



Prayer
Network

Prayer MATTERS

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2023



Dear *Prayer Matters* readers

Welcome to the
October–December
edition of *Prayer
Matters*.

It is my honour to welcome you
to this edition of *Prayer Matters*.

It occurred to me what a great
rhythm of prayer has been
produced over the last number
of years since the booklet's
inception. I have reflected on
the many contributors and
readers this booklet – now
online – has challenged,
reached and touched. It's
astonishing, and long may it
continue.

While the format may have
evolved over the years, and
continues to do so, the content,
prayers and thoughts continue
unabated, ready to allow God to
speak to us in boundless ways.

And that is my prayer for you as
you read and engage with the
content of *Prayer Matters*: that
God will indeed reach you as he
speaks in boundless ways.

I want to take this opportunity
to thank all the contributors
who have written from the
heart in order to help us engage
with God. Also, a big thank you
to you, the readers, for taking
the time to use this material in
your daily prayer lives.

Be blessed as you read this
edition, and I pray that you will
find comfort and joy in the
content that has been so
lovingly written.

In Jesus' name,

Major Gary Lacey, Territorial
Prayer Network Co-ordinator

All Bible references are NIV
unless stated otherwise

October - Jesus, Righteous

In October the focus of our prayers is on Jesus and his righteousness.

OLDER PEOPLE'S MINISTRIES FOCUS

 **ANDREW WILEMAN**
OLDER PEOPLE'S SERVICES

SUNDAY 1 OCTOBER

Dear Father God, we pray for those who are older in our churches and communities. We ask that no one will be forgotten or overlooked. Just as you see each one of us as your children, we pray for eyes to see the wisdom and years of life that are to be celebrated in our older adults. Amen.

MONDAY 2 OCTOBER

Dear Father God, we pray for anyone who feels lonely today. We pray for those who are living alone and find it difficult to connect with others. From the youngest to the oldest of your children, we pray for eyes to see how we can connect with each other, showing and sharing your love. Amen.

TUESDAY 3 OCTOBER

Dear Father God, thank you for the joy of caring for those we love. We pray for those who are carers. We thank you for them, for their gifts, for their love and patience. We ask that you give strength and wisdom to those who may feel tired today. May your joy and peace be theirs, we pray. Amen.

WEDNESDAY 4 OCTOBER

Dear Father God, thank you for the joy found in later life. We give thanks for faithful volunteers who give their time willingly in retirement to support others in need. May each one find refreshment, enjoyment and fulfilment as they serve you, just where you have placed them. Amen.



THURSDAY 5 OCTOBER

Dear Father God, today we pray for those who are living with dementia and for their carers. Help us always to look into each other's eyes and see the fullness of one another. Forgive us for the times when we have forgotten those who are no longer able to worship with us. Give us eyes to see deeper into the needs of others. Amen.

FRIDAY 6 OCTOBER

Dear Father God, bless all those who attend our Older Adults Salvation Army programme around the UKI Territory. May each one feel the warmth of your love, the sense of belonging and the joy of joining with others in each of our corps and centres. May friendships grow and strengthen, we pray. Amen.

SATURDAY 7 OCTOBER

'Father God, you know how we need you. Journey with us through each day. We are yours and oh so precious, honoured and loved in your care. So give him all your worries, cast all your cares on him. For he knows what's in your heart and he longs to meet you there, he longs to meet you there.' (Major Yvonne Field, 'He Knows', written for the International Day of Older People 2022). Amen.

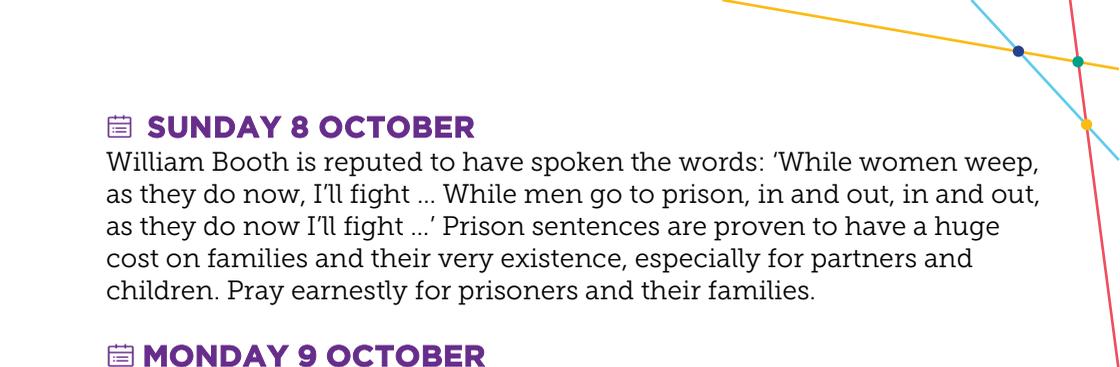
PRISON MINISTRIES FOCUS

 **MAJOR RIK PEARS**
PRISON MINISTRIES OFFICER

SETTING THE SCENE

Almost from its very foundation, The Salvation Army has been involved in prison ministry. This ministry continues today with a strong chaplaincy team made of volunteers, lay Salvationists and officers working in 22 prisons in the UK. These are demanding and challenging ministries that are highly valued and respected by His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service. This week we share in Prisons Week which for more than 40 years has sought to gather the Church in prayer for the needs of all those affected by prisons: prisoners and their families, victims of crime and their communities, those working in the criminal justice system and the many people caring for those affected by crime inside and outside of our prisons.





