

Baptist
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Alongsiders
Youth Resource

www.baptistmissionaustralia.org/Alongsiders



Alongsiders

1. People of Prayer

We follow Jesus' model of retreating to pray before stepping out

2. People of Peace

We are people who bring peace and seek people of peace

3. People of Love

We love people and holistically respond to their needs

4. People who Partner

We partner together in God's mission

No matter where we are, we can journey alongside our neighbours and friends.

Being an Alongsider means listening, showing hospitality, bringing peace and humbly sharing the good news of Jesus. It means praying and seeking the Spirit's leading. It means loving the people God has put in your world, as well as loving the world.

Being an Alongsider means sharing God's love in genuine, active, and relevant ways. It means partnering together with each other and God – sending and being sent, giving, and receiving. Working together as partners in God's mission.



Explore more Alongsiders resources:
www.baptistmissionaustralia.org/Alongsiders

The Alongsiders Youth Resource

This resource has been written by Rachel Stevens, Baptist Mission Australia's Next Generation Specialist. Rachel is passionate about engaging with young people as they explore who God is and who He has made them to be.

The Basics

This youth guide has been designed as a single 1.5-2 hour youth group session. It is based around four interactive prayer stations that correlate to the four key themes of the Alongsiders series – prayer, peace, love and partnership. Each prayer station also has a corresponding extension activity that can be done by youth individually through the week.

While the prayer stations focus mainly on creative ways to pray for intercultural team members, their families and the communities they are serving among, the extension activities facilitate opportunities for youth to creatively pray for themselves and their own contexts.

Through the prayer stations and the extension activities, youth will be encouraged to lift their eyes to what God is doing both globally and locally.



There are printable resources for each prayer station. You can access these via the 'Youth Resource' dropdown on this page:
www.baptistmissionaustralia.org/MMMresources



Using the Guide

Adapt this resource for your community and context. Use it as a launching pad, making adjustments depending on the size, age, maturity level or focus of your youth group.

You can run this resource:

- » As one single youth group session, using all four stations at once
- » As individual stations that you can use over four separate weeks as part of your regular time together
- » As interactive elements in your regular Sunday service

Things to consider:

- » What space do you have? How can the stations be best set up? How will you make each station inviting and comfortable? Will you have music playing?
- » How many youth do you expect? Do you need to set up more than one set up of each station?
- » How do you want your youth to engage with the stations? Will they be self-directed? How will leaders be utilised?
- » Will youth be in groups with a set time per station, or will they be free to move around as they want?

Open Prayer and Worship Space

In addition to the prayer stations, setting up an open prayer and worship space could be helpful for those who finish early or prefer a less structured environment.

This open space could include things like quiet worship music, pens, paper, a map of the world, pictures of intercultural team members, Bible passages, a map of your local neighbourhood, playdough or clay, candles or anything else you think your youth will connect with.

You can use this Spotify playlist that we have put together of worship songs: **Baptist Mission Australia: Alongsiders playlist**

Opening and Closing your Session

How you open and close your time together will depend on how you are using the resource. Here are some ideas for building community, connection and understanding of the themes.

- » **Have a meal together:** A great way to open conversation and begin thinking about God's big mission is to enjoy a meal together from one of our team's locations. If your community partners with a particular team member or country, then choose a meal from that culture.
- » **Spend some time in worship:** Including worship in your session will help draw our eyes back to God, who is ultimately the one that we are all partnering with as we seek to live as alongsiders.
- » **Show videos from intercultural team members:** On the Baptist Mission Australia website there are many videos from intercultural team members. Some are ministry update videos and others thematic videos, relating to each of the four key Alongsiders themes: Explore videos here: www.baptistmissionaustralia.org/MMMresources
- » **Debrief about how the themes relate to your context:** Spend some time in small groups talking through the four themes and how they relate to the youth in their contexts - their schools, sporting clubs, families, neighbourhoods etc. This could be a time of structured questions or open reflection.
- » **Do the extension activity:** To help bring the activities to a more local and personal space, you could do (or started) one of the extension activities. Each one focuses on one of the key Alongsiders themes and provides space for your youth to think through how this theme interacts with them and their community.

Alongsiders:

1. People of Prayer

We follow Jesus' model of retreating to pray before stepping out

» Introduction

We are alongsiders when we follow Jesus' model of retreating to pray before stepping out in the world to be salt and light. Prayer changes hearts and opens us to God's activity in us and in our world. Pray helps us keep in step with Him. That's why the Bible says to "devote yourselves to prayer" (Col 4:2a).

