PARISH OF ST MATTHEW & ST OSWALD RUGBY

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Leading Intercessions during Sunday and Tuesday services

Thank you for being willing to lead intercessions during Sunday/Tuesday services. Below are some guidelines that I hope you will find helpful as we aim to lead people in prayer.

1. **Aim:**
   To lead the congregation in real and heartfelt prayer that:
   - Brings to God our concern for others and
   - Enters into God's concerns for His world.

2. **Timing**
   Please keep your prayers between 3-5mins long. We are leading intercessions within a church service, and not leading a prayer meeting. The service leader is trying to keep the service to a certain length to respect Children's Church timings so needs your help.

3. **Do's**
   I. Look at the theme of the service and ask the Lord to guide you as you prepare the intercessions for that day. Jane will send you through the order of service for Sunday on the preceding Tuesday or Wednesday so that you can link with the theme of the sermon. Also, have a look at the prayer points.
   II. Think about what is likely to be on people's minds and hearts on that day and pray for those things that are relevant to them.
   III. Make sure that you can be heard and that means standing with your mouth close to the microphone. If you are unsure about microphone use, talk with Malcolm Hunt who can help you.
   IV. Speak slowly so that people can enter into the prayers.
   V. Address your prayers to God – normally to Father.
   VI. Feel free to use silence. Times of silence will often enable people to pray themselves.
   VII. Link to the church vision statements where relevant.
   VIII. Feel free to do it differently – for example, use a litany or use pictures etc.

4. **Don'ts**
   I. Preach! If you start talking to the congregation and not to God, you are preaching and not praying! This is not the time for testimony, explaining the Bible etc. There will be times however in our intercessions when we will talk to the congregation to give instructions; for example we might say something like: *"Let's take a moment of silence to bring before the Lord those who are on our hearts today….."*
   II. Don't feel that you have to cover everything – lists in particular are not helpful, for example: *"We pray today for the homeless, those facing prejudice, torture, bereavement, sickness, loneliness, abuse, mental health problems, financial problems, redundancy, imprisonment..."* Simply pray something like: *"We pray for those facing homelessness today, holding before you people in our town facing this situation. We pray for your provision and for your continued blessing upon the ministry of Hope4."*

5. **Format**
    I. Having a clear structure to your prayers can help people relax into praying.
    II. People also like to know what is expected of them, so if you are going to use a response, explain it clearly at the beginning of the prayer time. If the response is different from the response: "Lord in your mercy" – "Hear our prayer", send the response to Jane to be included in the PowerPoint so that people don't have to try and remember it!
    III. Generally, for a Sunday or Tuesday morning time of intercession 4-5 sections will be sufficient.
    IV. The following example format may help, but don't be restricted to it.

- Pray for the **World** e.g. some of the following:
    - What are the issues that are in people's minds?
    - Are there any current emergencies that need prayer? Pray for provision, for people involved and for peace.
    - What issues are coming up on the international agenda?
    - Pray for agencies involved in alleviating suffering, and people involved in bringing about justice.
    - **Caution:** Avoid giving a news report!

- Pray for the **Nation** e.g. some of the following:
    - What are the issues that are in people's minds?
    - Pray for the government (1Timothy 2:1-2)
    - Pray for the Archbishops

- Pray for the **Local Community** e.g. some of the following:
    - What are the issues that are in people's minds?
    - Pray for our schools; for the headteachers, teachers and children.
    - Pray for local businesses.
    - Pray for the hospitals, the council, the police etc.
    - Pray for the links we as a church are building with the local community.
    - Pray for families.

- Pray for the **Church** e.g. some of the following:
    - Pray for our vision and for any events coming up.
    - Use the prayer points to pray for current issues within the church
    - Pray for our children and youth work and the "passing on of the pearl" to the younger generation.
    - Pray for our unity, for the deepening of our love for God and for one another
    - Pray for the effectiveness of our witness
    - Pray for more of the Holy Spirit.

- Pray for those **Suffering** e.g. some of the following:
    - Pray for healing for those who are ill within the church family.
    - Pray for those facing difficult challenges or situations.
    - Pray for people outside the church family who are suffering, and who are known by the church family.

6. **Resources**

   There are many resources you can use, which include:

   I. "The Intercessions handbook and The second Intercessions handbook" – John Pritchard.
   II. "Prayers of Intercession" – Susan Sayers
   III. "The book of a thousand prayers" – Angela Ashwin
   IV. For a variety of litanies from the Church of England see: https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/service-word/service-word-morning-and#ch6h
   V. For a variety of prayers from the Church of England see: https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/topical-prayers

Thank you for being part of this ministry. May the Lord bless you as you lead His people in prayer.

Jane Hulme Aug 2022