



2024

Prayer Guide

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7:14

Precious promises about prayer

Christians have been adopted as God's children. He loves to hear from us *and* answer us. In fact, God's Word is full of promises about God's power and desire to answer our prayers. So lavish are those promises that we might find it hard to believe them! Jesus says,

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened." **Matthew 7:7-8.**

Paul says,

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."

Ephesians 3:20-21

James puts it negatively, but sometimes we need the challenge:

"You do not have because you do not ask God." **James 4:2**

Perhaps God knew we'd find it hard to believe such an extraordinary resource was available to us: He keeps repeating the point! All of which means, our praying really matters! It's never time wasted, because, as someone once put it, "when we pray, we move the arm that moves the universe." As his children, we have privileged access to our Heavenly Father. As members of Christ's body, the church, we also have the privilege of praying *as a family*. It's no surprise the very first church 'devoted themselves to prayer' (Acts 2:42). I hope this prayer-guide helps us also to be a prayerful church through 2024.

Planning to pray

Most of us find we never regret making time to pray. When we pray, God promises us 'peace that passes understanding' (Phil 4:6-7). But it's easy to slip out of the habit of praying, which is why planning to pray is so helpful. Here are a few ways you might plan to pray through this prayer-guide:

- **Individually in your own times with God.** Christians love to spend time with God each day as we read the Bible and pray to him. You could use this prayer guide as part of those regular times.
- **Together as a couple or a family.** Perhaps before hitting the pillow you could spend a few minutes praying from this guide together? Or encourage the kids to get involved over breakfast or kids tea?
- **In a midweek group or with a friend.** A midweek group could work through a different 'day' of the guide each time they meet. If you meet to pray with a friend from church, you might pray for church together too.

In addition to these smaller contexts, why not get involved in opportunities to meet to pray together? Our **Prayer Gatherings** (whole church prayer meetings) are on the last Wednesday of each month at the Parsonage (34 Crescent East). We also meet to pray every **Thursday morning** for 30 minutes in the church building at 11:15am. It's always such a blessing to pray with others.

Prayer Fuel

Jesus says "I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit. Apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:5). In light of this our longing as a church is to be **rooted in Jesus and fruitful for him**. This vision will form the heartbeat of this prayer-guide, with each day focussing on a different facet of that fundamental vision.

Notes:

Mondays: Belonging to the family of Jesus

As disciples of Jesus who belong to him, we also belong to each other. We are called to show this through deep, loving, and honest relationships. Church is the family God has given us to help us remain rooted in Jesus and fruitful for him.

*“All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts” **Acts 2:44-46***

*“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” **Hebrews 10:24-25***

*“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, 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***

- Pray that we would have strong committed relationships with each other, bearing with one another in love and forgiving each other as Christ forgave us.
- Pray for our Midweek Groups to be places of love, support, and encouragement, where together we grow as disciples of Jesus. Pray for those physically unable to be part of midweek groups to be well supported and connected in other ways.
- Pray for our Sunday services to be places of genuine love and welcome for people of all ages and backgrounds.
- Pray that in our busy lives we would not give up meeting together, but make it a priority to actively encourage and spur each other on in our trust in Jesus. Pray God helps us **Make Sunday Special**.

Notes:

Tuesdays: Growing in relationship with Jesus

As branches attached to the vine, we are called to remain rooted in Jesus in a growing personal relationship with Him. We know God as our Father, enjoying fellowship with Him in prayer through the Holy Spirit. We know Jesus as Lord, expecting him to impact every area of our lives as the Holy Spirit speaks his Word, the Bible, into our lives, and empowers our joyful obedience.

What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

Philippians 3:8-11

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

Ephesians 1:17

- Pray that we would not 'lose our first love' of Jesus, as did the church in Ephesus, but would rejoice in Jesus' love for us, and keep a deep love for him at the heart of everything.
- Pray that God's Spirit would be powerfully active among us through the preaching, teaching, and personal study of God's Word.
- Pray for those teaching God's Word in children's groups, midweek groups, Sunday services and other contexts to be prayerful and faithful.
- Pray that God would pour his love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, and lead us all into a growing enjoyment and dependence in prayer.
- Pray that God would stir even more of us up to come along to our monthly Prayer Gatherings, and other regular times of corporate prayer.
- Pray that every individual in church would be personally supported and encouraged in their own spiritual growth.

Notes:

Wednesdays: Joining with the mission of Jesus

Jesus is at work extending his kingdom of light and grace before he comes again to renew all things. He does this through his Spirit-empowered people witnessing to him in word (sharing the gospel), and deed (living lives of love and service).

Joining in with this mission is central to our calling as God's people, and an exciting part of our fruitfulness for Him.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20

"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander."

1 Peter 3:15-16

- Praise God for Jesus' words of assurance "I will build my church, and the gates of hades will not overcome it" (Matthew 16:18). Praise God for evidence of this building through the centuries, across the world, and even here in Hadley Wood!
- Pray we'd see many come to new personal faith in Jesus this year. Pray for one friend or family member now!
- Jesus has an amazing compassion for the lost. Pray for a heart like his.
- Pray for opportunities in your own daily life to witness to Jesus in word and deed. Pray for God to open doors for your Christian friends to witness too.
- Pray that our church services would be welcoming and accessible for those still exploring Christian faith. Pray we would have confidence to invite friends to join us at church.
- Pray for Rompers (a group for preschoolers and their carers) to be full of love, welcome, and the good news of Jesus.
- Pray that God would open new doors for outreach in Hadley Wood and beyond in the years ahead. Is there a group of people in our area on your heart? Or a village/borough/town surrounding Hadley Wood? Pray for them.

