



PRAYER GUIDE

FOR
Parliament
AND THE
Nation

September
October
November
2020



The
Nationwide
Christian Trust

WELCOME TO OUR PRAYER GUIDE

On 23 June, the UK government announced that a major relaxation of lockdown restrictions would take place from 4 July. Pubs, restaurants, hotels and libraries could reopen with customers maintaining social distancing. Places of worship would also be able to reopen for services, assuming safety measures were in place. There were concerns in some quarters that Prime Minister Boris Johnson was 'reopening the economy' too soon. However, some commentators pointed out that other countries had reopened safely. They also highlighted the risk of permanent damage to the economy if lockdown had continued.

In terms of a possible vaccine or other medicine to treat Covid-19, Remdesivir, an anti-viral drug has been found to shorten the recovery time for coronavirus patients. This drug is made by the American biopharmaceutical company Gilead. In a controversial move, President Trump's administration bought up the entire supply of this medicine for July, August and September.

Another medicine, Dexamethasone, is the first drug shown to save the lives of people with Covid-19. It has been hailed as a breakthrough. Initial findings showed the low-cost steroid cut the risk of death by 33% for patients on ventilators and by 20% for those on oxygen.

Meanwhile, clinical trials at Oxford University on a possible vaccine are ongoing. If successful, the vaccine may be ready for UK citizens by September.

In other matters, Brexit talks have been ongoing between the EU and the UK's chief negotiator David Frost. Both sides were hoping a deal could be agreed during the summer. The Prime Minister wanted the broad outline agreed in July, with all the loose ends tied up as soon as the autumn. As the deadline for requesting an extension to the transition period with the EU expired on 30 June, the UK will leave on 31 December 2020, whether a deal is in place or not. This is something Boris Johnson has always insisted would happen.

While the media focus has been on Covid-19, the issue of climate change has fallen off the radar. In June, however, the Met Office published a new study. In it, they predicted that temperatures of up to 40°C could be a regular occurrence in the UK by 2100. This would be more likely if carbon dioxide emissions were not significantly reduced. The current record stands at 38.7°C, set in Cambridge in July 2019.

May God continue to bless you.

Neil

Neil Smith, Editor

Please use these prayers both in your individual and church prayer times to hold the nation and its leaders before God in prayer, petition and with thanksgiving (1 Timothy 2:1-4).



Neil Smith
PRAYER GUIDE EDITOR

Neil graduated with a degree in Applied Chemistry from the University of Hertfordshire and worked for many years in the pharmaceutical industry. He enjoys singing both at home and in church. He really values the liturgy in the Book of Common Prayer.

Neil also sits on the Governing Body at his local school and is a youth leader at his church. He lives with his wife in a house where their children visit frequently to enjoy plenty of home cooking and fellowship.

Scripture quotations taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Hodder and Stoughton, a member of Hodder Headline Ltd. All rights reserved. "NIV" is a registered trademark of International Bible Society. UK trademark number 1448790

August 30th - September 5th

THIS WEEK'S THEME

'For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords. He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow and loves the alien, giving him food and clothing.'

Deuteronomy 10:17a+18

CARING FOR OTHERS



SUNDAY 30

God our Redeemer, thank you for your great love for human beings made in your likeness. Help us always to see others as you do, remembering that each life is unique, precious and to be protected from conception to natural end. Amen.



MONDAY 31

Lord, please draw near to people who have failing health and comfort those who care for them. We ask that they would be treated with compassion, respect and dignity, especially near the end of life. May they die, having experienced your peace "which passes all understanding." In your name. Amen.



TUESDAY 1

Thank You, Father, for all who show such skill and dedication in looking after children and adults with serious physical, mental and emotional difficulties. Grant them patience and hope in the hard times they face, we pray. Amen.



WEDNESDAY 2

Good Shepherd, we pray for anyone who has been overwhelmed by an experience that made them feel guilty, abandoned, disappointed or burdened by another painful emotion. Thank you for loving us unconditionally and dying for our sins, that we might be healed and restored. Amen.



THURSDAY 3

God of all comfort, we remember those who live alone and may not speak to another human being for many days or possibly weeks. Give them a sense of your presence, we pray. Please raise up those who can help to break this cycle of loneliness. In Jesus' name. Amen.



FRIDAY 4

Creator God, we know that all human beings are made in your image and are precious in your sight. Please help Christians to be courageous, compassionate and gracious in defending unborn children. May they offer practical and spiritual support to expectant mothers and fathers facing difficult decisions. Amen.



SATURDAY 5

Gentle Saviour, we pray for frail elderly people in hospital wards, care homes and nursing homes. May they be treated respectfully and protected from neglect or bullying. Please give patience and compassion to those caring for them. In your name, Amen.

In 2019, the number of people living alone had increased by 20% over the previous 20 years, from 6.8 million in 1999 to 8.2 million in 2019 (over 15% of the UK adult population). The majority of this increase is driven by the growth in the numbers of men living alone (72.1%), predominantly aged 45 to 64 years.

As over-70s were considered to be more at risk during the coronavirus pandemic, they were told to stay indoors and not venture out unless absolutely necessary. One of the effects of this lockdown was to increase their sense of isolation and loneliness. This, in turn, had a negative effect upon their mental health and wellbeing.

The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, once said: 'as a civilised society, we have a duty to support those among us who are vulnerable and in need. When times are hard, that duty should be felt more than ever, not disappear or diminish.'

