: <https://www.xldisplays.co.uk/>

³ You can purchase Ruth Fazal “Songs from the River” CD’s direct from Ruth’s website at www.ruthfazal.com and sometimes from Christian bits at www.christianbits.co.uk

Station 1:

“Welcome back home”



Items Needed:

- Two large tables covered with gold holographic⁴ paper
- A display board covered in yellow gold silky fabric⁵ with a two toned “gold and flame” organza voile⁶ over the top of it.
- A chair covered in yellow gold silky fabric.

⁴ You can purchase gold holographic paper on ebay at www.ebay.co.uk

⁵ You can purchase yellow gold “silky satin fabric 150cm wide” from ebay. I used 4 metres. (www.ebay.co.uk)

⁶ You can purchase “two tone satin organza fabric sheer voile 150cm side” from ebay. I used 4 metres.

Items Needed continued:

- A picture of “The prodigal daughter”⁷ and a picture of “The prodigal son” mounted on white foam board⁸. These pictures are leant against the display board. A silver tray⁹ is laid in front of the pictures and a sign saying, “Please place your cardboard heart here” is placed behind the tray.
- A4 cards with the following words on them:
 - “Station 1: Welcome back home”, pinned to the display board.
 - Words from the leaflet (see page 5) pinned to the display board
 - Bible verse: *“Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”* (John 1:12-13) laid on table.
 - Bible verse: *“Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate.”* (Luke 15:22-23) laid on table.
- On the second table is laid out a place setting of a plate, knife, fork, spoon, serviette and wine glass. Also on this table is a bottle of champagne, a bowl of “Celebrations” chocolates and a bowl containing cream coloured heart-shaped cards¹⁰ and pens.
- Draped over the chair is a white robe (a cassock alb works well) with the words, “Robe of righteousness” pinned on it, a pair of sandals with the words, “Sandals of son-ship” pinned on them and a signet ring¹¹ with the words, “Ring of power and authority” next to it.

Tips for Station 1 set-up:

- Cover the table with the gold holographic paper first.
- Cover the display board with the yellow gold silky fabric then place the gold and flame organza voile over the top of it before positioning on top of the table.
- If you can, laminate the A4 cards so that they hold their shape better.

⁷ You can purchase, for a very reasonable price, 60cm x 42cm prints of Charlie Mackesy's “Prodigal Daughter” and “Prodigal Son” paintings from the website “Faithin5” at <http://faithin5.com/buy/prints/>

⁸ You can purchase A2 foam board from Hobbycraft at <http://www.hobbycraft.co.uk/>

⁹ You can purchase silver trays from most supermarkets

¹⁰ You can purchase heart-shaped cards from ebay at www.ebay.co.uk by putting “card heart cut outs” into the search bar.

¹¹ You can purchase a plastic signet ring from ebay at www.ebay.co.uk

Words in the leaflet for Station 1: (See pages 1-8 at the end of this document)

In His love, your heavenly Father sent His Son Jesus to come and pay your “sin debt” on the cross – enabling you to be declared “not guilty!” Through faith in Jesus alone, you are now welcomed into the Father’s open arms, to enjoy relationship with Him. He receives you with unconditional love and joy in His eyes, delighting in you as His child.

Like the Prodigal Son in Jesus’ parable you are given a robe of righteousness to wear, as through Jesus, you are now in “right standing” with your Father.

As the Prodigal Son was given a ring to signify His Father’s power and authority, you are equipped through the Holy Spirit with power and authority to carry out your Father’s business.

As the Prodigal Son was given sandals for his feet, signifying “son-ship” as opposed to being a slave, you too have been given the “rights of son-ship”, being God’s child and not His slave.

Spend some time enjoying your Father’s welcome as you draw close to Him through Jesus. Receive His words to you:

“You are my Son/Daughter, whom I love; with you I am well pleased” (Luke 3:22)

If you would like to, take a “celebrations” chocolate and as you eat it receive your Father’s joy afresh that you are reconciled to Him through Jesus.

Having received your Father’s love, spend some time expressing your thanks and gratitude for the grace you have received from Him. If you would like to, take a heart shaped card and write your name on it and lay it on one of the silver trays in front of the pictures as a way of offering your heart afresh to your Father.

Station 2:

“Welcome into God’s family – the church”



Items Needed:

- Two large tables covered with hessian¹²
- Display board covered in white material (eg a white sheet) on top of which is draped a large piece of white voile¹³.
- A picture of “Welcome”¹⁴ mounted on white foam board¹⁵ and leant against the display board.
- A blue sheet¹⁶ draped over the noticeboard and into a “font” of water
- A4 cards with the following words on them:
 - “Station 2: Welcome into God’s family – the Church,” pinned to the display board.
 - Words from the leaflet (see page 7) laid in front of the picture
 - Bible verse: *“So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.”* (Galatians 3:26-27) laid on second table.
- On second table is a card cut out of a church building (see Appendix 1) with Ephesians 4:4-6 written on it. Next to the church building is a bowl of jewels¹⁷
- On the 1st table are some Bible verses printed out ie: Romans 12:10, 12:16, 15:7, Ephesians 4:2, 4:32, 5:21, Galatians 5:13, Hebrews 3:13, 1Peter 4:9, John 13:34.