SUNDAY 8 OCTOBER

William Booth is reputed to have spoken the words: 'While women weep, as they do now, I'll fight ... While men go to prison, in and out, in and out, as they do now I'll fight ...' Prison sentences are proven to have a huge cost on families and their very existence, especially for partners and children. Pray earnestly for prisoners and their families.

MONDAY 9 OCTOBER

Pray for prison staff and their families, many of whom work in Britain's toughest and most dangerous prisons. Like so many settings, our jails are understaffed and underfunded. Prisons are challenging and difficult places to work in but staffed by men and women committed to their task.

TUESDAY 10 OCTOBER

CAMEO groups (Come and meet each other) are in operation in three of our prisons. These gatherings are especially significant for the older, most vulnerable and at-risk prisoners. Pray for these groups today and their leaders. May they be safe spaces within prison where people can meet and enjoy some time of fellowship and the opportunity to be stimulated by quizzes, games and conversation.

WEDNESDAY 11 OCTOBER

Pray for prison chaplains. Their days are often stressful and at times dangerous, with responsibilities that range from the highest category of security down to open prisons. Pray for their work with young offenders, women, men and older vulnerable prisoners. Pray also for the many prison charities who work week in week out in the nation's jails.

THURSDAY 12 OCTOBER

Pray for prisoners – men, women, young and old – who have come to faith, often through the devoted and caring ministry of prison chaplaincy teams. Pray that through the prayer and Bible study groups they will grow strong in their faith. Pray also for a welcoming church family on their release.





FRIDAY 13 OCTOBER

'You cannot warm the hearts of people with God's love if they have an empty stomach and cold feet' (William Booth). Pray today for the many prisoners who, after serving their sentence, on release find that they have no safe and welcoming accommodation to go to, no new place to call home. Pray for those who help them to live new, productive and fulfilling lives without the need to re-offend. Pray that we will all be moved by God's love and be welcoming whenever an ex-offender comes into our church.

GLOBAL COMMUNITY FOCUS (INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WEEK)

 **HAYLEY STILL**

UK ENGAGEMENT CO-ORDINATOR

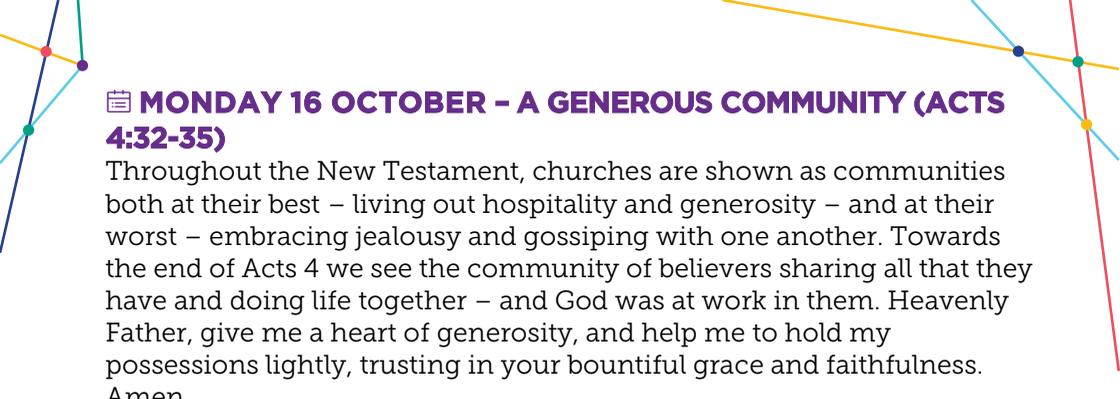
SATURDAY 14 OCTOBER - LUKE 10:25-37

The theme for International Development Week 2023 is Global Community: exploring what it means to be community and considering the idea that church should be an example of community at its best – loving, serving, inclusive, generous. When Jesus was asked 'Who is my neighbour?' (Luke 10:29) he told a story that broadened people's thinking. Lord, help us to look beyond what is familiar and comfortable to those outside of our geographical locations and familial bonds, and recognise ourselves as members of a global community, interconnected as children of God. Amen.

SUNDAY 15 OCTOBER – A LOVING COMMUNITY (JOHN 13:34-35)

Jesus' teachings encourage a radical and transformative kind of love that extends beyond personal preferences to love all people, not just those we know and like. We are called by Jesus to express love as a mark of discipleship. Lord, when we show love for one another, help us to reflect your love into the world and express a commitment to selflessness. Amen.





📅 MONDAY 16 OCTOBER – A GENEROUS COMMUNITY (ACTS 4:32-35)

Throughout the New Testament, churches are shown as communities both at their best – living out hospitality and generosity – and at their worst – embracing jealousy and gossiping with one another. Towards the end of Acts 4 we see the community of believers sharing all that they have and doing life together – and God was at work in them. Heavenly Father, give me a heart of generosity, and help me to hold my possessions lightly, trusting in your bountiful grace and faithfulness. Amen.

📅 TUESDAY 17 OCTOBER – A COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITY (ROMANS 12:9-16)

People in our world are in pain. Pain caused by war, hunger, isolation, poverty and exploitation. Pain caused by other human beings. We must be stirred to action. But first, perhaps we should weep. Henri Nouwen said: 'Compassion challenges us to cry out with those in misery, to mourn with those who are lonely, to weep with those in tears.' Lord God, fill my heart with love and compassion for those I know and for those I will never meet. Amen.

