

Friday Focus

Welcome to the second issue of Friday Focus. Friday Focus invites all Christians to pray on Fridays throughout 2007, as part of the Year of Prayer. This is to lay a prayer foundation in preparation for Hope 2008, when the good news of Jesus Christ will be shared through word and deed into villages, towns and cities across the British Isles.

Thousands of Christians have linked in with Friday Focus since its launch and churches, towns and cities are mobilising initiatives during the Year of Prayer. Over 350 locations have already signed up to be a part of Hope 2008.

Prayer is not only about relationship with Jesus, it is also about partnership. Jesus invites us to pray and work so that 'His kingdom will come'. His purpose is to transform our lives and attitudes, so that as transformed people, Jesus is able to offer life to those who do not yet know him.

Each Friday, you have the opportunity to pray alone, or with others, focusing on the themes. Our aim is to pray **BLESS**ing on our families, friends, colleagues and then to others in our communities and across our nation. A blessing refers to the favour of God; that God will help and protect. God wishes to bless us and because He blesses us, He wants us to be a blessing to others. (Numbers 6:24-27)

The **BLESS** acronym is a helpful way to remember to pray about basic life issues. Jesus, in his life on earth, met people at their point of need and then addressed spiritual issues. **B** stands for body, health, strength; **L** for labour, work, financial concerns; **E** for emotional needs; **S** for social and relational areas of life and **S** for spiritual concerns.

As we pray, let's:

- Come humbly into God's presence – in praise and worship. (Psalm 117:1-2)
- Deal with any sin and ask for God's forgiveness. (1 John 1:9)
- Read and use the scriptures as a basis for how to pray. (Psalm 119:105)
- Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance as to how to pray. (Romans 8:26-27)
- Pray in faith in the name of Jesus. (John 14:13-14)
- Consider fasting on Fridays – either all meals, or one meal. (Matthew 6:16)
- Be available to share the love of Jesus. (Luke 4:18-19)

Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false. He will receive blessing from the Lord and vindication from God his Saviour. Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek your face, O God of Jacob.' (Psalm 24:3-6).

Friday Focus

Prayer themes for the 2007 Year of Prayer
APRIL – JUNE 2007

HOPE 2008



Good Friday Colossians 1:15-23; 1 Peter 1:3-9

Today we remember how God showed his great love for us, forgiving our sin, removing Satan's authority, and giving us hope, salvation and a new life in Christ. **Give thanks:** that Jesus is **the** hope for our world! **Pray:** for renewed faith to help us all to 'set apart Christ as Lord'; for boldness to be witnesses to the hope we have been given; for many to catch the vision of Hope 2008 at the Easter conferences; for my church and its witness in our community. **Consider:** could I offer hope to someone today?

The Jewish Community Psalm 122; Romans 11:11-18

The vibrant and dedicated Jewish community makes up over 300,000 of the UK's population. **Give thanks:** for the richness and vibrancy that the Jewish Community brings to life. **Confess:** the church's lack of understanding and knowledge of God's plans and purposes for the Jewish people. **Pray:** for **BLESSing** on Jewish families today. **Consider:** What may we learn and do to help build and support the Jewish communities and Israel?

Hope for families Deuteronomy 7:7-9; Philippians 2:1-4

Take time to think about my extended family. Who are the people who come to mind to pray for today? What are some of their needs? **Give thanks:** for the gift of families and the purpose God intends for them to play in society. **Pray:** for forgiveness if I/we are out of relationship with anyone today; for opportunities to care in practical ways; a **BLESSing** for them to continue in their faith or to find faith in Jesus Christ. **Consider:** making contact with someone in my family.

Government and leadership Romans 13:1-5; Proverbs 29:2

On 3 May 2007, there will be local government elections in England, local government and Scottish Parliamentary elections in Scotland, and National Assembly elections in Wales. **Confess:** when the Church has not supported national leaders. **Pray:** for God's will to be done in these elections; for more righteous men and women to be elected to positions of authority, for wise transitioning in the national Labour party leadership, for Her Majesty the Queen and her role. **Consider:** how could I get involved in the political process.

Pray that:

- B** may look to God for all their needs
(Psalm 145:15)
- L** may keep their lives 'free from the love of money'
(Hebrews 13:5)
- E** may have 'a gentle and quiet spirit'
(1 Peter 3:4)
- S** will 'bear with each other and forgive'
(Colossians 3:13)
- S** may confess Jesus as Lord
(Romans 10:9)

BLESS



A youth movement 1 Timothy 4:12; 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

Hope 2008 plans to harness the energy and enthusiasm of young people to get involved in creative outreach programmes in their communities and start a new youth movement. **Give thanks:** for all youth agencies who are working together for this. **Pray:** that the Hope08 youth website will provide encouragement and resources; for the young people I know in my church to stand firm in their faith; **BLESSing** for a young person who needs direction and hope. **Consider:** how is my church serving young people in our community?

Crime and disorder Proverbs 14:34; Colossians 4:2-6

Experience has proved that churches and agencies praying and working together are a catalyst for positive change. **Give thanks:** for the police service (17th May is the National Day of Prayer); for all who work in the criminal justice system. **Pray:** for protection and guidance for police officers and their families; for all involved in the Redeeming Our Communities initiative; for an uncovering of the real issues that lead to addiction, despair, crime and disorder. **Consider:** how could my church pray for, and support, the local police force?

