



East Staffs and South Derbyshire Prayer letter **April 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.

Matthew 22:36 – 40

“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?” Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your Mind. This is the first and greatest commandment....”

Give Thanks

- For the work that our Leadership Team does.
- For the work that the volunteers do in your church, from the Stewards to the cleaners and everyone else.
- Give thanks for those in our congregations who actively encourage folk both inside and out of the church.
- Give thanks for the outreach projects that the churches in our circuit have (see the weekly notices for more details).

EACH WEEK

- Pray for ceasefires in Gaza and the Ukraine.
- Please pray for all those affected by terrorism especially remember the victims of ISIS in Russia.
- Please pray for our presbyters under pressure at the moment. Pray for Rev Rachel Wood, that she will be refreshed by her sabbatical, for Rev. Rachel Moss, who is grieving for her father/uncle; for Mike who is in charge of the circuit at the moment; for Helen who is currently not well and for Manoa as he moves towards full time ministry in the circuit but is still very much involved in the Fijian community’s spiritual needs.
- Pray for the Circuit Leadership team who are also working to keep the circuit going with the current difficulties and are aiming to keep the circuit on track. Pray for Teresa Hawkins who is monitoring the circuit email and circuit office, responding to the needs of the circuit where possible.
- Pray for the raft of ideas being promoted by all political parties in light of the next election to be focussed on the wellbeing of all not just the interests of the few.
- Please pray for peace as the world seems to be slipping towards global conflict.
- Pray for the elections planned for the 3rd April (Pakistan), April – June (India), 4th April (Kuwait), 10th April (South Korea), 21st April (Maldives), 20th April (Togo), that the will of the people will be observed by the parties involved.
- Continue to pray for the Middle East not to become a focus for world conflict and all that would mean for mankind. Pray for a consensus to be reached as to the future of Palestine and that a political end to the conflict will be reached that provides security for Palestinians and Israelis alike. Great statesmanship is needed throughout the world at this moment in time and it is difficult to see where it will come from.

Week one 1st April

Matthew 28 : 39

And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself.”

- Please pray for all those who have responded to the Easter narrative especially those who have met Jesus and accepted His love for them for the first time. Pray they will get the support and guidance they need to follow Jesus and grow as they travel on their pilgrimage with Christ.
- 2nd April is designated as World Autism awareness day. Please pray for those who have this issue. It is said that if you've met one autistic person you have met one autistic person. They are all different, individuals whose issues come under the auspices of mental health and as we know the mental health services in this country and indeed around the world leave a lot to be desired. Pray for understanding of the issues they face and for tolerance and help for those who are autistic.
- Around the world there are many tribes, nations and peoples who are persecuted whether due to differences in faith, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation or gender. Please pray for both the persecuted and the persecutors for tolerance and understanding as well as an end to the persecution. We are taxed with loving our neighbours whatever the differences and our own prejudices. Pray for ourselves that we will be true to the Christian ideal of loving our neighbours and not standing in judgement

Week Two 8th April

John 13:34

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

- Many millions in the world are beset by the horrors of hunger, thirst and homelessness caused by the actions of others. Please pray for all in these situations but especially pray for those Christians in these situations. That they can maintain their commitment and love for others wherever they find themselves. Pray for the aid agencies trying to support people with these problems especially in Gaza, Sudan and South Sudan, Yemen and Myanmar.
- Pray for farmers and growers who have been affected by the constant rain this winter. Our weather patterns are changing as a result of climate change and will affect what they can grow successfully in the future. Pray for governments to support farmers and help them to continue to supply us with food and to adapt to the new climate we find ourselves in.
- Pray for the Methodist Church throughout the world. In some places it is growing more quickly than ever and in others (including the UK) it is fast declining. Pray that the message of salvation and forgiveness of sins will echo throughout the world and that Methodists everywhere will spread the love of Jesus. Pray that the church will not be hidebound by rules and regulations as the Jewish leaders were in the time of Jesus. Pray for renewal and an outpouring of the spirit.