Prayer is a powerful practice, which has an immeasurable impact on our lives, our churches and the world. We pray in many ways: in song, in word, while moving, through formal prayer, through art, and through acts of justice and mercy.

Prayer creates space for lament and grieving, for deep listening, praise and thanksgiving and to grow and change. **As we pray, God invites us to become like Him, in love, holiness, mercy, rest, and peace. Prayer moves us into mission and enables us to be alongsiders.**

» Station One: Prayer Post-Its

In this prayer station, youth will be invited to firstly reflect on their own understanding of prayer and then pray for God's mission around the world and our intercultural team members.

Time: 15-20 minutes

What you need:

- » Printed instructions: <http://ow.ly/6LOG50NFBA2>
- » Bibles
 - *OR printed passages:*
Mark 1:35-39 and Collosians 4:2-6
- » Printed question posters (print A5, A4 or A3):
<http://ow.ly/BBPN50NFv5O>
- » Textas or pens
- » Post-it notes
- » Masking take or long rope to create a labyrinth on the ground (like this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5--pGSEbPY&t=134s>)
 - *OR printed handheld labyrinths:*
<http://ow.ly/pEQP50NFv5n>
- » Printed photos of team members (cut out):
<http://ow.ly/QFB050NFyWU>

How to set up:

- » **Reflection Space:** This is where the youth will reflect on the prayer questions and then respond by writing on post-it notes and sticking them around the posters. Set up this space with Bibles, question posters stuck on the wall, post-it notes, pens and instructions.
- » **Prayer Space:** This is where the youth will pray for God's mission around the world and engage with the labyrinth. Either create a labyrinth on the ground or have printed handheld labyrinths available.

How to participate:

1. Begin in the **reflection space**. Take some time to read Mark 1:35-39 and Collosians 4:2-6.
2. In a small group or by yourself, think about the questions on the posters:
 - Why do you pray?
 - What would the world look like if God answered all your prayers in the way you wanted?
 - Where do you feel most connected to God in prayer?
 - What activities helps you feel connected to God
3. Write words or short sentences in response to these questions on post-it notes and stick them on the wall alongside the posters.
4. Move to the **prayer space** and choose a photo of an intercultural team member/s to pray for. Use the labyrinth to stay focused and mindful.

Pray for:

- Them to experience God's presence, love and joy in their life
- Their own faith and relationship with Jesus
- The conversations they are having about Jesus with their local friends
- Their physical, mental and spiritual health

»» Extension Activity One: Prayer

This extension activity encourages youth to begin a creative prayer practice as a way to retreat and connect with God.

What you need:

- » Printed creative prayer posters: <http://ow.ly/jzXi50NFv66>
- » Textas and pens
- » Scissors

How to participate:

1. Take the ideas posters home or use the blank ideas poster to add your own ideas. Keep them as full posters, or cut out each idea card and place in a jar to pick from.
2. Each day, choose one idea and creatively spend time with God. Try new things and see what connects with you.
3. Keep up the practice! Either by trying new things or sticking to one or two ideas that work for you.

Prayer suggestions:

- God, mould me into your likeness
- God, how do you want to use me this week?
- God, show me how to better connect with you
- God, help me to see myself as you do
- God, help me love people like you do
- God, help me share your love with people

2. People of Peace

We are people who bring peace
and seek people of peace

» Introduction

God calls us to be alongsiders who are peacemakers and seek people of peace.

Peacemaking calls us to first seek what God is doing in a situation in order to align our selves with the ultimate reconciler. **Being a peacemaker means we seek to be people who embody the love, compassion, wisdom, truth and justice of God with gentleness and humility.** As God's image bearers, we are called to partner with Him in bringing His peace and reconciliation to all of creation.

While God is already at work in the world, He wonderfully invites us to partner with Him. This is an incredible privilege. Peacemakers also look for people of peace who are open to hearing about Jesus, and opportunities for mission and meaningful relationships in a community.

» Station Two: Sun Mural

In this prayer station, youth will contribute to a communal sun mural on the wall. Together you will add photos of intercultural team members, countries and people around the world to a sun mural, representing that God's love reaches to every part of the world. He is at work everywhere and we can partner with Him.

