

SHINE Prayer Diary

Thanksgiving – giving thanks with a grateful heart

Friday 1 August

I don't depend on my arrows or my sword to save me. But you saved us from our hateful enemies, and you put them to shame. We boast about you, our God, and we are always grateful.

Psalm 44:6–8

How wonderful it is to know that we don't need to depend on ourselves to be saved. Today, take a few moments to remember some of the ways in which God has saved you – perhaps in a difficult medical situation, perhaps giving you protection in a supernatural way, perhaps he has even saved you from your own foolishness! Thank God as you remember these situations and ask him to help you to develop a greater daily habit of gratitude.

Please pray for the families from St Helens attending The Christian Family Week in Lancaster, and also all who will be attending various Christian events during the coming weeks.

Saturday 2 August

We should be grateful that we were given a kingdom that cannot be shaken. And in this kingdom we please God by worshipping him and by showing him great honour and respect. Hebrews 12:28

Thank you, God, that even though at times we feel as though we are wobbling, and as though the Church is shaken, you have granted us a kingdom that can never be defeated. We are so grateful for this. Today, we pray for all the Archbishops and Bishops of the Worldwide Anglican Communion and especially for all of them who are attending the Lambeth Conference. We pray for them, that as they worship you, they will worship you in spirit and in truth, so pleasing you and showing you great honour and respect. We ask that today and tomorrow's meetings will be filled with an attitude of prayer and listening to God. We ask for a way forward to be found in the midst of disagreement and that the Holy Spirit will bring renewal to the whole Church across our world. Amen.

Sunday 3 August

(A psalm and a song for the Sabbath.) It is wonderful to be grateful and to sing your praises, LORD Most High! It is wonderful each morning to tell about your love and at night to announce how faithful you are. Psalm 92:1+2

Give thanks with a grateful heart,
give thanks to the Holy One:
give thanks because He's given
Jesus Christ, His Son.
And now let the weak say, 'I am strong',
let the poor say, 'I am rich',
because of what the Lord has done for us;
and now let the weak say, 'I am strong',
let the poor say, 'I am rich',
because of what the Lord has done for us.

Monday 4 August

When the seventy-two followers returned, they were excited and said, 'Lord, even the demons obeyed when we spoke in your name!' Jesus told them: 'I saw Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning. I have given you the power to trample on snakes and scorpions and to defeat the power of your enemy Satan. Nothing can harm you. But don't be happy because evil spirits obey

you. Be happy that your names are written in heaven!’ At that same time, Jesus felt the joy that comes from the Holy Spirit, and he said: ‘My Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I am grateful that you hid all this from wise and educated people and showed it to ordinary people. Yes, Father, that is what pleased you.’ Luke 10:17–21

Thank you, Lord, that as one of your followers my name is written in heaven. Please help me to follow you more closely. Thank you that I belong to you and so you have given me all that I need to withstand the attacks of the enemy. Please help me to depend on you for protection. Thank you, Lord, that you don’t need me to be extra-specially clever or wise to understand this. Thank you for all the amazing things that you have shown me about yourself – and please keep showing me more. Amen.

Tuesday 5 August

Thank you, Jesus, that by the grace and goodness of the Holy Spirit I am filled with joy and I am able to acknowledge your goodness to me. Today, I pray that joy will spill out of my life into the lives of all those around me. Please fill my heart, my home, my workplace, my neighbourhood and my town with laughter and joy. Amen

Wednesday 6 August

Give my greetings to Priscilla and Aquila. They have not only served Christ Jesus together with me, but they have even risked their lives for me. I am grateful for them and so are all the Gentile churches. Romans 16:3+4

Thank you, Jesus, for all those people who serve me, those in my shops, those in the health service, those in my workplace, those in my church and those in my home. I am so grateful for all those who have put me first, over and above their own needs. Amen.

Thursday 7 August

I am grateful that God always makes it possible for Christ to lead us to victory. God also helps us spread the knowledge about Christ everywhere, and this knowledge is like the smell of perfume. 2 Corinthians 2:14

Thank you, God, that victories are possible because of Christ. Today, I remember some of those hard situations and circumstances which I have faced, and I thank you for helping me. Please enable me to help others to know you. Please help my life to be fragrant, like a sweet smelling perfume which is agreeable and pleasant. Amen.

