

Prayer of Movement and Gesture

This ever-evolving prayer is derived from the program **Wisdom of the Body**, created by Deborah J. Welsh. Photos are by Bob Gates. Text, Bill Redfield and Deborah Welsh. Chant inspired by Dona Wonacott. Sequencing inspired by Peggy Barnes. The two part invocation is done one time only. The six gesture prayer is repeated as many times as desired, beginning with Prayer Position. The chant, if used, is done on one tone.

Invocation as Offering – Feel what is being offered in the palms and offer it through the whole body.
Focus on Intention/prayer/self-oblation.



Invocation as Embodied Intersection of the Horizontal and the Vertical – Sign of the Cross

Intersection at the heart space. We move from the horizontal to vertical by release, surrender, divestment, etc., not by achievement or climbing.



← Horizontal



← Release through the body one arm at a time to the vertical



The Six Gestures of the Prayer: (Repeated three times in group prayer with chant on last time.)

- 1. Prayer Position** – Pause, centered and balanced. Hands folded: “I am here—in openness, sincerity, authenticity, and purity of heart, not in self-satisfaction and certainly, not in self-aggrandizement.”



- 2. Bow** – “I acknowledge that I am standing in, with, and before wholeness and holiness. I bow to the whole of which I am an integral part. I submit to this wholeness and empty myself into its mystery.” The bow can be the bow of the head only or a whole body prostration. Chant: “Be still and know that I am God.”

- 3. Opening and Receiving** – Having consented to a process of emptying, there is spaciousness to receive. “We open and lift up our hearts to receive embodied divine energy and spirit. Our hearts are cracked wide open.” Chant: “Be still and know that I am.”



4. **Abiding in the Indwelling Spirit** – “We drink deeply of divine love, gathering ourselves toward our center of being.” This gesture in which we bring our arms inward to our hearts, or face, or wrapped around the body in deep awareness of our prayers offered and heard. We sense our place in the family of things. Chant: “Be still and know.”



5. **Sharing** – “May my prayer extend to all things.” Feel the prayer moving outward to whomever and whatever it touches – physically present or not. Turn from one side to another, look around and see how the seeds of this mysterious love are being scattered and multiplied. Chant: “Be Still”



6. **Grounding** – The prayer ends in a reverential stance that establishes us as an embodied being - the body as an axis between heaven and earth. “I am here. I am awake. I am home.” Chant: “Be”