

## Monday 2nd – Sunday 8th February

### *Personal Meditation and Worship*

*...my house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations. [Isaiah 56:7]*

*But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast. [Hebrews 3:6]*

It is God's people who are called to be a house of prayer – far more than a particular building is to be a place of prayer.

Reflect on:

- the privilege we have in prayer
- the need to pray for our world
- the call on God's people to pray

Thank God for the many people who have faithfully prayed over St Helens during the last almost 20 years of SHINE's ministry.

Praise Him for the openness we have in St Helens to publicly and clearly proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ; recognising that this openness is a fruit of the faithful praying of many people.

*"When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to **devour the land** or send a plague among my people, **if my people**, who are called by my name, will **humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways**, then will I hear from heaven and will **forgive their sin** and will **heal their land**. Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place. I have **chosen and consecrated this temple** so that my Name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will always be there. [2 Chronicles 7:13–16]*

We are living in difficult times: economically, spiritually, morally, amongst others – the land is being devoured. We, God's people, are called to be part of the answer to our nation's troubles.

Using the Scripture above, allow God's Holy Spirit to lead you this week in humbly praying, seeking His face and repenting on behalf of the nation.

**His promise is to hear and to heal!**

*Other Scriptures for meditation and prayer: 1 Kings 8:22–29; Psalm 6:1–9; Habakkuk 3:1 & 2; Mark 11:24; Acts 2:42*

Use these verses to give you more ideas for praying this week.

## Monday 9th – Sunday 15th February

### National Marriage Week

*Marriage Week UK celebrates the diversity and vibrancy of marriage as the basis for family life in the UK. It is timed to include Valentine's Day (7th–14th Feb 2009) and has been held every year since 1997.*

*Marriage remains incredibly popular – over 90% of young people in the UK aspire to be married at some point in the future, and the large majority will achieve this. Although the popular view is that marriages don't last, two out of every three first marriages will last until one partner dies, and one in two second or subsequent marriages will also last a lifetime. The Divorce rate (the number of divorces per 1000 married couples) has remained virtually static since the early 1980's.*

*Current research suggests that the enduring stability of marriage results from the commitment that two people make to each other, embodied in their vows, and supported by family, friends, and society at large. Many couples today, however, come to marriage to celebrate the stability of their relationships rather than to initiate them, so we see couples marrying later in life, often after living together for a period, and often after buying their home and starting a family.*

*The theme of Marriage Week in 2009 is "Celebrating Commitment", reflecting both the way that many couples see marriage, and the need for society at large to continue to celebrate the stability that married families bring to society. [Source: [www.nmw.org.uk](http://www.nmw.org.uk)]*

### Parenting and Families (from Barbara & Margery)

- ***Dear Heavenly Father**, We thank you for our homes and families, for our food, shelter and clothing, and for all the happiness that parents and children can share. We ask that your love will surround us, your care protect us and that we may know your peace at all times, for the sake of your dear Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*
- ***Lord**, Thank you for the Christian presence in our town centre over Christmas time. We praise you that churches worked together to bring the message of Jesus' birth to the people of St. Helens. We pray the miracle of 'God with us' will live on in hearts and homes and make a difference to all our lives. In Jesus' name, Amen.*
- In the present financial climate would you please pray for families who are finding it difficult to cope with having less money to meet all their needs? Remember families who will be hardest hit by the current situation and pray for anyone who has lost their job as a result of cutbacks. Pray for those who are afraid of losing their homes and especially those for whom this may already have happened.
- Parenting courses are running in Children's Centres, Schools and other community venues. Please pray for parents attending, that they will enjoy meeting with other parents and find new ideas and support to help them in bringing up their children and teenagers. Please pray that parents will feel less stressed, more confident in dealing with their children's behaviour and that their children will be happier and feel valued and loved.

- **Lord**, we pray for wisdom and sensitivity for those leading the parenting courses. *That they will be able to help parents feel relaxed and welcomed. May they help parents to recognise how they can encourage their children, listen more effectively to them, and show them how to communicate in a respectful way. We pray that parents will find the courses fun and learn to enjoy their children more. Bless each family whose parents come along, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.*
- Please pray for those caring for children, e.g. Foster carers, grandparents and other family members. Thank God for the fantastic work done by these people remembering the time and commitment they give to their role. Pray for the children that they will be happy and feel loved and cherished by the families who are caring for them. Pray that home situations can improve so that parents and children can be together again where possible.
- For children who cannot go back to their parents please pray for the right provision for housing and employment as they get older. Pray for the right friends and leisure pursuits that will combine to help them lead fulfilling lives and have a secure and happy future.