Prayer for the Church – St Paul’s advice on ‘The Way of Love’ from The Message 1 Corinthians 13

Friday 8 August

If I speak with human eloquence and angelic ecstasy but don’t love, I’m nothing but the creaking of a rusty gate. If I speak God’s word with power, revealing all his mysteries and making everything plain as day, and if I have faith that says to a mountain, ‘Jump’, and it jumps, but I don’t love, I’m nothing. If I give up everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake burned to be as a martyr, but I don’t love, I’ve gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I’m bankrupt without love. 1 Corinthians 13:1–3

We pray that the Church in St Helens will value love above power, knowledge and sacrifice. Amen.

Spend a few minutes praying for your local church.

Saturday 9 August

Strong defines the Greek word *agape* as *benevolence*. Benevolence is an act of charity, a gift given out of generosity; true sacrificial love. So *agape* love is a love that requires us to die to ourselves. It means that we can no longer do good works to others for the benefit of ourselves. It means that we must face sacrifice!

Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, doesn't have a swelled head, doesn't force itself on others, isn't always 'me first,' doesn't fly off the handle, doesn't keep a score of the sins of others, doesn't revel when others grovel... 1 Corinthians 13:4+5

We pray that the Church in St. Helens will be characterised by charity and generosity. Amen. Think of a practical act of service that you can carry out for another member of your church. Then ask God to help you as you implement this act of love.

Sunday 10 August – Worship Jesus

Love divine, all loves excelling, joy of heaven to earth come down;
fix in us Thy humble dwelling, all Thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, Thou art all compassion, pure, unbounded love Thou art;
visit us with Thy salvation, enter every trembling heart.

Finish then Thy new creation: pure and spotless let us be:
let us see Thy great salvation, perfectly restored in Thee:
changed from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before Thee, lost in wonder, love and praise.

Monday 11 August

Love ...takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, puts up with anything, trusts God always, always looks for the best, never looks back, but keeps going to the end. 1 Corinthians 13:6+7 When you are faced with certain sacrifice, do you attempt to manipulate your situation to escape this sacrifice?

We pray for all believers in St Helens, that we will take pleasure in truth, trust in God, look for the best in our fellow pilgrims and be willing to love in a sacrificial manner. Amen.

Take a moment to pray for another Christian, asking God to fill their mind with truth and to help them to persevere in the Christian journey.

Tuesday 12 August

Love never dies. Inspired speech will be over someday; praying in tongues will end; understanding will reach its limit. We know only a portion of the truth. But when the Complete arrives, our incompleteness will be cancelled. When I was an infant at my mother's breast, I gurgled and cooed like any infant. When I grew up, I left those infant ways for good. 1 Corinthians 13:8–11

We pray for all followers of Jesus in St. Helens that we will choose to be transformed by God's love and power; choose to leave behind sin and foolish ways of being; and choose to be daily filled with the Holy Spirit so that we may love and serve God and our neighbour more truly.

Amen.

Let God show you how he desires for you to grow more like Jesus.

Wednesday 13 August

St John Chrysostom talking about our eternal future with Christ says this in regards to verse 12: 'What will anyone be able to say when the very truth of those things is presented, when the royal halls are thrown open and it is possible to gaze upon the King Himself, no longer in a shadowy way not in a mirror, but face to face; no longer by faith, but by actual site?'

We don't yet see things clearly. We're squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won't be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We'll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing him directly just as he knows us! 1 Corinthians 13:12

We pray for ourselves, the local churches which we are linked to and other neighbourhood churches, that we would gaze upon the King himself both in our private worship and in our public worship. Amen.

You could try this suggestion from '*Finding Sanctuary – Monastic steps for everyday life*' by Father Christopher Jamison.

Sit with your limbs uncrossed and with a straight back, hands in your lap, simply breathing at regular speed but breathing deeply and relaxing. Close your eyes and think of a beautiful scene from the natural world. You may find it helpful to use one of the following, traditional prayers:

- Come and illumine my darkness
- Be still and know that I am God
- God be in my head and in my understanding
- Come Holy Spirit and inflame my heart
- Come Lord Jesus

Thursday 14 August

But for right now, until that completeness, we have three things to do to lead us towards that consummation: Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly. And the best of the three is love. 1 Corinthians 13:13

We pray that all over St Helens Christians will decide to trust steadily in God, to place their hope in God and to love extravagantly. Amen.

If you are facing a difficult circumstance ask God to help you to trust him. If you are praying for a situation which seems hopeless, ask God to give you hope and if you are tempted to back off from a person who has hurt you, ask God to help you love that person.

Prayer for Merseyside

Friday 15 August

Using the following prayer from the Archdiocese of Liverpool let us pray for the city of Liverpool, European Capital of Culture in this year 2008...

