## Prayer diary

28 April-31 August 2024



# Pray with us











parenting for faith

Inspiring people of all ages to grow in Christian faith

When we pray, we are reminding ourselves that we are spiritual beings, and not just flesh and blood; that we belong to this world and the world to come; we can already 'speak heaven', while still on earth.

This is one of the 'thoughts on prayer' taken from this current prayer diary, and it reminds us that to pray is an act of defiance in the face of the generally accepted narrative about life's futility. By choosing to become people who pray, we step into the bigger picture of life and eternal life, which lies unseen all around us. And when we pray we are putting our faith into action, even though outwardly we are not obviously 'doing' anything!

When Paul urges us to put on the whole armour of God in his letter to the Ephesians, his final recommendation is prayer, without which all the other named equipment is rendered ineffectual. He writes, 'Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests' (Ephesians 6:18).

Your prayers for BRF Ministries are similarly more important than any of the many activities recorded in this prayer diary. Without them, nothing spoken in face-to-face training sessions or online, nor anything written in our Bible notes and books, can have lasting value for the kingdom of God. Without your faithful prayer, BRF Ministries may as well pack up shop and cease to exist! So

thank you for your committed and active defiance against that futility, as you join with us in prayer over these next four months.

In prayerful solidarity with you.



Martyn

Martyn Payne
BRF Ministries volunteer prayer advocate

Despite everything, Lord...

my lack of zeal, my hesitancy, my distracted mind and my thoughtlessness...

Despite everything...

you have given me another day.

A new beginning.

A fresh start.

A clean sheet.

Another chance.

This is grace.

Thank you, Lord God, that your love is new every morning.

Great is thy faithfulness!

#### For the overall mission of BRF Ministries

Communion with God, our Breath of Life, is always free and God wants us to be fully engaged. Prayer is an opportunity to breathe deeply and coordinate heart, mind, body and soul to be attentive to God's voice.

Alan Li Camarillo, The Upper Room, May-Aug 2023



#### Thought for the week

Beware of turning public prayer into an opportunity to advise, correct, influence, or control others. Let our prayers be said with humility and grace.

#### Pray with us for

- Good communication between the different teams working at BRF Ministries, that each may enhance the others' ministry
- Creative synergy between the four ministries to enhance the social media presence of BRF Ministries
- New developments in discipleship resources and passion for linking up the generations on a journey of faith together
- Imaginative collaboration with other organisations and churches to promote regular prayer and Bible reading among God's people
- **Shared trust in our God**, who will provide for all our needs, sending us the financial help we need, just at the right time



Spirit of God, inspire in each of us life-giving gifts that will bless this needy world; and open us up to be channels of your grace through what we say, do and write, and in the way we live our lives, each and every day.

Amen.

5-11 May brf.org.uk

## For God's blessing on BRF Ministries

I finally got over my guilt about my prayer life when I realised that the short prayers I managed to say when pushing the pram or cleaning were just as valid and important as the longer prayers that I'd had time for before children. In fact, praying short little prayers throughout the day is a good discipline.

Caroline Fletcher, *Day by Day with God*, May–Aug 2023

#### Thought for the week

Prayer is certainly not about changing God's mind, but rather allowing God to change our minds, so that we see ourselves, each other and the world through God's eyes.



#### Pray with us for

- all who serve with BRF Ministries this day as staff or volunteers, that they may know they are part of God's mission
- all meetings this week, in the office or online, that they will be guided by God's Spirit
- all ministry events and training taking place this month, that they will help grow God's kingdom across the generations
- all Living Faith publications being written or read, that they might bring people closer to God's Son
- all the prayers and articles published online this week, that they will bring God's blessing to God's people

Loving God,
we bow our knees before you,
the Father from whom every family
in earth and heaven is named,
and ask that those we love
and those for whom we pray
may know you and the power of your love at work
in their lives, this day and always
Amen.



## For BRF Ministries and older people



A few years ago we had a discussion in our church small group about praying a simple prayer each day: 'Lord, please order my day'... Doing so has helped to calm me when I've felt overwhelmed by all the tasks ahead of me.

Claire Musters (ed.), Christmas Voices (BRF, 2023)

#### Thought for the week

When we name, or even just imagine someone before God in prayer, we are inviting God to come close to them in their need. It's like opening the door into God for them on their behalf.