¹² You can purchase hessian from ebay. I used 5 metres. (www.ebay.co.uk)

¹³ I used “sheer organza fabric voile 150cm wide x 3m long” and purchased it from ebay. (www.ebay.co.uk)

¹⁴ You can purchase a “Welcome poster in 24 languages” from Amazon at www.amazon.co.uk

¹⁵ You can purchase A2 foam board from Hobbycraft at <http://www.hobbycraft.co.uk/>

¹⁶ You can purchase a “blue flat sheet” from Linens direct at www.linensdirect.co.uk

¹⁷ You can purchase “Acrylic Gemstones” in various colours from amazon. (www.amazon.co.uk)

Tips for Station 2 set-up:

- Place two tables at right angles to each other
- Cover the tables with the hessian material first.
- Cover the display board with the white material than drape the white organza voile over the top of it before positioning on top of the table.
- If you can, laminate the A4 cards so that they hold their shape better.
- Enlarge the picture of the church building (Appendix 1) and mount on a piece of blue card. Open the “doors” of the church so that people can stick their jewels inside.

Words in the leaflet for Station 2: (See pages 1-8 at the end of this document)

Each child of God is welcomed into God's family, the church, through baptism. We are all given the same gift of the Holy Spirit, the “mark of ownership”. God provides us with a “place of belonging”, where we are accepted, loved, nurtured and where we can grow in character to become like Jesus.

Each member of God's family is uniquely equipped to take part in the Kingdom calling to:

- Worship and glorify God, (1Peter 2:9)
- Grow and mature in the Christian faith (Eph 4:11-16) &
- Go and make disciples of all nations. (Matt 28:18-20)

If you would like to, dip your finger into the water and make the sign of the cross on your forehead as you remember your baptism into God's family. Receive afresh the words spoken on that day:

“We welcome you into the fellowship of faith; we are children of the same heavenly Father; we welcome you”

Take one of the jewels and hold it in your hand. Think of someone in your church family (child or adult). Thank the Lord for this person and that they, like you, are welcomed into the church family.

Pray and ask the Lord to give you grace to love them, honour them, serve them etc (using the Bible verses on the table) so that Jesus is glorified and your church family can be built up.

When you have finished praying for that person, stick the self-adhesive jewel onto the church model, inside the doors of the church.

Station 3:

“Welcome into His presence”



Items Needed:

- A large display board covered in purple silky fabric¹⁸
- Attached to a garden cane are two “curtains” of two toned “claret and blue” organza voile¹⁹. The cane is fixed to the top of the display board at either end.
- A high stool is placed in front of the display board. The stool is covered in blue silky fabric²⁰ which flows out onto the floor in front of it.
- A picture of “Rublev’s icon”²¹ mounted on white foam board²² is placed on top of the stool and leant against the display board.
- In front of the picture and around the base of the stool are laid some flameless – flickering LED Tea-lights²³

¹⁸ You can purchase purple “silky satin fabric 150cm wide” from ebay. I used 4 metres. (www.ebay.co.uk)

¹⁹ You can purchase claret and blue “two tone satin organza fabric sheer voile 150cm side” from ebay. I used 4 metres.

²⁰ You can purchase blue “silky satin fabric 150cm wide” from ebay. I used 4 metres. (www.ebay.co.uk)

²¹ You can purchase a “Rublev’s icon poster” from ebay at www.ebay.co.uk by putting “Holy Trinity Troitsa Andrey Rublev Art Photo/Poster Repro Print” into the search bar

²² You can purchase A2 foam board from Hobbycraft at <http://www.hobbycraft.co.uk/>

²³ You can purchase “Flameless Flickering LED Tea Light Candles” from ebay at www.ebay.co.uk

Items Needed continued:

- Two silver trays are laid on the floor. On one of the trays are “shot²⁴” glasses filled with water. By the side of this tray is a full jug of water and a small bin for the empty glasses. Also laid out on the floor is a pile of A6 white paper, pens and kneelers.
- A4 cards with the following words on them:
 - “Station 3: Welcome into the Lord’s presence”, pinned to the display board
 - Words from the leaflet (see below) pinned to the display board
 - Bible verse: *“Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God”* (Hebrews 10:19-22a) laid next to the stool.
 - Bible verse: *“Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”* (Hebrews 4:16), laid in front of the empty silver tray.

Tips for Station 3 set-up:

- Set up the large display board first and cover with the purple material.
- Set up the stool in front of the display board and cover with the blue material..
- Make the “curtains” from the two toned organza voile, then thread onto the garden cane and finally put into place on top of the display board, fixing either end securely.

Words in the leaflet for Station 3: (See pages 1-8 at the end of this document)

Every child of God is welcomed into the presence of God through Jesus and is invited to be part of the life of the Trinity.

When Jesus died on the cross the curtain in the temple, that kept the presence of God apart from the people, was torn in two. Now we are free to enter the Most Holy place through the blood of Jesus – a way has been opened up for us to enjoy fellowship with God.

Look at the picture (through the curtain) depicting the community of the Trinity and see the space at the front of the picture. As you look at the space, hear the Lord say to you:

“Welcome(your name) into my presence”

Receive His love for you.

As you marvel at the privilege of being invited into the presence of the Lord,

- *What do you want to say to Him?*
- *What does He say to you?*

If you would like to lay any requests before the Lord, write them on the paper provided and place them on the silver tray.

Finally, invite the Lord to come and fill you afresh with His Holy Spirit as you express your desire to know Him deeper. Take a glass of water and drink it as you receive His life-giving Spirit.