📅 WEDNESDAY 18 OCTOBER – A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY (ISAIAH 58:6-7)

'This group has helped me and my friends. I realise how dangerous human trafficking is in my community so I keep talking to my friends about it.' These are the words of Charles, a survivor of human trafficking and part of The Salvation Army's anti-trafficking project in Uganda. Through community focus groups, he has joined with others to protect themselves, and one another, from the threat of trafficking. Pray that communities will be strengthened to support each other and stand against injustice.

📅 THURSDAY 19 OCTOBER – AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY (ACTS 15)

We can easily mistake diversity for division. We can easily feel disconnected from people in other parts of the world, in cultures dissimilar from our own. But we have so much to learn from those whose experiences differ from our own; the world is smaller than it seems. Lord, help us to celebrate diversity whilst embracing unity. Amen.





📅 **FRIDAY 20 OCTOBER - AN ACTIVE COMMUNITY (JAMES 2:14-16)**

Mighty God, empower us so that our actions reflect the faith we proclaim. May our hearts be moved to compassion, and our hands be ready to serve. Let our lives reflect your love, showing that our faith is alive through our deeds. Amen.

JESUS, RIGHTEOUS FOCUS

👤 **MAJOR ADRIAN LEE**
HUDDERSFIELD CORPS

📅 **SATURDAY 21 OCTOBER**

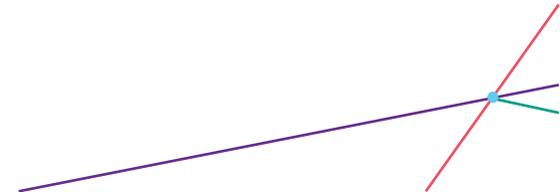
'Do not take advantage of the widow or the fatherless. If you do and they cry out to me, I will certainly hear their cry' (Exodus 22:22-23). Lord Jesus, may your righteous judgement inform decision makers across the social and political spectrum in our communities nationally and locally, in the treatment of those who are vulnerable in society. Amen.

📅 **SUNDAY 22 OCTOBER**

'God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble' (Psalm 46:1). Lord Jesus, may your righteous hand lift and comfort all who find themselves in a place of conflict – emotionally, spiritually or physically. Help them to know and follow your ways, bringing them peaceful resolution. Amen.

📅 **MONDAY 23 OCTOBER**

'Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out' (Romans 12:2 The Message). Lord Jesus, in the midst of constantly shifting values and media influences that claim our attention at every turn, may your righteousness guide our thoughts and actions. Lead us along your paths, always. Amen.





TUESDAY 24 OCTOBER

'When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them ...' (Psalm 8:3). Lord Jesus, the glory you created above has been often masked by the climate catastrophe we have created below, through our failure to follow good stewardship of this planet. Forgive us, and help restore a righteous respect in us towards this beautiful world. Amen.

WEDNESDAY 25 OCTOBER

'All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had' (Acts 4:32). Lord Jesus, we pray for forgiveness when 'self' has come before 'selfless', and the best interests of those in need have suffered as a result. May we seek to follow your righteous example and model to our communities that generosity of spirit and love shown by the early Christian Church. Amen.

THURSDAY 26 OCTOBER

'He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war any more' (Isaiah 2:4). Lord Jesus, in our world so often plagued by war and conflict, we pray for your righteous rule to come, bringing your peace, justice and an end to tears of suffering. Amen.

FRIDAY 27 OCTOBER

'If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you for ever – the Spirit of truth' (John 14:15-17). Lord Jesus, we thank you that your words encourage us and bring us confidence on our journey of discipleship in following you. May we always seek your righteous way in all that we do, think and say. Amen.



'JESUS SAID...' FOCUS

 **STEPHANIE CHAGAS-BIJL**

SATURDAY 28 OCTOBER

"Come, follow me," **Jesus said**, "and I will send you out to fish for people" (Matthew 4:19). Jesus' first words recorded to the disciples were 'Follow me'. These two words are still at the heart of his calling for each of us. Pray for people who still haven't heard Christ's message to follow him. Pray for those who have heard and are struggling in their response.

SUNDAY 29 OCTOBER

'Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," **he said**. "Be clean!" Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy' (Matthew 8:3). A faith-filled man with leprosy somehow knows that Jesus can heal him, and he does. Pray for those struggling with illness, whether it is short-term or chronic, whether the healing seems possible, or not.

MONDAY 30 OCTOBER

'Knowing their thoughts, **Jesus said**, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts?"' (Matthew 9:4). Jesus challenges the teachers of the law who were accusing him of blasphemy for forgiving sins. Pray for your own mind. Only you know your deepest thoughts and questions. Ask God to purify anything that may be cynical or degrading to yourself or someone else.

TUESDAY 31 OCTOBER

'At that time **Jesus said**, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children"' (Matthew 11:25). Here we have a glimpse into a moment of connection between Jesus and his heavenly Father whom he thanks for revealing his truths to those with a pure childlike faith. Pray that as a body of Christ we would be challenged in our pride and arrogance – that a spirit of humility and yielding to God's love and purpose would abound.

NOVEMBER - Jesus, Healer

In November prayers will be centred on Jesus, who brings healing.

WELLBEING FOCUS

MAJOR SARAH EVANS
DIRECTOR, WELL BEING DEPARTMENT

SETTING THE SCENE

'When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal those who were ill' (Luke 9:1-2). Jesus commissions his Church to go out both to preach and to heal. God's will for everyone is that we should experience holistic wellbeing – life in all its fullness – physical, psychological, spiritual and emotional. As God's people we are both recipients of God's healing and proclaimers of that wholeness to others.