Lord God, look with love and mercy on Liverpool and its people. Once the gateway of an earthly empire, through which flowed the wealth of many nations; we ask now that the River of Life, your divine grace may flow crystal clear through our city streets, and out to the whole world, for the healing and well-being of the nations. Amen.

Inspired by Revelation 22:1+2

Saturday 16 August

Please pray for:

- Chief Constable Bernard Hogan-Howe
- Merseyside Police's dedicated gun crime experts as they work with other neighbouring forces and the Serious Organised Crime Agency to stop the supply of weapons into the county
- the challenge of educating young people and our communities about the seriousness and danger of gun crime
- law enforcers, as sentences are passed on those caught using guns or harbouring guns
- the supply of guns to young people to be cut off

Sunday 17 August – Praise God our Protector

And David spoke to Jehovah the words of this song in the day Jehovah had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul. And he said, Jehovah is my Rock, and my Fortress, and my Deliverer. The God who is my Rock, in Him will I trust. He is my Shield, and the Horn of my salvation, my High Tower, and my Refuge, my Saviour. You save me from violence. 2 Samuel 22:1-3

As I face the storms of life and challenges which are before me, I choose to trust in God my Rock, my Fortress and my Deliverer. So I take a few minutes to think of all the names of God

which remind me of how he protects and takes care of my life, and I praise him for his goodness to me.

Prayer for our Nation

Monday 18 August – we cry out to God for mercy

Lord God, we live in times that bring fear into many hearts. We cry out to you for the victims of violence in our land, for the families of those who have died violent deaths, for all who have suffered violence and need a healing touch, for those who have been dehumanised and who have violently harmed others. We cry out for healing for our nation. Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer and let our cry come unto Thee.

Tuesday 19 August – praying for the credit crunch

Honour the LORD by making him an offering from the best of all that your land produces. If you do, your barns will be filled with grain, and you will have too much wine to store it all.
Proverbs 3:9–10

Let us pray for the millions of people facing huge financial challenges over the next few months. We confess that our nation has accumulated large national and personal debts (February 2008 personal debt stood at £1,421bn). We pray that God will show mercy to our nation and we pray for a spiritual awakening to change our materialistic culture; for wise leaders to manage our finance industries. We pray that in spite of the credit crunch our Government will work for trade agreements which are fair, and allow poor countries to trade in such a way that allows their economies, as well as our own, to prosper.

Take the opportunity to pray for anyone you know who is caught in the negative equity situation, coping with rising mortgage payments or struggling with debt.

Prayer for the Nations

Wednesday 20 August – praying for Chinese Christians

Therefore since we also are surrounded with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily besets us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Hebrews 12:1

As the Olympic Games take place in Beijing please pray for China, giving thanks for the growth of the Chinese Church and the commitment Christians have to sharing the Gospel with their neighbours.

Please pray for:

- safety for those who, like Brother Mac, risk arrest by distributing Bibles; for protection as they travel and that the Bibles will reach the hands of those who most need them
- house church and Three-Self Church pastors as they work to serve their congregations
- unity by God's Spirit of truth in all Chinese churches
- the emerging generation of leaders as they spearhead the growth of the Chinese Church in the 21st century
- churches where leaders have been arrested, that the congregation would remain strong and not be intimidated
- Christian students to be able to find other Chinese Christians on their campus and be able to pray and read the Bible together
- young Chinese Christians, in a time of economic growth, that they would not lose sight of the relevance of the Gospel
- those in prison for their faith, that God would strengthen them physically and spiritually (prayer points from Open Doors)

Thursday 21 August – the worldwide Islamic Community

Walk in wisdom toward those on the outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, having been seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.

Colossians 4:5–6

Give thanks and pray for all the Christian workers worldwide witnessing to Muslims. Give thanks for the large number of Muslims coming to Christ praying that they will be kept safe.

Please pray:

- that millions of Muslims all around the world who are unaware that Jesus died for their sins will hear the truth of what Jesus did for every human being
- for opportunities to witness to Muslims
- that God would continue to reveal himself to Muslims in dreams and visions
- for Christians in Muslim countries who are suffering for their faith
- for bridges to be built between the Muslim Community and the Christian faith

Consider how you might pray for or make contact or build a friendship with a Muslim family.