Time: 20-25 minutes

What you need:

- » Printed instructions: <http://ow.ly/1Sg750NFBCy>
- » Bibles
 - *OR printed passages: Acts 16:11-15, Matthew 5:9 and James 3:13-18*
- » Printed image of sun: <http://ow.ly/eBQM50NFv6c>
- » Orange and yellow crepe paper
- » Blue-Tack or sticky tape to adhere sun and paper to wall
- » Printed photos of team members (cut out):
<http://ow.ly/QFB050NFyWU>
- » Printed photos of countries (cut out):
<http://ow.ly/a9Vq50NFz78>
- » Printed illustrations of 'faceless' people (cut out):
<http://ow.ly/YmSH50NFv6o>

How to set up:

- » **Sun Mural:** This is where youth will be adding photo as they pray. Place the sun image in the centre of your wall or table, and then using the crepe paper, add sun rays coming out of the sun.
- » **Prayer Space:** There are three prayer prompts for this station - God's work in the world, intercultural team members and communities around the world. For the first one, have country photos accessible. For the second one, team members photos and for the third one, illustrations of 'faceless' people.

Additionally, have the corresponding Bible passages available for prompts two and three.

How to participate:

1. Pick up one of the **country photos** and hold it in your hands. Pray God's work in this country.

Prayer prompts:

- Pray for people and communities experiencing pain, grief and brokenness
- Praise God for his complete love for all people
- Thank God for his heart to bring reconciliation and peace to the world
- Pray for the work that the Holy Spirit has, is and will do in this country

2. Once you have finished praying, place the image in amongst the rays of the sun mural.

3. In a small group or by yourself, read James 3:13-18 and Matthew 5:9.

Reflect on these questions:

- What is new to you in these passages?
- Is there anything that holds you back from peacemaking? Why is it hard?
- Why does James connect peacemaking with humility, mercy, forgiveness, purity and character?

4. Pick up one of the **intercultural team member photos** and hold it in your hands. Pray for this team member/s.

Prayer prompts:

- Pray for them to be able to lovingly journey with people experiencing pain and grief
- Pray that they will know the love, comfort and compassion of God in their lives
- Pray that they would be attentive to the movement of the Holy Spirit in the community they serve

- Pray that they would connect with people of peace
- Pray that they would be peacemakers

5. Once you have finished praying, place the image in amongst the rays of the sun mural.

6. In a small group or by yourself, read Acts 16:11-15.

Reflect on these questions:

- Who are the people of peace in this passage?
- What practical steps can we take to find and build friendships with 'people of peace'?

7. Pick up one of the **'faceless' people illustrations**. This is representative of communities around the world. While we do not know the names, ages, cultural backgrounds, languages, beliefs etc. of everyone around the world, God does. Hold the illustration in your hands and pray for communities around the world.

Prayer prompts:

- Pray that people would experience God's love
- Pray for hearts to be opened to Jesus
- Pray for followers of Jesus to effectively communicate the Gospel
- Pray for people's physical, emotional and spiritual needs to be met

8. Once you have finished praying, place the illustration in amongst the rays of the sun mural.

»» Extension Activity Two: Peace

This extension activity invites youth to pray the peacemakers prayer as a daily practice.

What you need:

- » Printed copies of peacemaker's prayer (print A5 or A4):
<http://ow.ly/Hrym50NFv6x>

How to participate:

1. Take home a copy of the peacemaker's prayer and place it somewhere you will see it. Pray the prayer each day.
2. As you pray the peacemaker's prayer, ask God to help show you how you can grow as a peacemaker. Ask God to show you opportunities to walk alongside people of peace.

3. People of Love

We love people and holistically respond to their needs

» Introduction

We are alongsiders when we love people and holistically respond to their needs. We witness to Jesus' love and Gospel when we bless others, both inside and outside the church.

We are a people of love when we bless others through words of affirmation, acts of kindness, and when we are generous with our gifts, time and life.

John says that we express genuine, Christ-imitating love through our actions and attitudes. When we see people in need we must respond — this shows that the love of God is in us. “Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.” (1 John 3:17–18)

» Station Three: Origami Hearts

In this prayer station, youth will write or draw a prayer and then fold that piece of paper into an origami heart. Together, you will add hearts into a mural to create the words: God is Love. If possible, it would be wonderful to keep this mural up in your church long-term as a reminder to all.