Thank you for praying with us, and may God bless your homes and families throughout 2009.

*Other Scriptures for meditation and prayer: Genesis 2:18–25; Ephesians 5:21–6:4; Mark 10:13–16; Matthew 18:1–5.*

Use these verses to give you more ideas for praying this week.

## Monday 16th – Sunday 22nd February

*For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men--the testimony given in its proper time. And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle--I am telling the truth, I am not lying--and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles. I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing. [1 Timothy 2:5–8]*

### Churches of St Helens

1. Pray that Christ Church United Reformed Church, Haydock will be successful in employing a youth pastor/children's worker.
2. Pray for an increase in the numbers attending St Peter's Kid's Club, as the local schools receive dates for the coming 3 months. *(from Dianne Liptrot)*
3. Continue to pray for the Churches waiting for new ministers to be appointed:
  - St Helens Parish Church
  - St Thomas, Eccleston
  - St Peter's, Parr – interviews on 7<sup>th</sup> March
  - St John's, Ravenhead
4. Churches in the Blackbrook & Parr areas: *(from Rev Janet Roberts)*
  - For church members suffering with terminal illness
  - For those who are full time carers & especially those who care for folks with dementia
  - For the Parr Team Lent Course beginning 4<sup>th</sup> March.
  - For the work among children TJ's on Tuesday nights & for growing relationships with parents
  - For the teenagers & their involvement with worship in church once a month.
5. West St Independent Methodist
  - Prayer for Overseas Missions
6. Pray for the unity of Churches in the Borough. *(from Focus Group Leaders)*
7. An exciting new venture will be launched in March. *(From Paul Caine)*  
On the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of every month, Paul, of Seedlings Trust, along with St Aidan's Billinge will hold a family service in the Primary School – 'Church in the Community'. Paul has committed to two years to help set it up and running.
  - Pray for the folk from St Aidan's Church and the school staff who will be involved.
  - Pray also for the practicalities, protection and obviously that families will come along and adopt this venture as their own and as Church.
8. As we pray for the Churches in our own area, let us not forget the turmoil in the Holy Land, and pray for peace and unity there. *(from Rev Fr Tom Neylon)*

*Other Scriptures for meditation and prayer: Ephesians 2:14–22; Ephesians 3:7–12 and 20–21; Ephesians 4:1–16*

Use these verses to give you more ideas for praying this week.

## Monday 23rd February – Sunday 1st March

*The LORD will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none. The LORD will make you the head, not the tail. If you pay attention to the commands of the LORD your God that I give you this day and carefully follow them, you will always be at the top, never at the bottom. Do not turn aside from any of the commands I give you today, to the right or to the left, following other gods and serving them.*  
[Deuteronomy 28:12–14]

### **The Town & the Borough Council**

1. Pray for the peace and prosperity of our Borough
2. Pray for true partnership working in St Helens, for the benefit of all, amongst:
  - b. the Borough Council
  - c. Housing associations
  - d. Voluntary & Community groups and organisations
  - e. Police, Fire and Rescue services
  - f. Health Services
  - g. Churches
  - h. Residents

### **Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Thematic Groups**

- Pray for suitable replacements for those LSP reps leaving the area.

#### *Children & Young People (from Mike Balmford)*

- Pray for the amalgamation of some schools and how it will affect families, staff and pupils.
- Pray about the high percentage of obesity in children in this area (14% of children entering schools are obese), and the high proportion of children with dental problems.

### **Ward committees**

- Pray for suitable representation on the Ward Committee for those areas without reps

#### *Eccleston – (rep Mike Balmford)*

- Pray for the redevelopment of the Triplex site

#### *West Park – (rep Jean Lucas)*

- a. Pray about the many burglaries in the area
- b. Pray for those currently out on bail, and that suitable accommodation can be found for those who need it.

**Saints** (from Phil Pawley)

As the new season begins please pray:

- for staff, players and families as the pressure usually associated with professional sports builds once more
- for those with faith that they remember to look to the Lord for help and strength
- for those who don't normally look to God that they may discover him as a living reality

As this will be Phil Pawley's last year as SAINTS chaplain, please pray:

- for him as he begins the process of finding and preparing a suitable replacement
- for continued favour with the Club
- for seamless handover
- that staff and players and their families will quickly accept the new chaplain.

