



WIN-UK PRAYER & FASTING WEEK GUIDE

In a wonderful act of solidarity, our church family has been united in praying and taking part in a common daily devotion for the past two weeks. In an effort to build on this, starting today (Mon 30 Mar), we have designated the next six days as Prayer & Fasting week. **We will do this in support of 144 of our brothers and sisters who are currently working in hospitals amidst coronavirus.** They are on the frontline of a serious and fierce battle, and one of the ways we can partner with them is through prayer and fasting.



HOW WILL WE PRAY?

We will:

- **Pray daily at 8:30 pm** (as far as practicable).
- Connect and join with another person as we pray in unison (family or friends).
- Light a candle where safe to do so.
- Read the short reflections first to help empathise with real-life situations.
- Use the daily prayer focus as the theme for your prayer.

HOW DO WE FAST ALONGSIDE PRAYING?

Fasting is a form of spiritual discipline practiced with the reading of God's Word and prayer. There are times when the Body of Christ needs to be set apart from excesses and pleasures that overtake our efforts to reflect and call upon God more intently. With the pandemic wreaking havoc across the world and people confined to their homes, now is the right time to fast together.

Above all else, God's objective is to create in us a clean heart and strong spirit, in order for us to be His 'shining light blessing' to the world. So, we fast with an intention to draw near to our Heavenly Father, surrendering our focus in order to listen to Him, and to respond positively to the global crisis.

IDEAS FOR A MEANINGFUL FAST

- Skipping a meal and drinks.
- Shortening our time on TV and gadgets.
- Refraining from negativity but instead be willing to develop how to respond more positively.
- As we fast, we intertwine the condition of our hearts, our longing for God and our love for others, together with God's heart for all of humanity.

Let us begin today.

DAY 1

PRAYER FOCUS: FIRST THINGS FIRST. SURRENDERING OUR HEARTS TO GOD.

Reflection: *I have a lot on my mind. Worries, fears, doubts, frustrations... I might fall ill, putting my life in danger... I remember people who have wronged me, which makes me feel unloved, neglected and causes me to lose trust in others... I have so many weaknesses that I cannot control... I am tired of life... running away from reality... no clear direction... tired of gaining control... I am discouraged... my child doesn't listen to me... my parents don't understand... I am overlooked... anxious about my needs...uncertain of tomorrow ... all I need is rest.*

God hears our inner monologue. He hears the cries of our heart and seeks to give us rest from them. He does not want us to fight these battles alone. Christ gives a special kind of lasting peace that the world cannot give. The peace He offers draws us closer to Him and His *right* pleasures. His peace heals and redirects us to a new way of fulfilled life under His rule and care.

TODAY WE PRAY TO DRAW CLOSER AND NEARER TO GOD AS WE SURRENDER OUR HEARTS TO HIM.

Prayer Points:

- Let us pray to release our thoughts to God.
- Let us pray to ask for forgiveness from Him.
- Let us pray to receive God's peace and healing of our soul through Christ's redemptive work on the Cross to save and change our hearts.
- Let us pray for God to honour our daily time of prayer and fasting this week, for our 144 friends working in hospitals.

**How will you commit to
God as a way of fasting?**

DAY 2

PRAYER FOCUS:

THANKSGIVING & PROTECTION FOR OUR 144 KEY WORKERS.

Words from our Key Workers:

(comments have been edited for brevity)

'I have never seen anything like this in my entire nursing career... it is worrying, but my nursing oath prevails...As for me, I sometimes feel fearful, sometimes not; but I feel the peace of God after I pray for comfort and protection.'

What are your thoughts as you prepare to go to work?

'Hoping that we will do what is needed to be done in order to minimise the risk of contamination to myself and others.'

What do you tell your family before setting off for work?

'I give them a tight hug and say, "I love you".'

What motivates you to step out of your home to work?

'That in my own little way, I can be of help to others during this crisis.'

What comes to mind upon entering the hospital?

'I pray for God's protection over me and my colleagues, and to give wisdom to the management and leaders who must make decisions and set guidelines.'

REFLECTING WITH THOSE IN THE FRONTLINE

Do you see yourself and other Christian staff as bearers of Christ's Light where darkness seems to prevail?

