

Easter Prayer Guide
2021

Pray well





Welcome

Who would have thought when our Easter celebrations were moved online last year, that we would find ourselves facing the same situation this Easter? Although we would love to be physically together, we know that we serve a great God who is with us everywhere. So, we invite you to be part of the week of prayer, coming together in the Spirit.

There are many ways to get involved – the main thing is to pray! This booklet will take you through readings and reflections in the lead up to Good Friday, and give you various topics to focus on in your prayers.

We'll be using the acronym **WELL** to bring before God both the situations we are facing close to home, and those faced by our global neighbours. We hope this booklet will help you pray.

24-hour prayer will be running from Monday to Friday and we would love you to sign up for a slot. Throughout the week there will be additional material on the website, including interviews and songs, and live prayer times via YouTube and Facebook. See the back page for more details. You could turn your daily walk into a prayer time and there are some suggestions throughout the week to encourage you to connect with others as you pray.

Pray **WELL** in your personal prayer times

Worship the Lord

Express your heart to him

Listen – what is God saying to you?

Lift others before him

Pray **WELL** as you connect with the church family

Walk and pray

Explore the videos and blogs online

Link into 24-hour prayer

Live prayer times





Monday

Pray Well for
Local Church

READ Matthew 21:12-17

Can you picture Jesus knocking over tables and driving people out of the temple? I wonder what onlookers were thinking as they witnessed this scene. Jesus was angry because the money changers and those selling animals for sacrifice were exploiting those who were coming to worship at the temple.

Jesus was upset because people were being hindered from coming to worship. What an amazing privilege it is to come into God's house and worship him! How wonderful that he makes the way open for us to come into his presence.

As we pray today, let's thank God for the local church.

Pray for our own congregation in Wellington, but also all the churches across our nation, that God would be glorified, and each church would truly be a 'house of prayer'.

If you are out walking and pass by a church on your journey, why not take a few moments to pray for that congregation?

PRAY We have several members serving God locally in Northern Ireland. Here are six for your prayers today:

- _ Sammy Foster and Roy Walker in Christian Vision for Men
- _ Michael Waddell in Belfast City Mission
- _ Toni Bassett working with refugees
- _ James Diffin working as a University chaplain
- _ Lee Eagleson in Trinity Church, Belfast

'My house will be called a house of prayer' **Matthew 21:12**



CONTACT one or two friends and pray together over a group video or phonecall.

Tuesday

Pray Well for
Justice

READ Matthew 21:23-32

Have you ever noticed how often the Pharisees show up trying to catch Jesus out? In the final few days before Jesus has to face the cross, they are intensifying their efforts to trap him. They fail to recognise the wonderful things he is doing and the authority with which he teaches.

They also continually find ways to heap burdens onto the people. They were putting barriers in the way of people's access to God and excluding those they considered poor and unworthy.

Jesus, however, was welcoming in all those the Pharisees despised. He told them, 'The tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you'.

Praise God that he welcomes in all those who are poor, oppressed, captive, and side-lined. He lifts off the burdens that have been heavy on them.

PRAY As we think about that, today please pray for Lauren Agnew as she serves with International Justice Mission. IJM works throughout the world, but Lauren's main work is to combat human trafficking in Romania. We also think about the invaluable work of Tearfund who partner with local churches around the world to bring restoration to those living in poverty.

'The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.'

Psalms 145:18



CONTACT Send a text or email to someone you've been praying for.

Wednesday

Pray Well for
Tough Times

READ Matthew 24:1-14

Do you ever look around and think the world is in chaos? This past year, especially, has thrown us into uncertainty and difficulty. And yet, we shouldn't be surprised.

Jesus foretold the future distress that would come, both in terms of physical disasters and the persecution of believers. Yet through all of these things, the Good News would spread to the ends of the earth, before Jesus' return.

As we pray today, let us rest in the knowledge that nothing that is happening has taken God by surprise, and that he continues to hold all things in his hands.

Let us be stirred to pray for all those who are in great distress through this pandemic. It is something that is on our minds so much, so let's turn those anxious thoughts into prayers. Pray for those who are ill and for all the frontline workers.