²⁴ You can purchase “disposable stacking shot glasses 25ml” from Party plastics at:
<https://www.partyplastics.co.uk/shop/306/shot-glasses/disposable>

Station 4:

“Our Ministry of Welcome.”



Items Needed:

- Two large tables covered with white material (eg sheets)
- A display board covered in white material, with a red sheet draped over it.
- On the table (containing the display board) is a vase of flowers, a coffee pot (with coffee), cups, glasses with juice, a plate of biscuits and welcome cards (for your church)
- Above the table is a “Welcome” poster. (see Appendix 2)
- On the left hand side of the second table are laid out “welcome hands,” (see Appendix 3) and pens. On the right hand side of the second table is a small cross and some Gospel tracts,²⁵ and the 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 Bible verse.
- A4 cards with the following words on them:
 - “Station 4: Our Ministry of welcome”, pinned onto the display board
 - Words from the leaflet (see page 11) pinned onto one of the sheets
 - Bible verse: Jesus said: *“Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me”* (Mark 9:37), pinned onto one of the sheets
 - Bible verse: *“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.”* (2 Corinthians 5:18-19)

²⁵ You can purchase “The Gospel leaflet” tract from CPO here:
<https://www.cpo.org.uk/product.aspx?prod=C3020TR&cat=2615>
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Items Needed continued:

- A red “carpet”²⁶ laid out on the floor ending up by the table containing the flowers, coffee pot etc.

Tips for Station 4 Set-up:

- Place the two tables in place at an angle to each other first.
- Cover the tables with the white material.
- Cover the display board with the white material than drape the red material over the top of it before positioning on top of the table.
- Enlarge the “Welcome” poster (see Appendix 2)
- Photocopy the “Welcome Hands” (see Appendix 3) onto A5 card.
- After you have placed all of the various items onto the two tables put the red “carpet” in place.

Words in the leaflet for this station: (See pages 1-8 at the end of this document)

Jesus said that whoever welcomes a child in His name welcomes him.

We have been welcomed “back home” by our Heavenly Father.

We have been welcomed into God’s family – the church.

We have been welcomed into the Lord’s presence through Jesus’ sacrificial death.

Having been welcomed, we are now called to be on God’s welcome team with a ministry of welcoming others.

Not only do we have a ministry of welcome but we have also been entrusted with the “message of reconciliation,” by which others might receive the welcome from their heavenly Father that we have received.

If you have a ministry to children, young people or adults, think about the people God has asked you specifically to welcome – think about the group you are leading. Ask yourself:

- *How do I welcome each person into my group/church each week?*
- *How well do I know the people I am leading? Do I know each person’s name?*
- *What could I do to enable each person I am leading to feel welcomed – to feel like I am “laying out the red carpet” for them?*

Please take a “welcoming hand” and write the names of a couple of children/people you are called to welcome on the palm of the hand. Then write on the fingers of the hand things you can do to make those children/people feel welcomed.

Pray for the people you have written on your “welcoming hand”, and then take it away with you and put what you have written into practice.

Not only are we to make people feel welcomed, but we are to be instrumental in enabling them to receive their Heavenly Father’s welcome through sharing the Gospel.

Pray and ask the Lord to help you share the Christian faith with those you come across each day – family members, colleagues, friends..... If you would like to, take one of the Gospel tracts and share it with someone you know, who hasn’t yet become a Christian.

²⁶ You can purchase a “VIP red carpet runner 15ft x 2ft” from Ebay at www.ebay.co.uk

Station 5:

“Rejected!”



Items Needed:

- A large display board covered in black velour fabric²⁷ and white silky material²⁸.
- A wooden cross positioned in front of the display board and the base wrapped in more white silky material.
- A “crown of thorns”²⁹ positioned on top of the cross.
- A notice that says, “This is the King of the Jews” pinned to the centre of the cross.
- Tacks³⁰ placed in a red bowl at the foot of the cross.
- Forgiveness prayers (see page 14) on A6 card, laminated and placed at the foot of the cross.

²⁷ You can purchase “black velour” fabric at: www.ebay.co.uk

²⁸ You can purchase white “silky satin fabric 150cm wide” from ebay. I used 2 metres. (www.ebay.co.uk)

²⁹ You can purchase a “crown of thorns” from ebay at www.ebay.co.uk or on Amazon at www.amazon.co.uk

³⁰ You can purchase tacks from most DIY stores eg Wickes, B & Q etc.

Items Needed continued:

- Red card “droplets of blood³¹” placed in a black bowl at the foot of the cross.
- Pens placed at the foot of the cross next to the bowl of red cards.
- A4 cards with the following words on them:
 - “Station 5: Rejected”, pinned to the display board
 - Words from the leaflet (see below) pinned onto the display board
 - Bible verse: *“He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain”* (Isaiah 53:5) laid at the foot of the cross.
 - Bible verse: *“The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes”* (Psalm 118:22-23) laid at the foot of the cross

Tips for Station 5 Set-up:

- Cover the display board with the black velour fabric first then the white material.
- Position the cross then drape the white material around the back of it.
- Wrap the base of the cross in more white material.

Words in the leaflet for this station: (See pages 1-8 at the end of this document)

At the heart of the Christian Gospel is the truth that each one of us has rejected God and His loving commands. The height of the rejection of God was seen when the sinless Jesus came to earth. Rather than welcoming him, He was put to death by men, being crucified upon a cross.

