

PRAYER DIARY – MARCH 2021

Monday 1st

On this first day of March let us give thanks for the promise of Spring. Thank God for the wonders of his creation and the ordering of the times and seasons which He has put in place. Pray that God will help us all to do what we can to look after his handiwork so that following generations can also enjoy it.

Tuesday 2nd

Our Presbytery of North Belfast hopes to meet by Zoom this evening. It will deal with many various items – the meeting will remember and give thanks for the life of Rev Noel Agnew who died last year. It will appoint Rev Dr William Parker, Minister of Sinclair Seamen's Presbyterian Church as the new moderator of Presbytery for the coming year and will also acknowledge the retirement of Rev John Dickinson. Pray for the Presbytery to act wisely and with vision and courage as it seeks to serve God's Kingdom. Also pray for the six Congregations that are vacant at the present time. - Ballygomartin, Ballysillan, Carnmoney, Crumlin Road, Newington, and New Mossley Congregations

Wednesday 3rd

It is estimated that 1.8 million Venezuelan migrants have fled their country and settled in Colombia, due to the political and economic crisis. Tearfund is working with local churches to prevent malnutrition in migrant children and help pregnant women access health services. The migratory crisis has generated a great demand for services – health provision being the most critical. The country's capacity to provide healthcare has become overwhelmed. Pray that Colombia will have the necessary resources to meet the health needs of its entire population, including migrants.

Thursday 4th

Pray for the situation in Myanmar and particularly for the work being carried on by Stand By Me. Money has been sent to Myanmar but the staff of the schools can't access it as banks are closed. The situation at the schools/homes is becoming more difficult as food prices rise and it is difficult to access money. Prayer is requested that God will make a way for staff to get access to funds to provide food and the necessities that are needed. Pray for the safety and protection of staff and children. Pray also that Democracy will return.

Friday 5th

Today is International World Day of Prayer. The service has been prepared by a Committee of Vanuatu Islands women. Because of the Pandemic it will not be possible this year for services to be held. However the service has been prepared and there are various ways that the service can be enjoyed; via YouTube, video or contact the NI Committee. The theme for this year is Build on a strong foundation and it is hoped to get the order of service to join in on line. Pray for the woman of Vanuatu Islands that the words and music of the service may encourage us to Build on a strong Foundation.

Saturday 6th

Maghaberry, Magilligan and Hydebank Wood are our 3 main prisons in Northern Ireland. Pray for the Prison Governors who have very challenging roles. Pray for safety and wisdom for the decisions they have to make. Pray also for Prison staff facing many difficult tasks of managing prisoners. Pray for protection and compassion for the people in their care. Pray for family members unable to visit during this pandemic.

Sunday 7th

Give thanks for today's service of worship. Thank God that we are able to use new technology to see and hear Philip share God's Word with us. Give thanks for Billy as he plays and Barton as he works behind the scenes to record the Service. Give thanks for the more than 120 people who view the service every week. Pray that God will use the Services to encourage and help us all and that our Congregation will remain faithful and strong. Pray that lives will be changed by God's word – that people's faith will be strengthened and more will turn to follow our Lord Jesus.

Monday 8th

At the time of writing this Diary today is to be a key date in the Lockdown Process. Some boys and girls will hope to return to school today. Pray for the teachers and parents as the restrictions ease a little. Pray too for the Chief Medical Officer and his team as they give important advice to our politicians and inform their decisions. Pray that changes will come that will allow us to return safely to worship in person again soon. Pray for our own Kirk Session and Committee as they make plans and preparations for a return to worship and any other arrangements that are needed.

Tuesday 9th

Pray for the many people who are at their wits end because of the growing debt crisis and the job losses because of Corona Virus. Pray for the many who are in real danger of losing their homes. Pray also for the work of CAP as it seeks to help those in any kind of debt crisis and to show them that God cares for them in whatever situation they find themselves in.

Wednesday 10th

Pray for the work of Christian Aid. Today Christian Aid are launching a new book of prayers called Rage and Hope – 75 prayers for a better world to mark Christian Aid's 75 Anniversary. Continue to pray for Christian Aid as it works in many parts of the world to bring people in disaster areas the help and support they need with basic food, water and shelter. Christian Aid is also at the forefront of working with issues of climate change, poverty, injustice and many other concerns.

