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THIRTY YEARS OF KINGS

THIRTY DAYS OF PRAYER





30

Kings was launched because faithful people prayed.
We believe God has been speaking to us afresh
about getting serious about prayer. This September
we will celebrate thirty years of Kings with thirty
days of prayer.

“You can work without praying, but
it is a bad plan. But you cannot pray
in earnest without working.”

— *James Hudson Taylor*

“As it is the business of tailors
to make clothes and cobblers to
mend shoes, so it is the business of
Christians to pray.”

— *Martin Luther*



On 4th September 1988 Kings had its first meeting in Ratton School with just a handful of people.

Thirty years have passed and we look back in amazement at what God has done. But we're not yesterday's church and we're not here to settle. We're getting ready for the next thirty years of mission!

21st Century Britain is in desperate need of the gospel. As secular culture drifts further away from God, there's more need than ever to pray. People are lost, facing an eternity away from God, and the Church is here to shine a light in the darkness. God has been speaking to us afresh about the importance of prayer and its power in effective mission.



24-7 PRAYER

PRAYER, MISSION AND JUSTICE

Throughout September, we'd love to be praying every minute of every day, for the entire month. That's 30 days of non-stop praying for our friends, families, communities, churches and nations for the next 30 years.

Everyone can play their part. Whether you come on your own, with your family, with a friend or a group of friends, come and be a part of our 24-7 prayer.

Through September we will facilitate 24-7 prayer in rooms located at the Kings Centre and Centro Lounge. These will be available throughout the month and you can sign up for any number of one hour slots, day or night:

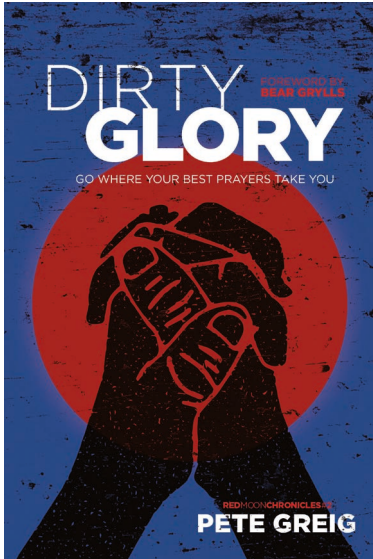
Sign up for online for one-hour slots

www.kings.church/prayer

“We all go through periods of
dryness in our prayers, don’t we?
I doubt whether they are necessarily
a bad symptom. I sometimes
suspect that what we feel to be our
best prayers are really our worst;
that what we are enjoying is the
satisfaction of apparent success, as
in executing a dance or reciting a
poem. Do our prayers sometimes go
wrong because we insist on trying
to talk to God when He wants to
talk with us?”

— *C.S. Lewis*

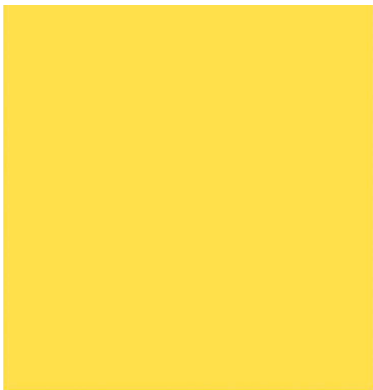
RESOURCES



Dirty Glory

Pete Greig

This award winning book is worth every minute you'll spend reading it. Packed with inspiring stories of incredible miracles, and gritty honesty about the struggle of prayer Pete Greig has written a book that is a gift to the church. Part of the inspiration behind us doing this series on prayer, Dirty Glory deserves a spot on your bookshelf.



Enjoy your prayer life

Michael Reeves

A little book that can be read in a single sitting, Mike Reeves has managed to distil a huge amount of wisdom and insight and pack it into a bitesize book. You'll be encouraged, challenged and inspired by this book that is as practical as it is profound.

Enjoy your prayer life

Michael Reeves



*Available from our book shop at the Kings Centre,
and at all good book stores*



WEEK ONE

Every part of Scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another—showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God's way. Through the Word we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (Message)

Before an infant can learn to speak they first need to be spoken to, a lot. Babies spend months listening to the noises and sounds all around them before they respond, and even when they do start to speak it takes many more months before their gurgling sounds are decipherable.

We learn to speak, we 'find our voice', by being spoken to and we find our voice in prayer in a similar manner. The Bible contains God's speech and as we sit and listen to its teaching and engage with its ideas we also

hear our Father speaking to us. Just as an infant begins to speak by repeating the words of her parents so we can learn to pray by repeating God's words back to him.

Start your prayer journey today by speaking the above Bible verse back to God; use its words to make requests and invite him into your life.



