



THE UNITED PARISH
Christ Church & St John's

PRAYER WARRIORS

February 2024



Thank you for picking up this Prayer Warrior's booklet for February. We are all appreciative of your prayers.

Once again, we find ourselves at the start of a New Year. If you are like me, you will be full of resolve to do better this year: - to be kinder, more thoughtful, more patient, loving, tolerant....The list could be endless. I'm so grateful that God knows and understands me and will forgive me when I fall at the first hurdle.

My main resolve – as always – is to spend more time with my Lord.

I have a little book of daily devotions which I look at on a random basis. It uses The Passion Translation for its Scripture quotations. I'm a New International Version girl normally but this quote spoke to me. It reminded me that no matter how much I feel I have to work and do and be busy with, what God actually wants is for me to spend time with him. I think it's an invaluable thought to start the year with. Whatever your resolve, burden or worry just keep this in mind.

“Are you weary, carrying a heavy burden? Then come to me, I will refresh your life, for I am your oasis. Simply join your life with mine. Learn my ways and you'll discover that I'm gentle, humble, easy to please. You will find refreshment and rest in me” Matthew 11 v 28-29

May you all have a happy, healthy and blessed New Year.

Yours in Christ

Leigh Henderson

Prayer Points from Revd Jonny

I give thanks to God for the incredible faithful encouragement that I receive from many people within the parish. Pray that God would continue to put in all of us a United heart to care for each other, to build each other up in the faith of Christ, and to encourage each other to faithfully proclaim the name of Jesus every day.

For those that have been affected by recent storms, pray for those who live on their own and for whom the past weeks have brought worry.

As we embark on 2025, and the Year of Evangelism, pray that God would equip all of us through the work of the Holy Spirit for the mission to go out and make disciples. Pray that he would give us a boldness to step beyond our comfort zones.

Give thanks to God for the incredibly positive attendance at the Evangelism Training nights led by New Wine Ireland. Pray for George Newell, that he would be directed by the Holy Spirit in his teaching to us.

I have a heart to see the village of Ballynure awaken to the message of the Gospel. Pray that God will guide us on how we step forward to share the Gospel in the village.

We continue to seek out a new Choir Director/ Organist for Christ Church. Pray that God would lead his chosen person to us.

I am very conscious this month in my role as Rural Dean of the various parishes that I am having to support due to vacancy and illness. I also am mindful of my need to remain faithful to God's call here in the United Parish. Pray that God will sustain me each day with the demanding pressures.

As we embark again this year in preparing a Youth Mission Team for Tarragona Spain, pray for myself and Michaela Tuccillo as we begin to meet weekly with the team.

Give thanks to God for our 2nd Sunday Evening worship. This has been such an encouragement with growing numbers attending each month.

I really want to see our Men's Ministry develop in the parish, and so pray for the programme of events this year, that this may give opportunity for growth and encouragement.

Overseeing the work of the Select Vestry is not a small task. This year we have major projects to consider, and we are very aware of the pressures on our parish finances. Pray for wisdom with the decisions we are making. But also pray that God would direct you in how you respond financially to the mission that he has placed on us to do here in Ballyclare & Ballynure.

Finally, I am always aware of our elderly and housebound parishioners. Can I invite you to not only pray for them and our connections with them, but maybe also consider prayerfully how you might be able to get in contact with a few of them to encourage them and let them know how valued they are within our church family.

Parish Groups

Mothers' Union - Vera Jones

Mothers' Union recommenced on Monday 27th January. Please pray that during the year as we enjoy fellowship, that new opportunities arise where we can assist Diocesan projects supporting women and families whose lives have been affected by adversity.

2025 is a year of new beginnings within Mothers' Union. We have a new President for our Diocese of Connor, a new All Ireland President and a new Worldwide President. Please pray for Alison Skillen of St Polycarp's Finaghy, Kay Clarke of Derry and Raphoe Diocese and Kathleen Snow from Canada respectively as they take up their new positions.