Prayer and mission Joel 2:12-17; Acts 1:12-14

Yesterday 10 days of non-stop prayer around the world began, when millions of Christians will be joining different prayer initiatives to pray for their communities and their nations. **Give thanks:** for what is happening here, e.g. Connecting Scotland, Walk Cumbria, Trumpet Call, Prayer Week, 24-7 week in Westminster, etc. **Pray:** for a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit on God's people across our nations; for the removal of unbelief and apathy; for many to discover the truth about Jesus this week. **Consider:** linking in with one of the prayer initiatives.

Global Day of Prayer Habbakuk 2:14; Psalm 24

On Pentecost Sunday (27th May) the 3rd Global Day of Prayer will take place, after which follows 90 days when Christians bless their communities in practical ways. **Give thanks:** for this move of God - in 2006, 199 nations took part. **Pray:** for the events taking place here in Britain, for a nation which you are concerned about; for a global issue such as poverty, injustice, climate change or the AIDS pandemic and ask for God's grace, mercy and provision of resources. **Consider:** what practical way could I bless someone today?

June 07

Friday

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Children at risk Lamentations 2:19; Romans 12:12

The UK has been accused of failing its children, as it comes bottom of a league table for child well-being across 21 industrialised countries. **Confess:** 'lift up your hands to him for the lives of our children'. **Pray:** for the World Weekend of Prayer for Children at Risk (2-3rd June); for Christian ministries reaching out globally to the billion children living in poverty and exploitation; for the church and government to work in unity and for children's needs to be taken seriously. **Consider:** how can I support vulnerable children in my community?

G8 – Group of 8 Nations Psalm 2; 1 Timothy 2:1-4

The G8 is an annual gathering of world leaders from: USA, Russia, Germany, Italy, France, Canada, Japan and UK, with EU representation. **Confess:** our failings as a nation in responding to previous G8 commitments. **Pray:** for God's favour to rest on the G8 meeting in Germany today; for wisdom and understanding as they consider terrorism, world debt and poverty, famine and relief, climate change; for renewed commitment to carry through on decisions made. **Consider:** BLESSing in prayer one of these leaders and their families.

Fatherlessness Malachi 4:4-6; Ephesians 6:4

The imbalance of human love, care and example through absent fathers can create social, emotional, physical and spiritual long term needs for many children and young people. **Give thanks:** for Father's Day, allowing many children to express their love. **Pray:** for fathers to create time for their families and to be good role models; for resources and guidance for single parents raising children without fathers; for the church to accept her responsibility to care for widows, orphans and the fatherless. **Consider:** encouraging a father you know.

People we meet John 3:16-21; 1 Peter 3:15

We want many people to believe in Jesus Christ through the vision of Hope 2008. Who are the people you will meet today e.g. travelling to work, at bus-stops, in shops, at petrol stations, at the school gate, delivering post, collecting rubbish etc. **Give thanks:** for them remembering that God sent his Son for everyone. **Pray:** a BLESSing for God to meet all their needs in Christ. **Consider:** how might I be a more effective witness of the hope I have received?

Changed hearts Colossians 1:9-13; Micah 6:8

The transformation of society will only come about through changed hearts and lives. St Paul prayed for the Christians he knew. **Give thanks:** for those who have encouraged me on my journey of faith. **Pray:** for 2-3 Christian friends that they will be filled with the knowledge of His will; bear fruit in every good work, be strengthened with all His power and live thankful lives; Pray also for a fresh move of God's Holy Spirit through the Church I attend. **Consider:** BLESSing in prayer a person featured in the news.

'The true measure of a nation's standing is how well it attends to its children – their health and safety, their material security, their education and socialization, and their sense of being loved, valued, and included in the families and societies into which they are born.'
(UNICEF Report 14.2.07)

Resources

Friday Focus will be published quarterly through 2007. Full permission is given to copy text but please acknowledge Friday Focus, World Prayer Centre as the source.

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More information about the topics covered, other initiatives and ideas of creative ways to pray.

Prayer Resources:

Prayer Alert – Weekly prayer email covering UK, Europe and world
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Highlighted Initiatives:

Year of Prayer 2007 – Information on what is taking place in the nation from: www.worldprayer.org.uk

Hope 2008 – A year of unified mission
Tel: 01273 571939 www.hope08.com

Events in May:

8 Apr – 27 May: National Prayer Walk - Scotland www.connectingscotland.com

28 Apr – 20 May: Walk Cumbria
www.walkcumbria.org.uk

17 May: National Day of Prayer for the Police Service www.cpauk.net

19 May: Trumpet Call VI – Birmingham
www.worldprayer.org.uk

19-27 May: Prayer Week
www.prayerweek.com

20 – 27 May: Week of Prayer for Parliament
www.christiansinparliament.org.uk

22 May – 9 June: IMPACT – Isle of Man
www.prayernet.org.im

27 May: Global Day of Prayer
www.globaldayofprayer.co.uk

TRUMPET CALL VI : 19 MAY 2007

The NEC Arena, Birmingham. 11am - 6pm
"Calling all Christians together for a day of prayer & proclamation at this critical time in our nation"

Tickets: £5

Online ticket shop & info:
www.worldprayer.org.uk

Tel (credit/debit cards): 0121 633 7393
Post: World Prayer Centre

Enquiries: trumpet@worldprayer.org.uk

Coming up in the next issue of Friday Focus: July – September 2007

UN International Youth Day:
12 August 2007 www.un.org

Racial Justice Sunday:
9 September 2007 www.ctbi.org.uk/ccrj

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