



Pebble Prayer on the Meditation Path

*A Desert Fathers & Mothers Practice for Walking Prayer
Contemplative Practice Circle • St. Columba's Episcopal Church*

The early Desert Fathers and Mothers of Christianity sought God in silence, simplicity, and ceaseless prayer. Long before prayer beads became common, tradition tells us that some carried small pebbles in their pockets while walking and praying in the desert.

With each prayer offered, a pebble would be moved from one pocket to another, or dropped onto the ground. The body participated in prayer. The rhythm of walking, touching stone, breathing, and praying became one simple act of attention to God.

Today, we adapt this ancient spirit of prayer for our meditation path at St. Columba's. Over time, as many prayers are offered, the path itself may gradually become a visible witness to the prayers of our community.

How to Practice Pebble Prayer

- Place 7, 12, or 33 small pebbles in one pocket, pouch, or your hand before beginning.
- Walk slowly and prayerfully along the meditation path.
- With each pebble, offer a prayer, a name, a concern, a thanksgiving, or a simple breath prayer.
- Move the pebble to another pocket, or drop it onto the path as a symbol of the prayer being offered.
- Continue until all the pebbles have been prayed.

Walk slowly • Breathe naturally • Allow silence between prayers

Simple Prayers

Breath Prayer

Inhale: "Lord Jesus Christ"

Exhale: "Have mercy on me"

Prayer of Presence

"Be still and know that I am God."

Prayer of Surrender

"Into Your hands."

Prayer for Peace

“Grant me peace.”

“Grant peace to the world.”

Prayer of Gratitude

“Thank You.”

“For this moment.”

“For this breath.”

You may also carry a loved one, a grief, a hope, or a thanksgiving in silence with each stone.

Prayer Before Beginning

O Christ of the quiet hills and restless sea,

meet us on this path of prayer.

As the desert elders sought You in silence,

help us to become attentive in heart,

gentle in spirit,

and rooted in Your peace.

May each step become prayer,

and each breath an opening to Your presence.

Amen.

“Pray without ceasing.” — 1 Thessalonians 5:17