Prayer for parenting and families – Margery and Barbara thank you for praying

Friday 22 August

Stop your crying and wipe away your tears. All that you have done for your children will not go unrewarded; they will return from the enemy's land. There is hope for your future; your children will come back home. I, the Lord, have spoken. Jeremiah 31:16–17

Ask God to bless the summer clubs that are taking place, especially those with a Christian background. Pray for the Holy Spirit to speak to children and young people's hearts as they listen to the gospel, maybe for the first time. Pray for all children in St Helens who have visited a church or Christian holiday club over the summer, that the seed of hope planted in these hearts will be nurtured and flourish.

Saturday 23 August

Give thanks for those parents who have discovered that their children are a joy and they can enjoy time together as a family. Please pray for the parents who have recently completed parenting courses, that they will continue to practise the new skills they have learnt and find their family life much calmer and happier as a result.

Sunday 24 August – Worshipping we welcome Jesus into our hearts and homes

As Jesus and his disciples went on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha welcomed him in her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat down at the feet of the Lord and listened to his teaching. Luke 10:38+39

Today, Lord Jesus, I choose to be like Martha and I welcome you into my heart and home. And I choose to be like Mary as I take time to listen to you and to worship you. Still my heart to listen for your voice. Fill my heart with a desire to worship you and a willingness to obey your guiding voice. Amen.

Monday 25 August

Please pray for the safety of children as they enjoy their summer holiday from school. Remember, too, the stresses for parents as they find ways to occupy their children, and for the extra burden of finding childcare for working parents. Please pray that our society will learn to value the benefits of the Biblical principle of Sabbath rest and Holy Days.

Tuesday 26 August

Take time today to thank God for his love for you, your family and all those special people he has put in your life.

Wednesday 27 August

Remember in prayer parents who have been separated from their children, either short or long term, that they will cope with the emotions they are feeling. Also remember in prayer families where discord and disputes have led to broken relationships, and ask God to bring healing and restoration.

Thursday 28 August

Bring to God in prayer any family you know who are in need of a loving touch at the moment. Ask him to show you how you can demonstrate his love for them in practical ways.

Prayer for Saints – Chaplain Phil Pawley asks us to pray

Friday 29 August

Please pray for:

- all involved in Saints at the business end of the season as the pressure really mounts
- players, families and staff as they carry this load through until early October
- an openness to the gospel and a willingness to look to God for help and answers to life's problems

Saturday 30 August

Please pray for:

- protection for the chaplain and for fruitfulness in ministry and blessing on his family
- the incoming coach, Mick Potter, that he will appreciate the value of chaplaincy within the club
- the Anderson family as the time of their departure back to Australia draws nearer, praying for schooling needs for the children and for the right jobs to come along
- the families of the players that their relationships will be strong and healthy

Sunday 31 August – Praise Father God

You move in signs and wonders, fill heaven with your praise,
and in Your mercy hold all things within Your gaze.

I am amazed, O Father, You gave the stars their plan;
yet with such tender patience, You hold me in Your hand.

Heavenly King, reaching out to me, You have turned my heart and soul towards eternity.

Your touch upon my life is grace and power enough; oh, all-embracing love.

Phil Thompson

Prayer for SHINE

Monday 1 September

Thank the Lord for all who join their prayers with yours praying for St. Helens. Please pray for the Shine board of trustees for wisdom and God's leading for future plans and events.

Tuesday 2 September – Hope explored

God has created mankind so that we naturally hunger for a relationship with Him. He has built that yearning for Himself into our frame; He has encoded eternal longings in our spiritual DNA structure. The Scripture says, *'He has also set eternity in the hearts of men'* Ecclesiastes 3:11

Please pray for:

- good planning and creative ideas for all the Hope explored courses that will be run this autumn
- the Journeys course being run this autumn in the Town

- the facilitators of these courses to be granted favour in the eyes of all who attend
- many to respond to eternity which has been set in their hearts by enrolling on faith courses

Prayer for St. Helens Council

Wednesday 3 September

Thank God for the generosity of the Council in helping to fund various Hope 08 projects which have run or are still running in the Borough. Thank God for the favour with which local churches are seen by our council. Pray that these projects would bring hope to the lives of many St. Helens residents. In faith pray for more opportunities to serve the Council and town and that the Council will approach the Church in new forms of partnership.

Thursday 4 September

Please pray for our Council leaders asking God to give them integrity, wisdom, good health and the necessary skills to lead our town.

