

SHINE Prayer Diary

Thanksgiving – for God’s wisdom

Tuesday 1 April

Wisdom is a life-giving tree, the source of happiness for all who hold on to her. By his wisdom and knowledge the LORD created heaven and earth. Proverbs 3:18+19

Thank you, Lord, for the planet on which I live. Thank you for the beauty of your creation.

Thank you that you created all things (including me) for yourself. Thank you that you created all things by your wisdom and understanding. Please help me to develop wise and sensible ways of living on this planet which are in agreement with your creative nature. Amen.

Wednesday 2 April

But if any of you lack wisdom, you should pray to God, who will give it to you; because God gives generously and graciously to all. James 1:5

But the wisdom that comes from above leads us to be pure, friendly, gentle, sensible, kind, helpful, genuine, and sincere. When peacemakers plant seeds of peace, they will harvest justice. James 3:17 + 18

Thank you, God, that you promise to give wisdom to all who ask you and that includes me.

Please give me wisdom for the situations where I am unsure how to think, speak and act. Thank you that your wisdom will help me to be a purer, friendlier, gentler, kinder, more sensible, helpful, genuine and sincere follower of Jesus. Amen.

Thursday 3 April

He is the key that opens all the hidden treasures of God's wisdom and knowledge. Colossians 2:3

Thank you, Jesus, for being the key that gives access to the hidden treasures of God’s wisdom.

Thank you for my relationship with you. Think about all that Jesus means to you and how he has opened up the treasures of God’s love for your life.

Friday 4 April

Our God, your name will be praised forever and forever. You are all-powerful, and you know everything. You control human events - you give rulers their power and take it away, and you are the source of wisdom and knowledge. You explain deep mysteries, because even the dark is light to you. Daniel 2:20 – 22

If you have any questions to which you are looking for answers, take a few moments, express these questions to God. It may help to write your question down alongside Daniel’s statement above. As time goes by you may like to note down the answers that you receive.

All powerful God, today I praise you and thank you because you are God and I belong to you. I thank you because you are in control of human events including the events that are shaping my life. Thank you that I can trust you to explain deep mysteries, including the questions that I wrestle with, in ways that I can understand. Please shine your light on my path today. Amen.

Saturday 5 April

The Law of the LORD is perfect; it gives us new life. His teachings last forever, and they give wisdom to ordinary people. Psalm 19:7

Thank you, Lord, for the Bible, which brings me new life teaching me and giving me wisdom.

Today as I read your word may the Holy Spirit open my understanding, explain to me more about Jesus, and teach me and guide me in paths that lead to righteous living. Amen.

Sunday 6 April – Praise God for his never failing love

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions they fail not,
As Thou hast been Thou for ever wilt be.
Great is Thy faithfulness, great is Thy faithfulness;
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided –
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

As you take a few moments to think about the last week remember all the good things God has done for you and given you. Use the song above to express your praise to God.

Monday 7 April

You are a great and powerful God; you are the LORD Almighty. You make wise plans and do mighty things; you see everything that people do, and you reward them according to their actions. Jeremiah 32:18 + 19

Thank you, Lord God Almighty, for your wise plans and mighty deeds. Thank you that you are all powerful, all knowing and all seeing. Thank you that you see everything that I do, that your eyes are upon me every moment of my life. Thank you that you will reward right living even though I do not fully understand what that will mean. Today as I make decisions, whether they are small or large, help me to do so in the knowledge that you are God Almighty. Amen.

Prayer for the Church – from Prayer for Christian Unity, Focolare movement

But you are a chosen group of people. You are the King's religious leaders. You are a holy nation. You belong to God. He has done this for you so you can tell others how God has called you out of darkness into His great light. At one time you were a people of no use. Now you are the people of God. At one time you did not have loving-kindness. Now you have God's loving-kindness. 1 Peter 2: 9 – 10

To pray without ceasing doesn't mean multiplying our acts of prayer, but it means turning our lives towards God. If things are difficult we could say, 'What really matters? Loving you matters!' Then we will transform everything into an act of love. And our prayer will be 'without ceasing' because our love is without ceasing. (by Chiara Lubich)

Tuesday 8 April

Each of you is now a new person. You are becoming more and more like your Creator and you will understand him better. Colossians 3:10

Take a few minutes to reflect on the fact that God calls all people to unity. Thank God for his help you as you seek for unity with other believers. Pray for the church in St Helens that believers would grow in understanding that we are called to unity.