WEDNESDAY 1 NOVEMBER

'O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation' (SASB 56). Next week many officers will be starting the challenge 'Step it up to a better you', looking at exercise, nutrition, rest and dealing with stress. Pray for the physical and mental health of all in spiritual leadership.

THURSDAY 2 NOVEMBER

'Ours is not a distant God, remote, unfeeling, who is careless of our loneliness and pain, Through the ministry of men he gives his healing, in their dedicated hands brings hope again' (SASB 10). Pray for the professionally skilled and dedicated work of The Salvation Army's Counselling Service.

FRIDAY 3 NOVEMBER

'Wash from my hands the dust of earthly striving; take from my mind the stress of secret fear; cleanse thou the wounds from all but thee far hidden, and when the waters flow let my healing appear' (SASB 742). Pray for healing and restoration for all who attend the Well Being Department event Flourishing In Ministry later this month.

📅 SATURDAY 4 NOVEMBER

'His tender touch can heal the broken-hearted, his word dispel the darkness of despair' (SASB 193). Pray for the wide-ranging ministry of regional Well Being officers, including pastoral support, critical incident response, workplace mediation and pastoral supervision.

📅 SUNDAY 5 NOVEMBER

'O Lord, whose human hands were quick to feed the hungry, heal the sick, who love by loving deed expressed, help me to comfort the distressed' (SASB 1003). Pray for wellbeing programmes held in corps and centres within the territory, such as Renew Wellbeing cafes, Kintsugi Hope courses and CWR's The Wellbeing Journey.

SHALOM FOCUS

👤 LIEUTENANT MARTYN BELLSHAW GILLINGHAM CORPS

📅 MONDAY 6 NOVEMBER

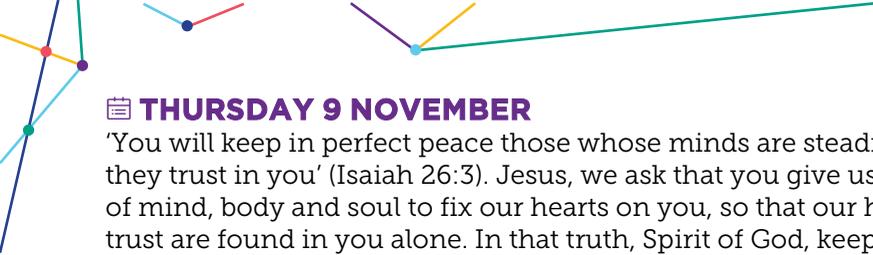
'So Gideon built an altar to the Lord there and called it The Lord Is Peace' (Judges 6:24). God, you are our peace, our shalom, our wholeness. Help us to recognise that we are made complete only in the depth of your shalom, your restoration of all of creation. Thank you, Father, that you had a plan to restore us. Jesus, thank you for making our wholeness complete; and Spirit, thank you that by your presence you reveal our wholeness each day. Amen.

📅 TUESDAY 7 NOVEMBER

'My covenant was with him, a covenant of life and peace, and I gave them to him; this called for reverence and he revered me and stood in awe of my name' (Malachi 2:5). Jesus, help us to live in the covenant you fulfilled. May we live in our inheritance of life in its fullness, in your shalom. Help us to stand in awe of your name, that we might know its power in and over our lives. Amen.

📅 WEDNESDAY 8 NOVEMBER

'But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity' (Psalm 37:11). God, help us to put aside our pride that makes us stumble and fall. Help us, Father, to lay down all that stops us from dwelling in your peace. Jesus, empower us to enter into our inheritance of your healing and wholeness, made possible by your example of the power of meekness. Amen.



THURSDAY 9 NOVEMBER

'You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you' (Isaiah 26:3). Jesus, we ask that you give us the strength of mind, body and soul to fix our hearts on you, so that our hope and our trust are found in you alone. In that truth, Spirit of God, keep us in perfect peace. Amen.

FRIDAY 10 NOVEMBER

'Great peace have those who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble' (Psalm 119:165). Father God, your word is written in our hearts. Help us to meditate and to live the truth of your word in our everyday ordinary living. May this truth be our guide to living in your wholeness, in your shalom. Amen.

SATURDAY 11 NOVEMBER

'For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations' (Ephesians 2:14,15). Jesus, thank you for the reality that you are our peace, that through you, and you alone, we are reconciled in wholeness with God. Amen.

SUNDAY 12 NOVEMBER

'Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near ... And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus' (Philippians 4:4-5,7). God, may this be our reality, may we find your joy in the wholeness that you have given through Jesus. May your peace transcend all understanding, may it transform lives and dissipate conflict. Amen.

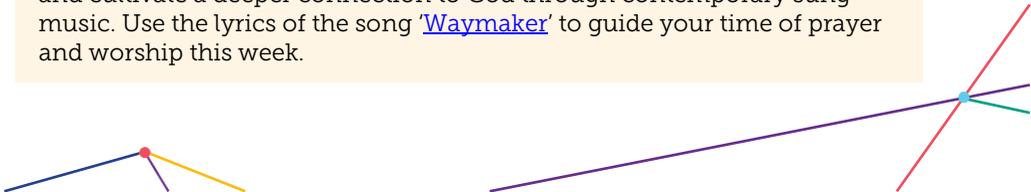
WORSHIP FOCUS

 **NICHOLAS KING**

MUSIC AND CREATIVE ARTS DEPARTMENT

🕒 SETTING THE SCENE

The Salvation Army Worship Conference will take place this weekend for the first time (18-19 November), organised by the Music and Creative Arts Department (THQ). This will be a space for people to develop their skills and cultivate a deeper connection to God through contemporary sung music. Use the lyrics of the song '[Waymaker](#)' to guide your time of prayer and worship this week.