#### Pray with us for

- God's blessing on the nation-wide team of Anna Chaplains
- Debbie Thrower, speaking at St Mellitus conferences in London and Nottingham today and tomorrow
- inspiration for the Parenting for Faith team leading a Facebook Live on children and the Bible this evening
- Debbie Ducille's workshop on Anna Chaplaincy at the Methodist Superintendents' conference in Oxford this Thursday
- Spirit-led vision and guidance for the Anna Chaplaincy team: Debbie Ducille (ministry lead), Julia Burton-Jones and Marian Muskett



Timeless God, who declares grey hair to be a crown of splendour and whose gift of long life can produce a heart of wisdom, forgive us for the sin of ageism that disrespects the elderly among us and ignores their vital contribution to a healthy society. May we humbly receive the gifts that older people have for us and delight in positive give-and-take between the generations, for the greater good of us all and for the glory of your name. Amen.

19–25 May brf.org.uk

#### For BRF Ministries and our online resources



A helpful way to interact with scripture is to turn the words we are reading into prayer, both for ourselves and others. The gospels are steeped in both prayer and teaching about prayer, so we can pick up on this as we are reading and use it to stimulate our own prayer life.

Tony Horsfall (ed.), Knowing You, Jesus (BRF, 2023)

#### Thought for the week

God's blessing is the best gift to anyone. It is the key that releases the good within each person so they might flourish as God's children. Above all things pray for God's blessing on others.

#### Pray with us for

- a fresh experience of God's Holy Spirit in our lives, as we celebrate Pentecost in our churches
- the gifts of God's Spirit for God's people to equip them for ministry and mission in today's world
- the encouraging presence of the Holy Spirit for the Parenting for Faith champions meeting online this Wednesday
- the guidance of God's Spirit for those leading BRF Ministries
- the publication this week of *The Everyday God* by Jonathan Arnold, which explores how works of social justice and mercy can transform lives

Lord, whose voice goes out into all the world so that everything can declare your glory, inspire us as we join in with you in proclaiming your love and mercy, through words online, in person, in print, in social media posts and over the phone. May all our speaking be seasoned with salt, and like you, full of grace and truth. Amen.



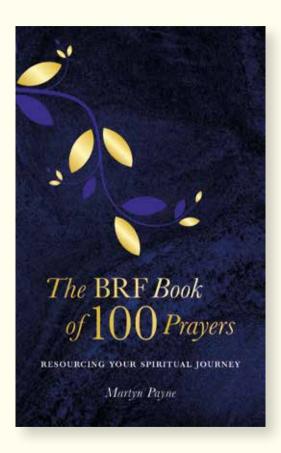
### The BRF Book of 100 Prayers

#### Martyn Payne

An illustrated collection of prayers by Martyn Payne. Prayer is at the heart of BRF's work, and this special illustrated anniversary collection is a celebration of prayer for BRF's centenary year. It can be used in a range of different settings, from individual devotions to corporate worship. Including sections on prayers of preparation, seasonal prayers, and themed prayers for special times and hard times, it is the perfect daily companion to resource your spiritual journey.

Hardback ISBN 978 1 80039 147 5 £12.99

Available from BRF Online - brfonline.org.uk/products/the-brf-book-of-100-prayers



## For BRF Ministries and discipleship



The Celtic rhythm of prayer recommends four prayer stops each day (morning, midday, evening and night). Use as many as are right for you. Building a regular pattern helps, but don't worry if you miss one.

Graham Booth et al., *Celtic Rhythms of Life* (BRF, 2023)

#### Thought for the week

Just as God's words never return to heaven empty but accomplish the task given them, so too, God's Spirit of prayer speaking in and through us is always heard and used by God.

#### Pray with us for

- the growing family of those who use our BRF Ministries Bible reading notes to nurture their daily discipleship as Christians
- churches and home groups who use Holy Habits resources to deepen fellowship and to grow God's kingdom in their communities
- BRF Ministries writers and editors working on seasonal material, particularly for Lent and Advent
- the planning and delivery of discipleship courses, seminars and online training sessions led by the ministry teams
- the BRF Ministries fundraising team planning campaigns for later in the year



Disciple-calling God,
may we, your followers, be so in love with you
that we might never forget our first love
but run in the way of your commandments,
looking to Jesus, who promises to see to completion
the work of faith begun in us
and present us faultless before your throne.
Keep us on track and faithful to your call.
For your name's sake. Amen.

## For BRF Ministries and all-age mission

God is always responsive to our prayer, but the very nature of prayer requires that we must persist in our praying. If prayer were always answered instantaneously, we would never learn to appreciate the goodness of God... In this way our character is being shaped and our trust in God increased.

Tony Horsfall, New Daylight, May-Aug 2023

#### Thought for the week

Don't forget that a heartfelt sigh is also prayer, just as is a cry of outrage or a gasp of wonder. God listens to more than just our words.



