

Intercessor Workshop  
4pm, Sunday 6 October 2019



*The aim* of the workshop is to ensure that: a) the Whangamatā Anglican intercessors are comfortable both with the existing, well-used intercessor book resources; and, b) that they are confident in crafting their own prayers as appropriate to the readings and theme for the Sunday.

*The following is an excerpt from our 2018 customary:*

## Intercessor

The role of the intercessor is to pray on behalf of God's people gathered in that place. They offer the "prayers of the people" which include prayers of thanksgiving and intercession. Thanksgivings are about giving thanks to God for the many blessings we experience and intercessions pray for God to undertake some action to bring some aspect of Kingdom life closer to the ways of the world.

The role of the intercessor is not to offer meditations, explanations, personal reflections, or a mini-sermon. Instead it is to pray for the needs of the world and give expression to the hope of the Good News we have heard through the Scriptures.

There are five main resources available to intercessors at Whangamatā. These are the intercession books by Janet Nelson, Ian Black and David Adam. In addition to this, there is material in the Seasons of the Spirit folder. All of these are held in the office. The other main resource is *A New Zealand Prayer Book*. You are welcome to craft your own prayers, too. The preacher for the day is probably the best person to run these by. As you have access to the readings, it is good to make sure that they match up with the prayers as some of the resource books reflect readings which differ from those we will have chosen for the Sunday morning.

When you prepare the prayers, see how they sit with you. If you struggle to make sense of them, they may need some tweaking. If there are references to foreign things they may need contextualizing. They should be prayers that you are able to pray with integrity, which offer grace and hope to the community, while articulating our shared hopes for our, and the world's, needs to be met.

## Crafting your own prayers:

Our custom has been to have a bidding and response at the end of each set of thanksgivings and intercessions. These might be well known: “Lord, in your mercy,” “**hear our prayer;**” or, they might be particular to the day: “God of the Burning Bush,” “**kindle your Spirit within us.**”

The pattern of using biddings and intercessions helps shape the thanksgivings and intercessions we use when we pray and reminds us what the people are saying as they pray. Our role as intercessors is to offer the *Prayers of the People*. The implication being that they are corporate prayers, rather than individual prayers. It means the language needs to be plural, but also that the content reflects the congregation or wider community.

**A method for doing so:** The following method does not exclude other ways of formulating intercessory prayers but it does provide a broad framework:

We span six sections, praying for the: Church; world; community; those in need; those who have died (not always needed); and, our own needs. Sometimes we close with a particular collect and occasionally we pray the Lord’s Prayer. In each section we give thanks for something and ask for something. So, it looks like:

[address for God], we pray for [section]. We give thanks for [topic]. We pray that [topic]. Bidding and then **response**.

Here is an example:

Loving God, we pray for the ministry of intercession. We give thanks for the faithfulness and commitment of our intercessors in Whangamatā. Bless them as they pray on our behalf, that their prayers may become our prayers.

Lord, in your mercy,                      **Hear our prayer.**

**Conclusion:** This method might seem to suggest dry, or formulaic prayers. They need not be this way. If you are inspired by the readings, or events in the world, work them in. If you want your prayers to be more poetic than prosaic, that works, too (this tends to work best in the concluding collect).

With faith in God, and trust in ourselves . . . let’s give it a go 😊