

PRAYERS FOR YOU TO USE

FOR THE CHURCH

Father, we rejoice in the beauty of our diversity, but we thank you most of all for our unity. We recognize that as believers, we are one blood, one family, and one kingdom. In Christ there is no Jew nor Gentile, no east nor west, no black nor white, no male nor female, but a new creation. Amen

Help us, Lord, to bless one another, to grow to love one another, to prefer one another in honour, and to pray for one another so that our nation may be healed. Keep us aware, Lord, so that we are not ignorant of Satan's devices to divide and destroy. Amen

FOR THE ECONOMY & BUSINESS

We pray for the leaders of business and industry and those who affect the economy of our region and nation. Restore the integrity of Britain's financial institutions which once had a place of honour throughout the world. Raise up righteous leaders and give them courage to demand righteousness again. Give them answers to the problems that affect all of us. Provide for all those in need of work and meet their needs in these difficult times. Amen

FOR NEIGHBOURS

All this day, O Lord, let me touch as many lives as possible for you; and every life I touch, do you by your spirit quicken, whether through the word I speak, the prayer I breathe, or the life I live. Amen.

(Prayer written in 1876 by Mothers' Union founder, Mary Sumner)

Lord

We lift our neighbours to you this day
Will you guard their lives with protection
and bless them with provision,
but most of all will you reveal your presence to them
that they might have faith in you.

By our prayers and witness
help us to give hope where there is hopelessness,
light where there is darkness and
joy where there is sorrow.

May we so reflect your love
that those who are burdened
will be drawn to you our Saviour.

Amen



WEEK OF PRAYER

Sunday 2nd to Sunday 9th May 2010

Prayer Guide

for

St Helens

www.tfh.org.uk/weekofprayer

For more information contact TFH, PO Box 155, L15 0JH
Email prayer@tfh.org.uk 07711 556 369

SUNDAY 2ND MAY

2-16 May is the HEAL OUR LAND fortnight, in the Mersey Region: a week of prayer followed by a week of evangelism that begins here and then tours cities through the UK. The aim is for churches to come together in unity, recognising the need of our nation for a move of God, and to call out to Him in prayer together to bring healing. A key verse is:

"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 will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land"

2 Chronicles 7:14

The central focus of the 2 weeks is the Prayer Concert on Monday 10th May at the Liverpool Anglican Cathedral. Another hugely significant date in our week of prayer is the general election and local elections on May 6th. These issues and others affecting the well-being of our society are covered in this prayer guide.

Please use today to prepare for the week of prayer. Remember, you are part of an army of people from many different churches across the Mersey Region, who will be praying. As you come before the Lord in preparation for the coming period of prayer, meditate on this Christian song from St Paul's letter to the Colossians. Pray it out to the Lord. Acknowledge His greatness and thank Him for what He has done for us.

Colossians 1:15-20

(Jesus) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.

He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross..

PRAYERS FOR YOU TO USE

FOR THE NATION

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your Kingdom come, Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.
Amen

Heal our land, heal our Land
Father in heaven, heal our land
Hear us O Lord as we humbly pray
Meet us O Lord as we seek your face
Turning away from our wicked ways,
Heal our land. Amen

FOR FAMILIES

Heavenly Father, we intercede for our families,
for marriages, children,
extended families, single parent families,
widows and orphans.
May the Holy Spirit
move throughout our region and nation
to heal broken families
and broken lives.

Amen

Heavenly Father, who sets the lonely in families
We pray to you for all families,
That members may be encouraged to live fully,
And to discover the sanctity of human love and the value of family life.
If times are troubled through separation or difficulties in relationships,
May people learn to be generous.
May all families grow
in understanding and appreciation of each other
and in love and respect.
Amen

SUNDAY 9TH MAY

MONDAY 3RD MAY

OUR NEIGHBOURS

When Jesus was asked what is the most important commandment in the law, he said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind", and went on to say, "Love your neighbour as yourself."

What a way to show love for them by praying for them. At a time of great insecurity, our neighbours need our prayer more than ever.

You can pray for their practical and emotional needs, and you can pray for their spiritual needs.