Not only have we rejected God as our Father and Lord, but we have also rejected other people, made in His image, which grieves the heart of God.

Scripture promises us that when we confess these sins of rejection to God, not only will He forgive us but He will also cleanse us and give us a fresh start.

Having received His forgiveness, God then expects us to forgive those who have rejected us, causing us pain.

Spend some time gazing upon the cross and allowing the cost of your rejection of God to touch your heart afresh.

*If you would like to, pick up a “droplet of blood” from the black bowl. As you hold it, pray and ask the Lord to show you the ways that you have **rejected Him** and write down those ways on your droplet.*

*Now ask the Lord to show you the ways you have **rejected other people** rather than welcoming them into your life. Write down those ways on your droplet and then pin it to the cross with the words facing inwards.*

Hear the Lord say to you:

“I forgive you and will cleanse you from your sins”

Receive this truth.

³¹ You can purchase red card “droplets of blood” from ebay at www.ebay.co.uk by putting in “red card circles” in the search bar

*Now, pick up a tack from the red bowl and as you hold it, invite the Lord to show you those people who have **rejected you**, rather than welcoming you. As you feel again the pain of their rejection, pray the following prayer:*

Lord I choose to forgive.....(name the person)

For.....(what they did or failed to do)

Which made me feel.....(verbally tell the Lord every hurt and pain He brings to Your mind)

I hand over this person to you, believing that you paid for their sin as well as mine when you died on the cross. (place tack in cross)

I choose not to hold on to my resentment any longer.

I ask you to bless.....(name the person)

Please come and heal my damaged emotions.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Forgiveness Prayer (on A6 card at the foot of the cross)

Lord I choose to forgive.....(name the person)

For.....(what they did or failed to do)

Which made me feel.....(verbally tell the Lord every hurt and pain He brings to Your mind)

I hand over this person to you, believing that you paid for their sin as well as mine when you died on the cross. (place tack in cross)

I choose not to hold on to my resentment any longer.

I ask you to bless.....(name the person)

Please come and heal my damaged emotions.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Station 6:

“Welcome to the wedding feast of the lamb”



Items Needed:

- A large table covered with a cream table-cloth on top of which is a piece of purple shiny metallic wrapping paper³²
- A display board covered in antique gold silky fabric³³ on top of which is draped a length of rainbow organza voile³⁴
- Laid out on the table are three round silver trays³⁵. On one of the trays is “wedding cake”³⁶ On the other two trays are disposable champagne glasses³⁷ filled with champagne / sparkling wine. Next to the trays are piles of small serviettes and sprinkled over the table is “wedding table confetti”³⁸
- Also on the table is a bottle of champagne / sparkling wine and a bottle of schoer.

³² You can purchase “Shiny purple wrapping paper” on ebay at www.ebay.co.uk

³³ You can purchase antique gold “silky satin fabric 150cm wide” from ebay. I used 2 metres. (www.ebay.co.uk)

³⁴ You can purchase “Rainbow organza voile” on ebay at www.ebay.co.uk I used a couple of metres.

³⁵ You can purchase silver “Round Embossed Foil Platters 30cm” from amazon at www.amazon.co.uk

³⁶ Iced fruit cake from Sainsburys works well.

³⁷ You can purchase “clear plastic champagne glasses” from amazon at www.amazon.co.uk

³⁸ You can purchase “wedding table confetti” from amazon at www.amazon.co.uk

Items Needed continued:

- Bin at the foot of the table with a notice with the following words attached to it:
“Please place your glass here”
- A couple of invitation cards (see Appendix 4) pinned to the display board
- A4 cards with the following words on them:
 - “Station 6: “Welcome to the wedding feast of the lamb”, pinned to the display board
 - Words from the leaflet (see below) pinned onto the table-cloth
 - Bible verse: *“Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!”* (Revelation 19:9) pinned to the display board

Tips for Station 6 Set-up:

- Cover the table first with the cream table-cloth followed by the purple wrapping paper.
- Cover the display board with the antique gold silky fabric first then drape the rainbow voile over the top of it.
- Enlarge the invitation cards (see Appendix 4) to A4 size and laminate.
- Pour out the champagne / sparkling wine and cut up the cake a couple of minutes before people arrive at the stations.

Words in the leaflet for this station: (See pages 1-8 at the end of this document)

Scripture tells us that one day the Lord will return in all of His glory. On that day we will see Him face to face and we will know Him fully even as we are fully known (1Cor 13:12).

There will follow the glorious celebration of the “wedding supper of the Lamb,” to which those who are “in Christ” are welcome.

As we wait for that wonderful day, we are called to be faithful;

- Faithfully loving and serving our God,
- Faithfully loving and serving His people and
- Faithfully loving and serving those who don’t yet know Him,
- Walking the path of the cross.

