

Sunday 3 – Saturday 9 October

Children and Young People

“In the same way, the gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world – just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and truly understood God’s grace. You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf” (Colossians 1:6-7)

In those verses, Paul reminds the Colossian Church who taught them the faith, and Paul gives thanks for the way in which the gospel is bearing fruit. Just think for a moment – who were the people behind you coming to faith? Name them in your head. And thank God for those people who gave up their time to help you in your faith.

This week, we’re focusing on praying for those who share Jesus with the children and young people of our borough. It is through these people that children and young people are coming to faith. Let’s thank God for them and pray for their work this week.

Frank Hinds, Pioneer Minister of the UNiT (Youth Church), has asked us to pray:

- * Please pray for the next monthly meeting of the UNiT, which meets around St Helens and the Borough, on November 19 at St. Mark’s.
- * Please pray especially for the Unit event on November 19, as we are inviting the ‘whole church’ to attend, enabling our wider churches to have a taste of what we are doing at the Unit, and making a statement about the unity amongst the churches.

Please also pray for:

- * Please pray for Craig Lawrenson and Joe Higgins as they continue to lead Youth Aflame – youth events which reach out to the young people of St Helens aiming to share the Gospel in a relevant way.
- * Give thanks for the recent interest in Christianity shown by some of the members of Youth Aflame. And please pray for the leaders of Youth Aflame as they seek to use this opportunity.
- * Give thanks for Sunday Schools and Kids Clubs which the churches of St Helens put on for the children of our area. Thank God for the hundreds of willing ‘Epaphrases’ who give up their time to share their faith with children.
- * Give thanks for the work done with teenagers in our churches throughout St Helens. Pray for the various youth groups and youth clubs which many churches provide. Give thanks for the leaders who take on this ministry.
- * Pray that as churches, we may be more open to children and young people. Pray that we take children and young people seriously – and allow them to lead us in our faith, as well as us leading them.

Please pray for the town centre churches

3rd October – Christian Life Centre and the Salvation Army Hostel

4th October – Barton Street Mission and Bethel Mission

5th October – St Helens Baptist Church and Wesley Methodist Church

6th October – Holy Cross and St Mary's Lowe House

7th October – St Helens United Reformed Church (Ormskirk Street)

8th October - St Helens Parish Church, St Mark's North Road and St Thomas' Eccleston

9th October – Redeemed Church of God

Sunday 10 – Saturday 16 October

The Local Church 1

“We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God” (Colossians 1:9-10)

It is clear from Paul's letter to the Colossian Church that Paul had a real passion in praying for the Colossian Church; that God would continue to guide the church through His Spirit, in order that those who are members of the church would grow in their discipleship, and bear fruit in Colossae.

This week, may we follow Paul's example by praying for our local churches, that we would be guided by God through His Spirit, and may all grow as disciples of Jesus. May we all bear fruit and be instruments of God's Kingdom as it grows throughout the Borough of St Helens.

Trevor Prescott, from West St Independent Methodist Church, has asked us to pray:

* Please pray for our Family Weekend at Conway from October 22nd to 24th, that all ages will mix well together and that a real family atmosphere will prevail. Please pray also for the session leaders; Harold Heath for the adults and Jonathan Moorhouse for the youngsters, that they will be used to challenge and inspire us as individuals and as a fellowship.

Janet Roberts, from St Pauls Church, Blackbrook, has asked us to pray:

* Please pray for us as we host a special service for the bereaved at the end of October. This year we are inviting families to come for tea before the service. Also please pray that God's love will touch people who are grieving.

* Some folks from the church have formed a Friendship group for the bereaved, please pray that it will be a practical help to those who find themselves alone in their sadness.

John Grundy, Head Chaplain from Heald Farm Court, has asked us to pray:

* Please pray for us at Heald Farm Court as we are coming to the anniversary of our opening at the end of October - especially the tenants, staff and remembering those who have been part of the family at Heald Farm Court over the past year and have now passed away.