📅 MONDAY 13 NOVEMBER - 'YOU ARE HERE, MOVING IN OUR MIDST'

Father, help us to acknowledge your presence in the here and now. In your presence there is fullness of joy, a deep joy that cannot be stolen or replaced. May we cling to that promise today. Thank you for being with us. Amen.

📅 TUESDAY 14 NOVEMBER - 'YOU ARE HERE, WORKING IN THIS PLACE'

Wherever we are, whatever we are doing, God can use us as his instrument. He is working in our ordinary, everyday lives – sometimes we just have to have our eyes open to see it. Help us, Father, to have our eyes open, ears attentive and hearts tuned into what you are already doing in us, through us and around us. Amen.

📅 WEDNESDAY 15 NOVEMBER - 'YOU ARE WAYMAKER'

Jesus is our Waymaker when there seems to be no way. He brings refreshing to our lives when we are surrounded by a desert. Jesus shines his light when all we can see is darkness. He sees way beyond our own circumstances. Jesus, make a way out of the darkness in our lives, we pray. Amen.

📅 THURSDAY 16 NOVEMBER - 'MIRACLE WORKER'

Dear Lord, thank you for the times where you have performed miracles in my life, both seen and unseen. Help me to have the faith to ask for miracles, to expect them and to praise you each time. Help us to be people who pray bolder prayers. Amen.

📅 FRIDAY 17 NOVEMBER - 'PROMISE KEEPER'

We can fully trust in the promises of God. Scripture tells us that the promises of God are all 'Yes' and 'Amen' in Christ (2 Corinthians 1:20). None of God's promises in the Bible ever fail; even the Holy Spirit himself is a promise from God to all believers. Keep standing on the promises of God when it comes to anything that concerns you. God's promises do not fail.

📅 SATURDAY 18 NOVEMBER - 'TURNING LIVES AROUND'

God has the power to change lives. You've seen it in your life and hopefully in lives of others too. Take a moment to remember just how far God has brought you and thank him. Pray for those on your heart who need God to break into their life and turn it around.



📅 **SUNDAY 19 NOVEMBER – ‘EVEN WHEN I CAN’T FEEL IT, YOU’RE WORKING’**

It’s a comfort to know that our faith is not based solely on how we feel. We have something deeper and more trustworthy than our feelings. There may be days that we simply do not feel close to God, his presence seems distant. But when you can’t feel his presence, he calls us to keep going anyway! Lord, you will not let me down. Thank you for being with me always, to the very end of the age (Matthew 28:20) and for keeping your promises. Amen.

JESUS, HEALER FOCUS

👤 **LIEUT-COLONEL JAYNE ROBERTS**
SECRETARY FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE DEVELOPMENT

📅 **MONDAY 20 NOVEMBER**

Mark’s Gospel gives us vivid glimpses of the healing ministry of Jesus, including the time when he was teaching in the synagogue (Mark 1:21-28). Jesus chose that setting to deliver a man from an evil spirit that recognised Jesus as ‘the Holy One of God’. On that day in Capernaum a troubled soul found peace and wholeness. Let us thank God today for the compassion of Jesus.

📅 **TUESDAY 21 NOVEMBER**

The next healing event (Mark 1:29-31) takes place in a private home where Simon’s mother-in-law was sick with a high fever. Jesus responded to this situation, and when he took her by the hand she was restored and immediately served Jesus as a disciple alongside her son-in-law. Thank you, Lord, for calling and enabling us in your service. Amen.

📅 **WEDNESDAY 22 NOVEMBER**

The news of Jesus’ healing power draws people from the whole town (Mark 1:32-34). Many sick people are brought to him and he heals them. We do not know the specific ailments they suffered but Jesus met them at their point of need. Thank you, Lord, for receiving us in the frailty of our humanity. Amen.



📅 THURSDAY 23 NOVEMBER

Mark 1:35 tells us that the morning after an evening when he had brought healing to many people, Jesus went to an isolated place to pray. What a powerful reminder that Jesus himself needed to be in solitude with his Father! May we too pray to find that balance in our lives and draw strength from our time of prayer with our Lord.

📅 FRIDAY 24 NOVEMBER

A man with leprosy came and begged to be healed, yet was respectful of Jesus' choice when he said 'If you are willing' (Mark 1:40). His disease meant isolation, physical disfigurement and ritual uncleanness. Jesus' response was deep compassion expressed in a loving touch. He was willing to help and heal. May we be stirred to respond to those in need with compassion.

📅 SATURDAY 25 NOVEMBER

In Mark 2:1-12 four men carried their paralysed friend to Jesus and lowered him through the roof. What a dramatic way to seek healing! Jesus' first response is to forgive his sins – a scandal in the eyes of the religious leaders who thought that disability was a punishment from God. Forgiveness is followed by complete physical healing. Lord, help us recognise our deep need to be 'ransomed, healed, restored and forgiven'. Amen.

📅 SUNDAY 26 NOVEMBER

As we have reflected this week on Jesus, healer, bringing health and wholeness to mind, body and spirit, let us pray this ancient prayer (SASB 696 verse 5): 'Thy touch has still its ancient power; no word from thee can fruitless fall. Hear in this solemn evening (morning) hour, and in thy mercy heal us all' (Henry Twells).

