

SIMPLY PRAY



SUSCOTLAND.ORG.UK/DOP

**SU SCOTLAND DAY OF PRAYER
18 JANUARY 2024**

Thank you for downloading this Prayer Guide and for your heart to pray for SU Scotland's ministry. We are grateful for you. We depend on your prayers.

On our website suscotland.org.uk/dop you will find supporting resources. We provide a short video version of the Prayer Guide for those who prefer to watch rather than read. We also provide opportunities to pray with others, at various times and locations.

Our Bible passage today is Matthew 6:5-18. Jesus is teaching his followers about prayer – our attitude and our approach to God. It contains the most famous prayer of all, the Lord's Prayer. Verses 16 to 18 talk about fasting. Alongside praying, perhaps some of you would consider fasting.

Let's explore Matthew 6 and allow God's word to guide our prayers. Let's pray simply – and simply pray!

GOD IS YOUR AUDIENCE

And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

And when you pray, do not continue babbling on like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Matthew 6:5-8

God wants you to pray as though there was no one else in the universe but you and him. He is your audience, not other people. He made you, he knows you, he loves you – he is your heavenly Dad. He doesn't need you to impress him with lots of words. He is waiting to hear from you... so simply pray.

Quieten yourself down before praying.
Listen to a worship song or read a psalm of praise.

Worship God by telling him in your own words what it means to be able to call him 'Father'. Praise him for other encouragements the passage brings to you.

We want to see young people growing in confident prayer. Pray for tonight's youth prayer event, led by our Gap Year and Student Exec. Pray that young people come.

Give thanks! We are seeing a huge upsurge in work with senior pupils. Pray for discipleship and growth in prayer for those leading SU Groups or attending COMMISSION, serving as trainees at weekends, holidays and missions.

GOD'S WILL BE DONE!

This, then, is how you should pray:
'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' Matthew 6:9-10

The hypocrite prays with the wrong motive, to impress others (v5). The pagan (or Gentile or person who doesn't know God) prays with the wrong manner, to impress God (v7). It is easy to condemn them, but how often do we try to talk God into doing things our way? Do we always pray according to God's will?

Pray 'Your kingdom come, your will be done' in SU Scotland, in your your region, in your own area of work or volunteering.

Pray that the SU Board and Leadership Team always sense and submit to God's will and direction in their decision-making.

Pray that young people will find their identity as a child of God. Pray that those at the margins will discover God as their Father and come to honour his holy name.

GIVE ME WHAT I NEED...

Give us today our daily bread. Matthew 6:11, CEV

Simple prayers are short and specific. They get to the point. They boldly ask for something. After all, God already knows what we need! And in his goodness and mercy, God loves to provide. How often have we seen that?

Thank God for answered prayer. You might like to watch 'Hello, we are SU Scotland' (see suscotland.org.uk/dop) to stimulate praise.

Ask God to give wisdom to those setting budgets. Pray that God will supply all SU Scotland's financial and volunteer needs in 2024.

Our no.1 priority remains to see more SU Groups in schools. Ask God for growth!

Pray into our office relocation in Glasgow and Edinburgh, asking that God will clearly direct how we can serve the priority communities around us.

FORGIVE & PROTECT...

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. Matthew 6:12-15

Having asked for God's provision, we now seek his pardon. Forgiveness is a big deal. Our relationship with God depends entirely on Jesus, who bore our sins in his body on the tree (1 Peter 2:24). Too often we can take this for granted and forget the price that was paid for us at the cross. Too often we can rely on a past time when we cried out for forgiveness, ignoring a daily need to get right with our heavenly Father.

And we don't just need pardon. We also need protection. In SU Scotland we see some schools closed to SU Groups. Young people are met with apathy as they share Jesus with friends and some secondary SU Groups are very small. Some primary groups are very large, and leaders face the challenge this brings!

Jesus, risen and ascended, now sits in power at the Father's right hand. He can deliver us from trial and temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13). Simply ask.

Pray for an SU staff member or volunteer. Pray for protection over their mental and physical health, their walk with God, their family life.

Gap Years, Interns and Trainee Activity Instructors have moved away from home. Pray they settle into a new church and flourish.

Pray for schools. Pray that SU Group leaders persevere. Pray for protection for Pupil Leaders and that those wishing to start new groups will overcome any obstacles. *Please register schools prayer at prayforschoolsscotland.org.uk*

Pray for young people who are struggling. Pray for the successful appointment of an Additional Support Needs Development Coordinator.

QUIET DEVOTION

When you fast, do not look sombre as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. Matthew:16-18

Fasting, along with giving to the needy and praying, is a personal act of devotion. We are grateful to the hundreds of people who, out of love for God, quietly serve SU Scotland.

Give thanks for those serving behind the scenes: minibus drivers, travel leaders, cooks, centre and site volunteers, financial supporters. Pray that God will richly bless them and raise up others to join them.

Pray for an increase in prayer and financial support for Regional Workers in every area of the country.

Pray for a deepening hunger for God among children and young people. Pray that many young people will respond to the significance of Jesus at SU Holidays, Weekends, Missions and Magnitude this year.

Thank you for taking part. We pray you have been blessed in spending time with God. If you sense God saying something in particular to SU Scotland at this time, please do share it with us. Email pray@suscotland.org.uk.