



Prayer Guide

nbsg.foodbank.org.uk



North Bristol
& South Glos

Foodbank

Together with Trussell

Prayer Guide



North Bristol and South Glos Foodbank work for the relief and prevention of poverty in our area, by providing food and essential items, plus related services including support and advice to those in need.

Nine in ten people forced to use a food bank are facing extreme poverty, unable to afford the basics or put food on the table. We provide nutritionally- balanced emergency food to people in crisis who have been referred to a food bank, and work with a network of care professionals and in partnership with Citizens Advice to provide signposting and support to services so that individuals no longer need to use a food bank.

Even before the pandemic, Trussell Trust food banks were facing record levels of need and when Covid-19 hit need rose by a further 47%, with 2,600 food parcels provided for children every day. These numbers are continuing to rise. Every day, too many people are going hungry.

Over the last decade, we have been able to provide practical support to people in poverty, and the response we have seen from the local community in that time is inspiring. Together, we are united by care and compassion, committed to doing everything we can to support people facing impossible decisions.

There is a decision to make: either we accept food banks as a 'new normal', or we work to create a more dignified, compassionate, and just society where everyone has enough money for the essentials, and where no one should have to use a food bank to get by.

We believe that by working together it is possible to end the need for food banks.

As an organisation, our work is based on, shaped, and guided by Christian principles, and for many food bank staff and volunteers, prayer is an important way of seeking guidance, being resourced for action, and bringing about change.

If you would like to pray or lead others in prayer for our work, we would really appreciate your support in this way.

We hope this short guide is a useful tool to help you do this, whether you use it alone, share it with a small group, or incorporate it as part of a church service. One of the things we love about Foodbank is the way it brings together churches from a wide range of traditions, denominations, and networks. We hope that whether you prefer to pray spontaneously or in a more liturgical way, there will be something for you here.

Churches are vital to the work of food banks -they open up their buildings, donate food, provide volunteers and leaders, and show amazing care and compassion to people who need emergency food and support.

'God's heart is really in pain when injustice happens in society, particularly to the most vulnerable. Ending the need for food banks is possible, but we can't do it on our own: it needs all of us, and we can do more together than we can apart.'



Here's how you can pray for North Bristol & South Glos Foodbank:

1 People in crisis who need to use a food bank

Hundreds of people use our food bank each week. Pray that each person would feel valued and cared for, as well as receiving the food and support they need. Pray that they will be well supported to access any other services and activities that would help address some of the causes of their crisis.

2 Food bank staff and volunteers

Our Foodbank is supported by over 150 volunteers. Thank God with us for the dedication and compassion they show as they welcome and serve people experiencing acute poverty. Pray that God would strengthen them, protect them, energise them, and use them to impact lives with love, kindness, and compassion.

3 Partnership and support

We rely on the generosity of businesses, churches, schools, and individuals who donate supplies to help people in crisis, and partner with us in many other ways too. Give thanks for the provision of this incredible support and pray for a continued sense of shared vision and purpose as we work together towards a hunger free future.

4 Campaigners and influencers

God is a God of justice. Pray that justice, wisdom, and compassion would prevail in decisions made by policy makers and politicians. Pray for the impact of our campaigning, research, and policy- influencing work - that it would make a lasting and significant difference to people experiencing or at risk of extreme poverty. Pray that people in this situation would have an increasingly influential voice in debates about policies and systems that impact their lives.

5 A future without the need for foodbanks

Pray for the fulfillment of our vision for a future without the need for food banks. Ask that God would inspire individuals, organisations, and communities to get involved in making this a reality. Pray for creative ideas and fruitful partnerships, and that we would see churches, individuals, communities, businesses, politicians, and public servants coming together to build a hunger free future where no one goes hungry.

Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?

Find out more - [trusselltrust.org](https://www.trusselltrust.org) - **Isaiah 58:6**

A short prayer:

Loving God,
Thank you for your love and kindness.
You are a God of mercy, justice, and compassion, and yet we acknowledge that these qualities are not always reflected in our lives, in our community, and in our society. Help us to respond to suffering, poverty, and hunger in ways that usher in your kingdom: to see people as you see them, to share your loving-kindness in the darkest situations, to challenge injustices that trap people in poverty, to build a future that sets people free, so that everyone can share in the fullness of life that Christ offers to us all.

Amen.



A prayer, with responses:

Father God,

You are the source of life and hope.
So many people in our country are facing hunger and poverty:

We pray for change and transformation.

God of love

All: hear our prayer.

Lord,

You draw close to us in our troubles.
So many people are anxious about how they will afford to food on the table and pay their bills:

We pray for provision, comfort, and hope.

God of love

All: hear our prayer.

Lord,

You are a God of kindness and compassion.
So many people feel alone in their difficulties and unable

to ask for help:

Help us to reach out to one another with love and encouragement.

God of love

All: hear our prayer.

Father,

You love justice and mercy,
Strengthen us to challenge and change systems that lock

people in poverty

So that everyone can share in the fullness of life God of love

All: hear our prayer.

Amen

'I lost my job, I was in a really bad way. I was struggling to meet the bills, feeding my children, I was going without food just so that they ate.'



The first time I used a food bank I was anxious, really scared, I didn't know what to expect, I thought I'd let people down because I was having to ask for help.

It was the hardest thing I've ever done, but the best thing I've ever done. They didn't make me feel like I was poor or wasn't worthy, I was welcomed with open arms. They've helped me so much, if it wasn't for them I don't know where I'd be - in a lot of trouble, I think.'

Lisa-Marie, who has used a food bank