

For 1<sup>st</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Prepared by Jean Meek

Each Sunday at 7pm, Christians in every part of the UK join in prayer. Here are some prayer thoughts from Jean that you may wish to focus on.

*Some men came, bringing to him [Jesus] a paralysed man, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralysed man, 'Son, your sins are forgiven' ..... 'I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home' Mark 2:3-5,11*

*This is one of my favourite bible readings- it speaks of intercession and faith and yet I am always challenged by it. What kind of effort was needed to take their friend to Jesus? I don't think they had a wee confab before setting off and decided it would be a good idea to take along some rope and a couple of hammers – just in case they had to carry their friend up a set of outside stairs and make a hole in the basalt roof! It must have taken a fair bit of physical effort and determination to bring him to Jesus but if they were aware of the possible hazards, they were undaunted by them. Nor should we be. It was their faith in Jesus that drove them on, and it was **their** faith that moved Jesus. Pray that the Holy Spirit would fill us with that same undaunted spirit.*

Scott spoke to us a wee while ago about Shalom - to pray for Shalom is to pray an all-embracing prayer for peace and goodness; that everything would be exactly as it should be. **Pray** for our national Church, that it would be a place of Shalom for all who name Jesus as Lord. **Pray** too for the congregations of Brightons Church, Muiravonside Church, Blackbraes and Shieldhill Church, Slamannan Church, and ask that we would all know His peace, goodness and well-being; that there would be a coming together of God's people; a willingness to let go and let God. To let God be our guiding light, "*that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you*". John 17:21

**Pray** for those carrying the responsibility of government, in Britain and abroad. **Ask** God to place alongside them Christian men and women who will speak His truth and compassion into discussions and decisions. **Pray** for those who will be elected next week, that they would carry the responsibility of their position with dignity and act in the interest of the electorate.

*Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.* Heb 13:1-2 Please **pray** that Government would rethink their decision to send some asylum seekers to Rwanda.

Continue to pray for the people of Ukraine, and the other war-torn countries, Afghanistan, Yemen, Syria, Columbia to name a few. **Give thanks** for everyone who has opened their doors to welcome the refugees, **pray** that visa delays will be eliminated, and **ask** that the perpetrators will be stopped in their tracks as Paul was.

Alpha and Omega, first and last, beginning and end. Another Alpha course is ongoing in Church for those who'd like to explore, or refresh, Christian faith. **Give thanks** for those who facilitate the course and **pray** for those going along, that this will be a new beginning for them, that their faith may grow and new friendships may be formed.

Pablo Picasso is credited with saying, "The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away". Isn't that what scripture teaches us? [1 Peter 4:10 NLT] When we use our abilities to help each other, God is glorified. **Ask** the Holy Spirit to help us recognise the abilities we have been given and give us opportunities to use them.

In this lead-up to exams, and throughout their duration, please **pray** that God's peace would enfold our youngsters. They so desperately want to do well. **Pray** they would know that God cherishes them as they are; that their best is enough and their tomorrows are in His hands.

Remember those whose medical treatment was put on hold because of the pandemic, causing increased anxiety and extended pain levels. Sadly, it's anticipated that it will take some time to 'catch-up'. **Pray** that steps can be taken whereby those in pain or anxious about their health, can receive the help they need.

Mark Twain wrote: "Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, ..." **Pray** for our young people going on their trip to Israel and Palestine this October. **Ask** for safe travel throughout, that the experience would be an enriching and enjoyable one and the richness they bring back will be an encouragement to those they share the experience with.

**Give thanks** for the work of the CAP volunteers who have just announced that a second client has gone debt free this month. What great news! **Pray** for God's continued provision of the resources needed to continue this amazing work.

In these difficult days of persecution, war and pandemic, **give thanks** that we are not without hope, that Jesus came for us, died for us and intercedes for us today, right this minute, at the Father's Right Hand.