PRESENCE

I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. Psalm 40:1-2 (NIV)

Walking across some stepping stones at a country park last year I almost lost my footing and plunged into the river. What I hadn't factored in was the presence of a thin film of green slime that was stuck to the stones. Though barely visible and apparently harmless it was as slippery as a sheet of ice. I flapped my arms, did a pirouette and thankfully (much to my families regret) managed to save myself from toppling in.

There are things we rest our hopes on and set our hearts on that act like the green slime on those rocks. Good things, beautiful things, can become deadly things when we rest too much of our weight on them.

Putting our hope in God and doing all we can to trust him with our obedience is the best thing we can do to keep a sure footing through life.

Stand on the solid rock that is Jesus.
He won't let you down.

Pray for us to be a church that is made up on individuals who are building their lives firmly on Jesus. Ask God to show you any areas where you're in danger of putting too much weight and hope.



JUSTICE

Jesus said, "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." Matthew 11:28-30 (Message)

In the book Genesis Adam's relationship with God is described in terms of him walking in the cool of the day. It's a picture of friendship and intimacy and a reminder of what we all lost on the day that he disobeyed God and humanity was exiled from his presence. With words that remind us of that story Jesus offers us the peace, rest and friendship we have been made for.

Find rest in Jesus. Find time to walk with him and allow

the message of grace to wash over you each time you do. Talk to him, thank him and ask him to give you what your soul so desperately needs.

"You have made us for yourself O Lord," Wrote a theologian in the 4thC AD "and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you." Have you wandered from his rest lately? Are you looking to other things to satisfy you in ways only he can?



PRAYER

TONIGHT: JOINT PRAYER EVENT AT KINGS CENTRE, 8PM

God has come to save me! I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord is my strength and song; He is my salvation. O the joy of drinking deeply from the fountain of salvation! Isaiah 12:2-3 (TLB)

Fill up on God. Draw your strength from Him. This verse looks backwards 'God has come to save me!' And borrows from it confidence for the present 'I will trust,' which in turn leads to satisfaction and hope for the future.

As a new school year begins many parents and children will be caught in the throws of change and uncertainty. Many a parent needs to read this and remember who their child's saviour is. Parents cannot protect their children from every eventuality, they cannot ensure their children make friends with the right children or even that their teachers will understand their particular needs.

Parents can however read this verse and declare it in prayer over their child's life and schooling.

That's what 'drinking deeply' from the fountain looks like. It's an expression referring to the experience of knowing confidence and joy wash over you as a result of recalling God's character and enlisting his help in your life.

Pray for children in school, pray for parents navigating these waters and pray for those you know in trouble.

Recall God's goodness and **call** on him for help.



PRESENCE

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

James 1:5-6 (TNIV)

It's easy to read the second half of this verse and feel disqualified from receiving wisdom. Doubt, or at least uncertainty, is a regular and ongoing part of the life of faith. Faith, by its very nature, isn't certainty.

However the kind of doubt being referred to here is a doubt about the essential nature and character of God. Is God the sort of god who wants to give you what you ask for? Will God give you wisdom when you ask him? In the Bible verse above, the emphatic answer is 'yes!'

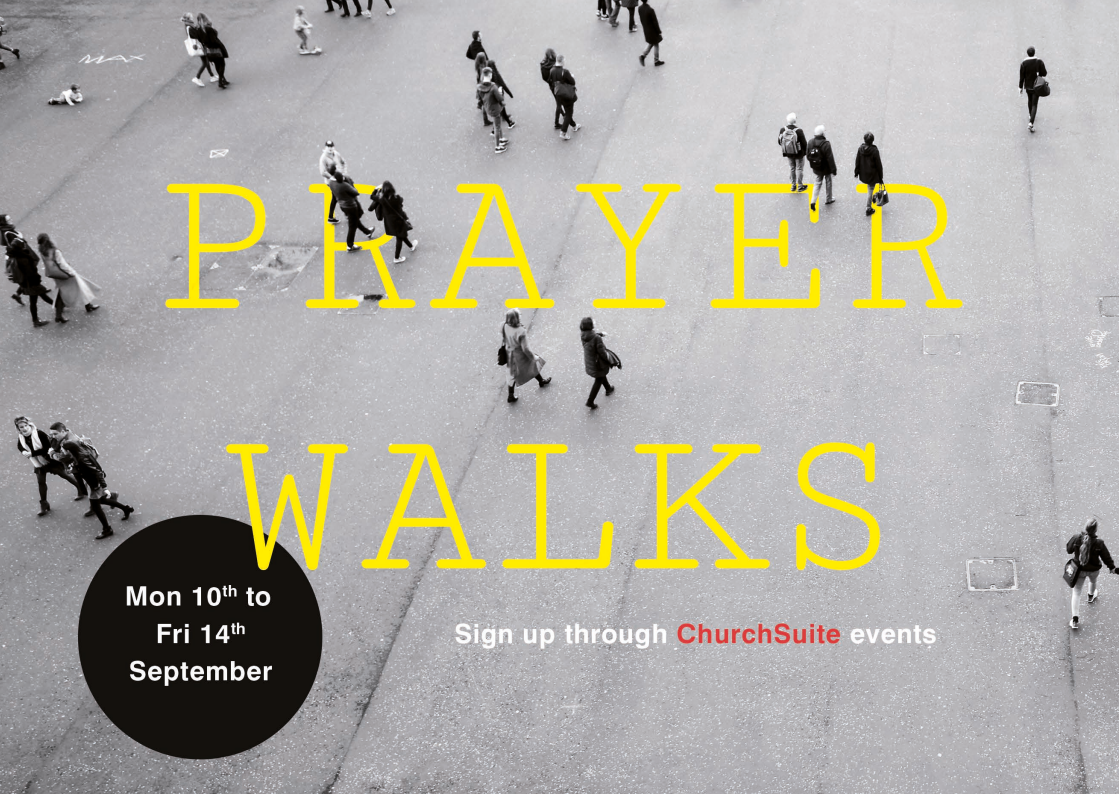
Where will you 'knee-jerk' in reaction to trouble and uncertainty? For many of us the knee-jerk reaction is toward a position or statement of certainty; we can't stand mystery and