Wednesday 9 April

Thank God for the relationships that you have with other Christians. Pray that God would help you to take the initiative in making a relationship with a Christian brother or sister grow. Pray for believers in St Helens that they seek to help their relationships with other Christians grow.

Thursday 10 April

Choose today to pray for the needs of another church and to find out more in the coming days about another church's needs.

Friday 11 April

Put up with each other, and forgive anyone who does you wrong, just as Christ has forgiven you. Colossians 3:13

Building trust with people that we find difficult is not easy. Maybe you could start again with someone you find difficult. We pray for ourselves, that God would give us the courage and wisdom as we seek to start again. We pray for other believers in St Helens that they too would be given grace by God and a desire to start afresh where possible.

Saturday 12 April

God loves you and has chosen you as his own special people. So be gentle, kind, humble, meek, and patient. Colossians 3:12

Today we pray for ourselves and all other believers in St Helens. Help us to grow in kindness, humility, meekness and patience. Help us to see others' points of view and help us to make an effort to listen as well as to speak.

Sunday 13 April – Praise and Worship God with your Christian sisters and brothers

God is the one who makes us patient and cheerful. I pray that he will help you live at peace with each other, as you follow Christ. Then all of you together will praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Honour God by accepting each other, as Christ has accepted you. Romans 15:5 – 7

Thank you, Father God, that today I have the opportunity to praise you. I praise you because you have adopted me into your family and made me your child. I praise you because you make it feasible for me to live in peace with others. I choose to live out my worship to you by honouring you with my words today and by honouring you through my thoughts, words and actions towards others, too. Amen.

Monday 14 April

Please pray that I will make the message as clear as possible. Colossians 4:4

Thank you, Father God, for the spiritual journey which I am walking with you. Thank you that many other believers in St Helens are also on their journey with you. We pray that you will give us opportunities to share something of our life's journey with others, and we ask you to help us grasp these special moments with your help and wisdom. Amen.

Prayer for St Helens

Tuesday 15 April – MPs

Lord Jesus, thank you that you created humans in your image to reflect your goodness and creativity in acts of extravagant goodness. Today we pray for our MPs Dave Watts, Labour MP for St Helens North, and Shaun Woodward, Labour MP for St Helens South. Thank you for the lives of these men who represent us in Parliament. Thank you that you created them in your image with a purpose to reflect your glory and to fulfil your purposes. We pray for them that you would grant them creativity and sensitive minds, wills and hearts as they seek to make decisions that will benefit our Town and Nation. We ask you to bless them and their families. Amen.

Wednesday 16 April – Sustainable Community Plan 2008 – 2018

Lord Jesus, thank you for St Helens Borough Council. As we pray for St Helens Council, we pray that you would grant wisdom to all those in authority as they plan and seek to bring about economic development and enterprise, healthier and safer communities, address the needs of all St Helens communities and neighbourhoods, and make provision for the children and young people of the borough.

Thursday 17 April – Justice

The LORD always does right and wants justice done. Everyone who does right will see his face.
Psalm 11:7

Lord Jesus, we thank you that those who do right will see your face. Thank you for the lives of those who hold positions of authority in St Helens. We pray that they would seek to do what is correct and would have a clear understanding of the issues that affect the Borough. We ask that decisions will be made that implement justice and well being for the residents of the Borough. Amen.

Friday 18 April

You loved justice and hated evil, and so I, your God, have chosen you. I appointed you and made you happier than any of your friends. Hebrews 1:9

Lord Jesus, you love justice and were chosen and appointed by your Father to bring salvation to the earth. Today we pray for all Christians in positions of responsibility in the Borough that you would be their mentor as they seek to grow in godliness, friend at all times, light for the path and strength for the present challenges. We pray that many who have been placed in positions of responsibility would seek after you and your ways. We ask this so that your name will be glorified. Amen.

Saturday 19 April

The LORD God has told us what is right and what he demands: "See that justice is done, let mercy be your first concern, and humbly obey your God." Micah 6:8

Lord Jesus, thank you that you care for all people, and are especially concerned for the vulnerable, young and elderly. We thank you that you care deeply about the deprived areas in the Borough. We thank you for the provision that is already being put in place in these areas and ask for a wise use of resources and for good planning for the future. We pray for all who are working for positive changes in these areas. We also pray for a change in the spiritual atmosphere that deprivation will be replaced with hope, hopelessness with growing trust and confidence, low self esteem with empowering. As we unite in prayer for the weak may your mercy be shown to many. Amen.