'Yes. As Christian nurses or frontlines, we can make a huge impact at this current time. By pro-actively caring for our patients and our colleagues, we become part of the solution and ensure we do not add to the problem. This means being conscientious, compassionate, calm and positive whatever situation we are in. Using the knowledge, wisdom and the overall wider perspective that God has given us helps to improve the care we can give to patients. We also acknowledge everyone on the team, disregarding no one.'

TODAY LET'S PRAY FOR ALL OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THE FRONTLINE

Prayer Points:

- Let us offer our thanks to the Lord for the 144 who sacrifice, risking their lives for others.
- We can pray for those we personally know by name in homes and small group settings on Skype.
- Let us pray that they are encouraged daily by a growing realisation of their God-given calling, compassionate heart, skills and placement which is vital today.
- Let us pray for divine protection and healing for those who have varying symptoms.
- Let us pray for their spouses & children and housemates for their health & support.

IDEAS TO SHOW APPRECIATION FOR THE 144

In the context of a nationwide lockdown, it is practical for us to provide focused help to those within our reach, such as within Family Centres/Small Groups/Zone.

Please get in touch with your FC co-ordinators to find out how to help.

- Send them an encouraging message and find out how they are doing.
- To those who are ill, it is best to let them rest. Find out from relatives what they need.
- Children can design and create E-greetings; or get-well-soon cards which can be photographed and sent.
- Remembering them on their birthday.
- Preparing sandwich spreads or soups to help with quick meals.
- Doing their shopping.
- Sending them hand lotion and anti-bacteria body wash or spray.

HOW CAN YOU SHOW YOUR APPRECIATION TO THOSE WHO ARE ON THE FRONTLINE TODAY?

SCRIPTURE: ISAIAH 58:5-7

Is this the kind of fast I have chosen,
only a day for people to humble themselves?
Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed
and for lying in sackcloth and ashes?
Is that what you call a fast,
a day acceptable to the Lord?

“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:
to loose the chains of injustice
and untie 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 them,
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?”

DAY 3

PRAYER FOCUS: RECOVERY FOR THOSE AFFECTED & THAT THE 144 WILL REFLECT CHRIST AT WORK

Words from our Key Workers: (comments have been edited for brevity)

When preparing for work

'I am uncertain about everything.'

Leaving for the hospital

'I ask my husband to pray for me and my fellow key workers; that we will be kept safe from infection, and that we will not be prone to mistakes in the various aspects of our work (e.g. giving medication, nursing interventions, preparing documentation etc.)'

My motivation

'I love my job! I love to care for people and above all, I love God.'

Pondering on my way to work

'I think of the new challenges I might encounter in the day ahead, and how I can be of help to colleagues in clinical areas.'

REFLECTING WITH THOSE IN THE FRONTLINE

PPE to protect me

1. We have PPE in our department, but we are unsure about how long it'll last. In addition to the PPE, I pray and imagine putting on God's invisible shield and think about His promises from the Word. This gives me peace...

2. ...there are days when we have to wear plastic gowns, without visors or shoe covers. To encourage those in my team complaining about the heat and the sweat, I joke around saying we no longer need to go to the gym to lose weight!

Having Christ in my life makes a difference! A changed heart keeps me calm and positive throughout my shift, rather than adding to the chaotic work environment.

BRINGING CHRIST'S LIGHT TO SHINE IN THE DARKNESS

Starting from a position of Prayer

Before proceeding to my designated clinical area, I started praying with other colleagues in my unit. Having started out as a three, the group has now grown to eight! I am thankful for management's support, who give us permission to pray in a quiet corner so long as we do not force anyone else to join.

Through God's strength, my husband and I cook and bake for Filipino nurses who are fairly new to the UK, and for colleagues in our building who are self-isolating.

