Sermon: (Luke 11.2-4) **Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.**

I sometimes wonder if prayer is like paying taxes – good to know someone is doing it as long as it is not me!

In most churches if there is a group that meets for prayer (and often there is not) it is usually the smallest. Most often a church will pray mainly during a crisis, or before a special event.

This is not me telling you off, just explaining how things are. There are many reasons for this:

Repetition, lack of results, lack of direction, too much silence, too little silence, ‘holy’ language.

This is not a new problem – **Lord, teach us to pray** (Luke 11.1)

What Jesus gives is not a fixed answer (“use these words and no other”), but a general recipe (most cakes have flour, sugar and eggs) for which there are more ingredients to come depending on the cake.

[1] **Father, hallowed be your name** Establishing a relationship (with respect and honesty, like a friend)

[2] **your kingdom come** The ultimate goal (and thus intercession)

[3] **Give us each day our daily bread.**

Note the communal aspect for giving us what we need to reach the ultimate goal

[4] **Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.**

Sins distort and make us fall short of the ultimate goal

[5] **And lead us not into temptation.**

“Temptation needs to be understood not as desire that makes us feel guilty, but as inclination to get entrapped in that which is harmful to us and which inhibits our flourishing and or freedom” (The Dark Side of the Soul p217)

No prayer is easy when there is no relationship, as with friendship.

When folk say they do not know how to pray they think of special language & posture, cf meeting the queen.

**Lord, teach us to pray** is not about words to God, but about relationship with God.