Prayer Spaces in Schools
Introduction

@PrayerSpacesInSchoolsAu
/prayerspacesinschools
The history of Prayer Spaces
• English Context
One million children and young people

3000 prayer spaces (at least), 2008-2017
The history of Prayer Spaces

• Australian Context - St John’s

• Many schools and parishes around the country, many different denominations.
First Prayer Space at St John’s - Junior School Transition 2014
Prayer Spaces in Schools - St John’s Anglican College, Forest Lake Brisbane, Queensland, Australia.
Junior School First Prayer
Space 2014
Junior School First Prayer Space 2014
2015 - First Prayer Space at the Senior School
2015 Senior School
2015 Senior School
2015 Senior School
Senior School 2015
Senior School 2015
Senior School 2015
Junior School 2015

God is like a plasma ball, when you touch him he immediately reacts to help you......

He looks all of us know...
Queensland Anglican Schools Conference 2016
Junior School 2016
Junior School 2016
Junior school 2016
Junior School 2016
Senior School 2016
Senior School
2016

Refugee Backpack

Hundreds of thousands of people are feeling from war in Syria. They have to leave quickly and can only take a few things with them. We might call them “refugees,” but they are really just people like us forced to run for their lives. Read a few lines from the stories to what people were able to take with them.

What would you tell your family?

You can write your own note and tie it to one of the piles!
Transition Service St John’s Cathedral 2016
Transition Service St John’s Cathedral 2016
Senior School 2017

Cyberbullying
You are invited to write down something you may have written online or sent in a text and now regret. You may want to write the name(s) of someone you have hurt.

Or perhaps you may want to write down the name of someone who has hurt them.

Take a piece of paper and write what you need to write. Then scratch the piece of paper up and throw the paper into rubbish.

Ask for forgiveness if you have hurt someone through words or actions.

Forgive those who have hurt you through words or actions. You may want to ask God for strength to do the right thing.

I am sorry.

Before you:
T - Is it true?
H - Is it hurtful?
I - Is it illegal?

RUMORS
name-calling
insult
mean words

teasing
gossiping
threats
lies

CYBER BULLYING
Junior School
2017
Junior School
2017
Naplan 2018
Reconciliation Prayer Space St Aidan’s
Prayer spaces enable children and young people, of all faiths and those still questioning, to explore spirituality, faith and life’s big questions in a safe, creative and interactive way.

Prayer Spaces in Schools equips local churches to serve the ongoing spiritual life of their school communities.
**Spirituality** as relational consciousness originated by Rebecca Nye & David Hay

- Relating to myself, well-being
- Relating to others, love, care
- Relating to the Earth, stewardship
- Relating to the ‘beyond’, God/divine
First Research, Stern and Shillitoe: Looked at the impact of Prayer Spaces through the lens of “the self, other people, the world and the sacred or divine.”

**Self-** “In terms of spiritual development, the biggest influence of prayer spaces appeared to be their influence on pupils’ relationship with themselves.”

**Other-** “After Self, the next popular theme for pupils was their relationships with other people. But their responses were about more than just thinking.”


The world- “The influence (of prayer spaces) was not just on individual relationships, but on community-building (at local, and national and international levels) too.”

Sacred and Divine- “The authors state that “Prayer Spaces provided distinctive and valued opportunities for pupils to develop their relationship with the sacred and divine.” For pupils who used the prayer spaces in this way, the majority mentioned God in the everyday context of a personal relationship in which they could speak to God and God would listen.”
“Joining fully the group process, meant revealing myself as Soul on earth-replete with mistakes and errors that have been the seeds of my own evolution. To the extent that I now embodied the course teaching on spirituality and growth (not as an expert but as a fellow human sojourner), the room could become a holding space of real spiritual experience, work, and transformation.” (Athan & Miller, 2007) p 19
We “hold space” for our students which allows the Divine to enter.

Miller asks the question, “How do I bring my own spirituality into my educational practice, and create a space so that others may bring their spirituality to their learning” (p. 21).

They talk about arranging chairs in a circle which is what we do when students come into the Prayer Space.

