

JANUARY to APRIL 2017

Northern Ireland Edition

CARE Prayer Diary

Making a Christian difference through prayer



CARE in Northern Ireland's vision is to be an active Christian influence on issues relating to human dignity and support for the most vulnerable. We engage with politicians in the Northern Irish Assembly and believe in the pivotal role that the local church plays in these efforts to be a voice for love and truth into society.

We endeavour to equip and resource church leaders, and their congregations, to be effective light and salt, whether that's through prayer, engagement with local MLAs or through grassroots initiatives to minister to those affected by challenging situations in their communities.

CARE in Northern Ireland Policy Officer Mark Baillie and Development and Churches Officer Tim Houston are based in our Belfast offices. You are welcome to get in touch!

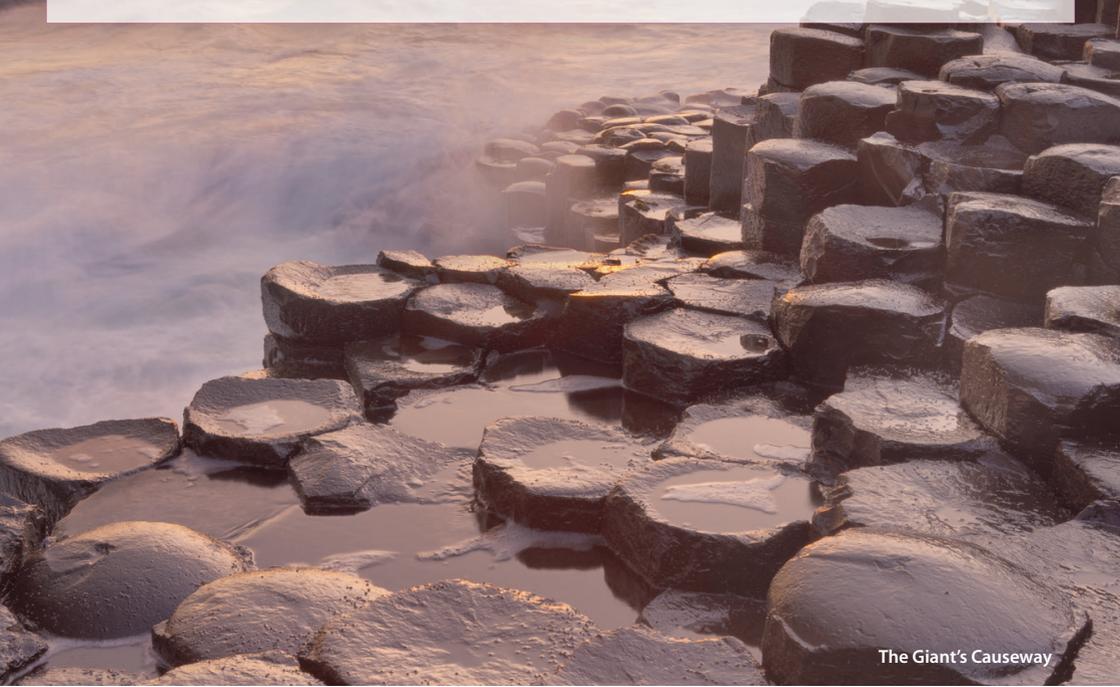
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The Giant's Causeway

The CARE Prayer Diary is written by Celia Bowring.

- Visit: care.org.uk/prayer to read online or sign up for the daily prayers by email.
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Celia Bowring

NORTHERN IRELAND



'The plans of the LORD stand firm for ever, the purposes of his heart through all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people he chose for his inheritance. From heaven the LORD looks down and sees all mankind; from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth.'

PSALM 33: 11-14 (NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION)

SUN 15 } **Lord, we thank You for Northern Ireland's ancient rich Christian heritage and that still today there are so many people here who are committed to their faith in the gospel. Please strengthen and unite Your Church and direct us in Your ways of justice and truth. Amen.**



MON 16 } **Lift up MLAs and others involved in shaping the future of abortion policy in Northern Ireland. Pray that the inherent value of human life will be upheld alongside a sensitive, compassionate concern for women who are pregnant as a result of sexual violence and those whose unborn babies have a life limiting condition.**

TUES 17 } **Ask God to bless CARE's Open ministry in Northern Ireland. Throughout the UK Open aims to help churches to create a compassionate environment where those who have experienced an abortion or a miscarriage can share their pain and find the support they need. (weareopen.org.uk)**

WED 18 } **God of the nations, please guide politicians and others of influence throughout the British Isles in the light of the UK referendum vote to leave the EU. Grant them wisdom to resolve the issues of free movement and trade across the border with the Republic and guard the hard-won peace between people from opposing positions. Amen.**