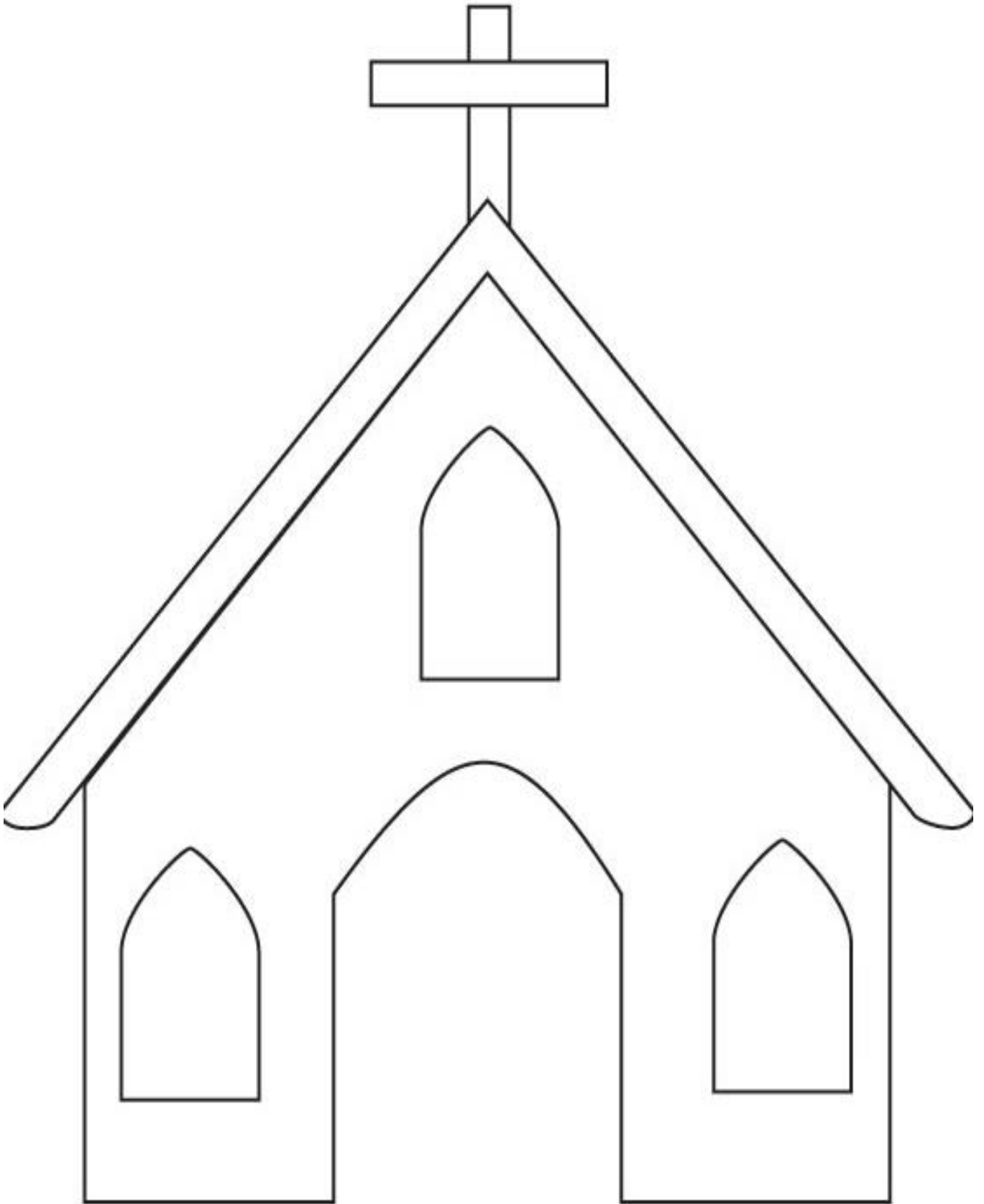
As you look at the invitation on the notice-board, hear the Lord say to you:

“You are welcome to come to the wedding supper of my Son Jesus, and I have clothed you in His robe of righteousness”

If you would like to enjoy a foretaste of the wedding supper, take a small glass of “champagne” and a small piece of wedding cake. As you eat and drink, thank your Heavenly Father that you are on the “wedding invitation list” of His Son because of what Jesus has done for you.

As you come to the end of the prayer stations, leave them with the knowledge that one day you have a wonderful welcome waiting for you. May this hope strengthen you as you walk through the ups and downs of this life.

