



**We seek to invite, encourage
and enable all ages to be
disciples of Jesus Christ.**

For 10th to 23rd January 2021

prepared by Eric Smith

Each Sunday, Christians in every part of the UK join together in prayer. We would like to encourage you to keep setting aside 7pm on a Sunday for prayer, no matter how long you give. As you start, place a lit candle in the window of your home as a visible symbol of the light of life, Jesus Christ. Here are some suggested points for prayer.

Hear my voice when I call, LORD; be merciful to me and answer me.

Psalm 27:7

For great is your love toward me; you have delivered me from the depths

Psalm 86:13

This last week has found us “back in the depths” literally and figuratively. With snow and ice making it difficult or even dangerous to be out, with a new lockdown restricting further what we can do including the shutting of churches and places of worship, and with events in America causing us to fear for how power and politics interact, we might find ourselves feeling very negative.

Let’s start, then, by giving thanks to God that He is not limited by earthly powers and governments, that He is close to us hour by hour and that He will hear our voice when we call, and He is there to answer us in His mercy.

As we use the points below for our prayers, may He help us to come in faith, to recognise that we are not asked to sort out the world’s problems in our own strength, but, instead, to call on the One who is able.

We are told this in Romans 8:26 *“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.”*

Give thanks:

- For the efforts of the scientists, researchers, medical staff and volunteers who have been involved in developing and approving the three vaccines that we now have available in the UK. Pray that the vaccination programme goes smoothly and is effective.

- For the continuing work done by Graham and Sandra Duncan in South Africa and by the Vis de Copil team in Arad, Romania as they seek to help the poorest and show God's love in a practical way. Pray for continued strength for them all and for continued support from here at home.
- For the ability we have at Brightons to broadcast our services on the internet. Pray for those who preach, those who offer readings and prayers, those who have technical responsibilities week by week, those who tune in and listen – that we may all realise that we are part of God's family here, joined in unity. May each of us play our part, listening for God's guiding and helping and supporting one another.

Pray:

- For politicians across the world, especially those whose words carry weight, for good or ill, that they might choose their words carefully, that both their words and actions would be aimed at humility, justice and mercy as the Lord requires. Pray especially for the USA in this difficult time of transition when many other countries take their lead from events there.
- For every person across our land affected by the realities of Covid-19 with restrictions, financial pressures, employment concerns and health worries crowding in. Additionally, many will be starting to feel the effect of Brexit. At this time, we can all default to being self-centred, selfish and inconsiderate of others. Pray that we, as the light of Christ in the world, may show love, care and kindness towards others – remember that our actions often speak louder than our words so pray that in all we do, we glorify God.
- For the leaders within churches across Scotland, in particular our own Church of Scotland as they seek to navigate the difficult path through Covid. Pray for the correct balance between gathering for worship and protecting one another over the weeks and months ahead. Pray for each local minister, trying to deliver care and guidance to his or her flock. Pray for the ministers, OLMs and locums in our own Braes area, for help in working out the way ahead for our congregations.
- For all those struggling with illness, mental health issues or bereavement in these difficult days. Pray that God's peace and comfort may be with them and that help may be available, even in the current situation.

We often say these words in our worship – may they be true for each of us this week: *“The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.”*

Numbers 6:24-26