THURS 19 } **Pray about the legal challenge brought by an escort, Laura Lee, to Section 15 of Northern Ireland's Human Trafficking and Exploitation Act – that makes it illegal to pay for sexual services. Ask God to guide and help the authorities to enforce the legislation and bring about a just outcome to this case.**

FRI 20 } **THANKSGIVING:** for the growing numbers of prayer groups that are being set up to support schools in Northern Ireland under the umbrella of Pray for Schools. Remember Heather Wallace, the coordinator, as she encourages churches, school staff, pupils and parents to fulfil the vision of 'every school a prayed for school'. (prayforschools.org)

SAT 21 } **Ask God to endow Christians with wisdom and discernment to understand how they should engage with the wider society on divisive issues such as abortion, marriage, gambling, human trafficking and freedom of speech. Please remember the CARE in Northern Ireland team as they seek to serve in this area.**

'Jesus is the antidote to all the bad news which is so prevalent in a broken society. Church is not for those who think that they are now 'good enough', but for people who know that they are not, but recognise their need of a Saviour who can make them whole.' (Rt. Rev. Dr. Frank Sellar)



JANUARY 22 – 28

DESTITUTE PEOPLE

'He will listen to the prayers of the destitute. He will not reject their pleas.'

PSALMS 102: 17 (NEW LIVING TRANSLATION)

Dictionary definition of destitution: 'poverty so extreme that you lack the means to provide for yourself. Someone in a state of destitution is experiencing utter despair.'

SUN } HOMELESS SUNDAY

22 Loving God, in Your house there is room for everyone, but in our world so many have nowhere to stay and nothing to eat. Please show each of us how we can help such people and fill us with Your grace and compassion towards them. Amen. (homeless-sunday.uk)

MON } Pray about Bob Blackman MP's Homelessness Reduction Private Member's Bill requiring local authorities to provide proactive services that prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place and help for all who are affected. Give thanks that the Government supports the Bill and has pledged £40 million to tackle this problem.

TUES } Ask God to draw near to the rising numbers of people, including those from abroad and refugees, who are sleeping rough in the UK as a result of relationship breakdown, redundancy, poor mental health, indebtedness, addictions, domestic abuse and other reasons. Remember the many agencies that provide advice and support.

WED } **Father God, please raise up more people in positions of authority in the UK to address the problem of poverty. Give them wisdom and courage to reform systems of taxation, employment practices, immigration regulations and benefits to narrow the gap between rich and poor people. Amen.**



THURS } Remember the many Christian organisations that are dedicated to the relief of poverty in the UK and further afield, pray that they will continue to receive sufficient resources to undertake wise and effective initiatives that will make long-term differences to people's lives.

FRI } HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY

27 Remember the tragedies of those who suffered in The Holocaust, under Nazi persecution, and in genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. Ask God to grant comfort and peace to those personally affected and to all threatened by a similar danger today.

SAT } **THANKSGIVING:** for a growing determination to reduce global poverty, especially through the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Pray for breakthroughs in overcoming corruption, waste and despair so that lives can be transformed.

Although much progress has been made, the UN estimates 836 million people still live in extreme poverty; about one in five people in developing regions live on less than £1 per day – mostly in Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. High poverty rates are often found in small, fragile and conflict-affected countries: 42,000 people had to abandon their homes every day in 2014 to seek protection caused by conflict.

LIVING WITH DISABILITY



'Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is nothing upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.'

PSALMS 73: 25, 26 (REVISED STANDARD VERSION)

SUN 29 } **Father, You regard each of Your children with such love, regardless of whether we are able-bodied or disabled. Please help us to see people living with disabilities as precious individuals who have been created in Your image, to understand their situations and offer friendship and care wherever needed. Amen.**

MON 30 } Remember the one billion people, 80 per cent in the developing world, with disabilities that cut them off from employment, education, social interaction and necessary healthcare. Give thanks for the courage and achievements of those who overcome difficulties and ask God to comfort those who cannot improve their lives.

TUES 31 } Please remember individuals who are on the autism spectrum, a developmental disability that affects how they communicate and relate to other people and experience the world, making life very difficult. Pray too for their families and others who support them.

WED 1 } **Dear Lord, please comfort parents of children who have serious disabilities and other life-limiting conditions, especially those who have recently been diagnosed. Grant them the capacity to love deeply and to receive Your strength as they prepare for all the future holds. Amen.**



THURS 2 } Pray for every effort being made across the world to bring relief to those with impaired vision and hearing loss through relatively simple interventions and aids. Give thanks too for projects that provide wheelchairs for people, giving them new opportunities and hope.