Andrew Gale, from Earlestown Baptist Church, has asked us to pray:

* Please pray for a meeting on the 10th October 2010 when as a church we seek God's will for the future.

* Please pray for us as we host 'Deep Harmony' on the 14th November 2010 (6pm start), that God will bless the evening and that non-Christians will be challenged by the message.

Please also pray for:

* Pray for our churches, that we may all be continually guided by God's Spirit.

* Thank God for all that he has done through the churches of St Helens over the years, and for the impact the churches have had on the local community.

Please pray for the churches in Billinge, Blackbrook, Haresfinch and Carr Mill

10th October – Billinge Family Church

11th October – St Aidan's Billinge and St Mary's RC Church

12th October – St David's Carr Mill

13th October – St Patrick, Clinkham Wood and St Peter and St Paul RC Church

14th October – Haresfinch United Reformed Church

15th October – St Mary's Blackbrook

16th October – St Paul's Blackbrook

Sunday 17 – Saturday 23 October

Healthcare in St Helens

“The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together”
(Colossians 1:15-17)

This Sunday (17th) is Healthcare Sunday, when we take time to pray for healthcare provision, and especially to pray for those who work in the healthcare professions. And so this week, in our prayer diary, I think it is fitting that we take time out to pray for healthcare within our Borough – thanking God for the healthcare provision that we employ, but also praying to our creator God for those who work within healthcare, that God would empower them as they often deal with difficult and life-changing issues.

A Special Prayer for Healthcare Sunday

Lord our Healer, thank You for every person who works in health care whether in the UK or overseas. Please remind them today how valuable their service is to all of us. Amen. (prayer from www.care.org.uk)

Please also pray for:

- * Take time today to thank God for your GP, your dentist and for those who have personally cared for you recently. Pray for them as they seek to care for you, and for many within the local community.
- * Thank God for the new St Helens and Whiston Hospitals which have recently been built. Thank God for those who have worked hard to improve healthcare provision within our area.
- * Thank God for the 5 Boroughs Partnership which provides care for those with mental illness. Pray for them as they seek to raise awareness about mental health issues and as they seek to dispel myths surrounding mental illness.
- * Take time today to pray for those whom you know personally who need and use healthcare provision at the moment.
- * Give thanks for the Ambulance Service, for the work they do in our area responding quickly to us when we are in need.
- * Give thanks for organisations like St John’s Ambulance – who help to train up people and enable them to provide healthcare, and who help to publicise the importance of us all to learn basic first aid skills.

And a final prayer

God of all compassion, please help people who are severely suffering today and grant them a measure of Your healing and wholeness. Thank You for the relief and strength You give to our bodies, minds and hearts. Amen. (prayer from www.care.org.uk)

Please pray for the churches in Ecclestone and Windle

17th October – Christ Church Ecclestone
18th October – St Luke's Ecclestone
19th October – St Julie's
20th October – St Andrew's
21st October – St Teresa's
22nd October – Newtown United Reformed Church
23rd October – St Thomas of Canterbury.

Sunday 24 – Saturday 30 October

Families and Parenting

Jesus called a little child ... and said, "Whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me." (Matthew 18:2, 5)

Children are small lives but great responsibilities – small bodies but big demands: let's take time this week to pray for children, and to pray for family life within our Borough.

Barbara Jones, has asked us to pray:

- * Please pray for all homes: that they will be places of joy, happiness, love and forgiveness, where adults and children can grow together, and places where we can be ourselves.
- * Please pray for all parents: that the homes they create will be loving and caring places where children are treated with respect and not expected to be perfect; for parents to enjoy the company of their children and guide and train them as they grow.
- * Please pray for all children: that they may not be warped in any way but have happy and secure childhoods; for the children who attend churches, that they will be led, inspired and strengthened by the Spirit of Christ, to learn to cope with themselves and others so that they grow to be loving, caring adults.
- * Please pray for those with a responsibility of care for children: for teachers and leaders that they may love that which is worth loving, know that which is worth knowing, and be inspired to pass on that love and knowledge to those in their care.
- * Please pray for ourselves. As families struggle with the effects of the recession please 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.

