

Creative idea

For praying for complex or huge issues

As well as responding to specific headlines, the Sanctuary's rhythm of prayer and worship has a rotating list of more than fifty topics, each one in focus for a week at a time when it comes round. This is to ensure we regularly cover the major justice issues even if they aren't in focus in the news, or even in the reports of charities and aid agencies.

Sometimes this can mean praying for huge and complex issues – such as people in the world who don't have access to an adequate water supply as we prayed for at the Sanctuary's centre last week...

When we gather to pray for these topics we tend to have a range of people present with very different levels of prior knowledge and therefore confidence to pray.

We have found this technique a really good way of empowering everyone to join in, helping us all to pray specifically and for a more extended period of time. (It also avoids the need to take up a lot of time explaining the issues and conveying a range of prayer points, rather than simply praying about them.)

Creative prayer idea for praying for complex or huge issues

1. In advance of the session, look up a range of facts and statistics about the issue you're wanting to pray about.
2. If possible create two lists – one of progress and good news to celebrate, and one of needs and difficulties where breakthrough is yet to be seen. (Where possible, try to keep them to a sentence or two each so that the information is digestible.)
3. Print out your points and guillotine them into strips, forming two piles of prayer points – one of good news and one of needs/challenges.
4. Invite people to take one strip from each pile at a time and to use the two strips together to inform their prayers of thanksgiving, blessing, continued breakthrough and intercession into the biggest areas of need in relation to this issue.
5. Encourage them to keep taking the slips until all the points have been taken, or until the time for prayer is over.
6. You could also adapt this idea in a number of ways, including creating a third list/pile of slips made out from relevant verses of scripture to help people frame their prayers.