Appendix 1: Template of Church for Station 2

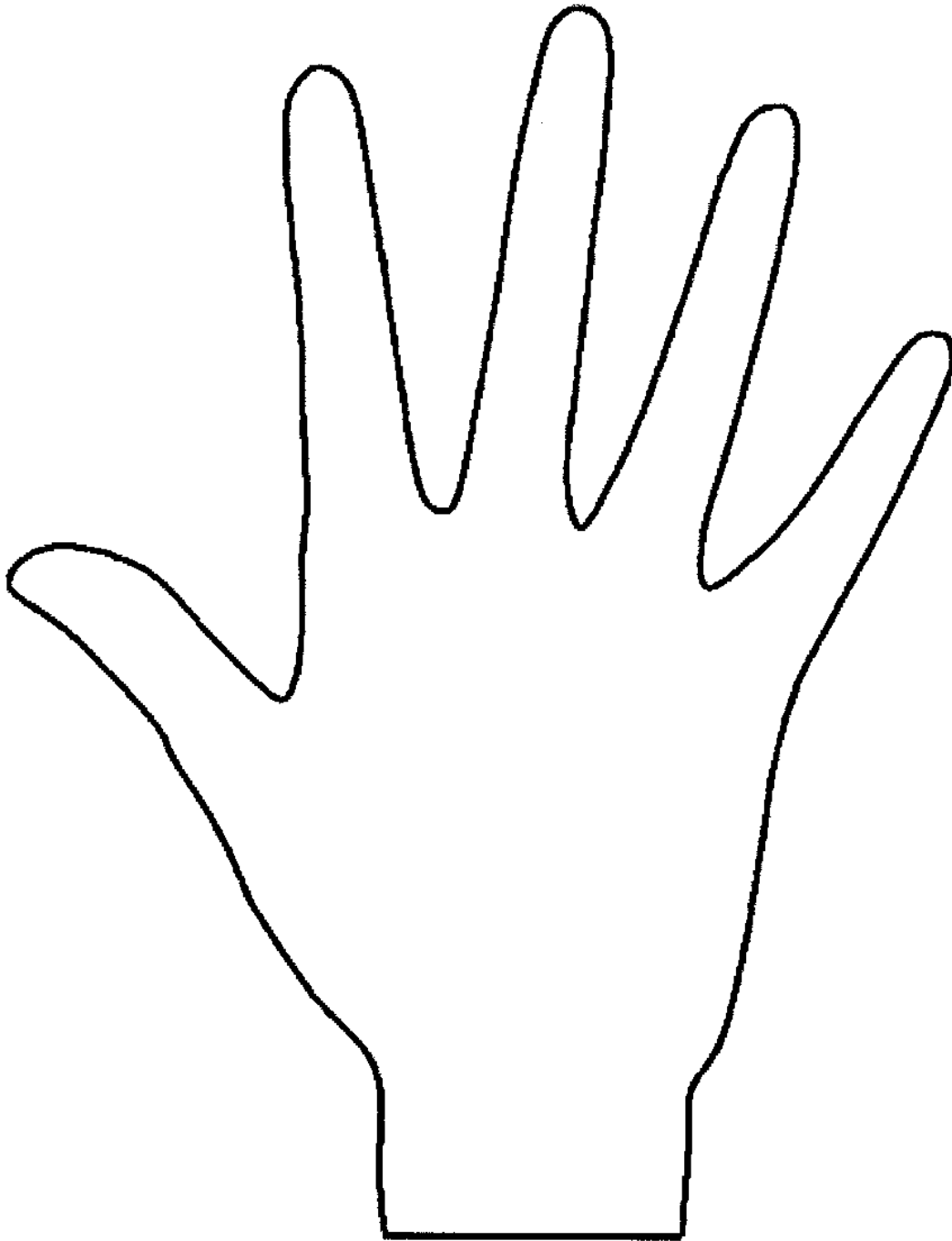


Appendix 2: Welcome picture for Station 4



Appendix 3: “Welcome Hand” for Station 4

Our Ministry of Welcome



- 1) Write on the palm of the hand the name(s) of children/people you are called to welcome.
- 2) Write on the fingers of the hand things you can do to make those children/people feel welcomed.
- 3) Pray for the people you have written on your hand.

Appendix 4: “Invitation” for Station 6

YOU ARE INVITED



to the
WEDDING of the **AGES**

You are invited to:

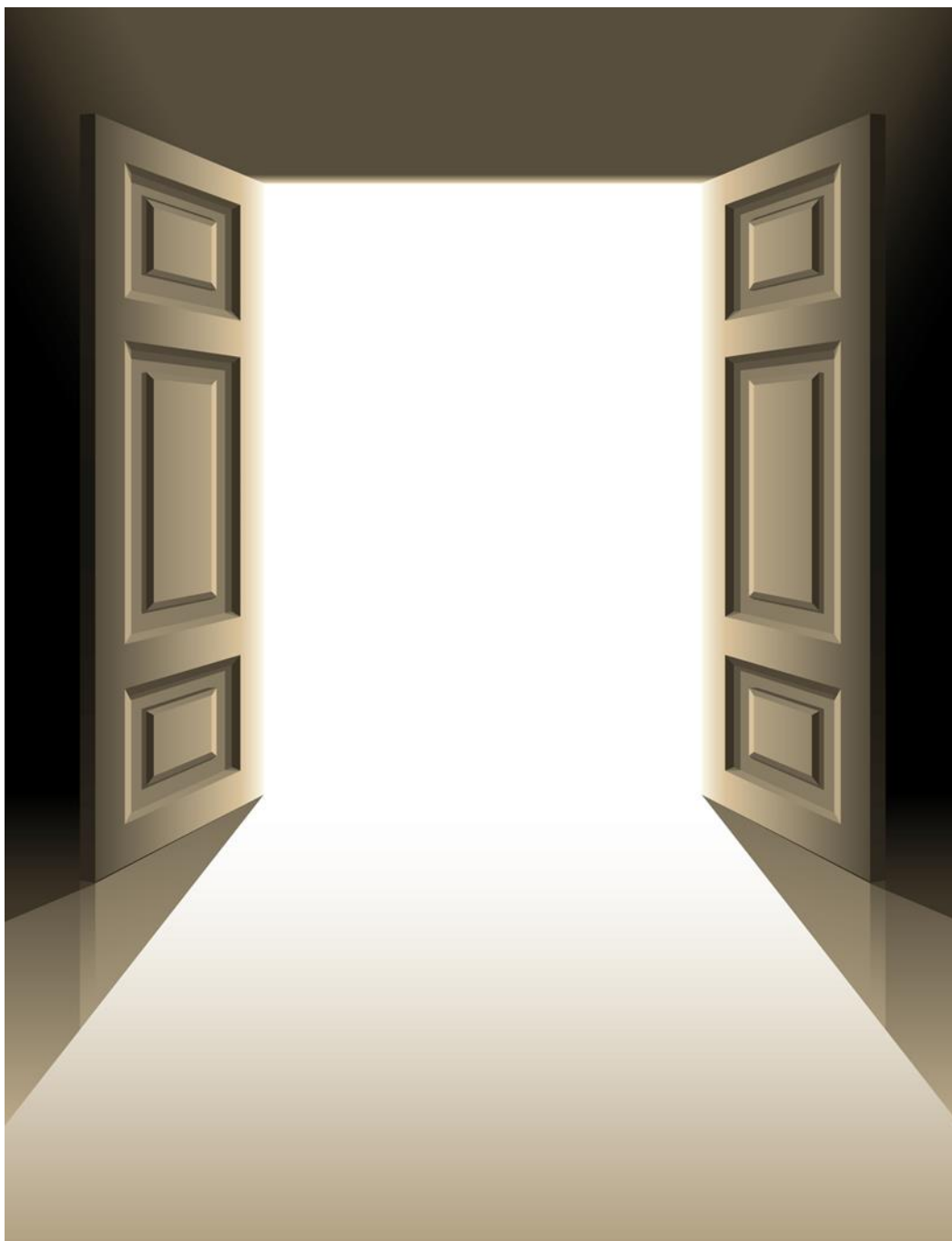
The Wedding Supper Of the Lamb of God

Where the
"Body of Christ"
will be joined forever
with the

Son of God

Clothes provided

R.S.V.P. to guarantee your place.



Welcome Prayer Stations

Please feel free to wander around the prayer stations at your own pace, engaging with what you find helpful.

1. "Welcome back home" (Luke 15:22-23)

In His love, your heavenly Father sent His Son Jesus to come and pay your "sin debt" on the cross – enabling you to be declared "not guilty!" Through faith in Jesus alone, you are now welcomed into the Father's open arms, to enjoy relationship with Him. He receives you with unconditional love and joy in His eyes, delighting in you as His child.

Like the Prodigal Son in Jesus' parable you are given a robe of righteousness to wear, as through Jesus, you are now in "right standing" with your Father.

As the Prodigal Son was given a ring to signify His Father's power and authority, you are equipped through the Holy Spirit with power and authority to carry out your Father's business.

As the Prodigal Son was given sandals for his feet, signifying "son-ship" as opposed to being a slave, you too have been given the "rights of son-ship", being God's child and not His slave.

Spend some time enjoying your Father's welcome as you draw close to Him through Jesus. Receive His words to you:

"You are my Son/Daughter, whom I love; with you I am well pleased" (Luke 3:22)

If you would like to, take a "celebrations" chocolate and as you eat it receive your Father's joy afresh that you are reconciled to Him through Jesus.



Having received your Father's love, spend some time expressing your thanks and gratitude for the grace you have received from Him. If you would like to, take a heart shaped card and write your name on it and lay it on one of the silver trays in front of the pictures as a way of offering your heart afresh to your Father.



2. "Welcome into God's family – the church" (Ephesians 4:4-6)

Each child of God is welcomed into God's family, the church, through baptism. We are all given the same gift of the Holy Spirit, the "mark of ownership". God provides us with a "place of belonging", where we are accepted, loved, nurtured and where we can grow in character to become like Jesus.

Each member of God's family is uniquely equipped to take part in the Kingdom calling to:

- Worship and glorify God, (1Peter 2:9)
- Grow and mature in the Christian faith (Eph 4:11-16) &
- Go and make disciples of all nations. (Matt 28:18-20)

If you would like to, dip your finger into the water and make the sign of the cross on your forehead as you remember your baptism into God's family. Receive afresh the words spoken on that day:



"We welcome you into the fellowship of faith; we are children of the same heavenly Father; we welcome you"

Take one of the jewels and hold it in your hand. Think of someone in your church family (child or adult). Thank the Lord for this person and that they, like you, are welcomed into the church family.

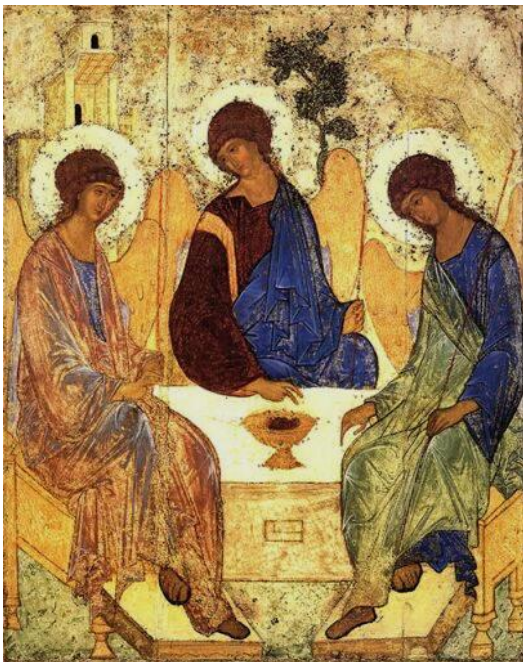
Pray and ask the Lord to give you grace to love them, honour them, serve them etc (using the Bible verses on the table) so that Jesus is glorified and your church family can be built up.

When you have finished praying for that person, stick the self-adhesive jewel onto the church model, inside the doors of the church.