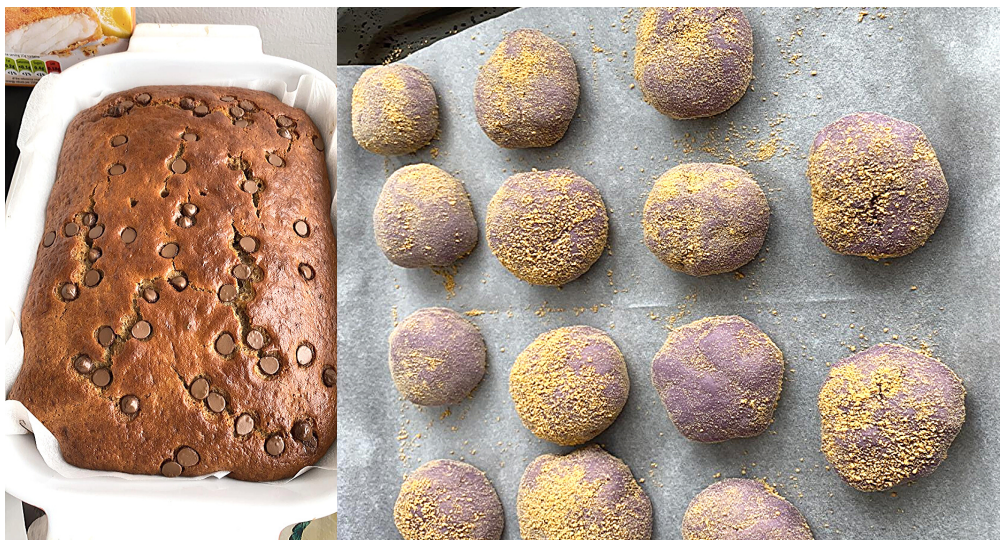
It is a means to encourage and sends out a message that they are not alone, and that God cares for them.

PAYING IT FORWARD WITH A SERVANT HEART

Returning home after work.

I shower, change into clean clothes and pray for the safety of our household. There is a sense of fulfilment at the end of the day, having done my part to care for patients to the best of my ability.

I look forward to my next CPD (Cook, Pack and Distribute) day! I strive to joyfully serve with the love of God.



Homebaked Ube Pandesal & Chocolate Sprinkled Loaf

TODAY LET'S PRAY SPECIFICALLY FOR HEALING AND BOLDNESS OF FAITH FOR OUR 144

Prayer Points:

- Let us thank God for the Key Workers whose hearts God have changed and whose spirit He has strengthened over the years.
- Let us pray for continuous protection for the Key Workers and their families, as well as healing for those with symptoms. Pastor Ricky (Birmingham) kindly asks for prayers for s. Donna, who is showing intense symptoms.
- Let us pray for courage, for our Key Workers to step up and take on spiritual leadership at work.
- Let us pray to God to give wisdom to those in management roles.
- Let us pray for more PPE to be produced and distributed nationwide.

WHO WILL YOU BE PRAYING FOR TODAY?

SCRIPTURE: COLOSSIANS 4:2-5

"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. 3 And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. 4 Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. 5 Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity."

