

*Christ Church Oswestry*  
*Transforming life through Jesus Christ*  
*Celebration! Newsletter*

*Prayer 4 life*

*weekend 30<sup>th</sup> Oct to 1<sup>st</sup> Nov*



*Calling on God for the fullness of life  
that Jesus offers to the Church,  
our families and friends,  
our neighbours and community*

# Why a *Prayer4life* weekend?



We are a people of Hope. Why? Because the God who raised Jesus Christ from the dead is with us. He is, as Psalm 33 says, “our help and our shield” in whom “our hearts rejoice, for we trust in His holy name.” For His

unfailing love rests on us, even as we put our hope in Him.

Our hope in God is not simply for ourselves but for our families, and for our town. Imagine for a moment what Oswestry, and all our towns and cities, would be like if God's values and way became the norm for how everyone lived. Think of the difference we would see in the lives of families and friends, schools, and work-places, streets and offices. When we consider this we might yearn for it but wonder how can it be?

What is beyond us is not beyond our God, for as the angel Gabriel said to Mary, nothing is impossible with God. When God moves in power people change, streets become safe, the sick are healed and the dead are raised. God can do this directly, we see this in Revivals but generally God chooses to work indirectly through His people. “I am the vine,” Jesus says “you are the branches, If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit.”

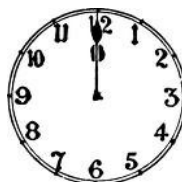
And then Jesus goes on to make us this great promise about prayer, “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be given to you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.” [John 15:5 onwards]



Jesus means that when we live in harmony with God our hearts will want what God wants – so when we pray God will answer for our prayers will be in accordance with His will. And even as we pray the Holy Spirit attunes us to God so we seek His priorities, His heart of love and compassion, and His will. It is a strange, mysterious and awesome privilege that God chooses to act in the world through us, by our prayer.



But 40 hours of prayer,  
from Friday at 8 to  
Sunday at noon?



How is it  
possible?

## 40 Hours of Prayer?

We know we should pray, but we also know we can find it hard to pray for just 4 minutes and 40 minutes can seem like a mountain, so how can we pray for 40 hours? And fast? This feels like a burden, a madness, and not a joy, and not for me. I'm an active person, I'm not good at sitting still. I can't leave my family and home to be 40 hours at Church. And how will I find all the words for 40 hours when I struggle to find the words for a few minutes.

If we want something strongly in our life, such as new pair of shoes or to visit family we willingly invest the time to do it. We are not asking you to come to the Church for a constant 40 hours of prayer - we all need to sleep, eat, & be with others. But we are creating a 40 hour framework in which we hope you will come to one of the guided events we are providing and/or take time out elsewhere for prayer on a suggested theme, using the suggested prayer diary, we shall be providing in the Church.

### HELPS for the weekend.

- + some suggestions for prayer, and thoughts on 'what to pray' for and for fasting are given in this newsletter;
- + we will set up a prayer request box in the church foyer so that between now and the weekend you could share needs you would like us to pray for as a church;
- + make your own list of people and situations on your heart and invite God to lead your prayers;
- + pray without words, by being still, quietening your mind, focusing on Jesus, enjoy being in God's presence and then bring the people, the situation before God that He might act in the need.

Words are not essential, for in God's love, as Paul says in Romans 8 even our wordless groans make acceptable prayers. "We do not know what we are pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express." When we abide in Jesus, the Spirit prays for us in accordance with God's will.

"May God meet all our needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever... May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all." [Philippians 4:19-20 and 2Corinthians 13:14].

**What  
do I  
do about**

**FASTING?**

Fasting is a free offering to God of what is precious to us. We give something up as a way of re-stating our personal commitment to Him. So, fasting is not an action of duty but of love, a gift of our hearts and bodies to God.

**What can I give up?** This must reflect your reality. Take time to consider what you could do, not what you can't possibly do.

Use the box below to say what you might give up, e.g.: a TV show, a meal [if medically able]; a paper or magazine; hobby-time.

Reflect on Isaiah 58:6ff for inspiration: Is this not the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and unite the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter – when you see the naked, to clothe him and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? .... Then you will call and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and He will say: Here am I.

“The word of the Lord Almighty came to me ... “the fasts ... will become joyful and glad occasions and happy festivals for Judah. Therefore love truth and peace.” [Zechariah 8:19

In this box you might write what time you will pray at home and which Church guided prayer time you might come to.