VALUES FOCUS

👤 **MAJOR BEVERLY BAKER**
SENIOR PERSONNEL OFFICER

🕒 **CONTEXT**

In addition to our mission and vision as a Salvation Army, our identity as disciples of Jesus are also shaped by the values of God's Kingdom as we love God and love others, reaching for fullness of life for all with Jesus. Our values (salvationist.org.uk/faith/our-values) are reframed as statements of intent to assist us in how we live out our mission and help us to consider where our behaviour might support or undermine our relationships.

MONDAY 27 NOVEMBER - BOLDNESS

We will courageously and confidently seek to fulfil our five mission priorities: share the good news, seek justice and reconciliation, nurture disciples of Jesus, serve others without discrimination, care for creation. Lord, in considering the values by which I live out your mission, if I've lacked confidence or motivation, I lean into your conviction and holy courage (Acts 4:31). If in my eagerness to fulfil your mission I've done that in ways that others experience as patronising or bullying, then I'm sorry. Help me express boldness humbly (Philippians 2:1-7), encouraging the learning of new ways together. Amen.

TUESDAY 28 NOVEMBER - COMPASSION

We will serve with the unconditional love and grace of God as the pattern for our behaviour with a bias to the poor and marginalised. Lord, as I live out your life of love, help me to do so with care, kindness and a generous and forgiving heart (Colossians 3:12-14), with greater understanding of others and their experiences (Deuteronomy 14:29). Forgive me and help me when I slip into being judgemental, condemning and blaming others (Romans 14:10). Amen.

WEDNESDAY 29 NOVEMBER - PASSION

We will bring our best selves, our God-given energies and our convictions to our work, service and learning, whether as officers, members, employees or volunteers. Lord, thank you for entrusting me with life-enhancing abilities, gifts, skills and knowledge (Ephesians 2:10). I'm sorry for when fear or cynicism limits my contribution (Revelation 3:15) or when my single-mindedness limits participation by others. Help me to keep listening, learning and offering you who I am and what I have (Ephesians 6:7). Amen.

THURSDAY 30 NOVEMBER - RESPECT

We will welcome each person with the dignity of those created in the image of God, valuing their diversity, seeking to serve each other's flourishing and transformation within God's love. Lord, I'm sorry if there are times I've regarded others with contempt or as if they need to earn or deserve my respect (Luke 10:29-37). Thank you for Jesus, who, while we were still sinners, gave his own life for us (Romans 5:8). Help me to live out God's love (Deuteronomy 6:5, Luke 10:27), to always be courteous to and about people, seeking to see potential (Mark 12:43), and to build mutual and collaborative relationships. Amen.

DECEMBER - Jesus, The Gift

In December prayers will be centred on Jesus, the gift to all humankind.

📅 FRIDAY 1 DECEMBER - INTEGRITY

We will be honest and transparent in all our dealings with each other and those we serve, being open about our motives and agendas. Lord, have I manipulated or misused power or influence (Jeremiah 23:1,4) or failed to be honest or to keep my word (James 3)? Help me fulfil my 'yes' (Matthew 5:37), to be trustworthy, to be noble, upright and true (Philippians 4:8-9). Amen.

📅 SATURDAY 2 DECEMBER - MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

We will willingly and freely give full account for our actions to those we interact with and expect the same in return, recognising the link between individual responsibility and mutual accountability. Lord, thank you that I am a part of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-17). Help me play my part for the common good, responsibly and collaboratively, in ways that empower and equip. Help me to graciously offer and receive feedback, listening and learning, when attitudes or actions of myself or others are unhelpful (Matthew 18:15). Help me serve as a faithful steward (1 Peter 4:10). Amen.

ADVENT FOCUS

👤 MAJOR GARY LACEY

TERRITORIAL PRAYER NETWORK CO-ORDINATOR

🕒 CONTEXT

Advent is a time of expectancy and anticipation of Jesus' birth. What a comfort, what a joy! From whatever angle we approach Advent, whether prophetically or maybe hopefully, theologically or even expectantly, God's comfort and joy remain fixed and available.

This Advent focus will be based around the old English carol 'God rest you merry, gentlemen' (The Salvation Army's Christmas Collection 33) also known as 'Tidings of comfort and joy'. The song is said to have its origins in an early anonymous manuscript dating from the 1650s. We will approach this focus in the spirit of intercession and use it to pray for others in the knowledge that they will receive comfort and joy direct from the Saviour this Christmas.

ANCIENT TRUTHS AND MODERN TIMES

📅 SUNDAY 3 DECEMBER – ‘GOD REST YOU MERRY, GENTLEMEN, LET NOTHING YOU DISMAY’

Read Deuteronomy 31:8. Father in Heaven, we recognise your birth as a symbol of your total care for humanity. While dismay comes to us all and seeps into our lives often quietly, sometimes abruptly, thank you that we can rest and not be dismayed in the power of your love. I bring myself, my family, my friends and my community before you, especially those who do not feel at rest and are experiencing dismay just now. Bless them with assurance of your reality and bring them comfort and joy in Jesus' name. Amen.