feel troubled by uncertainty. Many of us like to be able to declare an authoritative opinion on an issue and label a particular course of action or a particular belief as 'right' or 'wrong'. We like to behave as bank managers approving or denying requests from people for help.

In this Bible verse, James wants us to react differently.

In a day and age where ideas shift and where beliefs on moral issues change Christians need to learn to 'knee-jerk' toward prayer, and learn to call out to God for wisdom fully confident that he answers and provides.

You can be sure that God will meet your needs.



PRAYER WALKS

Mon 10th to
Fri 14th
September

Sign up through **ChurchSuite** events



PRAYER NIGHT

W E D N E S D A Y 1 9 S E P T E M B E R 2 0 1 8

newgroundchurches.org

Praying together with churches across New Ground via live link
Taking place at the Kings Centre, 7:45pm



PRAYER

I call to God, and the LORD saves me. Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice.

Psalms 55:16-17 (NIV)

Jez writes:

When we first got married Amy and I lived in Eastbourne town centre, in what felt like a seagull den. Every year from about March onwards the gulls would nest on the flat roof attached to our back bedroom, and every morning we'd be woken by the ugly squawking of hungry and protective seagulls.

The only place in the house we could avoid the noise was in the living room at the front of the house, the trouble was that this overlooked a busy road in between two sets of traffic lights. Every evening cars would treat the two traffic lights like a drag strip and tear down the road at great speed. Wherever we went,

at whatever time of day there was a cacophony of inescapable noise.

The Bible writer paints a similar picture for us except that it's the Christian who's meant to make the noise, in prayer being confident that the major (and glorious) difference between my reaction to the noise and God's reaction to our prayer is that God doesn't run from us, or go into a different room. When we cry to the Lord, he hears us. Whatever time of day it is, however long we cry out to him for, he promises to always listen.

Try adopting an 'evening, morning and noon,' approach to prayer today.



JUSTICE

I call on you, O God, for you will answer me; give ear to me and hear my prayer. Show the wonder of your great love, you who save by your right hand those who take refuge in you from their foes. Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings. Psalm 17:6-8 (NIV)

Find strength and safety in God for yourself but also for others. Christians can say with certainty that they are the apple of God's eye. We are precious to God and prized by him. The believer's faith in God creates a reaction in God's heart that is like the passion of a lover and the enthusiasm of a child.

The truth of this verse can often be masked by trials however and so the psalmist fights to hold onto the truth of God's great love in a sea of storms. He 'calls'

to God, demands that God would 'give ear' and 'hear' his prayers and he fights to be one who 'takes refuge' in God.

Take a moment today to pray this for yourself but also for all those you know who are experiencing trials. Pray that those who are stressed out by a heavy schedule would find refuge in God. Pray for those battling illness. Pray that God would show them the 'wonder of his great love.'

TONIGHT: STUDENT & 20s BBQ, 6:30PM, GRAHAM & BELINDA'S



WEEK 2

TODAY: WOMEN'S EVENT, 9AM, KINGS CENTRE

Let my teaching fall like rain and my words descend like dew, like showers on new grass, like abundant rain on tender plants. I will proclaim the name of the LORD. Oh, praise the greatness of our God! He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he. Deuteronomy 32:2-4 (NIV)

Weeks without rain in our summer led to our parks and gardens becoming dry and dusty scrublands, places that were practically gasping for moisture and refreshment from the rain.

Going too long without hearing God speak or talking to him in prayer has a similar effect on our spiritual health. Be refreshed by God's mighty word. Read aloud God's words, listen to them being read in an audio Bible or in a podcast.

