

On Beads of Prayer

Connecting with God

How to Organize a Prayer Bead Workshop

To lead a prayer bead workshop, just give *On Beads of Prayer* a call at (703) 734-1978 or e-mail us at: info@onbeadsofprayer.org and we'll give you pointers for your workshop. See our PowerPoint presentation for a step-by-step guide.

What is the First Step?

You will want to form a small, broad-based committee solely for the purpose of introducing the idea of a prayer bead workshop to as many people as possible. This generates excitement about the workshop. This is not a long-term commitment. This is not a church activity that requires baked goods or reports.

It is important to invite clergy, the head of the Sunday School, and those working with seniors or their designees. Direct people to our web site so that they can learn more about *On Beads of Prayer* before they decide to commit to a workshop.

If it's not a parish-based group, find anyone interested in learning about prayer bead workshops or those who already know how to string and use prayer beads.

How Do We Publicize the Workshop?

Be sure to set a date well in advance and promote the event early and often through bulletins, and anywhere else people might find out about your upcoming workshop. Make sure the clergy include it in announcements for several weeks. If there is a diocesan publication, get a free announcement. Include your name and contact information. Contact neighboring Protestant churches as well. Personally invite their clergy.

What Kind of Workshop Should I Teach?

The workshop can be about teaching to pray with prayer beads or it can also include teaching how to string them.

*** Please Note: The first workshop should be merely an introduction to prayer beads and to the idea of forming a prayer bead ministry.**

- Allow one hour for teaching how to pray with prayer beads, including time in small groups.
- Allow at least one and a half hours if you're also teaching how to string beads.

Whom Do We Invite?

We've found workshops work best when there are at least 8 to 10 participants. Having more than 50 people becomes unwieldy when you break into small groups. You can find interested participants from:

- existing groups: prayer groups, meditation groups, Sunday School students
- individual friends, neighbors
- other churches in the area

Include people across the age spectrum from seniors to young adults to children age 4 and up.

You will need a prayer leader for each group of 6 to 8 participants per table.

How Do We Set Up the Room?

Find a room with plenty of overhead lighting and enough chairs for all participants. Set aside one table for handouts and to display and sell the prayer beads. Have a sign-up sheet for people who want to receive information and to learn how to make prayer beads.

Workshop for Praying

Order kits from *On Beads of Prayer* or pre-made prayer beads from our web site. The church may pay for them or each participant may pay you individually.

Be sure you have enough prayer beads for each person to have one set to use and possibly purchase. Tell them in advance that no purchase is necessary in order to participate.

There should be no pressure; this is a spiritual exercise.

Workshop for Praying and Stringing

Order bead kits from *On Beads of Prayer*.

Be sure you have:

- rectangular tables for 6 to 8 participants, with chairs
- individual kits of beads, crosses, and wire
- solid color fabric placemats on non-plastic cloth to keep the individual beads in one place
- at least one sample of completed prayer beads per table of stringers
- needle nose pliers and scissors
- copies of "How to String" reproduced from our web site
- copies of "On Beads of Prayer" brochure reproduced from our web site.
(Everyone is to take at least one.)

If you are using your own beads, please prepare the beads in advance by washing them with liquid soap and water, rinsing them thoroughly, and drying them. All beads from *On Beads of Prayer* are washed and blessed. There should be no food or drink on the tables, not even water. Working with prayer beads is sacred.

How Many Volunteers are Needed?

You'll want to have enough volunteers available to help lead the prayers and/or to guide the prayer bead stringers. There should be one prayer leader or two stringers per table of six or eight. We may be able to provide volunteers if the workshop is in the vicinity of Washington, DC.

How Do I Lead the Workshop?

- Begin the workshop with a prayer. The prayer for this ministry by Bishop Eastman might be appropriate.
- For the first workshop, invite someone from the clergy to talk about prayer beads, prayers, or any related topic. What information he/she doesn't speak about, you will cover. (Although the history of prayer beads is rich and fascinating, we want to steer away from the intellectual aspect and move into the spiritual aspect to begin this prayer journey.)
- The talk should be a half hour.
- If feasible, show the PowerPoint presentation to the group.
- Then break into small groups in circles to pray, or at tables to string prayer beads.
- If the group is going to string, follow above instructions for "Workshop for Praying and Stringing."
- Find out if the group would like to keep the prayer beads they make or if they would rather give them to the U.S. military or to others, or to sell them.
- Have fun stringing the prayer beads!
- As individuals complete stringing, have a prayer leader invite them to join a circle in a different part of the same room and practice praying with the prayer beads, using suggested prayers in our hand-out leaflet. Each person can also write his/her own special prayer and take turns sharing it.
- Plan for follow-up workshops and more meetings with the group.

If your workshop makes prayer beads for the U.S. military, call *On Beads of Prayer* for shipping instructions.

What is Our Next Step?

If all goes well, and there is interest in continuing, see "How to Develop a Prayer Bead Ministry."

LET US KNOW HOW IT GOES!

On Beads of Prayer is a ministry whose mission is to deepen your connection with God. Visit our web site at www.onbeadsofprayer.org for more ways to get involved!