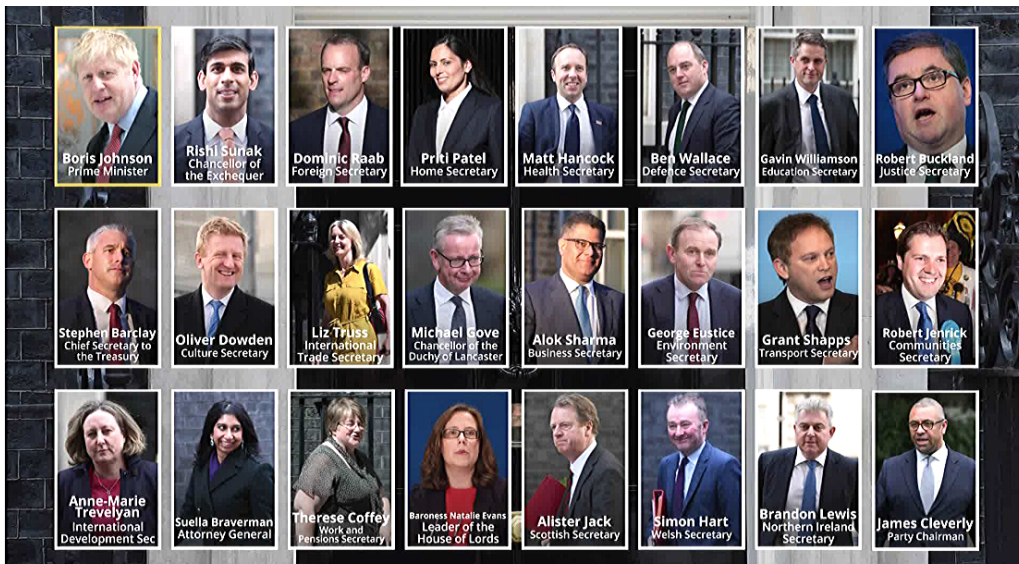
DAY 4

PRAYER FOCUS: GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP IN THE UK

Amidst the plague of coronavirus, the UK Government and the executive team of the National Health Service (NHS) are dictating the national response to the pandemic. Collectively, they are responsible for the wellbeing of citizens and residents in the UK, and their actions now will determine our future for years to come. Top leaders have been working around the clock, in a race against time to control the spread of the disease, which has now affected over 30,000 people. They are also finding means to support the national economy and people's livelihood as industries come to a halt.

Regardless of our political views, we should support them as they lead us through this critical time. The burden is heavy on the shoulders of these men and women who seek to serve the people of their nation.

WHO ARE THEY? GOVERNMENT LEADERS OF THE UK



Government Cabinet

Photo: BT, 2020



Online Cabinet Meeting

Photo: Boris Johnson Twitter, 2020

NOTABLE LEADERS DURING THIS CURRENT CRISIS

Boris Johnson – Prime Minister, self-isolating with symptoms

Prof Yvonne Doyle – Director for Health Protection and Medical Director for Public Health England

Prof Chris Whitty – England's Chief Medical Officer and the Department of Health and Social Care's Chief Scientific Adviser

Sir Patrick Vallance – UK Government Chief Scientific Adviser and the Government Office for Science and Engr Profession

Matt Hancock – Sec of State for Health, recovered from symptoms and back to work

Sir Simon Stevens – CEO of the NHS

Rishi Sunak – Chancellor of the Exchequer

TODAY LET'S PRAY FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND LEADERS OF THE UK

Prayer Points

- Protection and healthy recovery of gov't leaders who have symptoms, especially the Prime Minister.
- Encouragement from families, colleagues and citizens.
- For their unity & wisdom and backing support from agencies & business partners.
- More test kits and new Samba II machines to be rolled out across the UK.
- Scientists working flat out on a vaccine for Covid-19.
- Successful recruitment, and subsequent protection of volunteers for the NHS Nightingale Hospital to open soon.
- Military officers and personnel supporting government initiatives.

HOW ELSE CAN YOU PRAY FOR THE LEADERS OF THE UK?

SCRIPTURE: 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-4

"I urge you then, first of all, to pray for the people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity. This is good and pleases God our Saviour, who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth."



Military personnel assisting with 2-week set up of the NHS Nightingale in the ExCel Centre, London which will house 3,000 patients in critical care.

(Photo: Sky News, 2020)

DAY 5

PRAYER FOCUS: FOR OTHER KEY WORKERS WHO KEEP THE NATION GOING

While we have been praying for the 144 frontline key workers in hospitals, we have and remember to pray for our other brothers and sisters who are key workers in other workplaces.

Stories from other Key Workers

School worker

I am a Midday Supervisor who look after pupils at lunch break. They are children who continue to go to school despite the lockdown since their parents need to focus on their jobs for the government and there is no one to look after their at home.

Supervision includes time in the playground after lunch and being ready to deal with First Aid matters should there be any accidents or injuries while playing outdoors.

STORIES FROM OTHER KEY WORKERS

I am thankful that I can do my part to help keep children of other key workers nourished, safe and happy while their parents keep the country going.

With love and understanding, I listen to my colleagues who share their burdens with me and encourage them as I stay positive.

There are times when I am anxious. My husband and daughter pray for my protection from the virus. And since Monday, we've been joining the rest of our family for nightly prayers through Skype. Doing so strengthens me mentally and spiritually for the next workday away from home.

CONTINUED: STORIES FROM OTHER KEY WORKERS

IT specialist at a local Council

He is an IT specialist for a local Council and after the lockdown was declared he was tasked to set up a network to allow over 400 council workers to continue their work from home. The network had to be up and running within two weeks so we can imagine the pressure he must have felt.

Looking back, he can honestly say that without the Lord's help and guidance, he would not have been able to complete the critical task, essential to keep the council's work going.