September 6th - September 12th

THIS WEEK'S THEME

FOODBANKS

'For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you invited me in. I needed clothes and you clothed me. I was sick and you looked after me. I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

Matthew 25:35-36



SUNDAY 6

Heavenly Father, we give thanks for Sir William Beveridge and his report, published in November 1942. Thank you for the radical and far sighted nature of this document which recognised poor people's needs and offered solutions that would significantly improve their quality of life. Amen.



MONDAY 7

Merciful Lord, we lift to you all who are unable to buy the food they need and are reliant on emergency supplies from foodbanks. Please provide them not only with food, but also with those who can listen and assure them they are not alone. In your name. Amen.



TUESDAY 8

Gracious God, we praise you that, in the midst of war, the British government was willing to consider 'post-war' solutions for banishing poverty and how it should be financed. We give thanks for our National Health Service and all who work in it. Amen.



WEDNESDAY 9

Lord of all comfort, we pray for those on low incomes who may have suffered due to the closure of foodbanks as a result of the coronavirus outbreak. We ask that they will not have been pushed further into the grip of poverty and social exclusion. May they receive all the food and support they need. In Jesus' name. Amen.



THURSDAY 10

Generous God, the Lord's Prayer reminds us that we ask you to give us this day our daily bread. May the existence of foodbanks remind us that the provision and distribution of food lies at the very heart of your concern for this most basic of physical needs. Amen.



FRIDAY 11

Bread of Heaven, we thank you that, through foodbanks, Christians are able to express key Gospel values and declare something of the faith that defines us. Help us to remember that, in real and practical ways, we are sharing our bread with one another, welcoming the stranger and loving our neighbour. Amen.



SATURDAY 12

Almighty Father, whose Son Jesus Christ has taught us that what we do for the least of our brethren we do for him; give us the will to be the servant of others as he was the servant of all. Who gave up his life and died for us, but is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Trussell Trust runs a network of foodbanks out of 424 centres across the UK, providing emergency food and support to people in crisis. In 2018-19, it gave out almost 1.6 million food parcels. This represents a 19% increase on the previous year.

Over 90% of the food distributed by food banks in the Trussell Trust network is donated by the public. That's why individual food donations are absolutely vital, as they enable everyone referred to the Trust to receive a balanced and nutritious three day supply of food. Without individuals' goodwill, their foodbanks would really struggle to operate.

The Beveridge Report was presented by its author, Sir William Beveridge, to the British parliament in November 1942. It provided a summary of principles necessary to banish poverty and 'want' from Britain. Beveridge's mantra throughout the report was 'Abolition of Want.' The paper proposed a system of social security which would be operated by the state, to be implemented at war's end. It was intended to protect the population "from the cradle to the grave."

"The land yields its harvest; God, our God, blesses us. May God bless us still, so that all the ends of the earth will fear him."

Psalms 67:6-7

HARVEST



SUNDAY 13

Eternal God, you crown the year with your goodness and you give us the fruits of the earth in their season. Grant that we may use them to your glory, for the relief of those in need and for our own wellbeing; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.



MONDAY 14

Gracious Lord, we thank you for the 'Meat Free Monday' initiative which helps raise awareness of the advantages in having at least one meat free day each week. We pray that people will be motivated to reduce their red meat consumption, as they become aware of the benefits in eating a more balanced diet. Amen.



TUESDAY 15

Compassionate God, we bring before you the 13 million people in the UK who live below the poverty line. Thank you for the generosity of groups and individuals who give food and money to charities so they can bring relief to these people. Amen.



WEDNESDAY 16

Liberating Saviour, we are grateful that supermarkets are removing "best before" dates from fresh fruit and vegetables. We pray that customers will use common sense to decide when food is no longer fit to eat. We pray that this will help to significantly reduce the amount of food that each citizen wastes every year. Amen.



THURSDAY 17

Merciful Lord, we bring before you the estimated two billion people worldwide suffering from a lack of specific micronutrients in their diet. This often includes vitamin A, iron and zinc. We pray that long-term solutions can be found to help reduce the deaths of many thousands of children in developing countries who die each year from poor nutrition. In your name. Amen.



FRIDAY 18

Loving Saviour, we lift up to you those in the developing world who suffer from hunger. We pray that local churches can lead their communities away from lives devastated by hunger and into lives filled with dignity, opportunity and strength. Amen.



SATURDAY 19

Lord of Creation, we remember those who are deficient in vitamin D, as they do not get enough from sunlight. We praise you for the way it helps keep bones, teeth and muscles healthy by regulating the amount of calcium and phosphate in the body. Thank you that supplements of this vitamin can be bought from pharmacies and supermarkets. Amen.

September is traditionally the month when most Christian churches in the UK have harvest festival services. This is often preceded by a harvest supper the previous evening. Primary and secondary school pupils often create harvest baskets that are distributed to needy families and elderly folk at this time. Familiar hymns like "We plough the fields and scatter" and "All things bright and beautiful" are frequently sung. Money raised for charities is commonly used to deliver food parcels to needy families and the elderly in the local area.

Harvest is an opportunity for Christians in the West to remember and be thankful for God's provision for our needs. At this time we are often reminded of harvests failing in other countries due to drought and disease. This may sometimes happen for several years in succession, which makes feeding the population very difficult.

Earlier this year, doctors raised concerns that many people may have low levels of vitamin D. This may be because they stayed indoors during the coronavirus restrictions and were therefore exposed to low levels of sunlight.

THIS WEEK'S THEME

PARTY CONFERENCE SEASON

The main political parties in the UK traditionally hold their party conferences in early autumn during the 'Conference recess.' This is when the House of Commons is closed for normal business. It is a time when the party faithful gather to hear speeches from party leaders on various subjects. This often includes details of new policy initiatives or attacks on existing policies by opposition parties.