Sunday 20 April – Praise the Lord for his authority

The Apostle Paul teaches us to pray for ourselves and all God's followers:

I want you to know about the great and mighty power that God has for us followers. It is the same wonderful power he used when he raised Christ from death and let him sit at his right side in heaven. There Christ rules over all forces, authorities, powers, and rulers. He rules over all beings in this world and will rule in the future world as well. God has put all things under the power of Christ, and for the good of the church he has made him the head of everything.

Ephesians 1:20 – 22

I praise you God for your great and mighty power which raised Jesus from the dead. I praise you God because you have seated the risen Son at your right hand side in heaven. I praise you Christ because you have been given all authority and power and you rule over all the forces, authorities powers and rulers that operate in this world. I praise you because I have be placed under you power and rule. I praise you because you care deeply about your church and so you have made Christ the head of all for the good of the church. Amen.

Monday 21 April

Lord Jesus, thank you for all those who police the Borough. We ask you to protect them as they go about their work. We pray for stamina and determination in the fight against drug trafficking. Thank you that you delight to bring the light of your justice into St Helens. We pray for the success of current operations, asking that many who are high up in the drug trafficking business will be brought to justice. And we ask that there would be a growing willingness on the part of communities to provide the police with information and to stop turning a blind eye to illegal activities. Amen.

Prayer for Parenting and Families – Barbara and Margery thank you for praying

Tuesday 22 April

Give thanks to God for the parenting classes that are running in St Helens. And give thanks to God for all the groups across the Borough that encourage the parents of young children enabling parents to find a safe place where they are able to make friends and share their concerns and worries about their children.

Wednesday 23 April

Pray for parents who do a difficult job often without thanks or appreciation that they will feel valued for all they do.

Thursday 24 April

Give thanks for mothers and fathers everywhere and pray they will feel God's love as they nurture and guide their children.

Friday 25 April

Please pray for relationships between parents and older children that these children will feel loved and valued within their families.

Saturday 26 April

Ask God to strengthen those parenting alone and give them godly wisdom in all situations.

Sunday 27 April – Praise your loving heavenly Father

Sing to God, sing praises to His name; praise Him who rides on the heavens by His name JEHOVAH, and rejoice before Him. In His holy dwelling God is the father of the fatherless, and the judge of the widows. Psalm 68:4 – 5

In the quiet of your heart praise God for being your father, protector and kind judge.

Monday 28 April

Please pray that society will learn to celebrate family life and that government will be responsible before God for the policies they implement.

Prayer for the Town – for healing

But he endured the suffering that should have been ours, the pain that we should have borne. All the while we thought that his suffering was punishment sent by God. But because of our sins he was wounded, beaten because of the evil we did. We are healed by the punishment he suffered, made whole by the blows he received. All of us were like sheep that were lost, each of us going his own way. But the LORD made the punishment fall on him, the punishment all of us deserved. Isaiah 53:4 - 6

Tuesday 29 April

Jesus the healer, you touched the woman who had bled for twelve years. Thank you that you still love to heal. We recognise that in St Helens many lives are blighted by acute and chronic illness and a sense of despair. Many families have seen generation after generation suffer debilitating illnesses. We ask for freedom from the bondage to illness and despair. We pray that many will turn to God and trust in him. We pray that across St Helens many people would respond to Jesus' message of hope and healing. Thank you for healing services which offer the opportunity to respond and reach out for a touch from you Jesus. We pray that many will reach out and touch you. Amen.

Wednesday 30 April

Jesus the healer, a gospel account of your ministry was written by Luke a physician. We pray for all dental and GP surgeries in St Helens, asking you to grant wisdom to doctors, dentists, physiotherapists, practice managers, nurses and receptionists. We thank you for their willingness to serve our community. We pray that they will be blessed with good health themselves, kind hands, open ears, sound medical practice and compassion. We pray for them as they face change and stress with government targets. We pray that many will find healing and comfort

Shine Prayer Event tonight at 7.30pm at St Anne's and Blessed Dominic, Sutton.
Please pray, do come.