“This is to lend a sense of intimacy, as well as of a physical enactment of the guiding principals of the learning environment to come, a non-hierarchal model of transmission of knowledge, in which the teacher is a member, not an authority, and all are seekers of the truth” (p. 23).
“A welcoming, open, non-judgemental stance by students and teachers alike goes a long way in creating an atmosphere where ‘truth is central…where every stranger and every strange utterance is met with welcome…hospitality means receiving each other, our struggles, our newborn ideas with openness and care” (p. 26).

We went to prayer spaces today. We went first after morning tea. We got to go to the teddy bear station. It was fun and it made me feel God was with me.
I went to pray. I learnt lots of new things about God. I learnt that God loves us more than we love our teddy bears.
We went to prayer spaces
I like prayer spaces. It was fun learning about God. I like God, he is cool. Pink
Prayer Space Reflection

I went to prayer spaces. I went to the place where we put our worries on the Cross.

It was fun and we went to these little white boards.
In order for the Prayer Space to continue to make a difference to all that experience Prayer Space, please spend a moment to reflect on the experience and write down your thoughts and opinions. Your input is valuable in making this experience a memorable and spiritual one for all involved.

How do you think the Prayer Space has impacted on you?
It made me feel very calm and relaxed. It made me feel like I was in a peaceful and serene environment. The atmosphere was inviting and the activities made me feel like I was part of something bigger.

How did the Prayer Space make you feel or think?
It made me feel calm and relaxed and it made me think about how fortunate I am.

Is there anything that needs to be changed or improved in the Prayer Space for the future?
I never get enough time to go through all the activities. It would be great if we could have more time for each activity.

What are your views on the Prayer Space?
It made me feel happy and refreshed.

What was your favourite Prayer Station?
The Teddy Bear Station. Because I got to cuddle with adorable teddies.

What was your least favourite Prayer Station?
The Refuge wasn't that appealing to me.

Thank you.
Prayer Space Thoughts - Students

In order for the Prayer Space to continue to make a difference to all that experience Prayer Space, please spend a moment to reflect on the experience and write down your thoughts and opinions. Your input is valuable in making this experience a memorable and spiritual one for all involved.

How do you think the Prayer Space has impacted on you?

It allowed me to get closer to God
and it also allowed me to calm down.

How did the Prayer Space make you feel or think?

It made me think of memories of the past and it made me feel calm and relaxed.

Is there anything that needs to be changed or improved in the Prayer Space for the future?

I don't really like the plasma balls.

What are your views on the Prayer Space?

It is a place that I'd wished I could have in my room
though really it's a place to be calm, patient
and relaxed

What was your favourite Prayer Station?

The teddy bears

What was your least favourite Prayer Station?

The plasma balls

Thank you.
Prayer Spaces in Schools - Feedback - Teacher

In order for the Prayer Space to continue to make a difference to the lives of our students, please spend a moment to reflect on the experience and write down your thoughts and ideas. Your input is valuable in making this experience a memorable and spiritual one for all involved.

How do you think the Prayer Space has impacted on the students?

Very well. The students enjoy interacting with prayer in this way.

Could you provide any comments that the students have shared with you after visiting the Prayer Space?

Good. It was relaxing. The back of the Auditorium is a better place for it.

Is there anything that needs to be changed or improved in the Prayer Space for the future?

Not really. The student love visiting this place.

What are your views on the Prayer Space?

A very good idea. It helps students from non-religious backgrounds to be involved in prayer and to see what it is like.

Any other comments?

I loved the new stations and think it's a very good idea to change activities/spaces every prayer space (semester).
Prayer Space Thoughts- Students

In order for the Prayer Space to continue to make a difference to all that experience Prayer Space, please spend a moment to reflect on the experience and write down your thoughts and opinions. Your input is valuable in making this experience a memorable and spiritual one for all involved.

Do you think the Prayer Space made a difference in your life?

It doesn’t make a large difference/impact but it does mean reflect in the moment.

How did the Prayer Space make you feel or think?

I made me relax and think about the past.

Is there anything that needs to be changed or improved in the Prayer Space for the future?

I could probably be more engaging for the younger children. Something more fun.

Do you like the idea of holding Prayer Spaces at our school?

Yes, I do like the idea of Prayer Spaces. It’s fun helps many of us find peace.

What was your favourite Prayer Station?

I liked the colouring station for relaxation. It’s good during school (stressful)

What was your least favourite Prayer Station?

I did not have a least favourite Prayer Station. All of them made me think about different aspects of my life in some way.

Thank you.

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