

# St Stephen's

## At Home Prayer Cycle

### *Summer 2020*



Picture by Sue Whitehead

***"Pray without ceasing..."***

**(1 Thessalonians 5:17)**

With the pandemic continuing to restrict everyone's movements, many people are experiencing not only a sense of isolation, but of powerlessness, too. With so much clear need around, what can we do to help? Fortunately all God's people can be involved in prayer that His Kingdom - of love, compassion, justice and freedom – will be known in our world now.

At its simplest, praying for others means to hold the people and situations on our hearts before God and ask Him to fill and transform them by His love. It does not require lots of eloquent words!

This prayer cycle is intended to help the family of St Stephen's to join together in this privilege of holding before God a few of the people and situations in need of His care right now. There will be many others that you will want to remember, too. If you become aware of people in special need, please do let others in the Church know so that they can pray with you.

You might find this a good prayer at any time during the crisis:

*Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy  
in this time of uncertainty and distress.  
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may rejoice in your comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.***

## **EVERY DAY ...**

- Pray for someone on your heart, and for someone who does not yet know the love of God for them;
- Give thanks for God's goodness and for prayers answered.

## **MONDAY – pray for...**

- Our healthcare workers, both those in the hospitals and those who work in the community;
- Other community service providers; police and probation services; local Funeral Directors; and others...
- Local care homes, and the housebound;
- Those who are mourning the loss of a loved one.

## **TUESDAY – pray for...**

- The leaders of the Churches nationally; and for Bishop John, Bishop Martin, and Archdeacons Rob and Nikki;
- For all the other churches in the area, giving thanks for our fellowship and sharing in the work of the Gospel;
- Churches which are struggling, and for the restructuring work the Diocese will have to undertake;
- Those struggling with separation from their families and loved ones.

## **WEDNESDAY – pray for...**

- The children in our communities: that they will be safe, flourish as they grow, and be drawn to follow Christ:
  - The primary schools in our parish (Northwick Manor and Perdiswell), their staff, parents/carers and children;

- The secondary schools which serve our communities; Sticky Fingers, Wishing Well and other pre-schools;
- Those we know through our Little Stars pre-school group and Young Disciples, and all who support them; and all the young people and families in our congregation and communities, especially any who are very vulnerable.
- All who are struggling financially.

### **THURSDAY – pray for...**

- Local Councillors, our MPs, and our national Government: that God will give them wisdom to make the difficult decisions needed at this time; and that they will protect the needs of the most vulnerable in society.
- Local businesses and community groups – both those which are still working, and those which are struggling;
- A growing sense of community locally, and that God will enable the Church to discover a role in fostering that;
- All who are feeling particularly isolated or lonely.

### **FRIDAY – pray for...**

- Our weekly services, whether printed, online, or (over time) in the Church building: that they may be a source of healing, uplifting and challenge to all who participate in them;
- The PCC, as they try to discern God's will for this Church through the uncertainty ahead;
- Our stewardship of financial and other resources;
- All who are seeking spiritual comfort and meaning, and that God will guide us and all Churches in finding ways to reach out to them.