It is also easy to forget the many other things that people may be struggling with. Pray today that God would give them strength and that they would trust him in the midst of their suffering.

PRAY For your particular prayers today, Veronica and Ghassan and family in Beirut, Lebanon. Beirut is going through great distress. The explosion last August left 300,000 people homeless at a time when their economy had all but collapsed and Covid-19 was rampant.

'The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.' **Psalms 34:18**



LISTEN to how God is asking you to respond in some practical way for someone affected by Covid.



Thursday

Pray Well for
Community

READ Matthew 26:26-30, 36-46

In Gethsemane, Jesus was in deep anguish. He had taken three of his close friends to keep watch with him. And how did they support him in this most agonising moment? They fell asleep.

If he knew they would fall asleep, why bother taking them? He wanted to be with them. The Last Supper likewise demonstrates his desire to be with them, even Judas who would betray him, and Peter who would deny him.

In John 17 we find Jesus' prayer for believers. Verse 24 says, 'Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am'. In these hours before his arrest, and then crucifixion, his mind is on what he came to do – to bring us back into relationship with God, and to one day be with him in heaven.

Praise him for his wonderful love for us. Though we are so underserving, yet he draws us near.

PRAY that we would love people as Christ does, that we would desire to serve our communities. May he give us generous hearts and open hands.

Today, let's pray especially for our local community of Ballymena. We thank God for the ministries of Helping Hands and Re-story, that are showing God's love to people in practical ways.

Give thanks for all the volunteers working tirelessly and for those in the congregation who donate items generously. Praise God for the doors he is opening, and the connections being made. Pray for those helped through these ministries, that they would know there is a God who created them and loves them.

'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.' **Matthew 26:28**



POSTURE If you are able, adopt a different posture during prayer today, for example you could pray on your knees, with your hands open or pray audibly.

READ Matthew 27:45-54

Throughout our readings this week, we have seen how Jesus makes the way open for people to come near. Today we find ourselves at the foot of the cross, where he dealt with the sin that separated us from God. In those hours of darkness, Jesus' mission was reaching its culmination.

'At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.' (v51)

The barrier between us and God was removed. The way is open for us to approach God because of Jesus' sacrifice for our sins.

As we praise and thank him for saving us, may we be filled with a fresh passion to tell others about God's great salvation.

PRAY for friends, family and neighbours and ask God for opportunities to share the Good News with them. We also pray today for God's mission that continues all around the world. Some of those we support and for your ongoing prayers are:

- _ The Cousleys with Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF)
- _ BREAD with Norman Kennedy (Bread for Kenya on Facebook)
- _ Tim and Lynsey Johnston in Brazil
- _ Sergey and Julia Perevishko in Ukraine
- _ Steven and Courtney Lamont in South Africa
- _ Metka and Goran Macura in Slovenia

We also give thanks for your giving to our Mission Fund. One example is that in early December we learned of a widow in South Africa who was in dire straits with a leaking roof. We were able to send £500 to Steven and by Christmas she had a new tin roof.

'Surely he was the Son of God!'

Matthew 27:54



LISTEN to or sing a song of worship to help you focus on God and become aware of his presence with you. If you don't have one in mind, here is a suggestion: King of Kings by Hillsong.

Information

Easter Week Programme

24 hour prayer

24-hour prayer will be running from Monday 29th March to Friday 2nd April and we would love you to sign up for a slot.

You can find information on how to do this on our church website: **wellingtonpc.co.uk** Alternatively, you can contact the church office if you need any assistance with signing up.

Easter Week Events

Every evening at 8pm from Monday 29th March to Friday 2nd April you can find live or recorded video content on our Facebook and YouTube. We would love for you to join with us as we explore how to pray well this Easter week.

Easter Services

Palm Sunday 28th March 11.30am

'How to avoid temptation'

James 1:12-16

Easter Sunday 4th April 11.30am

'He makes everything new'

Revelation 21:1-8

Please visit our Church website **wellingtonpc.co.uk** where you can find lots more information and resources for Easter Week.

Contact us

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