Listen to the words of this verse and obey them:

- Praise his greatness
- Declare his dependability and faithfulness
- Marvel at his moral perfection and his timing

As we do so our strength returns, fresh perspective comes and our dry, dusty souls will burst into life and colour again.



PRESENCE

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)

There is no perfect, pain free path through life; it simply doesn't exist. What this proverb promises is that God will guide you and that he will, over time, straighten out much that is crooked in life. He knows the best way through the chaos and his laws are good and trustworthy.

Rather than leaning on your own resources and ability to resolve things, start today by repeating this verse back to God in prayer and express to him your desire to trust him and for dependency on him to be your 'knee-jerk' reaction to trouble.

Families: For a memorable and easy to pick up song for kids (or big kids!) search on YouTube: Rizers Trust. If you've young children in the house, consider watching it together after dinner and use it as a family in prayer.



THIS MORNING: TOM & SUZIE BROCK AT OUR EASTBOURNE VENUES



PRAYER

THIS WEEK: COMMUNITY PRAYER FOCUS, INCLUDING PRAYER WALKS

Jesus said, "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no-one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no-one can snatch them out of my Father's hand." John 10:27-29 (NIV)

Prayer is meant to be a conversation not simply a monologue. Start today by asking God to speak to you. The challenge is that for many of us we don't know where to begin with hearing God's voice. We don't know if we can trust the thoughts in our mind to speak for God and we don't like the idea of being one who 'hears voices.' Jesus' words are meant to reassure us rather than fill us with anxiety. Christians can know God speaking to them personally and intimately through the Holy Spirit and learning to discern God's voice is part of the adventure of faith.

Grab a pen and paper, sit before God and ask him to speak to you. Listen to your intuition and instinct and write what comes to your mind. Check it against the verse above; does it sound like the heart of the God being spoken about by Jesus? If so then hold on to it, pray into it, thank God for it and learn to pour out more of your heart to him.

God has a firm hold on you. He will NEVER let you go.



MISSION

I know what I'm doing. I have it all planned out—plans to take care of you, not abandon you, plans to give you the future you hope for. "When you call on me, when you come and pray to me, I'll listen." When you come looking for me, you'll find me. "Yes, when you get serious about finding me and want it more than anything else"
Jeremiah 29:11-13 (Message)

God has good things for you. These words were first spoken to a group of migrants struggling to cope in a hostile environment. They were words that gave them hope and steered them to put their confidence in God. They are also meant for us. The Bible says that we are migrants in a land that isn't our home. Our 'passport' says 'heaven' but our residency is on earth.

These words are like a letter from our Home Office encouraging us to keep

going. They are a reassurance that God has a plan and that his plan, far from being a fatalistic 'put up with it', plan is a plan that gets shaped by our correspondence with our Home country. God instructs his people not just to 'hold on' but to 'keep on communicating,' and not to suffer 'radio silence' from heaven.

As we pray we take our place in God's great drama on the earth. As we pray we shape what God's doing in the world.



PRESENCE

*The old life is a grass life, its beauty as short-lived as wildflowers;
Grass dries up, flowers droop, God's Word goes on and on forever.
This is the Word that conceived the new life in you.*

1 Peter 1:24-25 (Message)

God's words create, sustain and eventually will bring everything to an end. When God speaks, nations shake and rulers topple off their thrones. Scientists may talk about a 'Big Bang' but really it was a 'loud shout' from the depths of God. He spoke 'light' and light was formed, he told darkness to 'separate from light' and it did. On and on it goes as God speaks and life is born. Then, once Eden ends and we're cast out into the world God speaks again and hope is born, the gospel good news gets going and God's plan for redemption kicks in.

The words of God, the ordering power of God, then enters the world and once again calls light out of darkness, only this time it's spiritual and not material. God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Jesus Christ.

Christians are those who have been born again by the word of God. It's that word that 'cleans' us Jesus said and it's that word that is able to cause us to grow up as believers.

Everything else will fade, all of the pressures and pains of today will one day be a distant memory, a bad dream. Today, in prayer, make yourself aware of God's presence in your life by listening to the words he speaks to you. 'The heavens declare the glory of God... day to day pours out speech and night to night reveals knowledge.' (Psalm 19:2)

Listen hard to what God says in his word and in his world. Listen and respond in prayer.



PRESENCE

You're my God, and I thank you. O my God, I lift high your praise. Thank GOD—he's so good. His love never quits! Psalm 118:28-29 (Message)

God will never give up on you. God will never abandon you. God will never walk away from you. God won't ever conclude you're too tough a job for him. God won't ever withdraw his decision to forgive you. God won't ever switch off his love for you.