As you pray for your neighbours meditate on this: prayer is first and foremost a relationship with God; it is a position of dependence on God and it is being in the place of His loving embrace.

One way of praying for your neighbours is to use the acronym BLESS.

B - pray for their bodily needs

L - pray that they will know God's love

E - pray for their economic needs

S - pray for their spiritual needs

S - pray for their social needs

Pray for an openness to the Gospel, for the "Lord to open their hearts to respond" (Acts 16:4)

Pray for salvation

Pray for opportunities to meet your neighbours and to be their friends

Pray for God's gifts to help you discern their felt needs and their unspoken needs.

Pray for the things they ask you to pray for.

LIST THE NAMES OF YOUR NEIGHBOURS HERE

LIST THE NEEDS OF YOUR NEIGHBOURS HERE

THE FAMILY

Protecting human life, protecting marriage, and protecting freedom of conscience are foundational for creating and maintaining strong families. Because of our Christian faith we can pray believing it will make a difference to the family in our community

MARRIAGE FACTS

85% of UK couples are married.

74% of people think that being married is the most desirable way to live

9 out of 10 teenagers under 16 say they want to marry.

There were over 300,000 marriages in the UK last year

ABORTION FACTS

There are 600 abortions a day in the UK, equal to 200,000 per year.

98% of all abortions are for social reasons.

The parliamentary inquiry in 2006/7, according to one report, was shaped by ideological and financial interests.

Only 27% of people questioned in a poll believed that the current 24 week legal limit for abortion should be retained while 58% of those questioned by *YouGov* said abortions should not be carried out after the 20th week of pregnancy

PRAY for organisations that support and strengthen family life, such as "Care for the Family", "Care Trust" and "The National Couple Support Network"

PRAY for government legislation that will be positive towards marriage and the family.

PRAY for an increase in the awareness of the value of marriage that promotes marriage as the best environment for children to be brought up in.

PRAY for those in families in St Helens who are:

Going through difficult times;

Coping with illness or disability in their family;

Feeling the pain of family breakdown;

Not sure they are loved and valued for who they are;

Tired and exhausted;

Experiencing the effects of unemployment

PRAY about the issues families have to face including bullying; the Internet, particularly social networking sites; inappropriate TV programmes; that the Lord would help us to act wisely and righteously in our families.

PRAY about the on-going issue of abortion (see left) that is a blight on our nation. Pray for a parliament that will not act in a biased way when it reconsiders the legislation. Pray for godly men and women in positions of influence who will work to bring about godly change in the legislation.

TUESDAY 4TH MAY

THE ECONOMY & BUSINESS

Everybody knows that a major issue for the nation and the region is the economy. As Christians our perspective is that we face not only an economic crisis, but a spiritual and moral crisis. It is an age of compliance not conscience. When a government loses its moral compass everything flounders.

PLEASE PRAY for a new appreciation of the need for a moral, righteous basis for doing business, as opposed to the greed culture that has dominated many parts of business in recent years.

PLEASE PRAY for good leadership in the business sector, in our region and nationally.

PRAY for the North West Development Agency in Warrington, that they continue to operate under the new government.

PRAY for Christian organisations working for the Kingdom of God in the business world. Especially remember the North West Christian Business Forum (led by Christopher Gibaud & John Manwell) and the International Christian Chamber of Commerce (Pam Coates plays a leading role locally). Pray for all involved, that they will have a real understanding of these times and that they will receive all the resources that they need to carry out their roles.

PRAY for the increased prosperity and growth of employment in the town, that the affects of the recession will be overcome by diligence and integrity.

PRAY for established businesses in St Helens that they prosper and provide secure employment for the people of the town

PRAY for Christian Business leaders & owners in St Helens to get a new understanding of God's purpose for business and economic growth. That they have hearts set to support our local communities, particularly regarding the alleviation of poverty and the enabling of men and women to start new businesses.

PRAY for young Christian men and women to rise up as a new generation of entrepreneurs, supported by established Christian business men and women who will sponsor and mentor them.