Our Theme for 2025 is: - **Join us and Join in.**

Please pray that members of our Church Family will take up our invitation and explore what membership of Mothers' Union is all about - more than is sometimes thought!! Thank you for your continued prayers.

Prayer Ministry Team - Andree Bradley

“....the joy of the Lord is your strength.” Nehemiah 8:10

Please pray for the Prayer Ministry Team moving forward into 2025 as they serve in our parishes.

Please join us in praying for the evangelism course led by George Newell, starting on Thursday 23rd January and running for 4 weeks.

We pray, Lord, help us to follow the example of Jesus in battles and blessings. Direct us to study your Word so we can be courageous in proclaiming the message of Jesus. (taken from Nicky Gumbel, BIOY)

Genesis Art Fellowship - Lynne Brannigan

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. Galatians 5:1

We would like to **thank God** for

- the freedom to enjoy and work on creative projects
- to be able to share with others

We **would ask** God to inspire us

- to give us boldness
- to walk in confidence and faith
- to have grateful hearts
- to give God the glory

CMS Ireland - Bert Rea

Kenya

Please continue praying for

Our link partners Lucy, Louise, Isabelle, Antony and Kathleen as they serve the mission and call of the Tujisaidie Self-Help Group. Pray especially for Lucy (Antony's Mum) and Kathleen as they prepare to travel to Ireland in May to visit the United Parish and other links in Ireland. They are founder members of Tujisaidie and have decades of experience to share, plus wonderful spiritual insight. Please pray for all the formalities to work smoothly and for the visitors to bring blessings to each place they visit.

Please pray that 2025 would bring peace and stability, as well as a seasonal pattern that allows crops to grow and ripen in their respective seasons, and that food prices become stable for the Kenyan population.

Tujisaidie School

Thank God for the 6 new classrooms, now in full swing. Please pray for the second phase of this Misean Cara project, which will lead to the classrooms being furnished and equipped, including a tablet for each student during computer classes.

Pray for the outings of the Tujisaidie School students, in February and March, taking them to the Nairobi Safari Walk, where they can observe the animals in large enclosures, ready to be released back into the wild after a period of convalescence and rehabilitation. Please pray for the teachers' outing to the Kitengela glassblowing workshop on 5 April. Give thanks for the generosity donations of supporters who fund these.

Thank God for the recent visit by Lenka McAlinden from "Just Be a Child" in England, which donated 6,000 books to the Tujisaidie school and the Tumaini library.

Pray for John Omondi (Principal), the teachers & school lunch cooks.

Tumaini African Foundation

Please pray for

- Antony and the team as they press on with the activities that go on in the TAF Centre of Excellence – especially the more than just a meal (MTJAM) programme which provides a free hot meal for an average of 510 children every Saturday lunchtime.
- Antony's work with the Tumaini Sports Academy – especially the TAF Football first team which is starting a new season in the FKF Nairobi East Regional League.
- Naomi the TAF Librarian who is on a 2-year Certificate course in Librarianship and Information Studies at the Railway Training Institute, and for Lucy Wangui who is running the library in her absence.
- The IT (Information Technology) innovation hub room being planned for the 2nd floor, giving thanks for the technical support given by the United parish + furniture that has been donated by the Kenya Irish Society.

Although the floods have subsided our prayers are still needed for the ongoing relief work helping to re-house the 500 or so members of the community whose homes were demolished after the devastating floods. Give thanks for the generous support of CMSI support parishes and a £10,000 grant from Bishops' Appeal.

Overseas Mission

Release International – Lisa Willett

Egypt:

Pray for new believers as they risk losing everything they have including family, friends, homes and jobs. They also face kidnapping and torture for choosing to follow Christ. Give thanks for their faith and pray for God's protection and provision in their lives.