It was reflections like that on the love of God that led ancient Jews to see that not even death can separate people from the love of God. It was meditations on the nature of God's goodness and on the strength of his commitments that gave rise to the idea of heaven and our final resurrection from the dead.

That's how theology is done. It takes a statement from scripture and drains as much life and truth out of it as it can. That's how prayer happens as well. Prayer is essentially 'faith out loud' and when you think on God's love and when you thank him for his love you're growing in prayer, it's as straightforward as that.

What else can you say about the love of God based on the above Bible verse? Direct them at God, ask him for insight and allow yourself in this way to 'bathe' in the loving kindness of God.



JUSTICE

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. Ephesians 3:16-17 (NIV)

Prayer is also a way of identifying with others in need. The model for prayer that Jesus teaches to his disciples is spoken in the plural 'Our Father... give us today our daily bread...'

Whether you're hurting or not use the verse above and the prayer below to identify with those who are struggling. After all, when one member of the body suffers, we all suffer (1 Corinthians 12:26).

*Dear God,
Some days feel too hard. We're hurting, fighting fear and worry at every turn. Thank you that in the midst of it all, you haven't left us to fend for ourselves. Forgive us for*

doubting you are there. Forgive us for thinking you've forgotten. Forgive us for believing we somehow know the better way.

We pray for those who grieve today. We ask for your comfort to surround those who weep. We pray for the peace of your presence to cover our minds and thoughts. Keep us safe in your presence forever, whether in life or in death.

We thank you that your ways are higher than our ways and your thoughts are bigger than our thoughts. We lay it all down at your feet, every burden, every care. In the Powerful Name of Jesus, Amen.



WEEK THREE

Jesus said, "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples." As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love." **John 15:8-10 (NIV)**

Jesus loves you now and forever, remain in Jesus' love. Prayer is a key way of abiding in Christ. As we pray we can't help but abide since prayer throws us onto God. In prayer we draw from the nutrients of the vine and fill our branches with life. How much should we pray? How much do we need to pray? That all depends on how much fruit you want to bear.

Weeds have shallow roots but tall trees require great depth. The widest root system ever recorded was from a wild fig tree in South Africa; the roots measured 400ft

wide! Grass requires very few nutrients but an oak tree draws up to 20 litres of water every day.

If you've set your sights on growing deep and wide as a Christian, then you know how essential prayer is for your life. A simple way to start today is by locating a regular spot to use for prayer. A chair or a favourite walkway, a particular time of the day perhaps.

Take some time to watch this video on YouTube: Bill Hybel's 'Coffee with God'

TODAY: MEN'S PRAYER EVENT WITH BRIAN HEASLEY, 9AM, KINGS CENTRE



PRESENCE

THIS MORNING: DAVE HOLDEN AT OUR EASTBOURNE VENUES

My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I shall never be shaken. **Psalms 62:1-2 (NIV)**

Experiencing peace and rest in God is a wonderful thing but it can often be an elusive thing. There are so many things that fight for our attention but God isn't one of them. Rarely does time with God seem urgent.

Our busy schedules on the other hand appear to have an urgency that threatens our very existence if we don't comply. The threat of extinction (or at least unemployment) looms close behind the requests your boss places on you and the threat of being labelled a 'failure' is underneath the tread-mill of expectations put on you by others.

We miss the truth of God's word simply because it doesn't force itself upon us and bully us into compliance; but missing the truth of God's word is catastrophic for us. He is our rock, the only one we can safely build our lives on. He is our fortress, the only one who can protect us from a battle and keep us safe in a storm. He is our salvation. He is the one who saves us, fights for us, delivers us and promises to never leave us.

Start today with this one simple request; 'God give me rest and show me the truth of your word. Be my salvation, be my rock, be my deliverer.'



Galatians 5:25 (Message)

Life is about something far more important than the things we do, it is about the person we're becoming.

Today make two lists. Write down all the things you're doing today and then write another list next to it describing the way in which you want to do it. Pray over the list and ask God, by his Spirit, to help empower you to live that way.

The way I want to do it:



JUSTICE

You can throw the whole weight of your anxieties upon him, for you are his personal concern. Be self-controlled and vigilant always, for your enemy the devil is always about, prowling like a lion roaring for its prey. Resist him, standing firm in your faith, remembering that the strain is the same for all your fellow-Christians in other parts of the world. 1 Peter 5:7-9 (Phillips)

The hardest country to be a Christian in today is North Korea where, according to Open Doors UK, not only is it illegal to be a Christian but neighbours and family members (due to government indoctrination) are highly watchful and report anything suspicious to the authorities. If Christians are discovered they are deported to labour camps as political criminals or killed on the spot; their families share their fate.