Usually, regardless of which party (or parties) are in power, the Liberal Democrat conference comes first, followed by Labour and then the Conservatives. However, this year the Labour conference was due to take place in Liverpool from 19-23 September. This will be Sir Keir Starmer's first as party leader. The Liberal Democrat conference was scheduled to be in Brighton from 26-29 September. Due to Covid-19, both parties decided to cancel their conferences and hold online events instead. The Conservative party conference is planned for Birmingham from 4-7 October. This will be Boris Johnson's first as Prime Minister since leading the Conservatives to victory at the general election in December last year.

September 20th - September 26th

'The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in men who are truthful.'

Proverbs 12:22



SUNDAY 20

Security at party conferences is much tighter now than it was previously. In the immediate aftermath of the Brighton bomb, security personnel realised how easily IRA bomber Patrick Magee managed to plant the explosive device with a long-delay timer.

COMPASSIONATE and caring God, we pray that all the party conferences will pass off safely without any security issues. We pray also that politicians will strike the right balance between personal security and giving access to journalists and members of the public who may wish to make contact with them. In Jesus' name. Amen.



MONDAY 21

In previous decades, the main party conferences always took place at seaside resorts such as Bournemouth and Blackpool. Nowadays, it is much more common for them to be in cities such as Liverpool and Birmingham. This has had a negative effect on seaside resorts, which have suffered a corresponding drop in income.

LOVING Lord, we bring before you those towns that no longer host party political conferences. We ask that they can find ways to regenerate themselves and not drift into a spiral of decline. Amen.



TUESDAY 22

For many years, whichever party was in government complained periodically of political bias by the broadcast media. This was especially true in 2003 when the Labour Party was accused by the BBC of "sexing up" a dossier relating to possible weapons of mass destruction.

HEAVENLY Father, we pray that all political parties and opinions are fairly represented in the print and broadcast media. May a wide range of views and ideas be broadcast without bias, so that people can make up their own minds on various issues. Amen.



WEDNESDAY 23

Truly memorable party conference speeches are few and far between. Until Theresa May's 'coughing speech' in October 2017, two of the best known were Tony Blair's "education, education, education" speech as Opposition Leader in 1996 and Margaret Thatcher's in 1984, the afternoon following the Brighton bomb.

GENEROUS God, we pray for all party leaders in the UK. Please give them strength to lead their parties with integrity. May they have the courage to speak out on various issues, even if they are unfairly criticised as a result. Amen.



THURSDAY 24

At party conferences, delegates are ordinary party members who pay to attend. They receive a pass, access to all politicians' speeches in both the main auditorium and conference fringe. They can also vote on policy motions they put forward, except at UKIP and Conservative conferences.

DEAR Lord, we give thanks that ordinary party members can attend conference each year. Help them to use this responsibility well, for the good of all political parties and the nation as a whole. Amen.



FRIDAY 25

Voter turnout in the 2019 general election across the UK was 67.3%. This was a decrease of 1.5% from 2017 but still the second highest turnout since 1997. Nonetheless, there appears to be an association between constituencies' age profile and their electoral turnout. Older residents tend to be more likely to vote.

GRACIOUS God, we pray that voter turnout will increase, particularly among 18-24 year-olds. We know that only 47% of this age group voted in the 2019 general election. Give them a desire to take this responsibility seriously. In your name. Amen.



SATURDAY 26

The election for the next leader of the Liberal Democrats was due to be held in June 2020. This was because previous leader Jo Swinson lost her seat in the December 2019 general election. However, the election was suspended until further notice due to the coronavirus pandemic.

LIGHT of the World, we pray for Sir Ed Davey and Mark Pack, interim co-leaders of the Liberal Democrats. Please help them as they do their best to lead the party until a leadership election takes place. Amen.

THIS WEEK'S THEME

CORONAVIRUS

On 30th January, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the coronavirus outbreak a global emergency as it spread to at least 24 countries outside of China. On 11th March, WHO declared the outbreak a pandemic. Within the scientific community, the virus is officially known as Sars-CoV-2, although it was originally referred to as 2019-nCoV. After contracting the disease, some patients rapidly develop viral pneumonia. These tend to be those over 70 or with pre-existing medical conditions. Many details are still open to question. These will be vital in determining whether coronavirus becomes as serious as the influenza outbreaks that kill hundreds of thousands of people per year worldwide.

Everyone has experienced mild coronavirus infections as common colds, causing coughing and sneezing. Animals have their own coronaviruses and sometimes one jumps into humans, which may have happened here.

In terms of treatment for Covid-19, the short-term focus is on using existing HIV medications to treat infected people. The long-term aim is to develop a vaccine to protect against the virus.

September 27th - October 3rd

'Blessed is he who has regard for the weak; the Lord delivers him in times of trouble. The Lord will sustain him on his sickbed and restore him from his bed of illness.'

Psalms 41:1+3



SUNDAY 27

At the time of writing, the source of Covid-19 remains unknown. However, it may have originated in a laboratory in China or possibly in a Wuhan seafood market. Some experts are wondering if this viral outbreak is seasonal, like influenza. Or, if it will continue throughout the year.

ALL knowing God, please bless scientific efforts to pinpoint the source of coronavirus. Give wisdom to those trying to determine whether or not it is seasonal, or affected in some way by the weather. Amen.



MONDAY 28

The economic impact of the virus is huge. As large parts of the UK economy were shut down, consumer spending and tax receipts fell significantly. In a House of Commons debate on 4th May, many MPs expressed concerns about the economic damage caused by the lockdown.

