

# Prayer Course II: Week 4

## Poetry (Writing our own prayers)

### Introduction:

It is obvious but easy to overlook the truth that all prayers at some time have been written by someone. However ancient or formal they have been created and honed by somebody. In this exercise we are going to try, like them, to write our own formal prayers.

### Background:

Christians throughout the generations have written formal prayers and not just because the services they were taking demanded them. Writing formal prayer has various benefits: it helps us focus our prayer and pare down and direct our petitions so we can be clearer what God is doing in our lives, and what we are bringing before God. More than that though, writing our own prayers helps us to appreciate the formal prayers that others have written before us. As well as helping us understand the patterns and structures that underpin formal written prayers. To do this we will be using the structure of the 'collect' and applying the themes we discern need praying about on that day.

### Purpose:

To learn to appreciate formal written prayers more deeply through trying to write our own.

### Process:

- Get yourself comfortable.
- Pray for God's help in your prayer.
- Notice what is on your heart to pray about. try to sum this up in a word or a short phrase.

- Apply that theme to the structure of the 'collect' praying for the right words to fit into the structure.
- Collect Structure:
  - Address prayer to God with appropriate terms for theme
  - Describe God's action on this theme
  - Plea for God to intervene on this theme, describing how.
  - Plea for God to Change us in relation to the theme, describe how.
  - Summarise the hoped for consequences of God's action.
  - Address prayer through Jesus and/or, in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Write it down.
- Pray it through, and then pray about the prayer.
- Make any changes.
- Pray it slowly.
- Sit in silence and listen.
- Give thanks for what you have been shown.
- Say the Lord's Prayer

### Further reading and resources:

Collects in Common Worship  
Collects in BCP