FRI 3 } **THANKSGIVING:** for Livability, a charity with a strong Christian ethos that provides a wide range of disability and community services to support the physical, emotional, spiritual and social needs of all who live with a disability. (livability.org.uk)

SAT 4 } **WORLD CANCER DAY**
Remember those who are involved in research into how to prevent, diagnose and treat cancer and the clinicians and therapists who care for patients. Give thanks that the survival rate has doubled since 1976 and pray for this trend to continue.

'We have a moral duty to remove the barriers to participation, and to invest sufficient funding and expertise to unlock the vast potential of people with disabilities. Governments throughout the world can no longer overlook the hundreds of millions of people with disabilities who are denied access to health, rehabilitation, support, education and employment, and never get the chance to shine.' (UNICEF Report 2011)

Open. – a Pastoral Response to Abortion

Open aims to create an environment within churches where unintended pregnancy and post-abortion concerns can be openly shared, with grace and compassionate understanding; and to offer resources which will help those affected by abortion to address these concerns in a safe and confidential setting. We provide:

- Training for church leaders to address this sensitive subject
- Lectures for those studying in theological colleges
- Seminars at Christian events
- Speakers who can open up the conversation in church congregations
- Post-abortion recovery weekend retreats

To find out more visit weareopen.org.uk

'One of the greatest pastoral challenges in the Church today is how we support women who have to deal with the pain of an abortion. This ministry brings tenderness, truth and hope to those who are dealing with this experience.'

Rev Malcolm Duncan
Gold Hill Baptist Church



FEBRUARY 5 – 11

DIGNITY FOR WOMEN



‘So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it.”’

GENESIS 1: 27, 28 (NEW LIVING TRANSLATION)

SUN 5 } **Loving Saviour, we give thanks for Your respect, honour and compassion that You showed to women during Your earthly life. May Your Church increasingly champion and care for those who are oppressed and overlooked, celebrating the equality You have ordained and enabling women and girls to thrive. Amen.**

MON 6 } **ZERO TOLERANCE TO FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM) DAY**
Pray for a change in attitude in the 30 countries where FGM takes place – it has no health benefits and causes suffering and serious complications. Give thanks for all who campaign to end this practice on behalf of the 200 million girls and women affected.

TUES 7 } Remember the 3,800 women being held in 14 prisons in the UK, often far from home, and many with histories of domestic violence and childhood abuse leading to mental health issues, addictions and a high level of self-harm and attempted suicide. Pray that they will receive the support they desperately need while they are inside and on release.

WED 8 } **Lord, please watch over girls and young women who may be persuaded to act unwisely or be exploited in certain situations including through social media. Thank You for the good examples of many Christians who seek to lead fulfilled and enriching lives following Christ. Amen.**



THURS 9 } Intercede for God to bring about protection and justice to women and girls who are victims of brutality and sexual assault from militias, armed gangs, traffickers and even their relatives in countries like Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guatemala, Pakistan and Somalia.

FRI 10 } **THANKSGIVING:** for every project that is supporting women in the poorest countries to set up micro enterprises and cooperatives that can provide for them, their households, local communities and national economies. Pray that these business ventures will be successful, bringing increasing security and prosperity.

SAT 11 } **DAY OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SCIENCE**
Pray that today will raise awareness of women’s achievements in science, technology and innovation and encourage more girls to pursue work and study in these areas – traditionally male domains. Especially remember those in countries where gender equality is not yet a reality.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) involves removing and damaging healthy and normal female genital tissue. This interferes with the natural functions of girls’ and women’s bodies and commonly causes severe pain, infection and other major problems. It is mostly performed on young girls from infancy to age 15 and is a violation of their human rights.



FEBRUARY 12 – 18

INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA

‘Whatever is true, honourable and worthy of respect, whatever is right and confirmed by God’s word, pure and wholesome, lovely and brings peace, admirable and of good repute; if there is any excellence, anything worthy of praise, think continually on these things – centre your mind on them, and implant them in your heart.’