Thursday 1 May

Jesus the healer, you wept with Martha and Mary at the tomb of Lazarus. Thank you for your compassion towards the dying. Thank you that you conquered death and ascended into heaven and you are now seated on the throne in heaven interceding for us. We intercede for Willowbrook Hospice and other hospices whose services are accessed by St Helens residents. Please prosper these places of refuge and comfort giving strength and sensitivity to all their staff. Please accompany those in St Helens who are dying at the moment and provide opportunities for spiritual help and comfort for both the dying and their families and friends. Amen.

Friday 2 May

Jesus the healer, you spent time at the pool at Bethesda where multitudes of the sick gathered to seek healing. Thank you for the hospitals and clinics and care homes which treat patients in St Helens and surrounding areas. Thank you for the staff who are dedicated to their vocation and committed to high quality patient care. We pray that you would encourage them in their services to our community. We ask you to make these safe places, praying that they will be wisely and prudently managed. We especially pray for standards of cleanliness to improve in the fight against outbreaks of super bugs. We pray for patients both young and old that as they travel the road of sickness, infirmity or disability they would be enabled to learn to trust in you. Amen.

Saturday 3 May

Jesus the healer, after you ministered to the man who was tormented in the graveyard he returned to his right mind. Thank you for all who offer counsel and support to the mentally ill and troubled. We pray that those who need these services would be able to access them. We pray for all who are troubled in spirit and mind that they would reach out to you in their despair and find your eternal embrace of comfort. May they search for direction, purpose and fulfilment in you. Amen.

Sunday 4 May – Praise Jesus the healer and liberator

The Spirit of the LORD God has taken control of me! The LORD has chosen and sent me to tell the oppressed the good news, to heal the broken-hearted, and to announce freedom for prisoners and captives. This is the year when the LORD God will show kindness to us and punish our enemies. The LORD has sent me to comfort those who mourn, especially in Jerusalem. He sent me to give them flowers in place of their sorrow, olive oil in place of tears, and joyous praise in place of broken hearts. They will be called "Trees of Justice," planted by the LORD to honour his name. Isaiah 61:1 – 3

Reflecting on the description of Jesus above take a few minutes to express your praise to Jesus for his marvellous ministry. Praise God that now is a time for God's favour in your life and the lives of those for whom you pray.

Monday 5 May

Jesus the healer, you ministered to the woman caught in the act of adultery. We pray for men and women both young and old who are caught up in sexual immorality and we pray for those who offer ministry to them. We pray for all who have been victims of the sexual sins of others, and all who have made unwise sexual choices, and we ask you bring healing and wholeness and forgiveness. Amen.

Prayer for the community and churches of Parr

Tuesday 6 May – churches

Lord Jesus, we thank for the churches of Parr: Boardman's Lane Methodist Church, Holy Trinity, Salvation Army, St Paul's, St Peter's, St Philips and St Vincent's. We pray for these congregations that they will be Christian centres of hope, light, healing and mission. We pray for all who attend that they will be strengthened in their walk with you and witness to your love. We pray for their leaders that they will be granted wise words, loving hearts and creative minds. May the Lord Jesus hold, in his loving arms, all in Parr who are suffering. As your church we ask you Jesus to use your church to comfort those who mourn, to protect the vulnerable, to speak words of encouragement to those who are lonely, to befriend the outcasts, to give strength to those who are suffering, to place your healing hands on the sick. Amen.

Wednesday 7 May – prayer with thanksgiving for:

- the provision of a home for Rob and Carole from the Salvation Army asking for God's blessing on their new home and ministry in Parr
- couples in Parr who are choosing to commit to each other in marriage, praying that these couples and many other couples will grow in love and commitment to each other and be a positive influence on the community around them
- monthly Friday afternoon Café Church outreach in St Philips being run by St Philips, St Peters and Christian Life Centre. Thank God for the contacts already made and that this will bear fruit and that the existing church will use this avenue to extend the Kingdom of God
- the life and witness of Holy Trinity Church during this time of change and praying that the building project would gain momentum

Thursday 8 May – children and young people

And they brought children to Him, so that He should touch them. And His disciples rebuked those bringing them. But when Jesus saw, He was much displeased and said to them, Allow the little children to come to Me and do not hinder them. For of such is the kingdom of God.