Heavenly Father, we pray for all those Christians involved in the business world. May they carry your presence and speak your peace into the workplace. Anoint their gifts of creativity and their energy that they may bring you honour in the tasks they face. When they are confused, guide them. When they are weary, energize them. When they are burned out, infuse them with the light of Your Holy Spirit. May their efforts bring hope, light and courage to all that they come into contact with. Amen

SATURDAY 8TH MAY

HEAL OUR LAND

The two weeks from 2nd to 16th May are the Heal Our Land fortnight in the Mersey Region.

The first week is a week of prayer, where churches, groups and individuals will be praying for God to heal our nation and region.

On Monday 10th May at 7.30 pm at the Liverpool Anglican Cathedral the prayer will culminate in a great Prayer Concert celebrating the great diversity in the church in the region and calling out to God for a move of His power here.

The prayer concert also launches a week of local evangelism across the region.

PRAYER CONCERT

Please remember the event at the Cathedral on Monday 10th.

Pray for the rehearsal at Liverpool Lighthouse tonight.

Pray for all the narrators, singers, dancers choirs, musicians, leaders and pray-ers involved in the concert, that God will receive all the glory.

Pray for a full congregation

Pray for the finances, that all the costs will be covered.

Pray for a great encouragement for the people who come to the concert, that they may grow in faith and in confidence in the Gospel.

PRAISE GOD for all the people involved in praying during this week of prayer. Give thanks that God has heard our prayers as we have lifted our hands and hearts to him.

PRAY for one outcome to be an increase in the prayers of grass-roots Christians as they comprehend the power of prayer to bring spiritual change to our city.

PRAY for the week of evangelism 10th to 16th May, for events taking place across Liverpool - that many people will hear a credible presentation of the Good News about Jesus Christ.

PRAY for the special multi-church outreach planned for Newsham Park, Liverpool on 15th May.

A SUGGESTED PRAYER

Father, we come to you as God's people because we believe greater things have yet to come and greater things are still to be done in this region and nation. But today our nation is in the midst of deep problems. As we have turned from the righteous ways of the Lord, the land has become polluted by corrupting forces that have swept away centuries of blessing and protection. So we ask forgiveness, and pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to transform Great Britain into all God designed her to be, and to bring the values of your Kingdom into the lives of our communities in this region. Amen

FRIDAY 7TH MAY

WEDNESDAY 5TH MAY

THE CHURCH

“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called—one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.”

Ephesians 4:3-6

PRAY FOR CHURCH LEADERS

PRAY for their pastoral role - bringing the love of Jesus to those around them shepherding their church members.

PRAY for their preaching ministry, that they would hear, and believe God's word, and proclaim it faithfully - being effective in their communication.

PRAY for their leadership role - seeking future vision, and leading the church into that vision, encouraging and enabling church members in ministry.

PRAY for their own walk of faith - for their prayer life, for their faith, that they would grow spiritually and in their love for God.

PRAY for their personal time - for relaxation and renewal, to avoid the pressures and stress of ministry.

PRAY for them if appropriate as husband/wife, and as father/mother.

PRAY for them as they lead worship, and in their roles as church leader - particularly their relationships with church members, and any relationships that are difficult at this time.

PRAISE GOD for all the good things about the Church in St Helens, particularly the level of mutual recognition and support between churches and Christians through SHINE. Praise God for the commitment to Christ being at the centre of St Helens, and for the desire to see Christ at the heart of the plans for the town. **PRAY** for the right person to be the faith community representative on the Economic Development and Enterprise Group in the town

GIVE THANKS for all the positive contributions that the Church has made to the life of the town.

PRAY for an increase in the depth of the unity between churches, that Christians hear Paul's injunction to *“make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit”*.

A SUGGESTED PRAYER

*Father in heaven,
May your Church on earth be united in spirit and intent on one purpose.
May we be one even as your Son is one with you,
that the world might believe that you sent him into the world.
Take away all prejudice from our hearts and cause us to love one another even as you have loved us,
that the world might know that we are your disciples and so that you might be glorified in your Church. Amen*

THE COMMUNITY

St Helens Council is divided into 16 wards, each ward being represented by 3 councillors. There is an election of one councillor to each of the wards each year, which takes place on 6th May this year.