📅 MONDAY 4 DECEMBER – ‘FOR JESUS CHRIST, OUR SAVIOUR, WAS BORN UPON THIS DAY’

Read Isaiah 9:6-7. Saviour, as we remember your birth on Christmas Day and lead up to our celebration of it, help us to remember this event as fact and truth. We want the world to know the truth in our times and the times to come, and we bring to you those who don't know who you are or have stepped out of a relationship with you. May there be a shift in awareness of the truth that you were born to save us all, and we pray that the world may know you fully. Amen.

📅 TUESDAY 5 DECEMBER – ‘TO SAVE US ALL FROM SATAN'S POWER WHEN WE WERE GONE ASTRAY’

Read 2 Timothy 4:18. Jesus, my protector, thank you that you save us all from the power that Satan tries to wield over this world. We want to bring to you all those who are trapped in this abhorrent power. Help them to encounter your ultimate spiritual power by turning to you. We bring before you those in our world who need you desperately. We pray for an amazing turnaround in their lives, a power shift of epic proportions! In Jesus' name. Amen.

📅 WEDNESDAY 6 DECEMBER – TIDINGS OF COMFORT

Read Psalm 23:4. Oh, my amazing comforter, I love you more than words will allow me to express. We acknowledge that the word 'tidings' means information and news, so we celebrate the spectacular news that you came to bring comfort. I bring all the uncomfortable situations that come to my mind right now before you, both in my life and in the lives of others and ask that your comfort will envelope us like a blanket of spiritual warmth. In Jesus' name. Amen.

THURSDAY 7 DECEMBER - 'TIDINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY'

Read Psalm 47:1. Father, thank you for the joy you bring to our lives. Thank you that we can access your joy and experience it in full. I pray for all those who are sad; bless them with a smile today. Lord, shower us with your Spirit of joy as we focus on you. Amen.

FRIDAY 8 DECEMBER - PRAISE OF THE COMING SAVIOUR

'How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"' (Isaiah 52:7). Lord God, we praise you for blessing us with your presence in the world. Amen.

SATURDAY 9 DECEMBER

Take time today to sit in silence, to find somewhere quiet and minimise distraction around you. Allow the Spirit of God to lay on your heart the names of people who need prayer in these days. Get a pen ready and write down the names. Once you have done this and prayed, keep the list for tomorrow.

SUNDAY 10 DECEMBER

Take your list of names from yesterday and pray for each one again. Maybe choose a line from this week's first verse of the carol 'God rest you merry, gentlemen' or choose one of this week's Scriptures to pray over them.

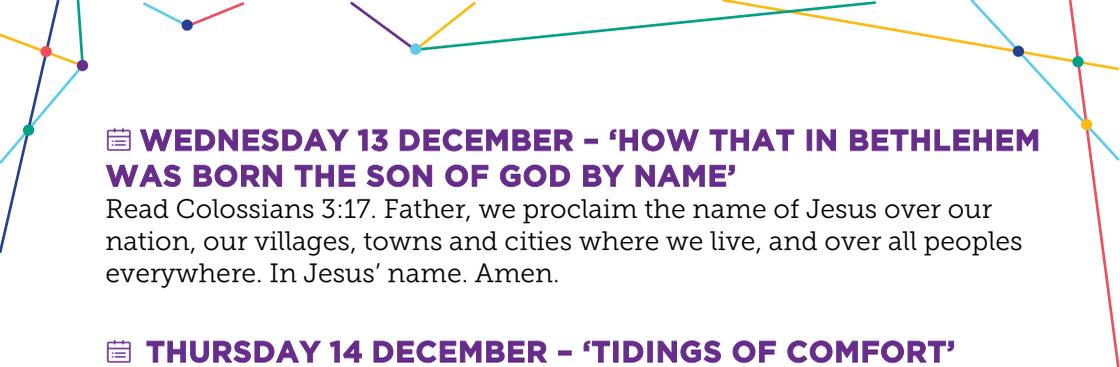
COMFORTED TO COMFORT

MONDAY 11 DECEMBER - 'FROM GOD OUR HEAVENLY FATHER A BLESSED ANGEL CAME'

Read Exodus 23:20. Lord, thank you for the comfort that comes from knowing that you are with us, that your angels are guarding us. Protect my loved ones, my friends, and my community. In Jesus' name. Amen.

TUESDAY 12 DECEMBER - 'AND UNTO CERTAIN SHEPHERDS BROUGHT TIDINGS OF THE SAME'

Read Hebrews 13: 8-16. Faithful Christ, thank you for your consistency, that you are the same yesterday, today and for ever. This world needs consistency, and your message never changes. Thank you for the comfort and joy that your consistent presence brings. Amen.



📅 WEDNESDAY 13 DECEMBER - 'HOW THAT IN BETHLEHEM WAS BORN THE SON OF GOD BY NAME'

Read Colossians 3:17. Father, we proclaim the name of Jesus over our nation, our villages, towns and cities where we live, and over all peoples everywhere. In Jesus' name. Amen.

📅 THURSDAY 14 DECEMBER - 'TIDINGS OF COMFORT'

Jesus, wonderful Saviour, beautiful Lord, help me to be a comforter, to show your comfort to others as an essential part of my discipleship. Help me to share a comforting word, a comforting hug, a comforting shoulder to cry on. Equip me with the courage to do that, with the purpose of making this world a better place. Amen.

📅 FRIDAY 15 DECEMBER - 'TIDINGS OF JOY'

Read John 15:11. Gracious God, you have spoken to us that your joy might remain in us, and that our joy may be complete. I pray that you will really strengthen me to share the joy that is in me with those who really need a joyful encounter. In Jesus' name. Amen.