LORD of grace, we pray that government policies will not cause long-term damage to the economy. Instead, may they be reasonable and proportionate. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.



TUESDAY 29

Respiratory droplets carrying infectious pathogens can transmit infection by travelling directly from the respiratory tract of a contagious individual to a recipient, generally over short distances. This can be in the form of sneezing, coughing or speaking.

ALMIGHTY and everliving God, whose Son Jesus Christ healed the sick and restored them to wholeness of life; look with compassion on the anguish of the world and by your healing power make whole both people and nations; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and for ever. Amen.



WEDNESDAY 30

Different countries developed different ways of controlling the virus spread. Restricting people's freedom of movement was practiced in countries such as Italy and France. Others, like South Korea, applied contact tracing and testing very rigorously. Citizens in Sweden, however, had no formal lockdown but instead relied on the public's "common sense behaviour" to reduce the spread of the virus.

ALL-WISE Saviour, we give thanks for countries' efforts to control the virus. May their different methods have achieved the goal of controlling its spread. In your name. Amen.



THURSDAY 1

Key to creating an effective vaccine is getting the body's immune system to recognise the virus as foreign. Scientists have described two possible alternative treatments. These are 'protein-based' vaccines and 'RNA vaccines.'

AWESOME Lord, we praise you for the skill shown by scientists in identifying possible vaccines to treat coronavirus. We pray that clinical trials are successful and will enable a vaccine to be developed which saves lives. Amen.



FRIDAY 2

In mid-April, President Trump said it was time to start "opening up America again" so that coronavirus restrictions could be lifted. Many European countries started easing their restrictions around the same time. The UK's approach was more cautious, which caused concern among business leaders in particular.

LORD of the Nations, we pray that countries' efforts to restart their economies were considered proportionate. May they not have put their citizens at unnecessary risk, we pray. Amen.



SATURDAY 3

Due to social distancing regulations, all faith groups were impacted by coronavirus. Cathedrals, synagogues, mosques, and other places of worship closed to large groups of people. Government guidelines, however, did allow church buildings to remain open if they provided essential services such as foodbanks and venues for blood donation.

FAITHFUL One, we bring before you all faith groups that were negatively impacted by social distancing regulations. We ask that numbers attending 'in person' will be greater than pre-virus levels, once buildings have fully reopened. Amen.

THIS WEEK'S THEME

SPORT

The 2020 Summer Olympics and Paralympic games, commonly known as Tokyo 2020, was due to take place between 27th July and 9th September. However, due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Games have been rescheduled for 23rd July to 5th September 2021. Despite being held in 2021, the Games of the XXXII Olympiad will keep the name Tokyo 2020 for marketing and branding purposes. This marks the first time ever that the Olympic Games have been postponed, rather than cancelled.

Watching sport on television is a very popular pastime but far fewer people take an active part in sport. Whether it be swimming, gym, running or just brisk walking, part of the London 2012 'Olympic legacy' was intended to be an increase in participation in sport. This would have the benefit of improved physical and mental wellbeing. It would also help deal with growing rates of obesity in the UK. Health experts recommend at least 30 minutes of exercise 5 times a week.

October 4th - October 10th

'Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.'

1 Corinthians 9:24-25



SUNDAY 4

Football is considered to be the nation's most popular sport. Of the 91 professional clubs in England and Wales, the top 20 play in the Premier League. This competition is very popular and extremely successful as a global brand. The remaining 71 clubs, however, receive much less media exposure and income is greatly reduced.

LORD of hosts, we thank you for the pleasure many get by watching and supporting their favourite team. We pray that lower league clubs will be given more money and treated more fairly by TV companies. Amen.



MONDAY 5

The cricket World Cup took place in England during the summer of 2019 and the winners were England. The first ever cricket World Cup was in 1975 which, coincidentally, was also in England. It is open to all members of the International Cricket Council, although the highest-ranking teams receive automatic qualification.

GOD of glory, we praise you for the enthusiasm of all those who took part in the cricket World Cup. We thank you that, after being runners-up three times, England have finally won this competition. Amen.



TUESDAY 6

Tennis is one of the most lucrative sports in the world. In 2018 the winners of the men's and women's singles at Wimbledon each received prize money of £2.25m. Britain's Andy Murray has won Wimbledon twice and Johanna Konta reached the women's semi-finals in 2017.

HOLY Spirit, we thank you for sportsmen and women who dedicate themselves to sporting excellence. Help us to be

dedicated in our walk with you. May whatever we do, in word or deed, be done in the name of your Son Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Amen.



WEDNESDAY 7

One of the reasons for people being reluctant to exercise is the ongoing cost of gym membership. Monthly fees of £15 or more are not uncommon. This can be a disincentive both for those on low incomes and for others who can afford it.

GENEROUS Saviour, we bring before you the price of gym membership. Please may solutions be found to limit the cost, so more people have the opportunity to join and achieve an appropriate level of fitness. Amen.



THURSDAY 8

The benefits of sport and physical activity on people's mental health are endless. Examples include improved mood, reduced stress and better self-esteem. Many GPs now prescribe physical activity for depression, either in isolation or in conjunction with other treatments.

PRINCE of Peace, thank you for the many benefits that sport and physical activity brings. May we encourage our friends and family to see the benefits of regular exercise and be encouraged to keep fit in a way that is appropriate for them. Amen.