Mark 10:13 + 14

Please pray for:

- Pace, Redbank and St Catherine's that troubled children may find acceptance, boundaries, healing, peace, confidence and increased self esteem
- Allanson Street Primary School, Broad Oak Primary School, Holy Spirit Primary School, Lansbury Bridge Special School, Merton Bank Primary School, St Augustine's and St Cuthbert's that these schools will give outstanding provision, offer security, fun and safety, have high quality staff, provide excellent learning environments and foster good home school relationships
- St Bernard's Orphanage in Zimbabwe (St Vincent's Parish Project) for generous giving, adequate financing, loving houseparents, good schooling, good health, safety and security for the children
- the children's ministries run by the Parr churches to prosper and help many children and young people to know Christ and his love

Friday 9 May – Hope 08 Projects

The Lord watches over everyone who obeys him, and he listens to their prayers. But he opposes everyone who does evil. Can anyone really harm you for being eager to do good deeds?

1 Peter 3:12 + 13

Please pray that the following projects will be graced with God's favour and seasoned with his love:

- The Salvation Army's Mums and Tots Drop In Coffee/Shop planned to start in May / June
- St Paul's parenting classes that God will use these classes to encourage parents, build positive family role models, strengthen families and raise a generation of secure and loving children
- St Peter's project to run a luncheon club, for willing church members to serve God and reach out the local community

Saturday 10 May – Global Days of Prayer 2008

Fling wide the gates, open the ancient doors, and the great king will come in. Who is this great king? The triumphant LORD - he is the great king! Psalm 24:9 – 10

As we have prayed this week for the churches and community of Parr we welcome you into our lives Jesus, King of Glory, praying that you will come and finish your work in Parr, in our neighbourhoods, our villages, our towns and our cities, our peoples and our nations. We lift our voices in unison with believers from Africa and Asia, from the Middle East and Europe, from North and South America, and from Australia and the Pacific Islands – and together we cry: "Come Lord Jesus. By the power of your Holy Spirit we ask you to help us fling open wide our hearts and the hearts of our communities so that you the King of Glory may come in. Amen."

Sunday 11 May – Pentecost

Jesus was taken up to sit at the right side of God, and he was given the Holy Spirit, just as the Father had promised. Jesus is also the one who has given the Spirit to us, and that is what you are now seeing and hearing. Acts 2:33

Lord Jesus Christ, King of Glory, we worship you today along with millions of other worshippers around the globe on this day of global prayer. You alone are worthy to open the scrolls of history, for you were slain and have redeemed us to the Father by your blood. We confess that you are Head of the Church and Lord of all heaven and earth. May people from every tribe and language become your followers. May your Spirit be poured out again on your

church so that your blessing brings transformation. Let your kingdom be established in every nation of the world. And may your name be glorified, from the rising of the sun to its setting.

Monday 12 May

Please pray for the Parish Church of St Helens strategically placed in the town centre:

- for the church as they await a new minister
- for the person of God's choosing
- for future vision

Prayer for SAINTS – Chaplain Phil Pawley asks us to pray

Tuesday 13 May

Please pray for:

- the team, their families, the staff and all working with the club
- those who have faith in Jesus to be renewed in their faith and to be brave enough to share Jesus with others
- those who do not know the Lord that they might come to know of and receive his saving love

Wednesday 14 May

Please pray for:

- those who are injured that they will not lose heart and that during the time of their recovery they would ask the deeper questions of life - the 'what if' type questions
- those moving on at the end of the year, particularly for Daniel the head coach and his family, that the right doors will open for work, schools, home and the like back home in Australia

Thursday 15 May

Today we thank you for the opportunity that chaplaincy offers to minister the life and love of Jesus to a wide variety of people in such a key part of the life of our town. We pray especially for the chaplaincy, for Phil and for his ministry as he works with players, families and staff. Lord, we ask you to give Phil creativity as he writes for the match day programme. We pray that you would bless Phil and his family in every area of their lives and ministries. Amen

Prayer for SHINE

It is not that I just want to receive gifts; rather, I want to see profit added to your account. Here, then, is my receipt for everything you have given me-and it has been more than enough! I have all I need now that Epaphroditus has brought me all your gifts. They are like a sweet-smelling offering to God, a sacrifice which is acceptable and pleasing to him. And with all his abundant wealth through Christ Jesus, my God will supply all your needs. Philippians 4:17 - 19

Friday 16 May

The Shine board of trustees is looking for a new board member. Please pray that the person of God's choosing will be appointed. Please pray for the current board of Trustees for strength and enabling.