Notes:

Thursdays: Children and Youth

Children are not just the church of tomorrow, they're a vital part of the church of today! We have a collective responsibility to support parents as they model and teach Christ to their children. We long for all our children and youth to be rooted in Jesus and fruitful for him.

*"Jesus said to his disciples, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them. **Mark 10:14-16***

*"Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord." **Ephesians 6:4***

- Pray for strength and capacity for parents (and grandparents) at church to make teaching and modelling Christ to their children a top priority at home.
- Praise God for the children on our books as regular attenders. Pray he would do a deep and lasting work in their lives. Pray also for all the children who don't come to church, but are regularly at our midweek Rompers group for children. Pray for continued growth.
- Praise God for such a positive link with Alphablocks and the Primary school. Pray for Sam and Alice as they give whole school assemblies and visit classes. Pray for sensitivity to the context, and that Jesus would draw children to himself. Pray for continued openings to serve.
- Praise God for those teaching our children on Sundays. Pray for faithfulness to God's Word, creativity and energy, and for positive relationships with the children. Pray for God to raise up more leaders and teachers to resource this growing ministry.
- Pray for our older children. Pray that God would be growing passionate disciples of Jesus.
- Pray for our whole church family to welcome, encourage, and celebrate the children God brings to us.

Notes:

Fridays: Church Leadership

Jesus is the leader of our church, and has appointed 'under-shepherds' to care for and teach his people. The spiritual health of our church depends upon these under-shepherds being rooted in Jesus and fruitful for him in public and private.

"Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you."

Hebrews 13:7,17

*To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. **1 Peter 5:1-4***

*For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." **Mark 10:45***

- Praise God for all those volunteering across the church family.
- Pray God would keep raising up servant-hearted leaders for our church. What gifts has God given you? What do you enjoy? How could you serve?
- Pray for our denomination, the Church of England, to remain firmly rooted in Jesus, and for us to contend for the truth when needed.
- Pray for Sam to "watch his life and doctrine closely" (1 Tim 4:16).
- Pray for each of these leadership groups in church life:

PCC: Jill Northam, Martin Politzer, Dani Tripp (Deanery rep), Sally Sloan (Deanery rep), David Hawkins (Treasurer), Claire Mangan, Alison Ruoff, Sam Ashton, Tania Hawkins (safeguarding officer), Kim Politzer (secretary).

Wardens: Martin Politzer, Tania Hawkins

Trustees: John Hall, Kim Politzer, Kirsty Birkett, Roger Dargue

Other key leaders: Alice Ashton (children's champion), Dawn Horlock (midweek group leader), Claire Mangan (administrator)

Notes:

Saturdays: Practical Provision

We are dependent on God for all our practical needs, and can trust him to faithfully provide. As Hudson Taylor once said: "Depend on it. God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply. He is too wise a God to frustrate His purposes for lack of funds, and He can just as easily supply them ahead of time as afterwards, and He much prefers doing so."

"Give us today our daily bread." **Matthew 6:11**

I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:18-19

- Praise God for the gift of our church building and grounds.
- Pray for wisdom as we look to steward these physical resources well. Pray for gospel-minded boldness, creativity, and perseverance as we look ahead.
- Pray that God would supply our financial needs through the giving of our church family.
- Praise God for David Hawkins who serves so faithfully as our treasurer. Pray that God would help us to be good stewards of the money given through sacrificial giving.
- Pray that God would enable us to be a radically generous church- generous with our time, skills, money, and possessions.
- Pray for protection from anxiety, and a peace that passes understanding, when we are faced with challenges.

Notes:

Sundays: Mission Partners

God calls us to 'gospel partnership' with believers outside of our immediate church context. We currently have two sets of mission partners, who we pray for and financially support.

Noelle: Serving God in Africa

Noelle runs Bible Storying workshops with various unreached people groups in Africa.

- Praise God for Noelle and the good things he is doing in and through her.
- Pray for safety, physical and financial provision, and fellowship on the move.
- Pray for boldness, wisdom, and much fruit from Noelle's labours for Christ.
- Do email the church office (admin@stpaulshadleywood.org) for uptodate news.

The Oatridge Family: Serving God in Budapest, Hungary

Andy, Zsófi, David, Réka, and Emily serve the Lord on the Acorn Bible Course, helping to train up youth leaders for the church in Hungary. They have also just planted a church in Biatorbágy.

- Praise God for the Oatridge family and the students enrolled on the Acorn Bible Course for 2024. Pray God will raise up many workers for his Hungarian harvest field. Pray the new church delights in knowing Christ and making him known.
- Pray for the Oatridge family to know daily encouragement in their labours for Christ.
- More info: www.acorn.hu.

Notes:

Sharing
joy in
Jesus
together!



ST PAUL'S HADLEY WOOD