## What should we pray for?

This varies according from need to need:

### [1] For families, friends, & neighbours who don't know Jesus.

Ask God to plant in their hearts:

- [a] a desire to urgently consider: What is my purpose for living? And then direct their thoughts to Him.
- [b] a sense of their emptiness, which can only be satisfied by Jesus, so they will be ready for Jesus to answer their hopes.
- [c] a yearning to seek answers to the eternal questions of life such as "Where will I go when I die?" And so to be led to Christ Jesus.

### [2] For the Church, for:

- [a] the renewal of the Church so we can accomplish our primary task – the sharing of the good news with the lost;
- [b] a spirit of unity and compassion, so that we would abound in love one toward another and be one in peace together;
- [c] the spiritual growth of the Church in Holy Spirit led discipleship.

### [3] For the sick and afflicted i.e. for those suffering distress caused by circumstances other than illness, for:

- [a] wisdom to seek the will of God in the situation;
- [b] weaknesses that we may have in our lifestyle that may hinder our prayers being answered [see Isaiah 59:1-2];
- [c] word-led prayers – not our words but the scripture Word, pray the promises of God over the people; and
- [d] worship-filled prayers [see e.g. 2Chronicles 20:22; Acts 16:25-26]

### [4] For ourselves for help in praying and fasting:

- [a] ask the Holy Spirit to lead you and therefore don't worry about getting the words right;
- [b] for protection in personal prayer against distraction - which can eat up your time for prayer; and
- [c] for help in fasting, so it is not a burden but a surprising joy.

# Main Events Programme

**Friday** 5:45 for 6:00 pm Launching the weekend with a Bring and Share Tea and Praise Party.

**Theme: Praising our Covenant Keeping God**

**Saturday** – Church building open through the day for guided prayer times and public Bible reading:

**8:00 am Theme: For our Church**

Bible reading and Prayer  
Ezra, Nehemiah and Acts of the Apostles

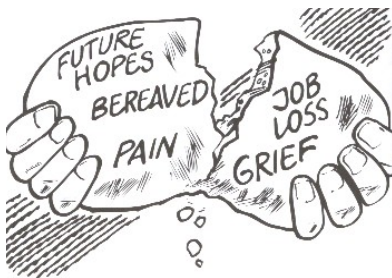
**12 noon Theme: For our outreach to families**

Bible reading and Prayer  
Ezra, Nehemiah and Acts of the Apostles

**5:00 pm Theme: For the Nations**

Bible reading and Prayer  
Ezra, Nehemiah and Acts of the Apostles

**8:00 pm Theme: For the coming of God's Kingdom**  
[and deliverance from evil]



**Sunday 10:30**  
Communion Worship:  
Theme: Giving 4 Life  
Church Gift Day

Our *Prayer 4 life* weekend expresses the United Reformed Church's national *Vision4Life* call to re-engage with the Bible, Prayer and Evangelism for purposes of transforming the Church, and the world around us.

**Vision4Life**  
*Transformed through prayer*

# Some suggestions for prayer over the 40 hours:

## For night prayers:

As darkness falls: come Lord Jesus

When we are tired & weary & longing for rest come Lord Jesus

While we wait for our Father's Kingdom, come Lord Jesus.

Read, reflect on and pray through the words of Psalm 91.

Pray for those who care for us and defend us while we sleep

## Day time possibilities:

for those who are born and for those who marry today;

for those who live in broken families; or without food, water, shelter

for our local communities e.g.: for schools, colleges & the Christian Schools Worker, for the Kingswell Centre, the CAB and other help agencies.

for the sick and afflicted; the mourning and bereaved

for local hospitals and hospices

## Halloween possibilities:

pray against cultural, religious and material strongholds

pray for CTOD and workers for the Harvest, and for revival

At any time: read, reflect on and pray through the words of Psalm 23; psalm 51; 116; 146; 150.

2 Chronicles chapter 7; 2 Chronicles chapter 20

John chapter 20

Galatians chapter 6

Pray for our Sunday worship and Church Gift Day



For more thoughts pray and fasting – see next pages.

And look out for our 40 hour prayer diary

# *Some Other Happenings for Your Action*

*Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October: Family Harvest Parade*

Harvest Offerings for Homeless in Oswestry  
Cash Offerings for Alzheimers Disease Society



## *Church Cleaning Day*

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October  
see weekly notices for details



## *Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October: Church Meeting*

see weekly notices for Agenda followed by

## *Bring & Share Harvest Fellowship Lunch*



## Church Gift Day: 1<sup>st</sup> November



## *Shoe Box Sunday*

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> November:

Hope for a touch of love  
[details in the foyer]

