

PLEASE: prayer ideas to intercede for refugees and ask God for inner transformation

Supplementary PowerPoint template available, with Bible verses, call and response, and additional material.

Background

Acknowledging the blessings we have received, as well as the ways we may have acted against God's will for our lives and communities, we recognise that we can only hope to address the challenges which arise by calling out to God and asking for his strength and wisdom.

The prayers below, shaped around The Salvation Army's five mission priorities, could guide a congregation in asking God to intercede, both in our lives and the lives of newcomers to the UK and Ireland, as we seek to engage more fully in God's mission where we are.

To Share the Good News

'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' (Acts 1:8)

We ask for your protection for our Christian brothers and sisters who are persecuted for sharing the good news and are forced to leave their homes and communities to find a place of safety. We pray that they will find compassionate communities to settle in. We pray that your Spirit will empower and inspire your Church in our work with refugees and asylum seekers, that we will be empowered to live out the good news in people's darkest situations.

Leader: Lord, please would there be fullness of life for all with Jesus.

Response: Lord, please.

To Serve Others Without Discrimination

'And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.' (1 Corinthians 13:13)

We ask that you fill us with love for the newcomers in our communities. We ask that you reveal to us their needs, and give us ears to hear, so that we may serve them in the best way. And we ask that you remove the scales from our eyes and reveal to us the prejudices we may hold, so we can humbly work to remove these.

Leader: Lord, please would there be fullness of life for all with Jesus.

Response: Lord, please.

To Nurture Disciples of Jesus

'Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.' (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

We ask that you reveal opportunities to spend time being with refugees and asylum seekers in our community. We pray that through these experiences, as we begin to understand the sacred being before us, we are both transformed, knowing more deeply your heart of love and compassion. Please also open up opportunities for newcomers to serve in your Church, recognising that we all have a role to play in the body of Christ.

Leader: Lord, please would there be fullness of life for all with Jesus.

Response: Lord, please.

To Care for Creation

'Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.' (1 Peter 4:10)

We ask you to soften the hearts of those who have the power to significantly impact climate change and, in so doing, allow people to have sustainable livelihoods and avoid natural disasters in their home countries. Inspire us to do our part and recognise our role as stewards of the resources you have given us, using them responsibly and acknowledging the impact we may be having.

Leader: Lord, please would there be fullness of life for all with Jesus.

Response: Lord, please.

To Seek Justice and Reconciliation

'Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.' (Hebrews 12:14)

We ask for peace. We recognise that violence of language and of action drives conflict. We see the millions of people displaced because of war and persecution. We ask that you help us to grow into people of peace in our communities. We ask that you empower us to be beacons of your light and love in dark places, and give us the boldness to challenge injustice and the will to seek justice.

Leader: Lord, please would there be fullness of life for all with Jesus.

Response: Lord, please.

Next Step

You might like to listen to some or all of the songs below. They give some idea of the experience many refugees and people seeking asylum may go through. Feel free to follow the links below or search for them on your music player app.

'Running (Refugee Song)' featuring Gregory Porter and Common

Originally released for World Refugee Day 2016, this song depicts the struggle of refugees, specifically the refugee crisis caused by the civil war in Syria.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rhfo3oBYDPA>
<https://open.spotify.com/track/7oW9BJSN3K5wFqJubN1GMC>

'A Safe Place to Land' by Sara Bareilles, featuring John Legend

A song that asks us to reflect on why people leave their home for a dangerous journey, and challenges you to be the 'light in the dark'.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5OJMOTe56tE>
<https://open.spotify.com/track/55fyE9Q754QhXpmcLtmam>

'No Country' by John Mark McMillan, featuring Propaganda

Here's what Christian artist John Mark McMillan says about this song:

'What is a country? Dirt under our feet? Lines on a piece of paper? Is the value of a person determined by the dirt? And what value do we hold in relation to the dirt, and is our love hemmed in by these lines? ... "No Country" is a song, mostly, written from the first person perspective of a displaced individual, but these are the questions that I hoped the song would ultimately raise.'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Po3ZgofRpNE>
<https://open.spotify.com/track/1RXRTq1nbEgCWs1ecWTR2W>

Invite the congregation to respond in prayer, asking God to intercede in situations like these in the UK, Ireland and overseas. Pray for the boldness and compassion to come alongside newcomers in your country as they journey to a place of safety and strength.