📅 SATURDAY 16 DECEMBER

Find a quiet space again. Reflect on any situations in which you think that you could be a comforter at this time. Maybe you can write a comforting note, or send a comforting text, or grab a coffee with someone who could do with some comfort?

📅 SUNDAY 17 DECEMBER

In your quiet space, just be in the presence of God and allow him to comfort you. Holy Spirit, comforter and friend, thank you for your presence. You are always with me. I love you. Amen.

NEWS OF GREAT JOY

📅 MONDAY 18 DECEMBER - 'THE SHEPHERDS AT THOSE TIDINGS REJOICED MUCH IN MIND'

Read Matthew 24:14. Glorious King, thank you for the good news that you have shared with us through the birth of your Son Jesus. The shepherds rejoiced, and I rejoice too, yet I want to do so much more to reach a world in need of a saviour. Show me what to do, Lord, to use my character to reach people. Amen.

TUESDAY 19 DECEMBER - 'AND LEFT THEIR FLOCKS A-FEEDING IN TEMPEST, STORM AND WIND'

Compassionate Messiah, as we go about our busy day-to-day activities, help us to remember that you are waiting for us to invite you into what we are doing. Lead us into a proper understanding of your desire to be asked into every part of our lives. Amen.

WEDNESDAY 20 DECEMBER - 'AND WENT TO BETHLEHEM STRAIGHT AWAY THIS BLESSED BABE TO FIND'

Read 1 Chronicles 16:11. Jesus, my friend, I want to seek you always. I want the world to seek your face too. So I pray that hearts and minds that are far from you would seek your guidance, just as the star in the Nativity story led people to you. May the world turn towards you and find your strength by seeking your face. In Jesus' name. Amen.

GOODNESS REVEALED

THURSDAY 21 DECEMBER - 'AND WHEN THEY CAME TO BETHLEHEM WHERE OUR DEAR SAVIOUR LAY'

Read Matthew 13:10-14. Father, the comfort and joy that come from the revelation of yourself through the birth of your Son Jesus is just perfect. Thank you for your goodness revealed. In Jesus' name. Amen.

FRIDAY 22 DECEMBER - 'THEY FOUND HIM IN A MANGER WHERE OXEN FEED ON HAY'

Read Colossians 3:12. Lord Jesus, my friend and my example, you were born in a stable, and yet you are a mighty King! Strengthen me to draw from your astounding humility and to lavish that on anyone I meet. Help me to reveal your humility to this world by following your example. I pray for those who struggle with humility. Break the chains of vanity, arrogance and egoism in ourselves and in society. Amen.

SATURDAY 23 DECEMBER - 'HIS MOTHER MARY, KNEELING, UNTO THE LORD DID PRAY'

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. Father, bring us comfort and joy through prayer. I want to commit to rejoice always, to pray without ceasing and to give thanks in all circumstances, for this is your will in Christ Jesus. Amen.

SUNDAY 24 DECEMBER – ‘TIDINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY’

Read Psalm 30:5. Lord, your word says that ‘anger lasts only a moment ... weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning’. I pray today on Christmas Eve, the night before the greatest morning of all time, for those who are angry and those who are weeping. May they find joy in the morning through the birth of your precious Son. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

MONDAY 25 DECEMBER – CHRISTMAS DAY: ‘NOW TO THE LORD SING PRAISES’

The last verse of the carol is a call to ‘sing praises’ to the Lord and embrace others ‘with true love and brotherhood’. Lord, on this special day, wherever we find ourselves celebrating the birth of your Son Jesus, may we celebrate and praise you with joy in our hearts and embrace others with the comfort you have given to us. Amen.

END OF YEAR FOCUS

 **MAJOR JAMES LLOYD**

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY TO TERRITORIAL LEADERSHIP

SETTING THE SCENE

As we stand on the threshold of a brand-new year, we can begin this year with a powerful intention – prayerfully seeking guidance and blessings through Scripture. God’s word has a unique way of bringing clarity, comfort and inspiration to our lives. By immersing ourselves in its words and meditating on its teachings, we can ensure a Spirit-filled beginning to the new year.

TUESDAY 26 DECEMBER

‘Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me’ (Psalm 51:10). Embarking on a new year, a powerful approach is to humbly seek God’s transformative touch, inviting his cleansing to wash away past burdens and his renewal to invigorate our journey. Spend a few moments praying this for yourself.

WEDNESDAY 27 DECEMBER

‘Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland’ (Isaiah 43:18-19). Progress in our walk with God requires leaving the past behind and focusing on the journey ahead. Ask God to help you leave behind anything that does not belong in the year to come. Seek him as you move on to a new day.



THURSDAY 28 DECEMBER

'Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness' (Lamentations 3:22-23). Embracing God's love and forgiveness is essential for our wellbeing and spiritual growth. Thank God that his mercies are new every morning.

FRIDAY 29 DECEMBER

'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here!' (2 Corinthians 5:17). Lord, thank you that because of our rebirth in you, we can embrace our identity as redeemed individuals, empowered to walk in your light. Amen.

SATURDAY 30 DECEMBER

'Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus' (Philippians 3:13-14). We can release the past, yesterday's chapter is closed. Pray for what lies ahead in 2024, as our future shines brightly with Christ.

SUNDAY 31 DECEMBER

'He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End"' (Revelation 21:5-6). It is accomplished! You've been transformed. Embrace your newfound self in Christ and stride confidently, for triumph awaits you. Thank God that you have the opportunity to begin the new year renewed in Christ.





CALLING
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PRAYER

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