FRIDAY 9

Certain televised sporting events are designated as "listed events." Unfortunately, some of these, including Wimbledon and the Grand National, were cancelled this year due to coronavirus restrictions. Also, many sporting events including the Ashes cricket and the Open golf are no longer listed. The cost of watching non 'free-to-air' sport on television can be £30 per month or more.

LIVING Saviour, we bring before you the cost involved in watching many sporting events on television. May the prices charged be reasonable for those on average wages. Thank you that some televised sporting events are still 'free to air.' Amen..



SATURDAY 10

The Olympic and Paralympic games are considered to be the world's most important sporting competition. It is an opportunity that occurs once every four years. More than 200 nations and thousands of athletes come together and compete in a wide variety of events.

LIGHT of the Nations, we thank you for the opportunity provided by the Olympics and Paralympics to bring different countries and nations together. We pray for all athletes whose preparations were disrupted when the games were postponed by 12 months. Amen.

THIS WEEK'S THEME

CHILDREN'S WELFARE

An unknown author once said the following: 'A child who lives with encouragement learns to be confident. A child who lives with tolerance learns to be patient. A child who lives with fairness learns what justice is. A child who lives with acceptance learns how to love.'

In May, Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said that school was the safest place for children from difficult or unhappy homes. He added that lockdown had resulted in many children not playing with or even speaking to someone of their own age for two months. The Royal College of Psychiatrists also said being in school was vital for children who were suffering from abuse at home.

In school, children and young people learn not just the 3R's, but various social skills as well. Many child psychologists are concerned that, by missing too much schooling, children's overall development will be affected. This may include their ability to make and keep friendships, a vital part of growing up.

October 11th - October 17th

'People were also bringing babies to Jesus to have him touch them. When his disciples saw this, they rebuked them. But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."'

Luke 18:15-17



SUNDAY 11

A child who has been in the care of their local authority for more than 24 hours is known as a looked after child. Looked after children are also often referred to as children in care, a term which many children and young people prefer. Each UK nation has a slightly different definition of a looked after child. But in general, looked after children are: living with foster parents, living in a residential children's home or, living in residential settings like schools or secure units.

LORD Jesus, you lovingly received little children and counted them of great value. Please help us to speak out and do all we can to ensure that children in the UK are kept safe and able to flourish. In your name, we pray. Amen.



MONDAY 12

On 1st March 2017, the then Education Secretary Justine Greening announced that it was her intention to make relationships education (but not sex education) statutory in all Primary schools from September 2020. This decision on relationships education has caused concern in many Muslim majority schools around the country.

FATHER, we pray about these plans to teach gender and relationship issues to pupils. Please give wisdom to schools as they produce their curriculum. Help parents to know the best way of explaining these subjects to their children. Amen.



TUESDAY 13

The website of the Schools Prayer Network, prayforschools.org, has its aim that 'every school in the UK will be a 'prayed-for' school.' The intention is to mobilise Christians to support their school communities through prayer.

LOVING Father, thank you for all those who are part of a school community. Please grant them your encouragement, wisdom and peace. We pray that Christians will be persuaded to pray for their local children and teenagers, especially as many have experienced a disrupted education since March. In your Son's name, we pray. Amen.



WEDNESDAY 14

State schools in England receive extra funding from the government to help them improve the attainment of their disadvantaged pupils. Evidence shows that children from poorer backgrounds generally face extra challenges in reaching their potential at school. In addition, they often do not perform as well as their peers.

FAITHFUL One, we pray for the millions of children and young people who live in poverty in this country. They often suffer with poor health, reduced opportunities to succeed at school and may be vulnerable in many other ways. Please help us to help them whenever we can. Amen.



THURSDAY 15

Children are encouraged to walk to and from school whenever possible. For this reason, a 'walk to school' week takes place twice a year to promote this. This initiative can support a reduction in air pollution around the school. It can also help tackle the growing obesity crisis among young people.

DEAR Lord, we are reminded of the 16,000 children injured in road traffic accidents each year, about 50 of them fatally. Please help those in authority to make our roads safer, so that more children will be encouraged to walk to school regularly. Amen.



FRIDAY 16

In a message to the Prince's Trust in June, Prince Charles warned of the "potentially devastating" impact of coronavirus on the young. The Prince said it was essential "to prevent this crisis from defining the prospects of a generation." He also warned that young people are often hardest hit in times of economic strife.

ALL-WISE Saviour, we pray for the many thousands of young people whose life chances may be negatively affected as a result of coronavirus. Please may they receive the support they need to deal with unemployment and any associated mental health issues they may face. In your name, Amen.



SATURDAY 17

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) is a charity campaigning and working in child protection in the United Kingdom and the Channel

Islands. It was founded in 1884 by Revd Benjamin Waugh, the Victorian social reformer. The NSPCC was granted its Royal Charter on 28 May 1895 by Queen Victoria who became its first Royal Patron. Its title did not change to "Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children", as the name NSPCC was already well established.

LIGHT of the world, we give thanks for the work of the NSPCC over very many years. May they continue to lobby government on issues relating to child welfare and create campaigns for the general public, which highlight and raise awareness of child protection issues. Amen.

October 18th - October 24th

THIS WEEK'S THEME

SOCIAL MEDIA

"You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them."

Deuteronomy 5:8-9a



SUNDAY 18

Light of the Nations, we bring before you those who are over reliant on social media for news. We know that much fake news comes from Russia, China and Iran. Help us to use trusted websites to find out the latest news and information, we pray. Amen.



MONDAY 19

Caring Saviour, we bring before you children younger than 13 who have lied about their age so they can create a Facebook profile, possibly with their parent's encouragement. We pray that friends and others will help them realise their mistake, so these false profiles can be removed. Amen.