Council Leader Brian Spencer – Corporate Services & External Affairs

Councillor Richard Ferry – Urban Regeneration

Councillor Suzanne Knight – Adult Social Care and Health

Councillor Shirley Evans – Children and Young People's Services

Councillor Wally Ashcroft – Culture, Sport and Heritage

Councillor Carole Kavanagh – Environmental Protection

Councillor Teresa Sims – Safer Communities

Councillor David Crowther – Chair of Planning

Councillor Nancy Ashcroft – Chair of Licensing and Environmental Protection

Prayer for St Helens – for all who work in St Helens both within and outside the home

(Prayer snippets taken from The Icon Painter's Prayer, before starting work)

Friday 5 September – for Fairtrading

Lord God we pray that:

- fairly traded products both from abroad and from home will lift millions of people out of poverty
- the people of St Helens will seek to trade justly and to invest in Fairtrade and so help to relieve poverty and care for the environment
- sales of fairly traded products will increase and such goods will be able to compete in the global market place
- Judith Price will establish a Fairtrade presence in the town which benefits us here and producers overseas. (Judith is a fair trader and has started 'GIFT', a fair trade business which supports Tearcraft, Traidcraft and TLM trading and other fair trade producers. For more details email: judithatgift@live.com)

Praying with the Icon Painter I ask God to ... help me to use the time given to me to work, without wasting time.

Saturday 6 September – for the work of carers

Lord God, we pray for all those who are carers, asking that you will give them grace and love as they care for those who are vulnerable and cannot care for themselves. We pray that they will be given the extra strength when they are worn down and discouraged, faith when all around seems dark and courage to take sometimes difficult decisions that are best for those they care for. We pray too for all chaplains in schools, hospitals and other facilities that they would be able to bring God's message of comfort in times of trouble and rejoicing in times of new life. Encourage

all who care for others in their work, that they would know that the work they do is seen by you and is of great value. Amen.

Praying with the Icon Painter I ask God to ... teach me to conceive the plan with serenity, to imagine the work without being sad if it turns out differently.

Sunday 7 September – Praising God for answering prayers and giving his people vision

He raised me to my hands and knees and then said, 'Daniel, your God thinks highly of you, and he has sent me. So stand up and pay close attention.' I stood trembling, while the angel said: 'Daniel, don't be afraid! God has listened to your prayers since the first day you humbly asked for understanding, and he has sent me here. But the guardian angel of Persia opposed me for twenty-one days. Then Michael, who is one of the strongest guardian angels, came to rescue me from the kings of Persia. Now I have come here to give you another vision about what will happen to your people in the future.' Daniel 10:10–14

God has listened to your prayers as you have humbly petitioned him for the concerns that he has placed in your heart. Rather than being discouraged as you wait for his answers praise him for his faithfulness and goodness. Why not praise him now for the times that he has enabled you to see and understand more of who He is and what He is doing.

Monday 8 September – for places of entertainment and relaxation

Lord God we pray for:

- all working in entertainment and relaxation places in the town asking for their protection
- may these places be increasingly wholesome places where spirits are refreshed and friendships are cemented
- Café Church meeting every Sunday morning at 10:00am at Caffé Nero for creativity and community, that this expression of church will be an open place where all people can reflect on God and interact with each other
- an increasing desire in the population of St Helens, to be more like Jesus in serving others within our communities

Praying with the Icon Painter I ask God to ... teach me how to link haste and slowness, serenity and enthusiasm, zeal and peace.

Tuesday 9 September – for the work of prisons

Lord God, today we pray for all who work in prisons in this region and for all who are from St Helens who are currently in prison.

Jesus, united with the Father and the Holy Spirit, give us your compassion for those in prison. Mend in mercy the broken in mind and memory. Soften the hard of heart, the captives of anger. Free the innocent; parole the trustworthy. Awaken the repentance that restores hope. May prisoners' families persevere in their love. Jesus, heal the victims of crime. They live with the scars. Lift to eternal peace those who die. Grant victims' families the forgiveness that heals. Give wisdom to lawmakers and to those who judge. Instil prudence and patience in those who guard. Make those in prison ministry bearers of your light, for all of us are in need of your mercy!
Amen.

Paulist National Catholic Evangelization Association

Praying with the Icon Painter I ask God to ... teach me to learn from previous mistakes, without falling into despair which corrodes.

Wednesday 10 September – for the Courts

Lord God, we pray for all who work in the Criminal Justice System in St Helens, for all who work at St Helens Magistrates Court and St Helens County Court. We pray for security staff, cleaning staff, administration staff, court clerks, solicitors, barristers, justices of the peace and jury members. May they grow in enthusiasm, zeal for righteousness, serenity and wisdom. We pray for the protection of all these who serve our community through the work of law courts. We pray for all who pass through our courts whether as perpetrators of crime or as victims of crime. Grant them a deeper knowledge of your plans and purposes and bring wholeness to broken lives. Amen.