#### Pray with us for

- the new Messy Churches that have already started this year and those planning to launch in the autumn
- Parenting for Faith's parenting teens six-week online course on Tuesday evening
- Debbie Ducille's workshop on Anna Chaplaincy at the Methodist Superintendents' conference in Blackpool this week
- inspiration and guidance for the Messy Church ministry team: Aike Kennett-Brown (ministry lead), Jane Butler, and Sally O'Hare
- Sally Rees leading a three-day training in Cardiff for ministry among older people

Jesus-sending God,
whose heart is that no one should perish
and who longs for all to come home,
thank you for every fresh expression of church
that is reaching out into its community
in messy, creative and sacrificial ways,
with radical hospitality and authentic love.
We pray that people of all ages will come to faith this way
and that there will be joy in heaven on a daily basis.
Amen.



## For BRF Ministries and the climate emergency

You, too, have a vital role in God's plans, whether that is seen by many or hidden. I remember my mum struggling as her health deteriorated, upset that she couldn't 'do' much for God anymore. But he showed her how much he valued the hours of prayer she undertook while she sat on her sofa daily.

Claire Musters, Christmas Voices (BRF, 2023)

#### Thought for the week

'God has created us to love and to be loved, and this is the beginning of prayer – to know that he loves me, that I have been created for greater things.' Mother Teresa



#### Pray with us for

- God's blessing on those advocating creation care as part of their church's discipleship and call to mission in the ongoing climate emergency
- the influence of publications in climate change education including *Changing the Climate*, Messy Church Goes Wild, and A Christian Guide to Environmental Issues
- Parenting for Faith's online training for church leaders on Tuesday and the 'Jumpstart' event for churches this Thursday
- readers and supporters of BRF Ministries, and particularly those affected by the climate emergency in the global south
- Messy Churches who are seeking to reduce their use of plastics and develop more eco-friendly approaches to all-age mission



Spirit of the living God, with all creation, you long with groaning too deep for words

for the healing of everyone and everything.
Inspire in our leaders, scientists, economists,
development workers, and in each one of us,
a new determination and courage
to fulfil our divine calling
to care for this world and all who dwell in it. Amen.

## For BRF Ministries and Christian parents

I delight in finding different ways to pray. One such practice is praying through the alphabet. That is, I start off a line of prayer with the first letter of the alphabet, followed by the next and so on.

Amy Boucher Pye, Day by Day with God, Sep-Dec 2023



#### Thought for the week

So often we don't know what to pray about a particular situation or for a certain person, but God knows what is best and so simply pray, 'Lord, have mercy', and in faith lay everything before God's throne of grace.

#### Pray with us for

- God's blessing on the Parenting for Faith team: Lucy Rycroft (ministry lead), Kate Irvine and Becky Sedgwick
- Facebook Live pop-up sessions, addressing issues facing Christian families today
- Christian parents known to you in your own congregation, who may value being put in touch with resources from the Parenting for Faith team
- Rachel Turner, who is now a freelance speaker and advocate for Parenting for Faith
- the children, grandchildren, godchildren, nieces and nephews known to you, asking the Lord that they may come to a living faith in Jesus for themselves

Parenting God, by your very nature you have set the pattern for true parenthood, loving us as creator, adopting us in Christ and nurturing us by your Spirit: inspire all who have the responsibility of children to follow your example of faithfulness, understanding and comfort through all the challenges and joys of family life, so that young and old might grow in faith together. For your glory. Amen.



#### For BRF Ministries and social media



Each day I make a list of ten things I am thankful for from the day before. I also make a list of prayer requests. The thank-you lists are often answers to the requests. No matter the year or date... I am always struck by God's faithfulness.

Deb Vellines, *The Upper Room: An Introduction* (BRF, 2023)

#### Thought for the week

Think of your prayer life as an adventure in which daily you explore the riches of your glorious inheritance in Christ Jesus. Every time you turn to prayer God has something new to show you.

#### Pray with us for

- the growing presence of BRF Ministries on social media, that it may be a positive and truthful influence in a space that can sometimes be filled with negative and hurtful content
- Richard Fisher who writes the weekly prayer email for supporters
- inspiration for those in the BRF Ministries communications team who choose prayers and quotes to post on Facebook every day
- the trustees of BRF Ministries, who are meeting online this Thursday
- those who write online articles for BRF Ministries and those choosing the themes for these, asking that they might reach a wide audience and bring glory to God



Lord of space and time, thank you for the opportunity to reach so many through social media and the internet. May we use these channels to communicate truthfully, and to advertise and to encourage responsibly so that every post or message is not wasted, but might count and bear fruit for your kingdom. Amen.

Pray with us weekly by joining our prayer partners and receiving our weekly email

brf.org.uk/weekly-prayeremails



#### For BRF Ministries and its staff

Spending time in God's presence is the most beautiful thing we can ever do. We should therefore do it with a joyous abandon, not trying to make our prayer times as efficient and productive as possible, but making them sumptuously lavish... because to spend time with God is to be in the most beautiful company in the universe.