Saturday 17 May

We thank God for his generous nature and provision. We thank God for the gifts that he has given to Christians in St Helens and pray that they will be used to glorify God's wonderful name. We pray for the financing of Hope 2008 projects and events in St Helens, thanking God for these opportunities for Christians to serve God and offer him acceptable and pleasing gifts. Amen.

Sunday 18 May – Praise God for all his generous promises

After Solomon had finished praying to the LORD, he stood up in front of the altar, where he had been kneeling with uplifted hands. In a loud voice he asked God's blessings on all the people assembled there. He said, "Praise the LORD who has given his people peace, as he promised he would. He has kept all the generous promises he made through his servant Moses."

1 Kings 8:54 – 56

We praise you, God, because you keep all the generous promises that you have made to us. We praise you because you have blessed our lives in more ways that we are able to count. We praise you for giving your people peace. Amen.

Monday 19 May – Human sexuality

Return to the LORD your God, people of Israel. Your sin has made you stumble and fall. Return to the LORD, and let this prayer be your offering to him: "Forgive all our sins and accept our prayer, and we will praise you as we have promised." Hosea 14:1 – 2

- Lord God, we pray for all who are caught up in sexual sins. You alone know their history and we do not presume to judge others, only to ask for your mercy and forgiveness. We pray for all who run businesses in St Helens, that promote sexual promiscuity, that they would wake up spiritually and realise the consequences of what they are involved in. We pray for all who visit these places that they would seek freedom.
- Lord, we pray for your church in Britain to respond to these issues in accordance with Biblical principles as you commanded long ago: *"You must see that justice is done, and must show kindness and mercy to one another."* Zechariah 7:9.
- Lord God, we pray that leadership in our nation (governmental, civic, spiritual and moral) will seek to see that justice and mercy are balanced rightly in decision making processes.

Prayer for Merseyside

Tuesday 20 May – Domestic violence accounts for 25% of violent crime in Merseyside

I prayed to you, LORD, and in my prayer I said, "What good will it do you if I am in the grave? Once I have turned to dust, how can I praise you or tell how loyal you are? Have pity, LORD! Help!" You have turned my sorrow into joyful dancing. No longer am I sad and wearing sackcloth. I thank you from my heart, and I will never stop singing your praises, my LORD and my God. Psalm 30:8 – 12

Lord, we pray that cycles of abuse will be broken and that many will be set free. We ask that there would be greater public awareness of the issues involved. We pray for all authorities who deal with domestic violence that the services offered would address the needs in a way that brings healing and wholeness to all who are involved. We pray that victims and also perpetrators would be treated with respect. We pray that where necessary the legal processes required would be put in place quickly and efficiently. In faith we ask that the words of the psalmist will become reality for those who are suffering or have suffered domestic violence. Amen.

Wednesday 21 – May Liverpool Festival of Hope 08 June 14th

We thank God for the progress made so far in the organisation of this huge Gospel Arts Street party to be held in Liverpool. Please pray for:

- workers in the organisation and Street
- final release of licences and insurances
- good media coverage
- safety for all who attend and perform
- faithful prayer support for this creative venture

Prayer for the Nation

Thursday 22 May – Human Trafficking

I'll tell you what it really means to worship the LORD. Remove the chains of prisoners who are chained unjustly. Free those who are abused! Isaiah 58:6 (CEV)

Heavenly Father, we join our prayers and actions with many others across our nation as we long to see an end to Human Trafficking. We pray for all who are vulnerable and may be lured into abusive situations asking for their protection and so we ask you Lord to be a shield and defence for the vulnerable. We pray for freedom for those who have been abused and sold as commodities. We pray for those who have been trafficked from abroad, lured here with false offers of decent work, and who are now living as 'abused prisoners' in our country. We ask that those who are being held in captivity will be supernaturally given opportunities for escape. We pray that the criminal justice system would be strengthened to offer greater protection for children and young people and vulnerable adults. We pray that criminals who are trafficking will be caught. We pray for an increase in the prosecution of criminals who groom, traffic and pimp young people. We pray for greater public awareness of this problem. Amen.

