

# Intercessory Prayer Guidelines



**All Saints' Church**  
*Preston on Tees*

# Intercessory Prayer Guidelines

The purpose of the intercession slot in our services is to pray for the world and the church. The following “ten commandments” are designed to help you lead these prayers in a way that will honour God and inspire his people.

1. **SEEK GOD.** When preparing your intercessions, ask God to place on your heart the things that are on his.
2. **PREPARE WELL.** Take the time to find out what the theme of the service is and what the readings are. Contact the service leader and preacher in the week prior to the service. Try to see if there are any ways the intercessions can amplify the theme and make for a “joined up” service.
3. **BE REAL.** You really want to be yourself when you pray. God honours sincerity of heart so it doesn't need to be a performance.
4. **DECLARE TRUTH.** Do encourage faith in God's people by clearly affirming God's greatness, his promises, his mighty power and his awesome deeds.
5. **LOOK OUTWARDS.** Try not to focus exclusively on All Saints.' Think too about other forms of Christian witness and mission to the nation and remember - there's a big world to pray for!
6. **KEEP TIME.** There is a big world to pray for but on the other hand the intercessions cannot cover *everything*; as a rule of thumb, try to keep to about 5 minutes. If you're not used to public speaking, practice at home and time yourself.
7. **PRESENT REQUESTS.** You don't need to spend a long time glorifying and praising God or reading long passages of Scripture. They are good and right things to do, but there are other times in the service set apart for that. Your main job, as leader of the intercessory prayers, is to present requests to God for our needs and those of the world.
8. **STAY NEUTRAL.** Be careful not to show political bias in your prayers. This is especially important when praying in the run up to elections and when praying about sensitive subjects, like wars. That's not to say we should avoid praying for these things, but do bear in mind that different members of the congregation may hold conflicting views. The goal is to pray as one body, not to highlight division.
9. **DON'T PREACH.** Beware of turning the prayers into a second sermon. This can happen when there are a lot of descriptive clauses in the prayers. Some prayers can reveal more about the intercessor's theological interests than the actual needs to be prayed for.
10. **ASK FIRST.** If you are going to pray for someone from church in any kind of need (e.g. pregnancy, illness, grief, accident, redundancy etc.) please make sure you ask their permission first. Some people prefer a discreet approach and do not want their need to be generally known.