PHILIPPIANS 4: 8 (AMPLIFIED BIBLE)

- SUN 12** Almighty God, please help us to maximise opportunities online and through social media to fulfil the Great Commission to communicate the gospel and make disciples among all nations. Thank you for all whose lives have been transformed by becoming aware of Your love and truth in these ways. Amen.
- MON 13** Pray that CARE’s online initiative Current will inspire, motivate and mobilise many Christians in their 20s and 30s as they think through their faith and discover how it can make a real difference in politics and other areas of our society. (wearecurrent.co.uk)
- TUES 14** Ask God to help adults and children who use their smartphones and other devices excessively, to the detriment of their relationships and conduct in social situations. Pray for those who are at the point of becoming addicted to realise what is happening and find help to be wise and self-controlled so this technology is a servant not a master.
- WED 15** Lord, thank You for the extraordinary benefits the internet brings to business and commerce, health and social care, education, science, arts and culture and much more besides. May this technology be an increasing source of blessing to people living in countries that are isolated because of poverty, political factors and conflict. Amen.
- THURS 16** Intercede for people who are targeted by cyberbullies and trolls who post humiliating, hateful and threatening messages about them. Pray that recent Crown Prosecution Service guidelines will lead to perpetrators being silenced and brought to justice.
- FRI 17** **THANKSGIVING:** for the determined efforts of Lady Howe, Claire Perry and other politicians assisted by CARE, to highlight the need to protect children online. Pray that the Government’s commitment to require age verification for accessing pornographic websites and introduce other important measures will be really effective.
- SAT 18** Ask God to grant wisdom and success to the National Cyber Crime Unit, which pursues criminals committing fraud, infecting computers with viruses, and hacking into accounts – threatening national security, organisations and individuals.



Almost half of the world’s population now uses the Internet – about 3.2 billion people, mostly in Asia. 55 per cent of its content is written in the English language. The biggest social media site, Facebook, is used by 23 per cent of the global population.

FEBRUARY 19 – 25

CHILDREN IN POVERTY



'As for me, I am poor and needy, but the Lord takes thought for me. You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God!'

PSALMS 40: 17 (ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION)

SUN 19 Father, we pray for children in cities, refugee camps, rural areas and family homes that outwardly appear secure and happy but lack food, shelter, education, protection and love. You care for each one and we ask that their needs will be met. Amen.

MON 20 **WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE**
Remember Christian organisations like Compassion, Tearfund, Toy Box, Viva, World Vision and the thousands of smaller charities, church initiatives and other groups dedicated to helping vulnerable children and improving their life chances.

TUES 21 Pray for government ministers, elected representatives in our Parliaments, Assemblies and local authorities, children's charities and others seeking solutions to the disturbing challenge that one in four children in the UK are affected by poverty. Intercede for wisdom and fruitful cooperation between them all. (cpag.org.uk)



WED 22 Holy Spirit, please use the lives and words of Christian parents, teachers and friends to light a spark of faith in many children who have not yet understood that Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins. May their spiritual poverty be replaced with an enriching relationship with their Father in heaven. Amen.

THURS 23 Pray for God's blessing on children in your local schools – as well as on those who are unable to attend or are educated at home. Pray for teachers and others to inspire and motivate their pupils, especially those from families living in material, emotional and spiritual poverty. (prayforschools.org)

FRI 24 **THANKSGIVING:** for the Scottish charity Mary's Meals that organises feeding programmes and provides emergency food relief to schools and camps in vulnerable regions around the world. Pray that they and others will be able to multiply this work and transform the lives of millions more children. (marysmeals.org.uk)

SAT 25 Ask God to grant wisdom to Caroline Nokes MP, responsible for Welfare Delivery within the Department for Work and Pensions. Pray that she will establish just and efficient ways to support the unacceptable numbers of vulnerable children affected by poverty.

The Centre for Social Justice has identified five Pathways to Poverty: family breakdown, educational failure, worklessness and dependency, addiction and serious personal debt. All of these pathways are interconnected and many of those trapped in poverty in Britain have experienced more than one of these problems.



FEBRUARY 26 – MARCH 4

FAIRNESS IN TAX AND TRADE

'The Lord detests the use of dishonest scales, but he delights in accurate weights ... Those who oppress the poor insult their Maker, but helping the poor honours him.'

PROVERBS 11: 1; 14: 31 (NEW LIVING TRANSLATION)

SUN } FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT: 27 FEBRUARY – 12 MARCH

26

Judge of all the Earth, we know that You hate corruption and injustice that increases the wealth of the rich at the expense of those who are poor. Please direct governments, politicians, financiers, business leaders and others to order their tax and trading affairs honestly and fairly. Amen.

MON } Give thanks for the amazing success of Fairtrade

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Fortnight since 1996 in raising awareness of the need for farmers and workers in developing countries to be provided with fair prices and terms of trade. (fairtrade.org.uk)



TUES } Ask God to grant wise discernment to Phillip Hammond

28

MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Jane Hutt AM, Derek Mackay MSP, and Máirtín Ó Muilleoir MLA in their wide-ranging responsibilities for finance and taxation matters in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

WED } LENT BEGINS

1

Lord Jesus Christ, as we prepare our hearts for Easter and reflect on our need for Your never-ending forgiveness and grace, please help us to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly before You. May we speak and live in ways that honour the poor and encourage all who follow in Your ways. Amen.