Thursday 11th

One of the great threats to the spread of God's Kingdom is indifference. Ask God the Holy Spirit to work through us and sweep away the apathy which hinders our work for Him. Pray for joy and enthusiasm in God's service.

Friday 12th

Today let us remember all those who are grieving for the death of a loved one – perhaps in the past year with all the added pain and complication that Covid restrictions have brought and also for all who have suffered loss and feel the pain of grief. May each person know the presence and consolation of our loving Heavenly Father. May memories of happier times bring comfort in dark times and may the promise of new life in our Lord Jesus Christ bring hope to the hearts of all who mourn. Pray too for those family and friends who seek to help those in grief that they will be able to find ways of giving comfort and help.

Saturday 13th

O God, you so loved the world that you gave your Son to die on the cross for us. We acknowledge with shame that our love for you is often poor and weak. Pour your own love into our hearts that we may love you above all things and may give ourselves, our homes, our time and our talents to serving you. We ask you to show us what your will is for our lives. May your Holy Spirit lead us and bring us to glad obedience today and every day.

Sunday 14th

As we worship together via social media let us give thanks for those who have been instrumental in setting this up so that we can worship together whilst being at home. We thank you Heavenly Father for those who have technical skills and abilities and we give God the thanks that we have been able to keep in touch through the many means of social media available to us.

Monday 15th It's 10 years since the start of Syria's devastating civil war which has killed half a million people and displaced over 12 million. Ask the God who 'breaks the bow and shatters the spear' to bring this terrible war to an end so that His name is exalted in Syria and across the earth (Ps 46:9-10).

Tuesday 16th

At this time pray for our politicians both here in Northern Ireland and across the water. These are difficult times and we pray for wisdom to know how best to advise the country about the safest way back to normal. We pray for unity of purpose in the various Councils and Public Bodies who are responsible for the implementation of any changes or plans.

Wednesday 17th – St Patrick's Day

We give thanks today for all who share the Gospel of Jesus wherever they are. St Patrick brought the Good News about Jesus to the pagan island of Ireland. There are many myths and stories about this missionary but whatever the truth is we cannot deny the fact that someone came and shared their faith in a Risen Saviour. This is still true and the need is very real today for many do not follow Jesus – it is even true that many children and young people do not know the truth about Jesus. We live in an increasingly secular and godless society. Pray for all who seek to share Jesus anywhere today and that God will raise up those who will tell others about the real Jesus just as Patrick did over 1500 years ago.

Thursday 18th

Although the work continues, the pace of life for MAF staff has changed, with many working from home since the coronavirus outbreak began. Give thanks for this opportunity to reflect, be still and experience the peace and presence of the Lord. Pray that God will remain close and continue directing their steps in 2021.

Friday 19th

We especially remember Cavehill Primary School, the boys and girls, its Principal, Mr Stephen Orr, all the teachers and staff all just yards away from our Church door. Pray for the Governors and staff as they make important decisions over budgets and staffing and work to do what is best for all the Pupils. May God bless the staff as they do their best with online classes and make up packs to send home for the boys and girls to keep up with their work. Be with those in P7 as they come to an end of their time in Cavehill and prepare to move up to Big school in September. Pray too for the little ones in P1 finding their way in very strange times. Pray also for parents helping with schooling at home!

Saturday 20th

Latin Link

Margo and Edwardo Huaman ask for prayer for Peru. Hospitals are full and there are oxygen shortages. Pray for wisdom for leaders, and pray that the rolling out of the vaccine would be done in a just and fair manner. They also ask for prayer as they continue their ministry online and join in praising God for the opportunities to continue to serve in this way. During March/April Eduardo and Margo will be on Assignment to their sending country which is Bangor, Northern Ireland. Pray for rest and relaxation during their time at home.

Sunday 21st

It is now a full year since the first Lockdown prevented us from worshipping together in person! So much that we took for granted has become a distant memory - jobs, schools, businesses, church organisations, worship – all have been disrupted. Our healthcare system and hospitals have been tested to breaking point – lives have been lost! – the world has changed!! We lament over all that we have lost, we cry out “How much longer God?” We must also thank God for the help and blessings we have each received in the past 12 months. Let us give thanks to God for all who have worked to keep our hospitals open, often at great personal sacrifice. We give thanks for the Vaccination programme and the progress that is being made. Pray for those in positions of power, and those who will make decisions, that they will be wise and compassionate. Pray for those who care for the sick and elderly – please protect them dear God.

