

## Written prayers

### Interceding for the elderly

*These prayers are designed to be used as part of an intercessions slot during a service, or when praying about the elderly as one of several specific topics during a prayer meeting. Please feel free to use them as flexibly as you wish, changing sentences or paragraphs, or adding in extra sections or new information as appropriate.*

*The section in bold at the end of the prayer is designed to be prayed together by the whole congregation, so to do this you will need to print out the words for everyone or add them to a PowerPoint slide and project them onto a screen. If this isn't possible, you can just speak them out yourself.*

*Depending on how your service or prayer meeting is run, and whether you are doing these intercessions as a standalone item or as part of a longer intercessions slot, you might like to get some images of elderly people to project up on a screen either while you are praying or as a scrolling PowerPoint presentation before you start. You could also add each line of the statistics included to single or multiple slides with the images, and pause on each one as you speak it out.*

*(The majority of information used here has come from Age UK ([www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)) which is a good source of up to date facts and figures about the elderly, as well as current campaigning needs.)*

Leader:            Father of all, you see every one of us as your child, no matter how young or old.  
                         You have known us for every second of our lives.  
                         You give us every breath, and you sustain us every day.

We lift to you now the elderly.  
Each one is your child,  
Each one is precious in your sight.

You have told us that through your Spirit, old men will dream dreams,  
Proclaiming that the day of the Lord is here.  
You see old men and women as they truly are – knowledge-keepers and dreamers,  
Many of them ever-faithful followers who have learnt to walk in your ways.

And we know, Father, that every aging heart is held in your hand, young and vibrant to your touch.  
We see how you use the wisdom, knowledge and experience of the older generations to teach the young,  
To bring old insight to new problems, and to give love and security where there is uncertainty.

You trusted an old man to build an ark and save humanity from the flood.

You brought a child to Abraham and Sarah despite their years, a child who signalled the beginning of Israel.

You guided an aging Moses through the desert so he could lead thousands to the promised-land, And you gave Zechariah and Elizabeth a son in their old age, a son who would prepare the way for your own.

*[you might want to pause after each of the following statistics to let them sink in – or if you're using PowerPoint slides, to let people look properly at each one and grasp the significance]*

And yet, today, our society is quick to forget the elderly:

More than two million UK pensioners are living in poverty, unable to buy enough food.

Hundreds of older people are becoming malnourished whilst in hospital, leaving them more vulnerable to infection.

An extra 25,000 people over 65 die in England and Wales each winter because they can't afford to heat their homes sufficiently.

And over two million people over 65 suffer depression – with loneliness and fear as the major contributors.

**All: Ancient of days, Lord of life, help us to love, support and respect the elderly as you do, and to see them as the knowledge-keepers and dreamers of our time. We stand now against these statistics that tell us a different story, and ask that you would help us join with older voices to work for justice for their generation. We pray for an end to food and fuel poverty; an end to hospital malnutrition; and an end to premature winter deaths. Open our eyes to see those around us who are lonely, frightened or cold – and give us the compassion to take the time to listen to their stories, to bring them into our own homes and families, and to care for them as you do.**

**We ask this Father in the name of your precious Son and through the power of your life-giving Spirit.**

**Amen.**