



## On your marks

It is important in all-age worship that every part of what goes on is accessible and meaningful to everyone there. Often however the prayers for others are left in their usual adult format, with someone speaking the words from upfront while everyone else just listens and adds the occasional amen. Why not make your time of prayer together more interactive?

## Get set

You need to have three places around the church where you can set up prayer stations. Make sure that they are easily accessible, particularly for any who are in wheelchairs or have difficulty with steps. It may be possible to have the three stations up at the front of the church, spaced out in a line from left to right.

You will need a candle, a globe and a cross. In addition you may like to have a set of pens or pencils along with post-it pads, which can be left at strategic points for people to pick up and write on as they come towards each prayer station. Why not use post-its in the shape of hearts or leaves?

## Go!

Explain that today we are going to do the prayers slightly differently. It will involve people leaving their seats and walking slowly between three prayer stations.

At the first station there is a cross - the place of hurting where we bring those who are struggling with life in any way. Jesus at the cross entered into and shared all our pain.

At the second station there is a globe - the place of mission, where we bring particular situations and people around the world before God, who is at work in his world through his people everywhere and our prayers.

At the third station there is a candle - the place of light, where we can bring ourselves and others to ask for a new light to show us the way ahead, asking for guidance, assurance and help.

Guided by stewards, the congregation should be invited to move up in three groups to the different prayer stations. The whole process should not be allowed to slow down too much and should not take more than 5 to 8 minutes, depending on numbers. Everyone should visit each prayer station briefly.

As each person arrives at a prayer station, he or she should pause to remember particular people or situations linked to that symbol. It may also be possible that as they come up they pick up a pencil and a post-it to write a particular name, which they can then leave by the symbol. Take care though about paper being left near the candle!



Finally draw all the prayers together once people have returned to their seats with a gathering prayer such as:

*Father,  
we bring all those who are hurting to your cross,  
we bring all those in need of guidance to your light,  
we bring the good news of love to the whole world.  
We ask these prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

Perhaps you can think of other symbols that would work in the similar way but which may be more suited to you own church's tradition?