Pray for the work amongst Sudanese refugees in Egypt. Give thanks for the many who are becoming followers of Christ. Pray for those discipling them and for further outreach into this community.

Lebanon:

Give thanks for doors being opened to share the Gospel as a result of the recent conflict. Pray for safety and boldness for those sharing the Gospel and openness for those receiving it.

Ministries within our town

Street Pastors

Pray that churches would be represented in the volunteers who walk through Ballyclare late at night

Pray for the management committee as they seek to understand God's direction for this ministry

Greater Ballyclare Youth for Christ

Pray for Hayley, the centre manager, as she continues to develop deep relationships with young people in the town.

Currently members of staff are on long-term sick which limits what the centre can provide. Pray that God would pour his healing on the staff team and their recovery.

WAVE

Please give thanks for the success of our coffee morning which was very well attended and raised a staggering £1200.

Please give thanks for the recent meeting and its success as they looked at Moses in the wilderness. Please also give thanks for all faithful volunteers and members and ask for God's blessing on all of them.

Please pray for the next meeting on **Sunday 23rd February**, asking God to equip and provide more volunteers to join the team.

StreetReach

This ministry runs every Summer providing outreach into Ballyclare through holiday clubs, cleanups, and community events. Pray that God would work within the organising committee as they prepare for this year.

Boys Brigade- Ian Heaney

BB has been going very well! We have enjoyed a good start to our first half of the year. Ballynure Company Section have joined us for the second year in a row; we give thanks for the bonds of friendship that have been formed.

We now turn our attention to all our displays before Easter. We have a considerable amount of work and planning to make these a success- we would appreciate prayer for this.

We have been massively blessed in Boys Brigade, we know this only comes from God's blessing on the leaders and the boys. Thank you to everyone who prays for us- the prayers are being answered!

The commitment of leaders is incredible. Very soon we will lose some leaders, so pray that God will provide faithful Godly disciples to carry on the work in our Sections.

Friday Night Bible Study Group – Tim Burns

We are continuing the SERVE programme; it focusses on developing young leaders and encouraging their discipleship.

We have had a break over Christmas and have now returned to our normal schedule. Pray for the young people as they come along that they would find a supportive and encouraging place and that they would be encouraged in their faith. Pray too that they would develop as Godly young leaders.

We are also using our older teens and those of university age to help lead; Pray for their confidence and development as they do this. Pray also for our home that it would feel like a safe and encouraging place for people.

Compassion Ministries- Frances Wilson

Please give thanks for how God has blessed the ministries; for our teams of volunteers; and for the privilege of reaching out to our community.

Pray that people will see God's love in all that we do.

Please pray for wisdom as we plan for 2025, especially as to the impact we can have in this Year of Evangelism.

Pray for the people we connect with; and for those who need help but are afraid to ask;
As we engage with more people, we are increasingly aware of the extent of loneliness in our town.
Pray that God will guide us to those people so that we can offer companionship and hope;
Pray for how we can grow our relationships with REACH (Rashee & Erskine Community Hub), Grange Community Action and the Six Mike Hub;

BABY BASICS

Give thanks for recent donations from the Sydenham Salvation Army Knit and Natter Group and Ballylinney Mums & Tots group.

Pray that we will connect with more organisations who would benefit from what we provide for struggling families.

- Pray for the families who receive our packs.

MUNCH ON MONDAYS

Give thanks for Conor and the team at Ballynure Co-Op who provide the food.

Give thanks for the recent cash donation we received which will enable us to purchase non-perishable items.

Pray that as we have started to offer tea and coffee, more people will engage with this ministry, especially those who are struggling financially and / or emotionally.

KINTSUGI HOPE

We will be running our next Kintsugi programme with REACH. Pray for Liz and Frances from St John's and for Paul and Ang from REACH as we start to plan.

CAP LIFE SKILLS

Our next Life Skills course is planned for the summer term. Pray for God's guidance and wisdom as we start to reach out to potential participants.