

## Ten top tips for... *prayer*

Dementia Friendly Churches are inclusive, accessible and community focused. These tips guide you in how to pray with and for people with dementia and their carers. Dementia friendly prayer is attentive and faith filled, enabling everyone to actively participate in the prayer life of the church.

### 1. Pray in a quiet and safe place

A calm and peaceful setting can help people with dementia focus on prayer. Also be aware of the church's safeguarding policy. This is to ensure that people with dementia are kept safe, treated with respect and not put in a situation that would be a risk.

### 2. Keep the prayers short and simple

Make prayers easy to follow by using short sentences and simple language.

### 3. Use common prayers like the Lord's Prayer

People with dementia are more likely to remember things from their past and childhood, so try to use common prayers that are more likely to be familiar.

### 4. Explain to the person what you are doing

People with dementia may find it helpful to have someone pray with them. Introduce yourself and ask the person what they would like to pray about. Then, tell the person when you start and finish praying with them.

### 5. Offer people with dementia time for individual prayer

People with dementia may feel more comfortable at a time of one-to-one prayer after a church service. People may not feel confident or able to come to the front for prayer, if you are offering prayer at the end of the service you may want to approach people instead.

### 6. Write or use set prayers about having dementia

Writing may help people with dementia express their thoughts and feelings. Encourage people with dementia to write down their own prayers or read ones that have already been written.

### 7. Include people with dementia in congregational prayer times

Take the opportunity to ask people with dementia to pray during prayer meetings or church services. They may want to pray specifically for people with dementia or other issues in the church and community.

### 8. Remember to pray for and with carers

Carers play an important part in the lives of people with dementia and may like the opportunity to pray about the challenges they are facing. Remember to offer prayer to carers during times of individual or congregational prayer.

### 9. Regularly pray for people with dementia

Identify a particular day for the church to pray for people with dementia or have dementia as a regular prayer point in church services or prayer meetings. You could also include a person with dementia on a prayer list or in a prayer diary.

### 10. Pray for dementia support services

Support agencies can provide an important resource for people with dementia. Remember to pray for paid for carers and support agencies including day centres, residential homes and dementia care units.