THURS } Pray that the Chancellor will respond to Theresa May's concern to help struggling families by

2

developing a fairer income tax system that supports couples with children, especially those who are married. Pray for CARE to continue to be a persuasive and effective voice on this issue.

FRI } **THANKSGIVING:** for success in 2015 following CARE's exhaustive work over many years calling

3

for a proper recognition of marriage and family responsibilities in the UK taxation system more in line with other countries. Pray that the Government will extend this to allow non-earning wives and husbands with dependants to transfer all their tax allowance to their spouses.

SAT } Remember the financial disadvantages and uncertainties faced by many of the 900,000 people

4

working on 'zero hours contracts' and pray that employers who are unfair and even bullying towards these workers will be forced to provide them with proper pay and conditions.

'People can make a living and work their way out of poverty by growing bananas, picking tea, or even mining gold. Or their work can be insecure, dangerous and trap them with too little to live on. Loving your neighbour by buying Fairtrade means families can eat enough and children can go to school. Companies can be sent a clear signal – many companies have a lot of power to drive change throughout their supply chains if they see that's what their customers want.' (Tearfund)

MARCH 5 – 11

TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION



'But as for me, I am poor and needy; come quickly to me, O God. You are my help and my deliverer; Lord, do not delay.'

PSALMS 70: 5 (NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION)

SUN 5 } **God of all justice, mercy and compassion: please draw near to the tens of millions of people across the world who are enslaved through human trafficking, forced labour, domestic servitude, debt bondage, forced marriages and sexual exploitation. Amen.**

MON 6 } Remember the hundreds of vulnerable children in the UK who disappear from care each year. Pray that police, social workers and foster carers will work together to keep victims of trafficking safe in appropriate accommodation, and that missing children will be urgently searched for and rescued from further exploitation.

TUES 7 } Pray for Sarah Newton MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Vulnerability, Safeguarding and Countering Extremism, whose portfolio includes the fight against modern slavery and addressing the harm caused by prostitution.

WED 8 } **INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY**
Lord, we are horrified at the plight of women and children who are trafficked, particularly into a life of abuse and prostitution, all over the world. Please grant success to all involved in rescuing and caring for victims, preventing it from happening and bringing those who exploit others to justice. Amen.

THURS 9 } Intercede for freedom and justice for workers in agriculture, horticulture, shellfish gathering and food processing who are severely exploited and abused by gang masters, – often living and working in degrading conditions, deprived of basic facilities.

FRI 10 } **THANKSGIVING:** that in Scotland trafficked and unaccompanied migrant children are already being supported by independent guardians. Pray that plans to establish similar provisions in Northern Ireland, England and Wales will not be unduly delayed, so that all vulnerable children in urgent need can be protected and nurtured.



SAT 11 } Remember the new UK taskforce coordinating policing, intelligence and other agencies to improve investigations and prosecutions of criminals involved in modern slavery. Pray too for Christian ministries including: A21 Campaign, A Way Out, Beyond the Streets, CARE, Hope for Justice, International Justice Mission, Love 146, No More Traffik, Salvation Army and Stop the Traffik.

'This government is determined to build a Great Britain that ... will not tolerate modern slavery, an evil trade that shatters victims' lives and traps them in a cycle of abuse ... This is the great human rights issue of our time ... I am determined that we will make it a national and international mission to rid our world of this barbaric evil.'
(Prime Minister Theresa May)



MARCH 12 – 18

GAMBLING PROBLEMS

'It happens so regularly that it's predictable. The moment I decide to do good, sin is there to trip me up ... I've tried everything and nothing helps ... Is there no one who can do anything for me? The answer, thank God, is that Jesus Christ can and does.'

ROMANS 7: 21-25 (MESSAGE)

SUN 12 } **God our Saviour, please strengthen us when we are tempted to succumb to unhelpful thoughts and actions. Please help anyone who is struggling to control a gambling habit and experiencing financial and other problems as a result. Amen.**

MON 13 } Remember the 108,000 people working in the UK gambling industry – almost half of them staff in the 8,809 high street betting shops. Pray for them to be encouraged to be vigilant and concerned for customers with a problem and given training to know how to help them.

TUES 14 } Pray about the excessive amount of gambling advertisements on TV – about £1.5 million's worth in 2016 – at sports events and online. Pray for this to be more strictly regulated especially to safeguard children and young people who may be tempted to gamble illegally online.

