

SUGGESTIONS ON LEADING INTERCESSIONS IN THE DIOCESE OF COVENTRY



1. Why is prayer for others so important?

Intercede = Prayer for others; asking God to help them or intervene in some specific way.

2. Why pray together?

- Matthew 18.19-20* – corporate prayer is a powerful thing
- If God has spoken to us through the sermon, this is a way we can address ourselves back to God in prayer
- Acts 2.42* – it is a mark of a healthy, growing church
- 2 Thess. 1.11-12* – when we pray together God is glorified

Why do you pray? Does anything from these bible passages impact you especially?

- For what?** (see *Common Worship*; page 174 (*Forms of Intercession*), and pages 281-287)
 - For our world (*1 Timothy 2.1-2a*)
 - For church leaders (*Colossians 4.3*)
 - On behalf of all – about issues facing is (*Ephesians 6.18*)

Which is most important for our church to develop?

4. The style of the service – sequence of concerns; optional responses.

- A series of short prayers or topics. With responses.
- Several longer prayers. With 'Amen' ending.

What alternatives responses to the normal 'Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.'?

5. **CHECKLIST** Where do I start? Ideas for starting points

- The *Diocesan Prayer Diary* – monthly themes, daily prayer for churches, schools, Deaneries, Mission Hubs, significant meetings and gatherings (see 10. Below)
- Bible readings for the service
- The Season we are in
- Ask service leader or preacher for suggestions
- What is happening in the world? News. Internet. Papers – national and local. Listen for a few days before you lead prayers.
- Church notices – suggesting needs and activities
- Special services coming up – e.g. weddings, baptisms, healing, memorial
- Draw from prayer resources left out in your church or a small chapel (Diocese, world region, partner Dioceses, CMS, CPAS, Feed the Hungry, Embrace, Christian Aid etc).
- Decide on topics, make your prayers 'clear and specific' so people can say 'Amen' with confidence. But don't push people to pray for something controversial or impossible to them.
- Do's – use language natural to you; keep prayers short (3-5 minutes total); make endings clear whether responses or 'Amen'; use silence to allow space; leave space for others to think of their own issues and needs ...'and there are others (silence)'
- Do not's – avoid chatting/explaining to the congregation; your prayers are directed towards God; take care about not preaching to the congregation; stick to one form of prayer; use a single sheet of paper; never assume people know anything by heart.



Any other ideas you want to make a note of? Questions you'd like to ask?

Recommended resource:
Anna de Lange & Liz Simpson 'How to Lead the Prayers: A Training Course' (Grove Booklet, 2002, W 169) £4.95

6. What do I pray about? – try hard to relate to all groups in the congregation (different generations have very different characteristics) especially in any Inter-Generational or All-Age worship.

- a. Children can pray too – they are often more aware of the world around them.
- b. What is going on in the congregation – Schools starting back? Guide or scout groups? Specific groups with children? Bereavement group(s).
- c. Pray for the less obvious. Residents at care homes or those living in alms houses? Links with local primary/secondary/special schools, naming their headteachers? Villages and events (in parish)? Groups meeting in villages/areas each week/month? Pray for an adjacent parish – anything you can think of or see on their website?
- d. *'Do not get parochial'* – there is a world beyond the church building and church family. The world is our parish, as John Wesley said.
- e. *'Do not be tempted to preach or make political points. You are helping people to talk to God, not haranguing them.*

Interests of the congregation? Do we pray enough for the world outside church?