3. "Welcome into His presence" (Hebrews 10:19-22a)

Every child of God is welcomed into the presence of God through Jesus and is invited to be part of the life of the Trinity.

When Jesus died on the cross the curtain in the temple, that kept the presence of God apart from the people, was torn in two. Now we are free to enter the Most Holy place through the blood of Jesus – a way has been opened up for us to enjoy fellowship with God.



Look at the picture (through the curtain) depicting the community of the Trinity and see the space at the front of the picture. As you look at the space, hear the Lord say to you:

"Welcome(your name) into my presence"

Receive His love for you.

As you marvel at the privilege of being invited into the presence of the Lord,

- *What do you want to say to Him?*
- *What does He say to you?*

If you would like to lay any requests before the Lord, write them on the paper provided and place them on the silver tray.

Finally, invite the Lord to come and fill you afresh with His Holy Spirit as you express your desire to know Him deeper. Take a glass of water and drink it as you receive His life-giving Spirit.

4. "Our ministry of welcome" (Mark 9:36-37)

Jesus said that whoever welcomes a child in His name welcomes him.

We have been welcomed "back home" by our Heavenly Father.
We have been welcomed into God's family – the church.
We have been welcomed into the Lord's presence through Jesus' sacrificial death.

Having been welcomed, we are now called to be on God's welcome team with a ministry of welcoming others.
Not only do we have a ministry of welcome but we have also been entrusted with the "message of reconciliation," by which others might receive the welcome from their heavenly Father that we have received.



If you have a ministry to children, young people or adults, think about the people God has asked you specifically to welcome – think about the group you are leading. Ask yourself:

- *How do I welcome each person into my group/church each week?*
- *How well do I know the people I am leading? Do I know each person's name?*
- *What could I do to enable each person I am leading to feel welcomed – to feel like I am "laying out the red carpet" for them?*

Please take a “welcoming hand” and write the names of a couple of children/people you are called to welcome on the palm of the hand. Then write on the fingers of the hand things you can do to make those children/people feel welcomed.

Pray for the people you have written on your “welcoming hand”, and then take it away with you and put what you have written into practice.

Not only are we to make people feel welcomed, but we are to be instrumental in enabling them to receive their Heavenly Father’s welcome through sharing the Gospel.

Pray and ask the Lord to help you share the Christian faith with those you come across each day – family members, colleagues, friends..... If you would like to, take one of the Gospel tracts and share it with someone you know, who hasn’t yet become a Christian.

5. “Rejected!” (Isaiah 53:3)

At the heart of the Christian Gospel is the truth that each one of us has rejected God and His loving commands. The height of the rejection of God was seen when the sinless Jesus came to earth. Rather than welcoming him, He was put to death by men, being crucified upon a cross.

Not only have we rejected God as our Father and Lord, but we have also rejected other people, made in His image, which grieves the heart of God.

Scripture promises us that when we confess these sins of rejection to God, not only will He forgive us but He will also cleanse us and give us a fresh start.

Having received His forgiveness, God then expects us to forgive those who have rejected us, causing us pain.

Spend some time gazing upon the cross and allowing the cost of your rejection of God to touch your heart afresh.

If you would like to, pick up a “droplet of blood” from the black bowl. As you hold it, pray and ask the Lord to show you the ways that you have **rejected Him** and write down those ways on your droplet.



Now ask the Lord to show you the ways you have **rejected other people** rather than welcoming them into your life. Write down those ways on your droplet and then pin it to the cross with the words facing inwards.

Hear the Lord say to you:
“I forgive you and will cleanse you from your sins”
 Receive this truth.

Now, pick up a tack from the red bowl and as you hold it, invite the Lord to show you those people who have **rejected you**, rather than welcoming you. As you feel again the pain of their rejection, pray the following prayer:

Lord I choose to forgive.....(name the person)

For.....(what they did or failed to do)

Which made me feel.....(verbally tell the Lord every hurt and pain He brings to Your mind)

I hand over this person to You, believing that you paid for their sin as well as mine when you died on the cross. (place tack in cross)

I choose not to hold on to my resentment any longer.

I ask you to bless.....(name the person)

*Please come and heal my damaged emotions.
 In Jesus' name. Amen.*

6. "Welcome to the wedding feast of the lamb" (Revelation 19:7,9)

Scripture tells us that one day the Lord will return in all of His glory. On that day we will see Him face to face and we will know Him fully even as we are fully known (1Cor 13:12).



There will follow the glorious celebration of the "wedding supper of the Lamb," to which those who are "in Christ" are welcome.

As we wait for that wonderful day, we are called to be faithful;

- Faithfully loving and serving our God,
- Faithfully loving and serving His people and
- Faithfully loving and serving those who don't yet know Him,
- Walking the path of the cross.

As you look at the invitation on the notice-board, hear the Lord say to you:

"You are welcome to come to the wedding supper of my Son Jesus, and I have clothed you in His robe of righteousness"

If you would like to enjoy a foretaste of the wedding supper, take a small glass of "champagne" and a small piece of wedding cake. As you eat and drink, thank your Heavenly Father that you are on the "wedding invitation list" of His Son because of what Jesus has done for you.

As you come to the end of the prayer stations, leave them with the knowledge that one day you have a wonderful welcome waiting for you. May this hope strengthen you as you walk through the ups and downs of this life.