



East Staffs and South Derbyshire Prayer letter **January 2024 Monday OR Wednesday 9.00 to 9.30 am**

If possible please join your brothers and sisters in prayer around the circuit at one of these times in your week and
If you feel it appropriate for you, just pick areas/ideas that appear most important and concentrate on them.

John 13:34

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

- **Give Thanks** Give thanks for those who are trying to bring aid to those in the war-torn areas of the world especially at this time the Gaza strip.
- For the early signs of spring in God’s creation.

EACH WEEK

- Continue to pray for those who are working towards peace in the conflict areas of the world.
- Pray for all those who are in hospital that their needs will be met and that they will be treated with dignity and respect whatever their needs.
- Pray for the elections taking place during this month in Azerbaijan, Pakistan, Indonesia Belarus and Cambodia to be free and fair. Some of these countries have a poor track record in listening to the will of the people.
- Pray for the Middle East not to become a focus for world conflict and all that would mean for mankind. Pray for our government not to blindly follow the Americans but to think for themselves. Great statesmanship is needed throughout the world at this moment in time and it is difficult to see where it will come from.
- Pray for the Church Councils that are taking place this month that they will be positive meetings, looking at the way forward to witness in their communities.

Week one 5th February

John 14:1

Jesus Comforts His Disciples

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.”

Palestine/Israel –Continue to pray for those families who have lost loved ones, especially the women and children in their thousands who have been killed by both sides. Pray those who have been displaced and for the many hundreds of thousands who have lost everything. Pray for the UN to have more influence over the warring factions. Pray that those involved in making this war last longer realise that every life is sacred and that any ideology that involves killing others is not part of the actions required by the God which both sides purport to believe in. The only hope for the future is a two state solution. Please pray for this.

The pictures we see from Gaza show immense destruction and squalor. Please pray for the world to recognise the need to commit to rebuilding the country as a road to better security for the ordinary people of Palestine, the state of Israel and ultimately the safety of the world.

Poverty in the UK –

According to the Office of National Statistics (ONS) the value of wages will not return to pre-pandemic levels until 2027. In an age when inflation has been at over 10% this means that many millions of people in the UK have seen a fall in their standard of living and purchasing power. As a result many more families are living in relative poverty and many more in what is called absolute poverty by the ONS. Pray for those parents who are going hungry while trying to feed their children. Pray for those children persistently turning up to school hungry. Pray for a society and a government that cares about these things and acts on them with something other than soundbites. The ONS expect poverty at about 18% - that's nearly one in five. We need to remember how privileged most of us are.

Pray for Palestine, Israel, Russia and the Ukraine. For those fighting to accept the humanity of their opposition.

Week Two 12th February

Ephesians 5 v 1-2

Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Children's services

Pray for the work of Children's services, underfunded and neglected over the past ten years there is now a crisis in need of support for our young people. The waiting list in the child mental health services around the UK is a national disgrace and when inpatient treatment is needed it is rarely close to the home of the child resulting in families split apart by distance as in-patient provision for young people is so poor.

Lent

Ash Wednesday is this week. Please pray for the members of our churches to become closer to Jesus as they focus on the events leading to his death and resurrection. Pray for any Lent groups you know of or are attending, for those leading and those taking part that they will perhaps see the love of god in a new way through the sacrifice of His son.

Maternity care

Pray for those working in this sector of the NHS. Beset by falling numbers of midwives, lack of sufficient funding and historically many failures in the service. Pray that the current investigations and inquiries will lead to greater transparency within the service, better care for mothers during pregnancy and at birth, and an acknowledgement for NHS leaders that there have been serious problems, not least by managers trying to suppress complaints and 'protect' themselves.

17th February is Random Acts of Kindness Day. Founded in 1995, we are encouraged to do random acts of kindness. Pray for those random acts of kindness to reflect God's love in the general population.

Pray for Palestine, Israel, Russia and the Ukraine. Pray for those who are courageously leading calls for the ceasefires especially where there are imprisoned for their statements.

Week Three 19th February

1 John 1:6

"If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth."

News services

Pray for those the news services try to demonise, the asylum seekers, the poor, the sick and the ignored. We are constantly hearing/ reading about how asylum seekers should be sent home, more recently how the church is helping asylum seekers to settle in the UK, how single parents are a drag on the welfare state. How the triple lock on pensions is holding the country to ransom. People who are caring, positive people, who are concerned for the needs of those around them are called woke and looked down on, often resulting in social media attacks and bullying. Our calling is to defend and help these people. Pray for the news outlets of the world to take a balanced and humane look at the poor and needy. Pray for those trying to demonise that they will come to realise we are all part of one humanity. God's children.

Circuit Pray for those initiatives within the circuit aimed at reaching wider public. Most are in the circuit weekly notices. Use this weeks notices to centre your prayers but the initiatives include coffee mornings and afternoon teas, CAMEO meetings (come and meet each other), games sessions, Baby Buddies and many others.

Carers

We probably all know of someone who is caring for a relative or friend. Usually without payment they are expected to give up jobs, give up friends and centre their lives around the one being cared for with little respite. Pray for the government to develop a positive support network for carers, both financial and physical. Pray for those carers you know, especially those who are caring for loved ones who have lost or are losing their memories and their grip on reality. Pray also for those who are caring for children with incurable diseases and diseases we think of as adult diseases associated with aging.

Pray for Palestine, Israel, Russia and the Ukraine. Pray for the civilians caught up in these wars, for help and support to reach them. For aid to get to those in need and despair.

Week Four 26th February

1 John 1:7

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.”

Safeguarding conference

The Methodist Church takes its responsibilities in safeguarding very seriously. We have a duty to enable all to worship safely in our churches. The District Safeguarding conference takes place on the 2nd March. Pray for the success of this conference that the delegates will feel supported and informed in their work throughout the District and individual churches will be safer places to worship in.

Circuit Service

Pray for the Circuit service at Uttoxeter this Sunday. For those leading and those taking part. That it will be a time of inspiration and collective growth in the spiritual journey of the circuit.

Senegal

Senegal is one of the leading examples of democracy in Africa. Since Independence in 1960 all elections have resulted in peaceful transitions of power. Pray this will continue to happen in the presidential elections to be held on March 1st. There are growing tensions within the background of economic difficulties and polarization of views (as is happening all over the world.)

Pray for Palestine, Israel, Russia and the Ukraine. Pray for the light of Christ to shine in the darkness of these conflicts.

A big thank you for joining in with the prayers. Obviously if something from one month becomes a burden on your heart then keep praying for it and I will endeavour to provide feedback where that is possible. Please feedback to me any things you would like the group to pray for and any ideas you might have to improve the way the group works. God Bless Steve 01283 820096

If at any time you wish to stop receiving this prayer letter, please let me know either by email or the phone number above.