Meeting for worship is therefore done with the utmost

secrecy. The apostle Peter reassures persecuted Christians by reminding them that such strain is shared by believers all over the world. Let's join with our brothers and sisters in North Korea today and pray. Ask God to strengthen and comfort his followers, especially those in labour camps and pray for Kim Jong-Un that he would have a revelation about Jesus and realise the error of his ways.

Visit www.opendoorsuk.org for more information



PRESENCE

TONIGHT: NEW GROUND PRAYER EVENT, 7:45PM, KINGS CENTRE

Blessed is the man who trusts me, GOD, the woman who sticks with GOD. They're like trees replanted in Eden, putting down roots near the rivers—Never a worry through the hottest of summers, never dropping a leaf, Serene and calm through droughts, bearing fresh fruit every season. Jeremiah 17:7-8 (Message)

In the old stories a person walking through the woods would tie some string to a tree and unravel it as they walked. That way if ever they got lost they could simply retrace the string back through the forest and find safety.

Bible verses like this can take the form of a bullies taunt ('you can't say that about your own experience, your faith is weak or worse; you're not a proper Christian!') or they can be like that string in the forest. Grabbing hold of a Bible verse like this is like grabbing onto that string. It points us back to safety and sets us on the right path;

it offers a direction of travel and a promised safe haven.

The natural response to life's trials is to look inward, to try to find the resources and strength needed to get through it. Trust yourself, work harder, change your diet, exercise more, read more. By doing so we can in fact reorient and replant ourselves but we still end up planting ourselves in the same soil. It is only when we obey God's word and work to orient our lives around his principles that we find ourselves headed in a different direction altogether.



JOY

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.

Isaiah 43:2-3 (NIV)

Growing up can make you wary of uncertainty and more cautious than enthusiastic. Stress and pain greet many of us before we've had a chance to finish our breakfast and reminders that the world isn't an easy place to live are all around. For many they live a daily 'passing through the waters,' and 'walking through the fire' experience and the thought of doing so again can be wearisome.

Sadly there is no option of not passing through waters and not going through fire. The only changeable is the

frequency of the trials and their intensities. This Bible verse reminds us however that what you have to go through isn't the most significant thing, who you go through it with matters most of all.

Start today with prayer. Ask God to make himself known to you today, invite him into your challenges and ask him to add to you the enthusiasm and optimism of a child. Those who wait on the Lord, Isaiah 40 says, 'will run and not get weary, walk and not faint.' You will overcome and not be overwhelmed.



JUSTICE

King Darius said, "I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel. "For he is the living God and he endures for ever; his kingdom will not be destroyed, his dominion will never end. He rescues and he saves; he performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions." Daniel 6:26-27 (NIV)

If Daniel and his friends in Babylon would have been told at the start the eventual outcome of their faithfulness to God they would have struggled to believe it. From a fiery furnace and a den of lions to a royal decree; it is remarkable what God does.

Stories like this are meant to help us and teach us.

As we watch the disintegration of family life in our nation, hear of rising levels of depression and chronic loneliness, we must take heart from what God has done in the past.

We don't know what today will bring, or tomorrow, but we do know how the story will eventually end. Decrees like this one by a pagan king will one day be issued by all world leaders. Every knee will one day bow before the king of kings and every government will recognise his authority.

Prayer bridges those two moments - the present and the future. Pray for your neighbourhood, community, town and country. Pray for families, pray for young people, pray for the elderly.



WEEK FOUR

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10 (NIV)

Originally addressed to a nation in need of comfort Isaiah reminds his people that God has not forgotten them. We have the same need that they did; our nation and the church in our nation needs the same encouragement right now.

Dwindling church attendance figures and a rising tide of secularism has meant that for many local churches 'survival' seems a big enough goal all by itself.

Today we're going to pray for the church in the UK, but our prayer isn't for its survival. The survival of the church

is not something that's in doubt, instead the church needs to discover afresh the significance and wonder of the presence of God. God is with his people and it's that that makes us different. It is the presence of God that gives us strength and confidence for the future.

Every generation of believers faces its own particular challenges but every generation has the same reason for confidence of hope; God is with us. God is with you. Pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the church today, pray for a greater awareness of the presence of God with us.



MISSION

THIS MORNING: TERRY VIRGO AT OUR HP VENUE

Don't copy the behaviour and customs of this world, but be a new and different person with a fresh newness in all you do and think. Then you will learn from your own experience how his ways will really satisfy you. Romans 12:2 (TLB)

No one enjoys being the odd one out in a group, and all of us want to fit in and be liked. The trouble is that whenever a person decides to follow Jesus they are also, by inference, deciding to swim against the tide of their culture. That's true whether you're in East Sussex or East Timor. To be a Christian is to be an insurgent and a revolutionary, it's a simple as that.

Christianity is a movement aiming to overthrow the lie of the enemy, the lie that tells people God can't be trusted. The human race behaves as though true fulfilment is found by obeying ourselves rather than our creator; it's that that the gospel message undermines.