WED 15 } **Father, we intercede for the partners and families of those who have a serious addiction to gambling and face the possibility of financial ruin, homelessness and relationship break-up. Please help them to acknowledge their problem, turn to You and also find support from others, without delay. Amen.**



THURS 16 } Pray about the growing practice of match fixing – when players and others involved agree to ensure a game is lost so gamblers and betting companies can anticipate the score. Ask God to grant wisdom and success to those responsible for each sport's governance and to law enforcers around the world.

FRI 17 } **THANKSGIVING:** for every provision of support for problem gamblers addressing risks to their financial and employment security, their health and close relationships. Pray for advisors, mentors and counsellors – mainly in the charitable sector, including Christian organisations – to succeed in helping people to break free of addiction and rebuild their lives.

SAT 18 } Pray for Carolyn Harris, MP for Swansea East, who chairs the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Fixed-Odds Betting Terminals (FOBTs) along with organisations including CARE, to persuade the Government to fulfil their intention to review gambling activity in the UK, and act to reduce the extremely high stakes on the highly addictive FOBTs.

British gamblers lost a record £12.6bn last year. Online betting accounts for a third of this amount and £1.7bn on FOBTs that allow customers to stake £100 every 20 seconds on electronic casino games like roulette. A maximum of four machines are allowed in each betting shop – there are almost 35,000 of them in the UK taking an average £48,724 per annum.

MARCH 19 – 25

COASTLANDS AND ISLANDS



‘Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise from the ends of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and all that is in it, you islands, and all who live in them.’

ISAIAH 42: 10 (NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION)

- SUN 19** } **Lord Creator of all oceans, seas, lakes and rivers: please watch over those who live and work on the coastlines of the Earth’s continents and islands, and its waters. Help us to protect people and wildlife affected by storms, floods, erosion and other circumstances that could endanger them. Amen.**
- MON 20** } Pray for naturalists working to conserve wildlife and their habitats on islands and coastal areas across the world, safeguarding them from extinction – which can happen when new species of plants, insects, birds and animals arrive and threaten their sustainability – and nurturing vital ecosystems and resources.
- TUES 21** } Please intercede for refugee migrants who are stranded in inadequate camps, mostly on Greek islands and the coast of Italy, and for the many more being brought across the Mediterranean in unseaworthy boats by unscrupulous human smugglers and traffickers.
- WED 22** } **WORLD WATER DAY**
God our Creator, thank You for the life-sustaining gift of water that covers almost three-quarters of the Earth’s surface. Please grant success to projects providing clean fresh water where it is desperately needed and treating waste water so it can be reused safely. Amen.
- THURS 23** } Pray for the governments of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to have wisdom and resources to deal with problems such as rising sea levels, dying coral reefs and natural disasters as well as criminal trafficking, smuggling and wildlife exploitation.
- FRI 24** } **THANKSGIVING:** for all who serve in Her Majesty’s Coastguard and with Royal National Lifeboat Institution crews around the coasts of Britain responding to those in danger on the cliffs, the shoreline and at sea. Ask God to help them in their work of rescuing people.
- SAT 25** } Remember those involved in the installation and operation of the world’s first large-scale tidal energy farm off the north coast of Scotland and for smaller projects elsewhere in Britain. Pray for their safety and welfare and that this renewable energy source will generate huge amounts of electricity without harming the environment.



Great Britain is the ninth largest island on the planet. The British Isles consists of 267 islands that are inhabited. One in ten people in the world are islanders. The world’s largest island is Greenland – over 800,000 square miles in size with a population of 56,000.



MARCH 26 – APRIL 1

CARING FOR FAMILIES

‘Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.’

COLOSSIANS 3: 12-14 (NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION)

SUN } **MOTHERING SUNDAY**

26 Thank You Lord for the dedication and unselfish love of mothers. Please draw near to those who are going through tough times and strengthen them. We also remember women who have lost their children, or are saddened that they have never given birth. Amen.



MON } 27 Ask God to encourage and strengthen mothers and fathers who are raising a family on their own, especially those who lack practical support from nearby family and friends. Pray for their needs to be met: financial provision, dealing with education, health and social issues, and the peace that comes through knowing Him.

TUES } 28 Ask God to help Edward Timpson MP, the Minister of State for Children and Families responsible for their social welfare through adoption, fostering and local authority care, special educational needs and other areas. Also remember Paul Givan MLA and John Swinney MSP with similar roles in Northern Ireland and Scotland.