Characteristics	Maturists (pre-1945)	Baby Boomers (1945-1960)	Generation X (1961-1980)	Generation Y (1981-1995)	Generation Z (Born after 1995)
Formative experiences	Second World War Rationing Fixed-gender roles Rock 'n' Roll Nuclear families	Cold War Post-War boom "Swinging Sixties" Apollo Moon landings Youth culture Woodstock Family-orientated Rise of the teenager	End of Cold War Fall of Berlin Wall Reagan / Corbachev Thatcherism Live Aid Introduction of first PC Early mobile technology Latch-key kids; rising levels of divorce	9/11 terrorist attacks PlayStation Social media Invasion of Iraq Reality TV Google Earth Clastonbury	Economic downturn Global warming Global focus Mobile devices Energy crisis Arab Spring Produce own media Cloud computing Wiki-leaks
DIFFERENT GENERATIONS CAN HAVE VERY DIFFERENT WORLDVIEWS					
Percentage in U.K. workforce*	3%	33%	35%	29%	Currently employed in either part-time jobs or new apprenticeships
Aspiration	Home ownership	Job security	Work-life balance	Freedom and flexibility	Security and stability
Attitude toward technology	Largely disengaged	Early information technology (IT) adaptors	Digital Immigrants	Digital Natives	"Technoholics" – entirely dependent on IT; limited grasp of alternatives
Attitude toward career	Jobs are for life	Organisational — careers are defined by employers	Early "portfolio" careers — loyal to profession, not necessarily to employer	Digital entrepreneurs — work "with" organisations not "for"	Career multitaskers — will move seamlessly between organisations and "pop-up" businesses
Signature product	Automobile	Television	Personal Computer	Tablet/Smart Phone	Google glass, graphene, nano-computing, 3-D printing, driverless cars
Communication media	Formal letter	Telephone	E-mail and text message	Text or social media	Hand-held (or integrated into clothing) communication devices
Communication preference	Face-to-face	Face-to-face ideally, but telephone or e-mail if required	Text messaging or e-mail	Online and mobile (text messaging)	Facetime
Preference when making financial decisions	Face-to-face meetings	Face-to-face ideally, but increasingly will go online	Online — would prefer face-to-face if time permitting	Face-to-face	Solutions will be digitally crowd-sourced

*Percentages are approximate at the time of publication.

7. Do something different

- a. How about a time of open prayer? 'Would two or three people pray for [a named/known missionary overseas] ...?' (having shared brief news)
- b. You could use visuals as a focus for prayers (pictures on a TV screen)
- c. Use a backing track of relevantly themed music
- d. Invite people to write prayers on pieces of paper as they arrive/wait for the service to start
- e. Invite different groups (e.g. Messy Church, PCC, Church Hall Committee, local farmers, artists, musicians) to suggest prayer needs to include in a Sunday service
- f. Have a musical response (sung) or even sing the intercessions using a familiar tune like Beauty for Brokenness by Graham Kendrick
- g. Prayer for different areas of employment and unemployment, like the NHS, teachers, business and trades people, named shops or stores in the area
- h. Pray for specific national and international mission agencies (see 5 h. above)
- i. Use different voices (as can also be so effective with some bible readings)
- j. Sometimes we need to allow silence, where there is something difficult to verbalise



Which one idea could you use next time you are leading our intercessions?

8. On the day – chat with churchwarden for latest news? think delivery?

9. Where to stand to lead intercessions? (at lectern/in congregation/back of church)

- a. You may be able to use a hand-held microphone.
- b. Move to different locations to stress particular themes and issues.
- c. Make sure you can get out of your seat easily; wherever you will be standing.
- d. Take your time. Speak slowly. Pause at the end rather than rushing away back to your seat.
- e. Look out rather than down if possible. Imagine you are talking with someone at the back of the church.
- f. Stand straight, well-balanced, feet apart, no shuffling.



Would you appreciate practising before the service? Check volume if using microphone.

10. CLICK LINK [Prayer - Diocese of Coventry \(anglican.org\)](https://www.anglican.org) - from the Diocesan website

11. CLICK LINK [Themed Prayer Resources - Equip Hub](#) – from the Diocesan Equip Hub

12. CLICK LINK [Prayer idea cards - Equip Hub](#) – from the Diocesan Equip Hub



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Notes

A POSSIBLE FRAMEWORK FOR LEADING INTERCESSIONS

SECTION	For example	Your own ideas/notes/differences
1. <i>Response, or Use Amen</i>	<i>Explain. Address biddings to people; prayers to God. E.g. Series of biddings and silence (no responses). 30 seconds</i>	
2. <i>Original ideas including visuals</i>	<i>Use a single image for each theme. What approach will I take?</i>	
3. <i>Theme 1 Wider church</i>	<i>For the church in Kenya, for other local churches, for special seasonal services up to 1 minute</i>	
4. <i>Theme 2 Creation, society, the King, those in authority</i>	<i>For political processes, for the King, the prime minister, government, international concerns. up to 1 minute.</i>	
5. <i>Theme 3 The local community</i>	<i>For schools, specific parts of the parish, doctors, nurses, social workers, teachers. up to 1 minute</i>	
6. <i>Theme 4 Those who suffer</i>	<i>For the sick, the bereaved, the lonely, those with mental health challenges, those under pressure. up to 1 minute</i>	
7. <i>Theme 5 The communion of saints</i>	<i>Giving thanks for the lives of any who have died, for anniversaries and memories of those who have gone before us. 30 seconds</i>	
8. <i>Total time?</i>	<i>up to 5 minutes</i>	

Revd. Clive Hicks, December 2023