Writing to a church in the heart of the Roman Empire Paul urges them to embrace their difference. Jesus came to overthrow the principalities and powers and he calls us to do the same.

Singing 'you're a good Father... and I'm loved by you, it's who I am...' is a easier (and catchier) than singing 'you're a subversive revolutionary... and I'm called to follow you, it's who I am, it's who I am...' but both are true.

Pray for courage today to embrace your calling to be transformed.



JUSTICE

The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles. The LORD is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. Psalm 34:17-18 (NIV)

According to the Pew Forum Christians face discrimination or persecution in 139 nations, three-quarters of all the countries in the world (fn: The Silence of Our Friends, Ed West).

In at least 11 countries in the middle east Christians are actively discriminated against. Journalist Ed West writes: *The 20th Century was a disaster for Christians in the Middle East. A century ago they comprised 30% of the region's population, and 20% of its Arabs, but starting with the 1915 genocide against Armenians, Syriacs and Greeks, that figure has declined to a low of 5%. The most optimistic forecasts suggest the Christian population of 12 million today will fall to 6 million by mid-century.*

We must pray for our brothers and sisters experiencing pressure for their faith. Pray for churches in Turkey, for John & Sophie

Ford, planting a church in Istanbul. Pray that they would experience peace from local authorities. Pray for a young man named Erdem in Istanbul who's recently come to faith.

About his situation John writes: *The subsequent weeks were fairly difficult for him as he felt the pain of disappointing his family, with certain tensions in their relationship. However, God has given him much grace, and given him opportunities to give a Bible to his mum and share his testimony with his sister. We had the joy of baptising him a couple of weeks ago.*

Martin Luther King Jr. once said: *"In the End, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."* Let us not remain silent in prayer for these brothers and sisters in Christ.



PRESENCE

TONIGHT: LOCAL SITE PRAYER MEETINGS

So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him.

Romans 12:1 (Message)

Recently my mum told me she was going to start using her 'best' cutlery for 'everyday' use; it was a big moment in her life. She's in her 60s, her children have all grown up and left and now she's going to use her 'best' for 'everyday'! We can have a similar attitude to things in our Christian life. Some things are considered 'holy' or 'special' whereas other things 'everyday.'

Paul writes to the church in Rome and discourages them from this sort of compartmentalising. There is no sacred and secular divide for the believer; everything is 'best' and also for 'everyday' use.

Eating cornflakes, watching TV, reading the Bible, walking with friends, riding a bike, singing worship songs; whatever you do, do it to the glory of God. That isn't to say you're to thank God in between mouthfuls of Shreddies or that you should be thinking of Jesus while watching Eastenders. Instead it means that everything you do is to be done within the posture of gratitude and joy.

Pray. Start today acknowledging God as the giver of every good thing. Consider how you can use the things he's given you today to worship and enjoy him through.



PRESENCE

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7 NIV)

Notice the antidote to our anxiety that Paul offers here. It has to do with your past, your present and your future. The journey takes us from anxiety to asking, through thanking and finally onto receiving.

Thanksgiving forces us to look back to our past and recall what God has done in our lives, we're then opened up to his kindness to us in the present, followed by the promise that we'll receive for our future a peace that'll go with us into the things we're afraid of.

Writing from a Roman prison Paul had reason to be worried and God knows we do too. Life isn't within our control we don't know how any day will end. 'Do not be anxious' isn't a 'don't worry, be happy' doctrine that denies the reasons to worry or a 'pull yourself together' command that makes you feel guilty. Instead it's an invitation to not suffer the strain of worry alone but to bring it to God. Do not be anxious BUT pray, Paul says.

Try that today. Thank God for your past, ask God for your present and receive from God confidence for the future.



PRESENCE

Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks this water will get thirsty again and again. Anyone who drinks the water I give will never thirst—not ever. The water I give will be an artesian spring within, gushing fountains of endless life." John 4:13-14 (Message)

Be refreshed by Jesus. It's as simple as that. Nothing else and no one else is able to refresh you quite like Jesus is. Speaking of our appetites and desires, the author C.S. Lewis puts it like this:

Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists. A baby feels hunger: well, there is such a thing as food. A duckling wants to swim: well, there is such a thing as water. Men feel sexual desire: well, there is such a thing as sex. If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.

The problem we have isn't that we desire satisfaction or pleasure but only that we satisfy them too soon on whatever we happen to stumble upon. We settle for water from a suspect source for fear they're won't be other option for miles. You and I are made by God, for God. We work best in his hands, trusting his truth, walking his path

Pray. Start today in prayer, ask God to fill you afresh with the Holy Spirit, ask him to make his presence real in your life again. Seek satisfaction and refreshment in him.