Praying with the Icon Painter I ask God to ... remind me that the work of my hands belongs to Him and that it's my duty to return it to Him.

Thursday 11 September – for work with children and young people

Lord God, we pray for all who work with children and young people in St Helens asking that:

- you would grant wisdom, humour, calmness and firmness whilst maintaining clear Godly boundaries
- church groups would be adequately staffed and funded, remembering the need of various local churches such as Haydock United Reformed for Youth and Children's workers
- children and young people as they start back at school or join new schools that healthy friendships will grow, a desire to learn will be encouraged and potential will be developed
- Scripture Union worker Richard Witham will bring the gospel message to many young people in St Helens, praying for all school Christian Clubs especially the Christian club in Haydock Sports College
- the great Christian resources that are available for children's, young people's and schools' work would be widely used and help the young to grow in a living knowledge of God

Praying with the Icon Painter I ask God to ... help me at the beginning of the work, where I am the weakest.

Prayer for God's favour for the Churches of St Helens

(with thanks to Rev Mark Cockayne for planting the seeds of these prayers in the hearts and prayers of those who attended the July Shine prayer event)

Friday 12 September

But Noah found grace in the eyes of Jehovah. These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. Genesis 6:8+9 NKJV

As we pray for God's favour, we pray fervently for all believers and church goers in St. Helens that their lives may be just and blameless before those they live with and work with and spend time with. May they walk with God. And God, please start answering this prayer right now, with me first. Amen.

Saturday 13 September

Remembering that the 28th September is the Back To Church Sunday we ask God to prompt us and we pray, Heavenly Father, thank you for Back To Church Sunday. We remember that we are created and loved by you. We welcome you now as you have already welcomed us. We pray that we may know the power of your personal invitation in our own lives. Give us confidence to offer a friend (*Your friend's name here*) your personal invitation. We pray for Back To Church Sunday and thank you for the gift of church as community. Make us aware of you. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen

Remember to pray for your friend(s) during the coming weeks.

Sunday 14 September – Sing to the Lord who bestows such great favour on your life

Sing to the LORD, you saints of his; praise his holy name. For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favour lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning. Psalm 30:4+5

Lord God, we praise your holy name. Your name is above all names that have ever existed because you are the eternal Lord of favour and joy. We praise you for the great kindness which you daily shower on our lives – blessings and more blessings – too numerous to count or even remember. May your holy name be lifted high above all other names today. Amen.

Monday 15 September

Moses obeyed the LORD, and when everyone had come together, he said, ‘We are here to follow the LORD’s instructions.’ Leviticus 8:4+5

We thank you, Lord, for the example of Moses’ leadership. Thank you that he obeyed your instructions. We pray for our church leaders by name... and all church leaders in St Helens, asking that they may be women and men with this same spirit, desperate to follow you and to lead with godly integrity. Amen.

Tuesday 16 September

My son, forget not my law; but let your heart keep my commandments; for they shall add length of days, and long life, and peace to you. Let not mercy and truth forsake you; tie them around your neck; write them upon the tablet of your heart; and you shall find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man. Proverbs 3:1–4

Lord God, we pray for ourselves and for the whole Church in St Helens that we would learn your ways and commands. Teach us to be merciful, truthful, loving and loyal. Help us to inscribe your instructions on the tablet of our heart. Give us favour in your sight and in the sight of our fellow men and women. Amen.

Wednesday 17 September

As a result of what the apostles were doing, sick people were carried out into the streets and placed on beds and mats so that at least Peter’s shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. Acts 5:15

Lord Jesus, we thank you that you love to look on your people with favour. Fill us afresh with your Holy Spirit. We long to see your followers’ shadow bringing your touch to the lives of those who are desperate, troubled, needy and sick or far away from you. May heaven touch earth here in St Helens as your glory fills your followers. Give us the humility to seek you earnestly and without preconceptions. Help us, your Church, to bring your presence and being into other people’s lives. Please equip your Church with your power and gifts. Amen.