TUESDAY 20

God of Justice, we ask that governments will continue to influence social media firms to remove all kinds of fake news. We think especially of disinformation claiming links between coronavirus and 5G. May they continue to monitor closely how quickly fake news is removed from social media websites. In your name. Amen.



WEDNESDAY 21

God of truth, thank you that the scientific community have robustly condemned conspiracy theories claiming that 5G technology helps transmit coronavirus. We pray that celebrities and others in the public eye will help to reinforce this message. In your name. Amen.



THURSDAY 22

Compassionate God, we lift up to you the large numbers of young people who have been or are affected by 'cyber bullying.' We know how it may take many forms including unkind texts, inappropriate images and emails and do lasting harm. We pray that young people can stay safe online and know how to deal with 'cyber bullying' when they are exposed to it. Amen.



FRIDAY 23

Dear Father, please give success to social media firms in limiting the spread of hate messages, pictures and videos. Thank you that Facebook now have a transparency drive to block violent and extremist material. We pray that this good work will continue, so that extremists find it difficult to post their hateful propaganda. In your Son's name, Amen.



SATURDAY 24

Holy Lord, help us not to make idols of our mobile phones. Instead, may we realise how easy it is to worship these 'carved images' instead of focussing our thoughts on you. Amen.

Over 60% of 13 to 17-year-olds have at least one profile on social media, with many spending more than two hours a day on social networking sites. As a medium, Facebook and other social media sites are intended for those aged 13 and over. However, there are children under 13 who lie about their age to enable them to create a Facebook account.

During April 2020, as many as 40 arson attempts were linked to 5G mobile phone masts. This was due to a conspiracy theory that 5G mobile network technology can cause a host of diseases, including coronavirus. The view from within the telecoms industry is that social media firms should be more proactive in removing videos and hoax comments relating to 5G technology. Having met with the Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden, representatives of Google, Facebook and Twitter should now be giving weekly reports on removing hoax science and fake news from their sites. However, in April, Facebook admitted it had removed less than 3% of fake news posts relating to coronavirus.

October 25th - October 31st

THIS WEEK'S THEME

'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.'

Matthew 6:13



SUNDAY 25

Dear Lord, we pray for those struggling with addictions which can often be compulsive. Open their eyes to the effects of their addiction on themselves and those around them and encourage them to seek help. Please provide them with different avenues of support and treatment, including through their GP, community and local church. Amen.



MONDAY 26

Compassionate Saviour, we pray for the more than 500,000 hard core gambling addicts in the UK. A figure that has increased by over 100% in the last ten years. We also remember the estimated one million mostly poor people in the UK who risk becoming problem gamblers. Please may they be given better support to help them find positive ways of dealing with their addiction. In your name. Amen.



TUESDAY 27

Good Shepherd, we pray that the coronavirus pandemic will not have a long-term negative impact on various addictions people may suffer from. May there be an improved awareness that those with a history of addiction behavior can be helped before increased habits become problematic. In Jesus' name, Amen.



WEDNESDAY 28

Dear Lord, we lift to you Justin Tomlinson, Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work. Please give him your blessing and guidance as he considers how best to support those who are suffering from mental health issues. Provide him with wisdom and compassion in addressing the problem of addiction, particularly in the workplace. Amen.



THURSDAY 29

Merciful Saviour, we lift to you those who have sought help with an addiction and are dealing with withdrawal symptoms both physically and mentally. Give them the support and courage they need to resist the cravings. Please heal their minds and bodies and give them a fresh hope for the future, we pray. Amen.



FRIDAY 30

Loving Lord Jesus, give us grace and compassion to support those who are caught in the addiction of pornography. Help all in society to recognise its destructive nature. May there be greater efforts to prevent people, especially the young, from being exposed to and possibly becoming addicted to it. In your name. Amen.



SATURDAY 31

God of Love, we lift to you the families of addicts and pray for your arms of comfort to surround them as they face daily uncertainty and instability at home. Please alleviate their anxieties and frustrations and assure them that they are not alone. Give them courage to help their loved ones to address their addiction. Amen.

OVERCOMING ADDICTIONS

An estimated 2 million people in the UK are fighting an addiction. Addictions begin for a wide variety of reasons but may be triggered by unemployment, poverty, stress and emotional or work pressure. They often start as a way of blocking out difficult issues. Long-term addictions can seriously affect both mental and physical health and damage work life and relationships. Academics from the University of Cambridge believe that coronavirus restrictions could lead to heightened levels of drinking, watching pornography and online gambling. These changes will be people's strategies for coping with the anxiety caused by the pandemic.

Addiction is most commonly associated with gambling, drugs and alcohol. It is, however, possible to be addicted to many things including solvents, work and shopping. Substances (e.g. drugs and alcohol) affect a person's physical and mental state, creating a "high" and a powerful urge to use the substance again. A similar mental "high" can be obtained through gambling and shopping.

November 1st - November 7th

'Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.'

Romans 13:1



SUNDAY 1

Righteous Saviour, please give wisdom to American politicians in their relationship with China over the coming months and years. May they be honest in their dealings with the Chinese Communist Party, as they seek to prevent a possible trade war between the two nations. Amen.



MONDAY 2

Prince of Peace, we pray that whoever is elected president will be keen to uphold the 'special relationship' that exists between the UK and the USA. May the two countries work together as they negotiate a 'post-Brexit' trade deal that will be beneficial to both countries. Amen.



TUESDAY 3

Father Almighty, we pray for Donald Trump in his role as President of the USA. We know he can be quite a divisive figure. For this reason, we pray that he will be careful in his choice of words; that they can heal and not divide, build up and not pull down. In your name. Amen.