Time: 15 minutes

What you need:

- » Printed instructions: <http://ow.ly/fcK950NFBEZ>
- » Bibles
 - *OR printed passages:*
John 5:1-15 and 1 John 3:16-18
- » Printed origami instructions: <http://ow.ly/ZxuB50NFv6R>
- » Origami or square coloured paper
- » Blue-Tack or sticky tape to adhere hearts to display
- » Textas and pens
- » Tables and chairs

How to set up:

- » **Heart Mural:** This is where youth will add the origami hearts that they make. Use the hearts to create the words: God is Love. You could create this on a wall, table or on the ground.
- » **Prayer Space:** This is where youth will read and reflect on the Bible passages, write or draw a prayer or reflection on their origami paper and then create a heart. In this space, have pens, paper, Bibles accessible, as well as the origami heart instructions. It will be easier for youth if they can sit at tables for this station.

How to participate:

1. In a small group or by yourself, read John 5:1-15 and 1 John 3:16-18

Reflect on these questions:

- Is there anything that makes you uncomfortable? Where do you think this discomfort comes from?
 - What does being a 'person of love' mean to you in your life?
 - What one thing can you do this week to love in action, encouragement or prayer?
2. In response to the passages and the idea of being a person of love, write a prayer or draw a picture on a piece of origami paper. You could focus on yourself and your community, or others and the world.
 3. Follow the instructions to make an origami heart. Add it to the mural to create the words: God is Love.

» Extension Activity Three: Love

This extension activity prompts youth to consider who God has put in their life and how they can show His love.

What you need:

- » Printed copies of the mindmap: <http://ow.ly/b1RY50NFv7e>

How to participate:

1. Take home a copy of the mindmap and add names to it. Think about who God has put in your life and how you can take practical steps to love them.
2. Each day, ask God to help you embody His love and give you opportunities to show love to others.

4. People who Partner

We partner together
in God's mission

» Introduction

We are alongsiders when we partner together in God's mission. You may not feel like an intercultural team member, but God has sent you out to declare the Gospel and show His love.

We partner with others - such as churches, intercultural team members and chaplains - by praying for them, practically supporting them, joining them in their ministry, encouraging them and financially supporting them.

As the global church does this for one another, we strengthen each other through the Holy Spirit to share the good news of the Kingdom of God.

Jesus invites us to live in a way that proclaims the Gospel and alerts others to God's reign of reconciliation, justice, beauty and wholeness. We don't have our own mission, and we don't do mission in our own strength. It is God's mission.

» Station Four: Postcards

In this prayer station, youth will learn about Baptist Mission Australia's Outback Australia team and then write or draw something as an encouragement to them. These encouraging postcards can be scanned and emailed to Baptist Mission Australia, or mailed to our office, for us to pass onto the Outback Australia team. *(If your church partners with another team, you are welcome to create encouraging notes for that team instead.)*

Time: 20 minutes

What you need:

- » Printed instructions: <http://ow.ly/S6pW50NFBGO>
- » Bibles
 - *OR printed passage: Philippians 1:3-8*
- » Printed postcards (cut out): <http://ow.ly/aXOg50NFA10>
- » Textas, pencils and pens
- » Printed information about the Outback Australia team: <http://ow.ly/8Zss50NFAM9>
- » Tables and chairs

How to set up:

- » **Reflection space:** This is where youth will read the passage and reflect on it. Make it a comfortable space.
- » **Postcard space:** This is where youth will write an encouraging note or draw a picture for the Outback Australia team. They could direct it to one member or family, or to the whole team. It will be easier for youth if they can sit at tables for this station.

How to participate:

1. In a small group or by yourself, read Philippians 1:3-8

Reflect on these questions:

- What do you find encouraging or challenging in Philippians 1:3-8?
- What's been your experience of partnership in the Gospel and the Great Commission?

2. Read the information about the Outback Australia team and create an encouraging postcard in response.

Postcard ideas:

- Write them a prayer
- Tell them about yourself
- Tell them something you value about their work
- Tell them how you are sharing God's love right where you are
- Draw them a picture
- Find Bible verses to encourage them

3. Add your postcard to the pile. Your leaders will send these to Baptist Mission Australia for us to send to the Outback Australia team.

»» Extension Activity Four: Partnership

This extension activity gives youth the chance to encourage other people who are serving God.

What you need:

- » Printed postcards: <http://ow.ly/aXOg50NFA10>

How to participate:

1. Take home a one or more of the postcards and encourage other people with them! Think about the people who have helped you in your faith journey or who you admire. This could be a youth leader, pastor, chaplain, friend, relative or teacher. Write them an encouraging note and thank them for the impact they have had on you.
2. Give to them. And in the weeks and months ahead, remember to pray for them in their ministry. Keep on encouraging them through prayer and partnership.

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