*Other Scriptures for meditation and prayer: 2 Chronicles 1:7–12; Psalm 106;  
2 Timothy 4:1–8*

Use these verses to give you more ideas for praying this week.

## Monday 2nd – Sunday 8th March

### Personal Meditation and Worship

*Ascribe to the LORD, O mighty ones, **ascribe to the LORD glory and strength**. Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in **the splendour of his holiness**. The **voice of the LORD** is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD thunders over the mighty waters. The voice of the LORD is **powerful**; the voice of the LORD is **majestic**. The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, Sirion like a young wild ox. The voice of the LORD strikes with flashes of lightning. **The voice of the LORD shakes the desert**; the LORD shakes the Desert of Kadesh. The voice of the LORD twists the oaks and strips the forests bare. And in his temple all cry, “Glory!” The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; **the LORD is enthroned as King forever**. The LORD gives **strength** to his people; the LORD blesses his people with **peace**. [Psalm 29:1 – 11]*

Let's make a special focus on worship this week.

Think about the greatness of God; His glory; His strength; His holiness. Make a note of what comes to mind as you consider God's attributes. Then turn your thoughts into words of praise.

#### **The voice of the LORD...**

Is this a voice you are familiar with? Jesus said, “*My sheep hear my voice*” [John 10:27]. Make some quiet times this week and allow God to speak into your heart and mind.

Have you experienced something of a “desert” time recently in your christian life? Perhaps prayer has been difficult, Bible reading dry and uninviting; church involvement hard work and challenging; allow **the voice of the LORD** to speak words of refreshment, of love, of hope and encouragement to your heart.

As God speaks to you, trust Him to give you words that you can share with others; words of encouragement; words of commission and strength; words of life; prophetic words that speak directly into the life of another person. He will use you to build up His people – your brothers and sisters.

Now, turn to worship and praise the One who is **enthroned as King forever**. He will give you strength and peace if you will seek him.

*Other Scriptures for meditation and prayer: Numbers 6:22–26; Hebrews 13:20, 21; Revelation 1:4–8 and 12–18; Exodus 15:1–18.*

Use these verses to give you more ideas for praying this week.

# Monday 9th – Sunday 15th March

## Young People and Children

### **Seedlings Trust** (from Paul & Jeanette Caine)

Pray for Paul as he ministers:-

1. Weekly at – Eccleston Mere; Legh Vale and Good News Clubs at St Philips and the Parish.
2. Fortnightly at – Queens Park Primary; Parish C.E.Primary; St, Aidans; St. Michael's, Aughton; St. Philips' C.E., Westbrook, Warrington; Callands Primary, Warrington; St Ann's, Orford; and St James C.E. Haydock.
3. Monthly at – Nutgrove; St. Bartholomews; Oakdene; and Rivington.

Praise -

Paul and the trustees are so grateful to God for the fantastic opportunities they have to do this very privileged ministry.

Pray -

- that the churches in St Helens will see this ministry as part of their outreach.
- For the Trust as they look to appoint new Trustees, after the sad deaths of two trustees in the last couple of years.

If anyone wants to know more or volunteer to go into a local school with Paul, please get in touch with him by email at [Pjcaine@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:Pjcaine@blueyonder.co.uk) or telephone 01744 604936.

### **Schools –**

Continue to pray for the amalgamation of some schools in the Borough.

### **St Helens College** (from Paul Johnson, College Chaplain)

Please pray...

- For staff and students, that in the current rebuilding process there will be good flexibility and patience. Please pray that students' experience of learning will not be damaged by the hustle and bustle of working so close to a building site.
- For staff and students of all faiths and none. Pray that there will be mutual friendships and understanding so that the College can be a beacon of light in a country where misunderstanding has already led to racism and violence. Pray that Christians will take seriously their responsibility to be peacemakers, love sharers and individuals who can carry God's Light and Word in a way which is culturally relevant.
- For Paul as he looks to develop a new Chaplaincy Team of volunteers - "Associate Chaplains" who will join a small group to look at awareness raising events. They will also provide a 'drop in' facility for staff and students, over

lunchtime, on all three major campuses. Please pray that the right people will be involved and that, ultimately, people will get a clearer vision of God's love as people show it in a practical way. Pray for strong relationships and friendships within the team so that staff and students will see that people of faith can get along as friends despite their differences of opinion about theology - this is within Christianity as well as between different religions. (For more information on being a volunteer contact Paul at the College –pjohnson@sthelens.ac.uk).