PRESENCE

TONIGHT: TRUE 11-18s ALL NIGHT PRAYER EVENT

The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.
Deuteronomy 31:8 (NIV)

God is with you, all the way. Bill Allen, from our Seaford venue, comments:

This is one of my favourite verses. It gives me strength knowing that the Lord has gone before me and is with me. God's presence, God's power, he's like a Father. It encapsulates the character of God in one verse... Every situation I get to I find that he's already there and in control. Over the past year I have been in and out of hospital having to have several operations and I have taken great comfort in this truth.'

Anxiety's power comes from the fact it cannot be fully explained away. No one knows the future and so no one can say for certain that the things you and I worry about won't happen. The truth is, however, that anxiety lies inasmuch as it only tells half the story. Disaster may occur, the worst life can throw at you may be thrown at you but when it happens God will give you the grace you need to endure it. When it occurs you'll be able to spot God's kindnesses to you along the way. When it occurs you'll be able to cope because he will be with you.



PRESENCE

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

John 15:4-5 (ESV)

TODAY: FAMILY PRAYER FOCUS, KINGS CENTRE

Prayer reminds us of our dependence on God.

Prayer is one of the main ways in which we abide in God. It is how we increase our dependence upon God because we come to understand through prayer that without Him we can't do or be anything. This dependence causes us to come to him for everything and anything.

Often when we stop praying regularly, it's because we have become more dependent on ourselves or those around us. We start going to friends and family before God.

Each day we come to God in prayer, we show our dependence upon him for

everything. When life is good, prayer reminds us why it's good, by giving thanks to God. When life is difficult, prayer brings us close to God in utter dependence on him and so we learn to abide in him in everything.

As it is the business of tailors to make clothes and cobblers to mend shoes, so it is the business of Christians to pray.

— Martin Luther

Luther is so right. It is our business as children of God to go to our Father for all things. This causes us to abide in Jesus and creates an increased dependence upon the one to whom we owe our life and everything in it.



JOY

It is good to praise the LORD and make music to your name, O Most High, to proclaim your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night, to the music of the ten-stringed lyre and the melody of the harp. For you make me glad by your deeds, O LORD; I sing for joy at the work of your hands. How great are your works, O LORD, how profound your thoughts! Psalm 92:1-5 (NIV)

THIS MORNING: TOPE KOLEOSO AT OUR EASTBOURNE VENUES

TONIGHT: BIG FINALE PRAYER EVENT, 8PM, KINGS CENTRE

After a month of praying for our town, the world, our friends and family let's end by giving thanks and celebrating all that God has done. The psalms are full of instructions for worship: clap your hands, shout for joy, dance, jump, sing, shout. These are less like commands and more like the overflow of an enthusiast. We do the same thing with the things we want others to appreciate with us: you must go and see that film, come with me to the beach and watch this sunset, get yourself down here now!

Singing is particularly important for Christian worship since it is one of the fastest ways of getting to a person's emotional life, and God is interested in your emotional life. We were made

to enjoy God, our enjoyment of God is what gives him the glory he's due. God isn't interested in dead and lifeless duty, but wants us to grasp in our soul, in the deepest part of our being, just how satisfying he is.

Find some time today to sing worship to God. Go for a walk, find a quiet spot in the house, put on your favourite album. Sing and celebrate God's goodness. Give thanks and reflect on what he's done over the past 30 days. What have you learnt about prayer? What do you hope to put into place for the future?

Refuse to remain unmoved, allow God to 'make you glad.'

SEPTEMBER: KEY EVENTS

We have a full diary of events planned through September that will equip us for prayer and provide plenty of space to pray in larger events and smaller, focussed groups.

Tuesday 4th	8pm, Kings Centre	Joint prayer event at Kings Centre
Friday 7th	Graham & Belinda's, 6:30pm onwards	Student & 20's BBQ with Jono & Carita from LIV
Saturday 8th	9am, Kings Centre	Women's event with Suzie Brock & other special guests (TBC)
Sunday 9th	Hampden Park & Centro venues	Tom & Suzie Brock
Monday 10th — Friday 14th	Various (TBA)	Community prayer focus, including prayer walks, see page 11.
Saturday 15th	9am, Kings Centre	Men's prayer event with Brian Heasley (from 24-7 Prayer)
Sunday 16th	Hampden Park & Centro venues	Dave Holden
Wednesday 19th	7:45pm, Kings Centre	New Ground prayer event via live link
Sunday 23rd	Hampden Park	Terry Virgo
Tuesday 25th	Various (TBA)	Local site prayer meetings
Friday 28th — Saturday 29th	Fri 7pm — Sat 7am	True 11-18s
Saturday 29th	Kings Centre	Family prayer focus
Sunday 30th	Hampden Park & Centro venues	Tope Koleoso
Sunday 30th	8pm — midnight, Kings Centre	Big finale prayer event