



THE UNITED PARISH
Christ Church & St John's



**PRAYER
WARRIORS
APRIL 2023**

Thank you for picking up this latest copy of the Prayer Warriors sheet.

You may remember that in our last edition I said I would keep you updated on my resolve to spend more time in prayer and bible study. Well, those who know me well will not be surprised to hear that once more I have failed miserably. I am today making lists, of lists, of things I have to do this week, as my ordinary life threatens to go thundering onwards like a runaway train!!

The thing that is giving me hope and comfort at the minute is the book we are studying in Monday night Bible Study – Judges. Judges is the story of the Israelites and their ever recurring cycle of sin and disaster. They turn to God to save them time and again, and despite the fact that they still sin again after he saves them, God in His infinite grace and mercy, saves them yet again.

I am that Israelite – God hears me time and again resolve to spend more time with him. Yet he still loves me and forgives me and waits for me to slow down. What can I do? I love the life he has given me and I want to live it to the fullest.

Its like my school reports – Could do better!!

Anyway. Thank you for all your prayers. Please keep praying wherever and whenever you can.

Yours in Christ
Leigh Henderson

Some Prayer Points From Revd Jonny

I am very conscious that in this past month we have seen so many people in our church family and community die. In the space of 7 days I conducted 5 funerals, Pray for each family that either has lost a loved one, or there is an anniversary approaching which brings grief very much to the forefront of their minds.

As I have just attended the 2 Boys' Brigade display nights, I give thanks to God for the incredible sense of God's presence in those boys. He is doing an incredible work in the lives of all our young people and the future for our community is bright when I look at their spiritual development. Keep praying for the families of all our young people, the they would be such a witness to their parents and siblings.

Give thanks to God for the powerful impact Alpha has been in sharing the message of Jesus with those seeking. We have been so blessed over the last 10 weeks and now that it has concluded I give thanks for the wonderful Godly leaders that have helped bring the message of the Gospel to our guests. Pray now for the planning that takes place for post-Alpha bible studies, that God would provide a leader to oversee this.

In St John's we are really keen to find someone to over see the music each week. Pray that God would direct the right person to support me in the oversight of Sunday worship.

Similarly we give thanks as the Choir in Christ Church have now returned to processing and recessing in Services post-COVID. Pray for new members to join the choir. Also pray for support for Andrew our organist when Jenny goes on maternity leave in May.

Pray that God would continue to sustain myself, Rachel Stewart & Emily Brannigan as we lead our youth team in preparation for the mission to Tarragona in Spain. Give thanks to God for an incredible bunch of teens we are taking to Spain, that God would mould and develop them into leaders for His service.

Pray for my own preparations as I visit our mission partners in Nairobi, Kenya in May - that God would equip me with His word as I begin to consider the teaching I will do whilst out there. Pray for all the practical arrangements that now need to be sorted - finances, vaccinations, programme planning.

Prayer Points From Revd Jonny

Continue to pray for my role as chaplain to Antrim Hospital; in each patient I meet they would know the comfort, strength & healing of God. I am also trying to complete a Post-graduate course in Chaplaincy and essays are now looming. Pray that God would equip me with the time I need to have these completed before I leave for Nairobi.

Pray for my role as Chair to the Church of Ireland Marriage Council that God would direct the Council's path to support couples in marriage across the island. Alison and I will lead for 6 weeks a Marriage Enrichment course across Ireland. Pray that couples would be enriched in their relationships through this course. Pray also for General Synod in May in which the Marriage Council will present a new video outlining our purpose and aims.

I thank God for our parish's commitment to be faithful to the proclamation of the Gospel. Pray that everyone who leads and preaches from both churches is led by the power of the Holy Spirit and that ears would hear afresh God's word.

Select Vestry

Give thanks to God for those who have served faithfully in this past year within the Select Vestry, including the wardens who welcome people into our churches each Sunday and support Jonny in preparations for Sunday worship

Pray for our forthcoming elections at Easter Vestry. This year is a triennial and therefore additional positions will need filled. Pray that people across our parish will ask themselves "what would you have me do in service to you Lord in your Church?" Pray that people would step forward to serve.

As our country continues to suffer economically, give thanks to God for the many people who generously sow into the life and mission of our parish. Pray that God would continue to resource us for the work he would have us do.

Pray for the newly appointed Select Vestry in April, that God by his Holy Spirit would guide and direct them in all they do and all they matters they consider.

Compassion Ministries - Frances Wilson

Please continue to pray for those in our community who are struggling to deal with financial hardship and for those whose mental health is suffering as a result.