Thursday 18 September

The LORD commanded Moses to tell Aaron and his sons to use the following words in blessing the people of Israel: May the LORD bless you and take care of you; May the LORD be kind and gracious to you; May the LORD look on you with favour and give you peace. And the LORD said, ‘If they pronounce my name as a blessing upon the people of Israel, I will bless them.’ Numbers 6:22–27

Lord God, the source of all blessings, we thank you that we are part of your holy priesthood. We pray for ourselves and all believers in St. Helens, that we will pronounce words of blessings on the lives of families, friends, enemies, neighbours, communities and ourselves. We thank you that you are faithful and bless those whom we bless. Amen

Why not pray a blessing on the lives of those you love, those you meet and those with whom you have experienced or are currently experiencing difficulties. Allow God to make you a blessing to these people. God loves to bless both you and all these people.

Prayer for government, law, order and justice in St Helens

And seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain. And when He had sat down, His disciples came to Him. And He opened His mouth and taught them... Matthew 5:1+2

Friday 19 September

On the 24th April Luke Traynor of the Liverpool Echo reported that crime is falling across Merseyside faster than any other area in the country. Figures show that overall crime fell by 18% over the past 12 months, easily overshadowing the performance of every force in the UK. Merseyside police says 28,000 fewer crimes were committed last year and there have been 48,000 fewer recorded offences over the last three years. Chief Constable Bernard Hogan-Howe said the drops in all areas of crime was a huge boost in Capital of Culture year. He highlighted the use of forensic technology, the much-heralded Automatic Number Plate Recognition Technology system and the new anti-social behaviour taskforce among the reasons for the large reductions. Let us give thanks to God for the favour shown to Merseyside.

saying...Blessed are the peacemakers! For they shall be called the sons of God. Matthew 5:9

We thank you, Lord, for all those who work to establish government, justice, law and order in St Helens. Today, we pray for our Police Area Commander Chief Superintendent Chris Armitt. We pray that you will grant him wisdom and strength, humility and integrity. Grant him favour in the eyes of his fellow police officers. As he leads the local police force may he and his family be blessed as he seeks to make the streets of St Helens safer places for those who live, work and visit St Helens. Amen.

Saturday 20 September – St Helens Town Centre

...Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness! For they shall be filled.

Matthew 5:6

Inspector Dawn McNab comments 'St Helens is a very safe place to live and socialise. I would urge visitors to follow the simple safety advice issued to ensure they do not become a victim of crime. We will continue to run targeted campaigns in the neighbourhood to ensure visitors, particularly women, can come to St Helens and enjoy their night out in safety.'

We pray for the policing of St Helens Town Centre asking that God will give:

- Inspector Dawn McNab and her team of officers wisdom
- the tools with which to implement to see what is right
- protection to town police officers especially over the weekend nights in the town centre
- success in campaigns to promote safety

Sunday 21 September – Seeking to crown Jesus as King of my life I remember his kindness

(By David.) With all my heart I praise the LORD, and with all that I am I praise his holy name! With all my heart I praise the LORD! I will never forget how kind he has been. The LORD forgives our sins, heals us when we are sick, and protects us from death. His kindness and love are a crown on our heads. Each day that we live, he provides for our needs and gives us the strength of a young eagle. Psalm 103:1–5

Lord Jesus, with all of my being I want to praise you today. Help me never to forget how kind you have been to me. You crown my life with goodness and mercy, and today I want to crown you as the King of my life. You give me the strength to carry on when I feel weak and weary. You have forgiven my sins, you have healed me and kept me safe. I look forward to the day when I will be in your presence and see you face to face. Please keep me in your gaze until I reach that day. Amen.

Monday 22 September – Parr, Sutton and Bold

...Blessed are they that mourn! For they shall be comforted. Matthew 5:4

Neighbourhood Inspector Mark Lawes notes many positive actions resulting in crime reduction in this area due to indicatives such as videoing people who had been identified by local community members as being the source of the problem; patrolling in hard to reach areas where anti-social behaviour was believed to be happening and visiting victims of crime and anti-social behaviour to help identify offenders.

We give thanks to God for:

- over 100 young people taken home and their parents asked to account for their actions
- over 100 people arrested for a variety of offences including drunk and disorderly behaviour and possession of a controlled drug
- 120 alcohol seizures carried out
- over 100 reassurance visits carried out to victims of anti-social behaviour
- over 150 reassurance visits carried out at post offices, petrol stations, betting offices, off-licences and pub

We pray asking God for:

- good intelligence leading to the solving of crime and the conviction of those engaged in criminal activities
- increasing safety and confidence for law abiding members of the community
- healing for the victims of crime and transformation for the perpetrators of crime

Tuesday 23 September – Rainhill, Thatto Heath, Eccleston and West Park

... Blessed are the merciful! For they shall obtain mercy. Matthew 5:7

Every three months, the views of the local community are surveyed by Inspector Neil Kavanagh and his team to identify priority issues. Thank God for local meetings which took place in August identifying key issues. Ask God that Inspector Kavanagh and team will be able to implement successful strategies to resolve these issues. Please pray for effective policing of the green areas which are in this zone.