WED } 29 **Father, we pray for families where children and others suffer from neglect and abuse. Please equip and strengthen social workers and others involved with these families so that such cases are exposed and victims are rescued and supported. Amen.**

THURS } 30 Please intercede for parents who are deeply anxious about children with problems relating to substance abuse, unstable and risky relationships, poor mental and physical health and other difficulties affecting their lives.

FRI } 31 **THANKSGIVING:** for Christian organisations and churches that support families under pressure because of debt, poor health, relationship breakdown, and other troubles. Pray especially for Care for the Family, Christians Against Poverty, Trussell Trust foodbanks, Spurgeons and other organisations known to you.

SAT } 1 Pray for Christian families that have adopted or fostered children, including those who are vulnerable because of their difficult backgrounds and complex problems. Pray that the Church will increasingly meet the challenge to provide safe loving homes for these children. (homeforgood.org.uk)

There are about 90,000 ‘looked after’ children in the UK. Six per cent of them are from abroad, unaccompanied and seeking asylum here. Nearly 64,000 children live with almost 55,000 foster families. In 2015-16 almost 5,000 children were adopted.

PEACE AND SAFETY



‘The Lord said to Moses ... Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them, “The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.”’

NUMBERS 6: 22-26 (ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION)

SUN 2 Lord our Saviour, thank You that by Your death and resurrection we are reconciled with God, receiving His total forgiveness and loving grace. Please speak to those who are unwilling to accept Your promise of peace, by Your Spirit and through the witness of Your people. Amen.

MON 3 Ask God to draw near to people who are experiencing turmoil and fear because of mental health problems, insecure circumstances, abusive relationships and other difficulties. Pray for them to have courage and opportunity to seek appropriate professional help and support from individuals and organisations offering refuge, advice and care.

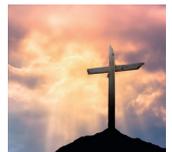
TUES 4 **INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR MINE AWARENESS AND ACTION**
Pray for the success of the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty’s aim to clear all anti-personnel mines by 2025, now supported by 80 countries. Remember the suffering of victims of these horrendous devices that indiscriminately kill or injure civilians, aid workers, peacekeepers and soldiers alike.

WED 5 Almighty God, stretch forth your mighty arm to strengthen and protect the armed forces: grant those meeting danger with courage, discipline and loyalty, may they truly serve the cause of justice and peace; to the honour of your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (from the Field Service Book of the British Army)

THURS 6 Remember diplomats, peacekeepers, relief workers, journalists and others who are in dangerous places to witness what is happening and negotiate between warring factions, often in the crossfire. Ask God to protect them and grant success in their mission to raise awareness of people’s plight, deliver aid and pursue peace.

FRI 7 Pray for those working for and being helped by the UK Protected Persons Service (UKPPS) which provides protection to people judged to be at risk of serious harm, including witnesses in criminal trials and those at risk of ‘honour based’ violence. Pray that their safe locations and hidden identities will keep them from harm and intimidation.

SAT 8 **THANKSGIVING:** for Christian retreat centres and communities throughout the country offering spiritual refreshment and an opportunity to draw close to God. Pray that these places of oasis and peace will continue to receive financial support so they can extend their hospitality and prayerful ministry to those who need it. (retreats.org.uk)



‘Where does your security lie? Is God your refuge, your hiding place, your stronghold, your shepherd, your counsellor, your friend, your redeemer, your saviour, your guide? If He is, you don’t need to search any further for security.’ (Elisabeth Elliot 1926 – 2015, pioneering missionary, writer and speaker)

PRAY FOR SCHOOLS

Supporting schools through prayer

'PFS is a frontline strategy – we're 100% behind them.'

24-7 Prayer

'It is vital that we pray for every school in the country.'

Scripture Union

There are about 30,000 schools in the UK. Pray for Schools' vision is to see every school supported by regular Christian prayer. It offers a unique collection of creative ideas, practical suggestions, resources and opportunities to keep the ministry of prayer effective and fresh for Christians leading and supporting the hundreds of groups that exist to bless their local schools.

Pray for Schools is a joint initiative of the Association of Christian Teachers, CARE, Churches Together, Prayer Spaces in Schools, Open the Book, Scripture Union and Youth for Christ.

To find out more visit:
prayforschools.org
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A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN...



APRIL 9 – 15

CHRISTIANS IN EDUCATION



'Pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong.'

EPHESIANS 3: 16, 17 (NEW LIVING TRANSLATION)

SUN 9 Lord, please bless Christians who are studying or working in schools, colleges, universities and other educational settings. Please encourage those who are going through testing times and may they know Your Spirit dwelling in them, showing forth Your love, truth and strength. Amen.