Give thanks for the dedication of our many volunteers in the various compassion ministries.

Pray that our community will know that what we do in these ministries comes from our love of God and that we will have opportunities to share our faith with individuals.

Pray that God will guide us as to how we should develop the ministries to reach out to more individuals in our local community.

Baby Basics

Give thanks the mobile unit to be used as a dedicated Baby Basics centre has been ordered. This should be in place by the end of June. Give thanks for the generosity of the individuals and organisations who donate. Pray for the individuals who receive packs from Baby Basics. We have received 28 referrals since January. Pray for God's guidance as we continue to reach out to more charities who would benefit from this service.

Munch on Mondays

Pray for those who visit our table and pray that more people will come along who will benefit from this ministry. Give thanks for the generosity of the Co-Op in Ballynure and for continued support to families in need.

Food Bank

Give thanks for our links with the Food Bank.

CAP Life Skills

Pray for the individuals who attended the latest Life Skills course. Pray that God will guide us as to how we continue to connect with our group.

Partnerships

Give thanks for the good relationships we have built with Community Advice, Antrim & Newtownabbey Council, Asda and Ballynure Co-Op. Pray for God's guidance as we explore further opportunities with groups who could signpost people to our ministries.

Parish Organisations

Mothers Union - Vera Jones

Please give thanks that we can regularly meet together to pray, and enjoy fellowship.

Give thanks for our newly Commissioned Diocesan Trustee Body and Executive Committee as they plan under God's direction the path forward for Mothers' Union in Connor.

Please pray for our Connor Diocesan President Sally as we welcome her to our Branch as our Speaker.

Give thanks for the prayerful support of our Indoor Members.

Pray for Mothers' Union Worldwide, the members and the Mothers' Union workers who train and teach these women in literacy and numeracy.

Boys' Brigade– Ian Heaney

Our displays took place at the end of March. It was great to get a chance to show off the boys' efforts this year to parents as we haven't had a display since 2019 and we give thanks to God for bringing us safely through that difficult time.

We have wrapped up our official BB programme with the end of the displays, but that does not mean we are finished for the year. There will be a number of boys partaking in DofE over the summer, and we will hold a couple of events with all the boys to keep in touch! Please pray that God will keep all the DofE boys safe during their expeditions and that all the other planned events will be successful and full of fun for all concerned.

As the boys finish up for another year, we will have boys leaving the company, and with that, leaving may mean that they lose the only contact they have with church. Pray that the seed that we have planted as a company will grow, and that these young men will come to know God as their Lord and Saviour.

Youth & Children's Ministries

Youth Bible Study - Tim Burns

Please pray for the exodus team and for Jonny as he leads the team.

Pray also for the Friday night group, we have recently started the Alpha Prayer course with them and it has been great so far. Pray that as they engage with the material it will help them understand the importance of prayer more and help them to engage with God in a deeper way through prayer. Pray for wisdom for us as leaders that we would lead gently.

For our Sunday morning teen study we are using the CMSI material which is designed to encourage young people to see the impact of climate change on people across the world. Please pray that all our young will be impacted by this in a long term and practical way.

St John's Junior Sunday School - Leah Burns

Thank God for the Jigsaw resources that are used each week and pray for the children as they discuss the bible stories and learn the memory verses. Pray that as we discuss the Easter story they would develop a better understanding of the true meaning of Easter.

Christ Church Sunday Youth - Alison Campbell-Smyth

Give praise to God for new youth joining us, and thank Him for such a great bunch of young people. Pray that God will increase in each young person an appetite for more of him in their lives. Thank God for our bunch of leaders shaping these young people.

Mission– Home & Abroad

Release International - Lisa Willetts

Give thanks for the Release of Uyghur Christian pastor Alim in China after 15yrs. Pray for him and his family as they reunite (wife and sons were not allowed to visit him in prison).

Nigeria: Pray for the new president Bola Tinubu - that he will take action to protect Christian communities from Islamist militants. For stability in the country under new leadership. That Nigerian Christians will remain strong in their faith in the face of violent persecution.

CMSIreland - Bert Rea

Kenya - With rains predicted in mid March, please pray that enough falls to alleviate the drought situation. Also, pray that initiatives to harvest water when it comes are successful, and the planting of drought resistant crops will offset the effects of severe dry spells in the future.

Please pray for the success of our new three year CMSIreland plan, which was launched at the beginning of March. Also, pray that many people from both churches will enthusiastically engage to ensure the plan's objectives will be achieved, and our link to Nairobi is strengthened.

Continue praying for our link partners Antony, Louise and Isabelle as they carry out their community programmes in these trying times.