* Please pray for forgiveness because we have let our children down. We have not followed God's leading in protecting them at all costs and demonstrating in our own lives the love of Jesus in action.

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

Please pray for the churches in Haydock and Earlestown

24th October – Earlestown Baptist Church

25th October – Blessed English Martyrs RC Church

26th October – St James the Great, Haydock

27th October – St Mark's Haydock

28th October – Christ Church United Reformed Church

29th October – Haydock Independent Methodist Church

30th October – Haydock Methodist Church

Sunday 31 October – Saturday 6 November

Education

"Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom" (Colossians 3:16)

There has always been a strong link between Christianity and education. From Jesus, who was often referred to by his disciples as teacher, to the growth of the early church – centres where people could come together and learn more about Jesus – to the fact that the British education system very much was influenced and stemmed out of churches providing basic education to those who could not afford education, to today where many Christians work in education, and where there are often strong links between churches and places of education.

This week therefore, let us focus our prayers on praying for places of education – places where wisdom is shared. And let's pray for Christians who work in education; that they may not only impart human wisdom, but also the wisdom which comes from the message of Christ.

Paul Johnson, Lead Chaplain at St Helens College, writes:

* Thank you for your prayers over the start of term at St Helens College. The students are now back and settled and the buzz of a new term is upon us. The big things to pray about for the next two months are the start of the Christian Union and the Faith Fair.

* It is notoriously difficult to run a CU at a Further Education College due to the fact that there is no set lunch time. This is a real challenge and one which has been tackled head on by the Chaplaincy Team, along with the new leader of the CU, Georgia Lloyd. The answer is to have a number of small, cell based, groups that will function rather than having one large CU. The groups will join together on a half termly basis, maybe along with the staff cell that is already functioning. It is really exciting, so please pray for the whole team at the start of this new journey.

* The Faith fair will operate on Thursday 4th November this year. There will be lots of faith and community groups, from various religions, coming along to explain what they believe and how it impacts their daily lives. The morning will be an exhibition and the afternoon will be a question panel. The model worked really well last year and we are excited to see what God will do this time.

* Please do continue to pray for the Chaplaincy Team (Paul Johnson, Craig Lawrenson and Frank Hinds) as we experiment with lots of tools to show God's love to individuals in real, practical ways.

Please also pray for:

* Pray for those who work in places of education across our borough. Give thanks for the tremendous work that they do with our children and young people, and pray for them as they cope with so many pressures.

* Pray for Christians who work in places of education. Pray that by their example, they may be like 'salt' and 'light' within their workplaces.

* Pray for Christians and churches who are invited into places of education to talk about Christianity through assemblies, classes and school clubs. Pray that they may use the opportunities they have wisely.

Please pray for the churches in Newton-Le-Willows

31st October – All Saints C of E Church and Emmanuel, Wargrave

1st November – Newton Christian Fellowship

2nd November – St David's RC Church and St Patrick's RC Church.

3rd November – St Johns' C of E Church

4th November – St Peter's C of E Church

5th November – St Mary and St John RC Church

6th November – Newton Methodist Church

Sunday 7 – Saturday 13 November

Fairtrade and the Local Economy

"Set your things on things above, not on earthly things" (Colossians 3:2)

This week, our prayers are focusing on the economy and the issue of fair-trade. In the news, especially recently, we only ever seem to hear about the economy and the state it is in. But whereas our news stories focus on how many billions our companies are making, we need to remember God's view of the economy – of the injustice in our economy. Let's pray this week that our economy would become a more just and fair economy for all.