Week Three 15th April

John 13:35

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

- Millions of people around the world are in despair and they try to improve their lives by moving. The despair of asylum seekers and refugees on the TV reports is palpable and horrific. People traffickers are taking advantage of them, countries round the world offer limited help, often only accepting migrants that ‘fit’ their own ideas not recognising the needs of many. Pray for the agencies involved in preventing the exploitation of refugees and asylum seekers whether it be traffickers, sex workers or other forms of criminality. Pray that Christians and their witness can bring hope to those who feel they have no hope.
- Gaza ceasefire?
- Just before Easter the USA abstained from a vote on a ceasefire in Gaza. While this may not have had the desired effect of encouraging a true ceasefire it at least indicates that, albeit reluctantly, the USA is realising, as most other countries already have done, that the horrors of the war in Gaza cannot continue. Pray that the leaders of Hamas will come to the negotiating table, as the only way that peace can come in the Middle East, is for a peace settlement in the conflict here. Too many leaders are content to stand back from action, too many are inept and unwilling to stand up for the rights of all humans as set out by the United Nations. Pray for leaders of countries to act in the best interests of all people not just the faction they belong to.
- Church growth.
- Pray for the churches of our circuit. Pray they will act on the prompting of the Holy Spirit, pray that they will accept change, confront the issues of witness and gospel outreach, search for God’s guidance and not sit back and accept the status quo. If we do that our churches will not survive and our circuit will disappear. Pray for the work of Jordan in the Uttoxeter school’s pyramid, for Oasis and their outreach programmes and for all those who are leading initiatives to engage with the local community.

Politicians and their language.

Week Four 22nd April

Romans 13:8

“Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law.”

- Monday 23rd April is Stephen Lawrence Memorial Day, pray for the work of the charity working in his name to eradicate hatred and racism.
- Pray for those who have been subject to indiscriminate murder. From American high school shootings to the Russian concert hall attack to the fighting in Gaza and the Ukraine. Every life is precious but many do not see what they do is wrong. Pray for those who see no wrong in taking a life, that they will be convicted by the Holy Spirit and change their ways from an attitude of violence to one of peace.
- The government in its various forms has been found seriously wanting in its work. From the Windrush scandal (where the government appears to be delaying compensation as the people get older) to the Post Office scandal(where a horrendous cover up took place), from the HIV and hepatitis scandal of infected blood) to the Birmingham city equal pay fiasco. There are many more instances of government mismanagement with attempted cover ups afterwards. Pray for the

victims of these fiascos and pray that lessons will be learnt about accountability and honesty and that these lessons will be learnt fully and will not be repeated. Governments often initiate enquiries and reports then ignore the findings. Pray that reports for the government will result in action, whatever party is in charge.

Week Five 29th April

Ephesians 4:2

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

- Over the last few years we have seen the total lack of morality in the way our financial systems work. Bosses and companies that make huge fortunes, that cannot be spent in one lifetime, earning in a few hours the amount their workers can only dream of accumulating in lifetime, if ever. Prices forced up whenever they think they can rather than reflecting the cost of supplies and when supplies get cheaper not bringing their prices down. The phrase corporate greed perfectly suits the ethos of many companies and leaders. Pray that they will realise the error of this attitude to finance and the people they employ and that fair moral stances will be taken and a levelling of opportunity and reward will take place. Pray for more accountability in government and business for the way companies and institutions are managed.
- Pray for the vast wealth of the Christian Church around the world to be used with wisdom to support those whom Jesus tells us to help, the poor, the naked, the lost and the hungry for why store treasures on earth when we should be storing our treasure in Heaven?
- Pray for workers rights throughout the world. We sometimes forget the fight that ordinary people had to gain the rights to holidays, sick pay, maternity rights, to secure employment and a fair wage. Many would say these rights are being slowly eroded in the UK but pray for those millions of workers round the world who have no rights, those forced to work as slaves, those forced into work for a pittance because they are under authoritarian rule, those who are trafficked, those who are downtrodden and feel worthless. Pray for the workers and their bosses for fairness in societies where there is no fairness. Pray for those who feel worthless and without hope. Pray for the coming of Jesus to them and their families to give them hope.

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