Friday 23 May – British Citizenship

On the cross Christ did away with our hatred for each other. He also made peace between us and God by uniting Jews and Gentiles in one body. Christ came and preached peace to you Gentiles, who were far from God, and peace to us Jews, who were near God. And because of Christ, all of us can come to the Father by the same Spirit. You Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens with everyone else who belongs to the family of God.

Ephesians 2:16 – 19

Lord Jesus Christ, thank you that on the cross you made reconciliation between humans possible. Thank you that you provided a way for us all to find peace with the Father and with each other. Holy Spirit, we pray that you will be poured out afresh in our nation in these days as you promised through the prophet Joel. We pray that Christians will be ambassadors of reconciliation to all sectors of society. We pray for all ethnic groupings represented in Britain thanking God for the diversity of human cultures. We pray for politicians as they discuss ways in which the inhabitants of Britain can live in peaceful harmony and live out lives as responsible and respectful citizens. Amen.

Prayer for the Nations

I will treat you with such kindness that your nation will grow strong, and I will also keep my promises to you. Leviticus 26:9

Saturday 24 May – Kenya

As part of the process to bring peace to Kenya, Kofi Annan urged all Kenyans to remain engaged and to play their part reminding them that 'each and every one of you has a role to play'. As we pray today for the nation of Kenya we seek to play our part by praying. We pray for this nation that peace will increase and healing will come to this nation which was wracked by months of civil infighting.

Many are living in makeshift camps and are apprehensive about how to live alongside neighbours who burned their house, killed their child or husband and have taken all their possessions. This is the experience of even those in the same church fellowships.

Please pray:

- giving thanks for the success of peace talks and pray that the plans for peace take root
- that all Kenyans will play their part in forging reconciliation so that Kenya is able to rebuild its reputation as a stable and successful nation within Africa
- for the ongoing work of aid agencies among displaced people

(Further information can be found at Tearfund web site www.tearfund.org)

Sunday 25 May – Praise the holy God who is worthy to receive your praise

Living under the shadow of His wing we find security.

Standing in His presence we will bring our worship, worship, worship to the King.

Bowed in adoration at His feet we dwell in harmony, voices joined together that repeat, 'Worthy, worthy, worthy is the Lamb.'

Heart to heart embracing in His love reveals His purity,

soaring in my spirit like a dove; holy, holy, holy is the Lord.

Monday 26 May – The nations of South America

South America, sometimes described as the forgotten continent, needs our prayers. Recently Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela have been involved in a diplomatic crisis. The conflict was sparked when Colombia bombed and sent troops into neighbouring Ecuador in a raid that killed Raul Reyes, the second-in-command of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).

Father God, we thank you for the continent of South America and pray for increasing political stability for this region of the world. We thank you that many are turning to Christ during these times of political, economic and social instability. We pray for political leaders that they would exercise wisdom and prudence in their decision making. We pray for all whose lives are affected by social and political unrest or by violence and poverty that they would turn to you and turn away from despair and retaliation. We pray for church leaders that they would be given strength to preach the gospel and to pastor the flock in difficult times. We ask these things praying that Your name would be lifted high and glorified. Amen.

Praying creatively

As we close the month of May let us take some time out to explore some different ways of praying that may help us prayer better but not necessarily longer! It's likely that there are matters on your mind and in your heart about which you want to pray, so here goes:

Tuesday 27 May

One shall say, I am Jehovah's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall write with his hand, 'For Jehovah, and be named by the name of Israel'. Isaiah 44:5

Try writing your prayers. Use slips of paper, the backs of cards, a notebook or a specially purchased journal. What ever you choose to write on remember that your name is written in the book of life.

Wednesday 28 May

Whatever you say or do should be done in the name of the Lord Jesus, as you give thanks to God the Father because of him. Colossians 3:17

Try praying during routine tasks or as you are waiting your turn.

Thursday 29 May

About that time Jesus went off to a mountain to pray... Luke 6:12

Try praying in different places. For example: your favourite chair, in the back yard, on a treadmill, etc...

Friday 30 May

Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before Jehovah our maker. Psalm 95:6

Try praying in different positions. Sit, stand up, kneel down and clasp your hands, lay face down.

Saturday 31 May

If you have ears, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches... Revelation 2:7

Try praying by listening to God.

Thank you for praying,

Sally Bartlett on behalf of SHINE