Elections are held in thirds, with one seat for each ward becoming vacant annually. Each councillor is elected for a term of 4 years

ST HELENS COUNCIL WARDS

Billinge & Seneley Green; Blackbrook; Bold ; Earlestown; Eccleston; Haydock; Moss Bank; Newton; Parr; Rainford; Rainhill; Sutton; Thatto Heath; Town Centre; West Park; Windle;

The BNP will be standing in 8 of the wards, underlined above.

Please pray against the voice of extremism, and that moderation will be heard in all the wards, especially the ones indicated.

Please pray for Christian candidates to have a favourable hearing and to be elected. Pray that regardless of the outcome they would be seen as men and women of integrity and relevance.

Pray that all politicians who will be elected will be open and sympathetic to what Christians say and the work they do in the town.

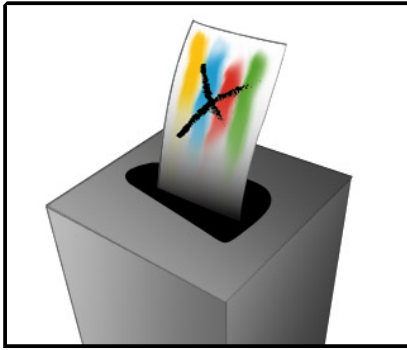
Pray that the town will flourish under the the government of the new council.

PRAY for schools in your neighbourhood. List some of the schools here:

Pray for the teachers, that they are able to exercise good discipline and be effective teachers. Pray that the children are kept safe and in an environment that helps them to learn. Pray for Christian teachers, that the presence of Jesus in their lives will radiantly shine in the classrooms and staff rooms.

PRAY for the elderly in your community. Pray for a more secure environment for them to move in. Pray for their financial needs, particularly those whose pensions have been affected by the economic crisis. Pray for care homes in your area - list them here:

PRAY for people with special needs. Community based care has meant many more special needs people are finding the fulfilment of living in their own homes, supported by teams of care workers. Praise God for this support of the most vulnerable in our communities. Pray that they find contentment and security where they live, and that they come to know God's love.



THURSDAY 6TH MAY

The General Election

In the last general election only 22% of the electorate voted for the party that formed the government. On this day when we choose who will govern us for the next five years, please pray for Christians to make use of their votes; to be motivated by concern for our nation and not by apathy. When Archbishop Desmond Tutu was first allowed to vote he was over 60 years old! Pray for people in our region to be stirred to exercise the democratic privilege they have enjoyed throughout their adult lives.

ST HELENS has two constituencies: St Helens North and St Helens South & Whiston. Confirmed candidates for the General Election 2010 in these constituencies at the time of producing this guide are:

St Helens North.

Conservative	Paul Greenhall
UKIP	Gary Robinson
Liberal Democrat	John Beirne
Labour	David Watts

St Helens South & Whiston

Conservative	Val Allen
UKIP	John Sumner
Liberal Democrat	Brian Spencer
Labour	Shaun Woodward
BNP	James Winstanley

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

the government of the Lord's choosing;

a government who will be able to deal with the serious challenge of the budget deficit and that can create the productive capacity for the nation to prosper;

a government that values marriage and the family and positively supports the traditional values of man and woman committed together for life;

a government that protects the vulnerable, including children, born and unborn, all those who are sick, disabled, addicted, elderly, and all the disadvantaged;

a government that will respect and protect the right of Christians to hold their beliefs and to act according to their Christian consciences.

PRAYER FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION

Loving God,

Thank you for caring about how our country is run, and that we have the right to vote for our politicians and government.

But in the run-up to this general election there are so many policies to understand, and so many different points of view to consider - sometimes I wonder whether there's any point in voting, whether anyone cares what I think.

As I choose who I am going to vote for, help me not to be cynical about politics and politicians, help me to remember that my vote can make a difference and help me vote for those people who will protect the poor and vulnerable, and do all they can to make our nation a place of fairness and peace.

Because you call us to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.

Courtesy of the Church of England web site www.cofe.anglican.org/generalelection

Today local elections are also taking place. Pray for men and women of integrity to be elected to these positions of importance in local government. See P5