

nations of the world that following the ways of truth and justice they may be free from bitterness and strife and by the power of your love live in peace.

We pray for all who are in trouble, that those who are sick may be cared for, those who are lonely sustained, those who are oppressed strengthened those who mourn comforted and that those who are close to death may know their risen Lord.

We give thanks for those who have died in the Faith, especially those known to us, who have entered into the joy and peace of your nearer presence. Grant that we may follow their example and come to share with them the glory of everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

2) In peace let us pray to the Lord;

for the Church of Jesus Christ in all the world; for this parish and its worshipping communities; for our ministers and elders and all who belong with us;
silence

Lord God, grant that we, and all who confess your name may be united in your truth, live together in love, and reveal your glory in the world.

for the nations of the world; for Elizabeth our Queen; for all in authority; for the communities in which we live and work;

silence

Righteous God, guide the people of this land and of all the nations in the ways of justice and of peace, that we may honour one another and serve the common good.

for those in any trouble this day; the sick, the poor, the oppressed;

silence

Merciful God, save and comfort all who suffer, that they may hold to you through good and ill, and trust in your unfailing love.

Let us give thanks for the saints who have lived and died in the Faith

silence

God of our fathers, we rejoice in the faithful witness of your people in every age and pray that we may share with them the joys of your eternal kingdom.

Accept these our prayers for the sake of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.

(Example 2 has both bidding and direct prayer. Biddings alone might be used with silences with a prayer at the end commending our prayers to God.)

Let us remember always that prayer for the world and for the coming of God's Kingdom is the work of our Risen Saviour. It is his constant prayer which matters. The Holy Spirit will catch up our lisping prayer so that it becomes an *Amen* to his great prayer for us.



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Intercessions in the Sunday Service

In the course of a service of public worship a number of types of prayer are offered. There are prayers of confession, seeking God's forgiveness. There may be collects, short formal prayers which often reflect the theme of the day. There will be thanksgiving prayers. Most prayers are led by the minister but there is another type of prayer which is very properly voiced from the congregation.



Intercessions express the hopes and concerns of a Christian community. They are true "liturgy" (the Greek is literally "the work of the people"). Here we express our loves, our fears, our solidarity when we hold up the world in prayer to our Father in Heaven. We pray for Christ's Church; we pray for our nation and our communities; we pray for people, situations and issues where God's help or direction is needed.

We do this because our Lord told us to and because the Apostle Paul told us to. We do

it because we believe that in the mystery of our relationship with God prayer makes a difference. We do it because while we are together as a congregation we are already beginning our work of discipleship together before we disperse.

It really does not make a lot of sense for the ministers always to be the ones to lead intercessions. Different eyes look upon the world in different ways. People's circumstances and experiences vary greatly.



What a wealth of interest and concern is represented by a congregation. In terms of intercessions the minister is only one person, and we should not be limited by his/her experience, knowledge or style of speech.

We hope that gradually intercessions may be given back to the people. To begin with, we plan that from time to time members who have offered to lead these prayers will do so in one of the Stewartry churches.

Practical Questions

Would I have to write my own prayers?

This is probably the best thing although it is perfectly acceptable to use a book as a guide.



What help may I expect in preparing my prayers?

The ministers will be available to help or consult. They will not expect to vet or approve prayers but will give advice as requested.

What style should I use?

There are some standard forms of intercessory prayer and it would be best if you stick to one of these. Examples are given later in this leaflet.

Are there some things which should always be prayed for?

It is normal always to offer prayer for the Church (worldwide and/or local) and for the nation, the Queen and our government (It is important for the National Church to hold up its rulers in prayer to God and Saint Paul instructs the Church to do this). Prayers of intercession in our service normally conclude with a "Thanksgiving for the Faithful Departed". This is an important prayer not least because it assures the congregation week by week that loved ones who have died are held in the love of God.

Do I come out to the front to lead the intercessions?

No. The congregation will be aware from the service sheet that the prayers will come from the congregation on that Sunday. You

will have a hand held radio mike and will simply speak in your normal voice from your pew. You will have clear written cue from the minister as to when to begin.

How often will I be asked to lead intercessions?

Only certain members will feel that leading prayers is a ministry for them but it defeats the purpose if a few folk are over used. We shall prepare a calendar (similar to the Scripture Readers' rota). This will give very good notice. It may be that intercessions are led by a member only in one of the four churches every few weeks in the early stages. You will not necessarily be in the church in which you normally worship. For this purpose you belong to the worship team of the Stewartry.

Styles of Intercession

There are basically two styles,

- 1) *Prayer (addressed directly to God)*
- 2) *Bidding (addressed to the congregation) often followed by silence and sometimes by a short prayer addressed to God.*

The following are examples.

- 1) God of love and power, we pray for your Church in this parish and throughout the world, that through the courage and faith of your people your word may be preached and lived.

We pray for the Queen and those in authority that in the fulfilling of their duties they may be guided by your Spirit and upheld by your grace.

We pray for our community, our country and the