Monday 22nd

Piracy, shipwreck, and missing home and family are some of the problems seafarers face. Pray for all RN and Merchant Seamen and women. Pray for safety and protection. Pray for all Captains and officers as they are responsible for the safety of the crew and the running of the ship. Pray also for those who go to sea to provide our fish and seafood. Keep them safe and help them in this difficult time of Brexit to keep within the areas where they are permitted to fish.

Tuesday 23rd

The Linkage Commission of the Presbyterian Church will meet today and perhaps tomorrow to decide on which congregations can proceed to seek to call a new minister. In particular Ballygomartin and New Mossley congregations will be under consideration. Pray that the members of the Commission, under the leadership of James Livingstone, will make good decisions in respect of each of these Congregations – both are in key areas and both face challenges with regard to finding the funds to pay for a full-time minister. Pray that the congregations will be blessed and be able to serve God whatever the outcome of the meeting is.

Wednesday 24th

Give thanks for our hospitals and the amazing work carried out by all branches of staff. Pray especially for all those who have ensured the fast roll out of the Corona virus 19 vaccination programme. Give thanks for our Blood Transfusion Service and the many other branches of medical care which we have access to.

Thursday 25th

Today is another deadline for Church Treasurers to have accounts and returns completed and to be inspected. There is much stress and effort involved for a small number of people in each congregation doing this important work. Pray that they will each know God's help as they persevere with their work. We in Rosemary give thanks for our Finance Committee and especially for the outstanding work that Roy our Treasure does day after day.

Friday 26th

Wycliffe Bible Translators ask us to pray for Angharad Evans, UK – Pray for wisdom in the care and Wellbeing team to know how best to support staff and their families through the impacts and upheaval caused by Covid-19.

Saturday 27th

Philippines – First Response Radio, a FEBC partner specialising in establishing radio communication within 72 hours in areas affected by natural disasters, has been broadcasting critical information in the province of Catanduanes where most areas have been off-the-grid following recent typhoons. Please pray for all those affected and for First Response Radio as they provide this vital outreach showing faith in action across Asia.

Sunday 28th

Open Doors has supported thousands of North Korean Christians last year. Across the river from North Korea, in China, Open Doors field workers run secret safe houses for North Korean Christians who have managed to escape through secret networks in China, they're also able to provide vital food and spiritual support to more than 90,000 North Korean believers. Pray for the work of Open Doors and the safety of all those who worship secretly and are helping to bring comfort and support to Christians in this most dangerous place for Christians to live.

Monday 29th

As this is the beginning of Holy Week ask God to help us to come before him in reverence and gratitude for The amazing gift of love which He has given us through the sacrifice of his only Son and the gift of his Holy Spirit to guide and empower us as we follow Jesus and seek to serve him.

Tuesday 30th

Our close neighbour, Ballysillan Presbyterian Church, is one of the six Congregations currently vacant in North Belfast. Tonight, the Vacancy Commission will meet with Members of the Kirk Session and Congregational Committee to discuss plans for the future of the congregation and how they might proceed to seek to call a new minister to Ballysillan. Pray for Rev Dr Liz Hughes as she convenes the vacancy and leads the meeting. Pray that God will guide and direct them as they seek to do what is His will.

Wednesday 31st

The Urban Mission Trust of our Presbytery meets today. It makes grants that help to fund outreach in North Belfast and Newtownabbey. Over £1,000,000 has been granted to congregations to fund important posts and projects since the Trust was set up in 2009. Every Congregation has been helped in some way during the current Covid crisis and we must thank God for the support that has been given. Pray for Rev Victor Patterson as he Chairs the Trust meetings and Trevor Long as its secretary. The Trust also administers property it owns and rents out to bring in valuable income. Pray the Trust will be wise stewards of what God has given to it and that it will be guided by Him in all that it does to encourage and support the work of the Gospel in North Belfast.