WEDNESDAY 4

Lord of all, we pray for democratic challenger, Joe Biden. May he be honest and fair in his criticisms of President Trump's administration. May he, too, be careful in what he says to the American people and the wider world. Amen.



THURSDAY 5

Dear Father, may there be a high turnout in these elections with very little negative campaigning. Instead, may both parties engage in positive campaigning that encourages people to cast their votes accordingly. In Jesus' name. Amen.



FRIDAY 6

God of mercy, please give the American people good understanding and knowledge of who to vote for in these elections. May they be guided by your Spirit as they decide how to cast their votes, we pray. Amen.



SATURDAY 7

Generous Lord, we pray that the USA will continue to use its wealth and influence wisely. Please let it be used to support those American citizens who feel 'left behind.' We remember particularly those made unemployed by the COVID-19 crisis. In your name. Amen.

THIS WEEK'S THEME

US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

The American constitution dictates that an election for president must take place every four years. In addition, no one is allowed to stand for more than two consecutive terms of office. The presidential election is always on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Therefore, the next election will be on 3rd November 3, 2020, when Donald Trump will be facing the Democratic nominee Joe Biden. Mr Biden was vice-President during Barack Obama's time in the Oval Office. The winner will be inaugurated on 20th January 2021. The president can be a man or woman of any race or any religion. But they must have: been born in the US, be at least 35 years old and have lived in the US for at least 14 years.

America is the fourth largest country in the world after Russia, Canada and China. Its population in 2019 was 328.2 million. It consists of 50 states, with New York being the largest city.

Previous former presidents include Abraham Lincoln, John F. Kennedy, George Washington and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

'Remember me with favour, O my God, for all I have done for these people.'

Nehemiah 5:19



SUNDAY 8

Almighty God, we recall with grateful thanks all those who have died in the service of their country. We pray for families who have lost loved ones in war. Help them remember that "you are our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Amen.



MONDAY 9

Caring Lord, we pray for all who in bereavement, disability and pain continue to suffer the consequences of fighting and terror. We remember with thanksgiving and sorrow those whose lives, in world wars and conflicts, have been taken away. In your precious name. Amen.



TUESDAY 10

Compassionate Saviour, we give grateful thanks for the work of the Red Cross and all they do to help people caught up in conflict who are facing hunger. Thank you that they are trusted to be neutral, independent and impartial and that their work is respected internationally. Amen.



WEDNESDAY 11

God of all comfort, we thank you for the Cenotaph service in London and for other similar services throughout the United Kingdom and beyond. We give thanks for the comfort and help these services provide for many people. May they continue acting as a focus for the nation's attention. Amen.



THURSDAY 12

Father of Peace, we bring our Armed Forces before you at this time. Thank you for the dedication of the men and women who make up the Armed Forces community; either currently serving troops to Service families, veterans and cadets. Please help them continue defending the UK and its interests and may they feel valued in all they do. Amen.



FRIDAY 13

Righteous Judge, we thank you that schoolchildren and adults alike have the opportunity to take part in educational visits to the World War One battlefields. Please give them a better understanding of the horrors of war and a longing for peace whenever possible, for you are the Prince of Peace. Amen.



SATURDAY 14

Loving Lord, we give thanks for the Acts of Remembrance that took place this year on the 75th anniversary of VE Day and VJ Day. We bring before you all those who lost family members during World War Two and are eternally grateful for their sacrifice. In Jesus' name. Amen.

November is often described as the 'month of remembrances', ranging from All Saints' Day on 1st November through to Remembrance Sunday on the second Sunday in November (which this year falls on 8th November). The terms of the armistice agreed after the First World War helped sow the seeds of the Second World War twenty-one years later.

Remembrance Sunday itself can often be a difficult time for those who have lost loved ones in various wars; either recently or many years ago. The Cenotaph service in London is broadcast every year on BBC1 on Remembrance Sunday. Familiar hymns, the laying of wreaths, Bible readings and prayers, plus two minutes silence at 11am. These all provide a comfort and help for many people. The most well-known war memorial in the United Kingdom is the Cenotaph in Whitehall. The word cenotaph comes from two Greek words, 'kenos' and 'taphos' which mean empty tomb.

November 15th - November 21st

THIS WEEK'S THEME

'The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.'

Psalms 19:7



SUNDAY 15

God of grace, we thank you for the BBC's initiative in broadcasting an act of worship each Sunday morning during lockdown. We also give thanks for the opportunities technology has given churches to 'livestream' broadcasts over the internet every Sunday. In your name. Amen.



MONDAY 16

Everlasting Father, we pray that next year there will be some TV programmes on Good Friday, explaining what the day is all about. Thank you that Songs of Praise is now being broadcast regularly on Sunday lunchtimes. Amen.



TUESDAY 17

Good Shepherd, thank you for the radio stations Premier Radio and UCB. We pray that they will continue to faithfully proclaim your Word to those who need to hear it. Please bless them in the work they do for you. Amen.



WEDNESDAY 18

Heavenly Father, thank you for hearing and answering our prayers, which are often heard and said on Christian radio stations or on national radio. We pray that religious broadcasting can be used to improve people's lives and be a blessing to them. May it also give hope and strength to those who might otherwise feel isolated and without hope. Amen.



THURSDAY 19

Gracious God, we pray that church services broadcast on radio and television will encourage those watching to attend a church service in person. Please challenge them by your Spirit and give them a desire to do so. In Jesus' name. Amen.