Judith Price, Fairtrade Representative for St Helens, has asked us to pray:

The Campaign for Fair Trade and Trade justice for all continues to make progress.

On an International level please pray:

- * That Economic Partnership Agreements for 76 countries across Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific will be fair and not detrimental to their fragile economies.
- * Pray that none will be signed until they give these countries trade justice so that they can develop their economies and not to be exploited by European countries.

On a National Level pray:

- * Supermarkets, who have been found guilty of exploiting overseas suppliers, will adhere to a new code of practice from the UK Competition Commission so that people who pick, pack and grow our food get a fair deal.

On a Local Level pray:

- * Thank God for the Council's Fair Trade forum who are working to maintain St Helens' Fair Trade status and encourage more businesses and groups to use fair trade products in their workplace.
- * Please pray that more churches will sign up to use Fair Trade products.
- * Please pray that the Harvest season will be a good opportunity to promote Fair Trade in our churches.

Please also pray for:

- * Please pray for our local economy; and especially local businesses in the various shopping centres of our Borough: St Helens Town Centre, Fingerpost, Haydock, Rainhill, Earlestown, Newton, and other shopping centres. Pray especially that local businesses will cope in the current difficult financial climate.
- * Pray that more businesses will invest in St Helens and the borough, and that more jobs would be provided for local people.
- * Pray for local farmers – that they too will get a fair deal when selling the goods that they produce.

Please pray for the churches of Parr and Rainford

7th November – Holy Trinity, Parr Mount

8th November – Parr Methodist Church and the Salvation Army, Tickle Avenue

9th November – St Vincent de Paul RC Church

10th November – St Peter's Parr and St Philip's Derbyshire Hill

11th November – Corpus Christi RC Church, Rainford

12th November – All Saints Rainford

13th November – Rainford United Reformed Church and Rainford Methodist Church

Sunday 14 – Saturday 20 November

Town-wide Issues

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful” (Colossians 4:2)

This week, just as Paul asked the Colossian Church to devote themselves to prayer, we too devote ourselves to prayer for our town. Today of course is Remembrance Sunday, when we remember and give thanks for those who have died for our freedom. But we also take time to pray for our town this week, praying for those who make our town a better place.

A prayer for Remembrance Sunday

Loving God, we remember in your presence all those who have died in war and those who still live with the pain of losing someone they love. We remember people who, today, live in fear of their lives and those who fear the knock on the door or the telephone call that heralds bad news. We remember politicians and others who hold positions of power and influence and whose decisions can lead to other people's life or death. And we commit ourselves not only to pray, but to seek and make peace in our relationships, in our communities, and in our world. Amen (Prayer from the Methodist Church – www.methodist.org.uk)

Carole Hudson, Chief Executive of St Helens Council, has asked us to pray:

* Clearly our thoughts at the Council are with the people of Pakistan. Please pray for the people of Pakistan who have lost everything in the horrendous floods.

* Please pray for all our young people who have started a new year at school or college. Give thanks that the examination results for St Helens this year have been the best ever. Pray that our young people will continue to reach their goals this academic year.

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Thematic Group Faith Reps:

* Please pray for the following people and the groups as a whole as they make strategic decisions regarding our area.

Children and Young People – Mike Balmford (e-mail: office@shine.org.uk)
Crime and Disorder Reduction – Tim Hyde (e-mail: office@sthelensbaptist.co.uk)
Healthier Communities and Older People – John Draycott
(e-mail: john.draycott@sky.com)
Communities and Neighbourhoods – Angela Metcalfe (e-mail: office@shine.org.uk)
Economic Development and Enterprise – Richard Bennett
(e-mail: r.a.bennett61@btinternet.com)

LSP Reps

We have included the LSP faith representative e-mails because their role is to represent us all as a faith community across the borough of St Helens. Therefore if you have an issue or opinion that you'd like raised up at the LSP groups then feel free to e-mail them and they would be happy to represent your views at those groups

Please also pray for:

- * St Helens Rugby League Club. Please continue to pray for the club as the new stadium is being built. Pray for the work of the chaplains: Rev. Paul Day and Rev. Gaz Tracey as they support the club at all levels.
- * Please pray for Chief Superintendent Chris Armitt and the work of Merseyside Police as they continue to work to ensure St Helens is a safe place.