MON 10 Give thanks for the thousands of Christians in the UK who are involved in organisations that are sharing the gospel in schools and further education in many different ways such as Barnabas in Schools, Chaplaincy Central, Festive, Fusion, Gideons, iSingPOP, Open the Book, Prayer Spaces in Schools, Schoolwork UK, Scripture Union, TLG, UCCF and Youth for Christ.

TUES 11 Please pray for the continued growth of Pray for Schools: CARE's initiative in partnership with Scripture Union and five other ministries that aim to see every school in the UK a 'prayed for school.' (prayforschools.org)

WED 12 **INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR STREET CHILDREN**
Father of the fatherless, please strengthen those who are working to rescue street children who are so vulnerable to destitution and abuse. Grant success to the many Christian and other projects across the world providing a safe home, education, healthcare and other help. Amen.

THURS 13 Remember Christians working in educational settings in other countries, some in situations that are hostile to the gospel and others in places in the poorest areas and in overcrowded camps where there is incredible need. Ask God to fill them afresh with His strength, reaffirm them in their faith and demonstrate His love to those around them.

FRI 14 **THANKSGIVING: GOOD FRIDAY**

Lord Jesus, may we always be deeply grateful for the cross. Thank You for enduring such physical agony, emotional suffering and, above all, the spiritual anguish of separation from the Father as You poured out Your life to save us from our sins. Amen.

SAT 15 Pray for the Association of Christian Teachers, communicating with the media on a wide range of issues and providing professional and spiritual support to Christians working in schools. Ask God to inspire head teachers, deputy heads, teachers, teaching assistants, administrative, technical and pastoral staff, governors and school board members. (christian-teachers.org.uk)

'The task of the modern educator is not to cut down jungles, but to irrigate deserts.' (C. S. Lewis 1989-1963)



APRIL 16 – 22

QUESTIONS OF LIFE AND DEATH

‘Jesus said to Martha, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die.”

JOHN 11: 25,26 (NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION)

SUN } EASTER DAY

16 Risen Lord, we rejoice that when You rose from the grave, death was conquered, we could be reconciled to the Father and receive eternal life. May the truth and power of the Resurrection strengthen us to serve You all our days. Amen.

MON } 17 Please intercede today for unborn children who are at risk because of a problem in pregnancy, health and developmental issues, miscarriage, the possibility of abortion or other threats to life. Ask God to protect, heal and surround these precious lives with His redeeming love.

TUES } 18 Remember frail elderly people in care homes experiencing ill-treatment and neglect as they have no family or friends speaking up for them. Pray for staff and others with concerns to have the opportunity and courage to report to the authorities that these individuals are not being shown dignity, care and respect.

WED } 19 Father we thank You again for the defeat of Bills to allow physician assisted suicide in all the UK Parliaments and Assemblies in recent years. Please have mercy and cause any further attempts to fail also. Thank you for politicians and others who are vigilant and determined to defend and protect human life. Amen.

THURS } 20 Pray for people who are in a deep coma and those with ‘locked in syndrome’ – seemingly in a coma but actually conscious. Remember the doctors and other professionals, family members and friends who may feel helpless and uncertain about the right action to take, and pray for integrity and wisdom.

FRI } 21 **THANKSGIVING:** that Britain ranks first in the world for high quality end of life care. Pray that our Government will increasingly promote hospice and palliative care as the most compassionate and effective way to support people who are suffering. (hospiceuk.org)

SAT } 22 Pray about the ethical and practical concerns regarding research into the genetic modification of embryos, which is now permitted in the UK by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, despite warnings of the risks involved.



‘The law that we have rests ... on the principle that we do not involve ourselves in deliberately bringing about the deaths of others. Once we start making exceptions based on arbitrary criteria like terminal illness, that frontier becomes just a line in the sand, easily crossed and hard to defend. The law is there to protect us all. We tinker with it at our peril.’ (Baroness Butler-Sloss, former President of the Family Division, High Court)

Meet the CARE team!

We are on the road this autumn, hosting a series of special evening events to meet our supporters. Come along and bring your friends to hear some inspiring stories of how God is at work in our nation and ask us your questions over coffee and cake.

Nottingham	9 February
Ayr	22 February
East Kilbride	23 February
Southampton	16 March
Derry/Londonderry	22 March
Belfast	23 March

Contact Gareth to find out more and to book your free place.

e events@care.org.uk t **020 7233 0455**

We hope you can join us!





Making a Christian difference



- equips individuals and the local church for prayer and action
- impacts the political world
- provides research and briefings for parliamentarians
- trains Christian graduates through the Leadership Programme
- supports the vulnerable through advocacy



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