- For the College as a whole, for Pat Bacon the Principal, Carmen Wills and Dave Grant the Deputy Principals and the rest of the staff. Please pray that, as the financial situation around the world develops through the year, they will have great wisdom and understanding about how to take an organisation like St Helens College forward.

### **Youth Aflame** (from Craig Lawrenson)

Praise God for his favour and blessing in 2008 particularly opening doors for us to hold a Youth Aflame stage at St Helens Festival.

Pray for –

1. Wisdom for us as we look to raise funds, organise the events, book bands, and speakers.
2. Continued favour with the council as we again plan Youth Aflame at St Helens festival.
3. Fresh vision as we seek to reach out to young people in St Helens.
4. Pray for all our young people who take part in and help organise the events.
5. Pray for the practical side of our events, the smooth running of each event, no problems with equipment, and the safety of all involved.
6. Pray for more churches to get involved and work together to encourage our young people and reach out to unchurched youth.
7. Pray God's will be done for Youth Aflame in 2009

*Other Scriptures for meditation and prayer: 1 Timothy 6:11 – 16; 2 Timothy 3: 10 – 17; Deuteronomy 4:9 – 14*

Use these verses to give you more ideas for praying this week.

## Monday 16th – Sunday 22nd March

*I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone--for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. [1 Timothy 2:1–4]*

### Pray for the Police Service

#### Officers on Patrol

- That they might build confidence with the public.  
That they might have wisdom in all situations.

#### Officers making “on the spot” decisions

- Especially when making a wrong decision might lead to an escalation of a difficult situation.  
For those engaged in public order or other potentially violent situations.

#### Officers suffering stress

- After dealing with a sudden death, accidents or the victims of violent crime.  
When dealing with major disasters or the death of a child or young person.

#### Integrity to resist corruption

- Through contact with those of a criminal disposition.  
Through temptation when in a position of trust.

### The Current Economic Climate

*If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the LORD your God: You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country. The fruit of your womb will be blessed, and the crops of your land and the young of your livestock--the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks. Your basket and your kneading trough will be blessed. You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out.*

[Deuteronomy 28:1 – 6]

#### Pray for:

- those who have lost or feel at risk of losing their jobs
- employers and those in management positions as they face the challenges of trading, manufacturing etc in the difficult economic situation
- for the staff of the St Helens Chamber of Commerce as they support those starting new businesses
- for churches to respond positively to the new stresses that many feel at this time
- communities and families to keep a sense of cohesion whilst so much seems uncertain and challenging
- for banks and building societies to do business with integrity and treat borrowers and savers with uprightness and compassion
- for churches their treasurers and Ministers, who along with the rest of society face

the financial challenges of the day

Pray specifically for any that you know in these situations; including your own church's financial position

*Other Scriptures for meditation and prayer: 2 Timothy 3:1–5; Philippians 1:12–14; Ephesians 6:10–20*

Use these verses to give you more ideas for praying this week.

## Monday 23rd – Sunday 29th March

### Community issues –

#### **TANGO, St Mark's, Haydock** (from Avril Chisnall)

- Thank God that nobody was present and hurt when the ceiling collapsed in the new centre.
- Pray that it will be repaired quickly, and that the costs will be covered without detriment to TANGO.
- Pray for all the organisations who work in the centre - that they can work in unity in the reduced area available to them.
- Pray that TANGO will 'Reap for God' in the work they do in the community.

#### **Philippi Counselling Centre** (from Jeannette Caine)

Please pray:

1. For the Centre, which opens Mon/Thurs/Fri and Sat, and offers all-round generic counselling for problems like depression/abuse, relationship problems, couple counselling, stress, bereavement and other difficulties, on a donation basis, where possible.
2. For the seven qualified and three trainee committed Christian counsellors who work there voluntarily, and feel called by God.

Please contact Wendy McLoughlin on 01744 679001 for more details.

#### **Mission in the Economy (MitE)** – (from Marjorie Conroy – Town Centre Chaplain)

Please pray for:

- Traders and businesses in this present economic climate
- Those who have lost their jobs as a result of the recession, that they will be able to find new employment
- For Linda and Marjorie – that they will be able to bring a realistic hope into the situation as they communicate with the business and retail sector at this difficult time.

*Other Scriptures for meditation and prayer: Psalm 127:1, 2; Psalm 134:1–3; Luke 10: 1–17*  
Use these verses to give you more ideas for praying this week.