Please pray for the churches of Prescott and Thatto Heath

- 14th November – Our Lady Help of Christians RC Church and St James, Eccleston Park
- 15th November – Prescott Methodist Church and Whiston Methodist Church
- 16th November – Prescott Salvation Army and Prescott Community Church
- 17th November – Balmer Street Methodist Church, Nutgrove Methodist Church
and West Street Independent Methodist Church
- 18th November – St John's Ravenhead and St Matthew's Thatto Heath
- 19th November – St Austin's
- 20th November – Toll Bar with Prescott United Reformed Church

Sunday 21 – Saturday 27 November

The Local Church Part 2

“And pray for us too, that God may open up a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ” (Colossians 4:3)

Paul, in his letter to the church in Colossae, encourages them to pray that God will open up doors for the message of Christ which he was proclaiming wherever he went. This week, as we again focus on the local churches, may we pray that God will open up doors for the message of Jesus to be heard throughout our town.

Janet Roberts, from St Paul's Church, Blackbrook, has asked us to pray:

- * Thank God for our work among children and their parents, we recently achieved the Child Friendly Church Award.
- * Please pray for the team who run our mid week TJ's group for primary children.
- * Please pray as we look to start a lunchtime club within Ashurst Primary School, and that a time will be found for it to meet.
- * Please pray for the new extra Mums & Toddlers group we have starting on a Tuesday afternoon; that the mums, children & carers who attend will experience some of God's love for them.
- * Please pray for the preschool playgroup as new children settle in and staff get to know them and their parents.
- * As a church we are running a course called Growing Leaders, its aim is to help us be led more by Jesus, to lead like Jesus led as a servant and to lead others to Jesus. Please pray that God will use this course to really help people in their journey with Jesus.
- * Please pray for us as we are currently negotiating with three local schools and community groups to stage "The Blackbrook Nativity". Please pray for good planning and that the true meaning and story of Christmas will be heard in our community.

And SHINE as an organisation, would like you to pray:

- * Please pray for the SHINE "Transforming our Community" conference being held this week on the 27th of November. Thank God for the work being done by churches in the community already, and we pray for God's guidance on ways churches can further engage with the community in service and in partnership. We ask that God bless those who attend, so that they may leave the conference refreshed in new ways to be a blessing for the people of St Helens.

Please also pray for:

- * Please continue to pray for those churches who are currently without a minister at the moment. Pray for the members of those churches who have taken on more roles within the church as a result – that God would strengthen them.
- * Pray that the churches in our area may have opportunities to share the Gospel and to challenge people to follow Jesus.

Please pray for the churches of Sutton and Rainhill

21st November – All Saints Sutton, St Michael’s Sutton and St Nicholas’ Sutton
22nd November – Sutton Methodist Church and Sutton Village Church
23rd November – Church of the Nazarene and Peasley Cross United Reformed Church
24th November – St Ann & Blessed Dominic and St Theresa.
25th November – St Bartholomew’s RC Church and St Anne’s Rainhill
26th November – Rainhill Pentecostal Church
27th November – St James’ Methodist Church, Rainhill

Church Prayer Requests

One of the goals of SHINE is to get churches to meet and pray for one another. As you will have noticed – we do put individual church prayer requests into this diary so that we can pray for each other. In particular – if there are any specific events which your church is organising and you’d like pray for that event – then please e-mail us at office@shine.org.uk. The next prayer diary is our December/January edition – please e-mail us your prayer requests by **Friday 29th October**.