Local Councils are responsible for

- Waste collection and disposal
- Recycling and waste management
- Local Planning functions
- Civic amenity provisions

TODAY LET'S PRAY FOR OUR OTHER KEY WORKERS

Prayer Points:

- Our friends working as keys workers in other places; for their strength and safety, also for their families.
- Men and women who brave the cold and exposure to virus to keep the nation going while the majority of us stay or work from home.
- Continuous healing for P. Ricky's wife and for other nurses who have varying symptoms.
- Availability of more PPE for use in hospitals.
- Continuous wisdom for Govt officials and key leaders of the NHS
- Let's pray specifically for our:
 - Teachers
 - Social workers
 - Policemen and women
 - Garbage collectors
 - Transport workers
 - Production & delivery staff

SCRIPTURE: PROVERBS 28:2B & PROVERBS 25:19

"...wise and knowledgeable leaders bring stability."
- Proverbs 28:2b

"Putting confidence in an unreliable person in times of trouble is like chewing with a broken tooth or walking on lame tooth." - Proverbs 25:19

DAY 6

PRAYER FOCUS:

THANKSGIVING TO GOD FOR ENCOURAGING REPORTS

Starting off with Scripture:

"Because of Christ and our faith in Him, we can now come boldly and confidently into God's presence. So please don't lose heart..." - **Ephesians 3:12**

"...be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity...Don't act thoughtlessly but understand what the Lord wants you to do." - **Ephesians 5:15-17**

"Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are His dear children. Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God."
- **Ephesians 5: 1-2**

THANKSGIVING REPORTS FROM THE FRONTLINE

Thanksgiving points:

- A nurse who had escalating symptoms (such as shortness of breath) last weekend is now recovering well and is able to take phone calls.
- Pastor Ricky reports that his wife who works as a nurse is still in hospital, but the attending physician told him this morning that her body is fighting the virus.
- There are those who were self-isolating but now have reported back to work.
- For the recovery of the nurses that were suffering from symptoms last week. For enabling those who have gone back to work, confident of their immunity.
- For strengthening those who are continually delivering nursing care with focus and compassion, under stressful working conditions.
- For those stepping up and are rising to the occasion to lead colleagues in prayer.

LET US GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD

Testimony from the frontline:

“Please continue to pray for us. We are under more and more pressure in our workplace as 80% of the workforce in our hospital are in self-isolation as part of shielding from those who are immunocompromised (with weak immune system) or pregnant. Some colleagues are actually ill and admitted themselves. [Each nurse is] now looking after 2-4 critically ill patients...as most of us provide high standard of care, it is just challenging and difficult to deal with. Equally, part of our priority is to look after our wellbeing as well as that of our colleagues.”



Nurses praying before their shift

TODAY LET'S CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR HEALING AND PROTECTION

Prayer Points

- For continued healing for Pastor Ricky's wife.
- For divine endurance while covering shifts for colleagues unable to work.
- For those nurses who may feel unwell in the days to come. For good rest and replenished strength, while God's divine comfort and healing help their bodies recover toward total immunity.
- For their families' protection and support, in love.
- For our community to be able to positively respond to the crisis in unity.
- For each one to find a way to help from the heart, to encourage through prayer and to spread hope through the Good News of the gospel.

CONCLUDING OUR FASTING AND PRAYER WEEK

Our church-wide Fasting & Prayer Week ends tonight, (Sat 4 Apr) but our solidarity as a Christian community will continue to strengthen in the midst of a global crisis. Fasting and praying together for the past week to support our 144 keyworkers in the frontline will have helped deepen our faith and sharpen our spiritual disciplines. Moving forward, let's strive to honour and love God much more, to value life, to discover comforting truths in His Word, and most crucially, to respond to it by showing care for others.

New Guide for the coming week

From tomorrow (Sun 5 Apr), we will have a new common guide to use during Holy Week, entitled: 'Holy Week Reflection: The Surpassing Love of Christ'. Download your copies from WIN UK FB page from tomorrow, Sunday.

GREETINGS FROM THE FRONTLINE



Nurses in the frontline who also pray with us

**THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO JOINED
TOGETHER IN PRAYER.**

wordinternationalministries.org.uk