FRIDAY 20

Unchanging Saviour, we offer our heartfelt thanks for the Daily Service on Radio 4, which has been broadcast continually since 1928. We pray for the many different Christian leaders who contribute to the programme. Please may it continue for many years to come. Amen.



SATURDAY 21

Lord of all power and might, the author and giver of all good things, graft in our hearts the love of your name, increase in us true religion, nourish in us all goodness and of your great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

RELIGIOUS BROADCASTS

In recent years, people have complained about the marginalisation of Christian religious broadcasting in the UK. There is a belief that the quality and quantity of religious broadcasting has diminished. Programmes like 'Songs of Praise' were often broadcast at irregular times on a Sunday afternoon.

Despite this, during the coronavirus lockdown BBC1 broadcast a 30 minute service from a number of different Anglican cathedrals in the UK every Sunday morning. Each service included a short message, prayers and two or three hymns. There were, however, no specific Good Friday programmes on BBC or ITV, although several were broadcast on radio. Many churches and cathedrals chose to 'livestream' services, either on Facebook or YouTube.

In addition, Premier radio transmits a variety of Christian programmes on medium wave, digital radio and on the internet. UCB is similar, but only broadcasts on the internet.

November 22nd - November 28th

THIS WEEK'S THEME

'Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.'
Proverbs 14:34



SUNDAY 22

Prince of Peace, we bring the Republic of Ireland before you as it continues to move forward since the result of the general election in February 2020. Please show the three-party coalition consisting of Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Green Party how they can work together for the good of the country and its people. In your name. Amen.



MONDAY 23

Father of all, we pray for the new Irish Prime Minister, Micheál Martin. Give him wisdom as he meets with members of the different political parties there. We also bring before you Leo Varadkar, who was Prime Minister from June 2017 until recently. The youngest person in Ireland ever to hold that office and one of its most globally recognisable leaders for many years. Amen.



TUESDAY 24

Light of the Nations, we thank you that in October 2019, Boris Johnson and Leo Varadkar were able to renegotiate and replace the Irish backstop with a new protocol. May it help to strengthen the Good Friday Agreement and benefit trade between the two countries. In Jesus' name. Amen.



WEDNESDAY 25

Awesome Lord, we praise you for the natural beauty found in Ireland. Thank you that tourists can visit places such as Dunmore Head, one of Europe's most westerly points. Also to see the River Shannon, which is longer than either the River Severn or Thames. May they appreciate and be grateful for the chance to see such wonderful scenery, we pray. Amen.



THURSDAY 26

Unchanging God, we pray for the 10.1% of the Irish population who professed no religion at the time of the last census. Please show Christians in Ireland how best to engage with them. May churches be equipped to serve and relate with them by ministering to their needs and concerns. Amen.



FRIDAY 27

Faithful One, we bring before you the different Christian denominations in Ireland. Please give them a unity of purpose in proclaiming the gospel. We pray that they will have good relations with each other. Amen.



SATURDAY 28

Righteous Judge, we realise the Catholic Church's influence in Ireland is much less than previously. A significant reason may be various child sexual abuse allegations against priests and nuns within the church. May the church continue to show humility in admitting their sins. We ask that, over time, they can repair the reputational damage that has been caused and regain the people's trust. In Jesus' name. Amen.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Ireland, also known as the Republic of Ireland or Eire, was part of the British Empire until 1922. Over the centuries it has had a chequered relationship with the rest of the United Kingdom. In part, this is due to the 'Great Famine' of 1845-1849, sometimes called the Potato Famine. This resulted in the island's population falling by 30%. One million people died of starvation or disease. Another 1.5 million emigrated, mainly to the USA. It currently has a population of about 4.9 million and occupies about 80% of the island of Ireland. Its only land border is with Northern Ireland. This border became very important during Brexit negotiations. It was often referred to during discussions related to a possible 'Northern Ireland backstop.'

The country joined the EEC in 1973, at the same time as the United Kingdom and Denmark. Ireland remained neutral during World War 2, became members of the United Nations in December 1955 and joined the euro in 1999. At the last census, 78.2% identified as Roman Catholic and 4.2% as Protestant.

Living Light Prayerline

Would you like someone to listen?

Our Prayerline provides a compassionate and caring team of skilled staff giving individual time and attention to everyone who calls.

We bring your concerns before the Lord and pray for his hand upon your life.

*You can now send a Prayer Request online by visiting our Prayerline page at:
nationwidechristiantrust.com*

Or call now on: 01277 367 118 Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm

Affiliated to The Christian Helplines Association

Volunteer opportunity

The Prayerline
is a place where
faith and
compassion
meet



The Living Light
Prayerline

- Are you a person of compassion?
- Do you have a listening ear?
- Do you have a heart for people?

We are currently seeking people to serve on our Prayerline who have a heart to listen with people and pray with them.

We are a team of Christians offering emotional and spiritual support and prayer. We do not offer counselling or an advice service, it is about praying to God and asking for His help, whatever the need. Hours of volunteers to be agreed (the Prayerline operates between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday).

Training is given along with travel expenses. If you require further information or would like to talk about volunteering then please call.

Call Michele on 01277 365398 option 4
or email at admin@nctuk.org

While the Prayer Guide is provided free of charge, there is obviously a cost involved in producing it. You may like to prayerfully consider making a small donation towards this resource.

Thank you again for standing with us in prayer

01277 365398 option 4



@NCTMulberryLife

Nationwide Christian Trust
Mulberry House, Chelmsford Road, High Ongar, Essex CM5 9NL
Tel: 01277 365398 nationwidechristiantrust.com