Wednesday 24 September – Windle, Rainford, Moss Bank, Billinge and Seneley Green

... Blessed are the pure in heart! For they shall see God. Matthew 5:8

Neighbourhood Inspector Zoe Thornton and her team report that it is significant that this neighbourhood has seen the largest reduction in Anti Social Behaviour across the whole of Merseyside — a reduction of 37% which equates to 1129 fewer callers in relation to disorder, whether that be anti social behaviour of youths, adults, street drinking or vehicle misuse (statistics from April 2007 / March 2008 as compared with previous year 2006 / 2007). We thank God for this significant reduction in anti-social behaviour and pray that other areas of St Helens would also see a reduction in such behaviours. We pray for meetings held in early September to identify local issues that need to be resolved, praying for cooperation on the part of local residents so that new successful schemes may be implemented.

Thursday 25 September – Newton, Haydock, Blackbrook & Earlestown

... Blessed are the meek! For they shall inherit the earth. Matthew 5:5

Neighbourhood Inspector Tim Kelly and his team are dedicated to policing this neighbourhood, which provides numerous challenges due to its diverse make up, including a town centre, two nightclubs, Haydock Park Racecourse, numerous public houses, shopping centres and industrial estates.

Please pray that continued effective policing will:

- reduce anti-social behaviour in the area which is fuelled by alcohol
- effect alcohol confiscations

- lead to the identification of where young people are obtaining alcohol
- build up the work of local partners including the Council and local licensees to prevent young people consuming alcohol

Praying for Welcome

Then the king will say to those on his right, 'My father has blessed you! Come and receive the kingdom that was prepared for you before the world was created. When I was hungry, you gave me something to eat, and when I was thirsty, you gave me something to drink. When I was a stranger, you welcomed me, and when I was naked, you gave me clothes to wear. When I was sick, you took care of me, and when I was in jail, you visited me.' Matthew 25: 34–36

Friday 26 September – praying for foster care

I can lie down and sleep soundly because you, LORD, will keep me safe. Psalm 4:8

We pray for:

- children entering foster care that they will find kind and loving foster families to care for them as long as this care is required
- sibling groups of children entering foster care, that they will be placed together in one foster home
- their first foster home to also be their last foster home, as multiple placements rob children of stability and love which is required to build the self-esteem needed to grow into responsible, caring adults
- more singles, couples and families to become foster parents and welcome these children as Christ himself would welcome them

Saturday 27 September – praying for our prodigals

'This son of mine was dead, but has now come back to life. He was lost and has now been found.' And they began to celebrate. Luke 15:24

God identifies with our tears over our prodigals. He loves them, and longs for His church to welcome them back.

I, as a member of the Church, confess that we have set standards as churches which have caused people to reject the Father who reaches out, Jesus who walks alongside humans and the Holy Spirit who counsels. I pray that my church will be filled with Father's love for prodigals, the Saviour's forgiveness and the Holy Spirit's comfort and that many prodigals will come 'home' through Back To Church Sunday (28th Sept).

I commit myself to considering: 'What can I do in my local church to make prodigals welcome?'

Sunday 28 September – Worship the Lord for welcoming us

Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my dearest compared to other men. I love to sit in its shadow, and its fruit is sweet to my taste. He brought me to his banquet hall and raised the banner of love over me. Song of Songs 2:3+4

Yesterday the Lord welcomed me with kindness and raised his banner of love over my life.

Today the Lord welcomes me with kindness and raises his banner of love over my life.

Tomorrow the Lord will welcome me with kindness and raise his banner of love over my life.

I worship his wonderful name!

Monday 29 September

And when you welcome one of these children because of me, you welcome me. Matthew 18:5

Let us pray that the churches and church children's clubs run in St Helens will be places where children are welcome, accepted, loved and valued, free to be themselves and free to grow in faith. Amen.

Tuesday 30 September

Loving parent of all humankind, make the roof of my home wide enough for all opinions; oil the door of my house so that it opens easily to friend and stranger; and set such a table in my house that my whole family may speak kindly and freely around it. Amen.

Prayer from Hawaii

Thank you for praying,

Sally Bartlett on behalf of SHINE