Lyndall Bywater, Day by Day with God, May-Aug 2023

#### Thought for the week

Just as God enjoys seeing, touching, tasting, hearing and experiencing creation through you, let yourself likewise sense God's response to it all, and let this shape your praying, whether that be deep sadness or sheer delight.



#### Pray with us for

- the gift of good teamwork across the whole of BRF Ministries, whether staff are working in the office or remotely from home
- the marketing and communications team: Iona Gray, Simon Haynes, Stuart Holley, Tracey Jones and Eley McAinsh
- the ministries support team: Maddie Jane
- the supporter services team: James Clarke, Charlotte Keegan, Maria Kemae, Clare Proudman and Taura Wood
- External contractors who support the work of BRF Ministries

Gracious God. thank you that you give us one day at a time, to do the next one good thing for the one person you place in our path that day. In the name of the one, in whose love we trust, and whom we serve with all our heart. Amen.



## For BRF Ministries and Bible reading

Lectio diving is a prayerful and attentive type of Bible reading, and it helps us penetrate beyond the letter of text to see how the Holy Spirit is speaking to us through these inspired words, in the here and now... Try to be still and silent. and let the scripture sink into your heart, mind and soul.

Martyn Percy, An Advent Manifesto (BRF, 2023)

#### Thought for the week

Explore prayer with all of your senses as you behold an image, touch an object, listen to music, delight in a meal, enjoy the aromas around you.



#### Pray with us for

- a renewed commitment from ourselves to read the words of the Bible
- for Bible reading notes readers seeking to know, to love and to follow Jesus more faithfully
- wise commentary and timely insights from the writers of our Bible reading notes
- BRF Ministries Bible reading notes editors: Gordon Giles (New Daylight); Jackie Harris (Day by Day with God): Eley McAinsh (Bible Reflections for Older People): Daniele Och (The Upper Room); Rachel Tranter and Olivia Warburton (Guidelines)
- BRF Ministries authors, that they would be inspired as they write



Scripture-breathing God, whose words bring life as we open up our Bibles, and whose voice we can hear as we listen prayerfully to the stories in its pages, help us by your Spirit to discern wisely what is teaching and what is warning, what is directly from you and what is about you, and what is for its time and what is for all time, that we might rightly handle your words of truth. Amen.

#### For BRF Ministries and its trustees

Every Sunday, as our vicar receives the offering plate, he recites... 'Lord, everything we have has come from you and of your own do we give you.' I always find it a moving moment... a chance to pause and remember that my whole life, not just my money, is a gift from God, to be offered back to him with great thankfulness.

Mags Duggan, Knowing You, Jesus (BRF, 2023)

#### Thought for the week

When we pray we are reminding ourselves that we are spiritual beings and not just flesh and blood; that we belong to this world and the world to come; we can already 'speak heaven' while still on earth.



#### Pray with us for

- Colin Fletcher, chair of BRF Ministries trustees, asking the Lord to anoint him with gifts of wise counsel and spiritual understanding, on behalf of the charity
- those trustees serving on the finance and people sub-committees, as they take important decisions concerning the future direction of BRF Ministries
- BRF Ministries trustees: Andrew Barton, Alistair Booth, Paul Cox, Paul Goodliff, Sarah Hayes and Julian Hills
- BRF Ministries trustees: Andrew Howard, David Leeds, Christina Proffitt, Verity Mitchell, Jane Whittington and Mike Wilkinson
- those who regularly and faithfully prayer for BRF Ministries

Gift-giving God,
whose Spirit equips us
with various kinds of service and ministries,
clothe all those in positions of trusted
leadership
with vision, wisdom and humility,
as they advise and advocate on behalf of
others,
for the growth of your kingdom. Amen.



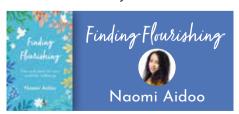
#### For BRF Ministries and its writers

Jesus' confidence was often nurtured in the quiet places of prayer and communion with his Father. In those spaces of solitude and silence, Jesus was affirmed in his identity as the Son... Those quiet places of communion are essential for us too in our own journeys.

#### Thought for the week

Melinda Hendry, Knowing You, Jesus (BRF, 2023)

Although silence and stillness can certainly help us to pray, be assured that God still hears us when we are busy and life is noisy and stressful. God longs to connect with us whatever our circumstances may be.



#### Pray with us for

- God's blessing on readers of the recent publication Finding Flourishing by Naomi Aidoo, which addresses aspects of wellbeing from God's perspective
- Rachel Tranter, the team leader for the creation content team
- the content creation team: Ben Bloxham, Rose Edwards, Felicity Howlett, Daniele Och and Becca Turnbull
- good working relationships with those who print and distribute our Bible reading notes and books so that orders can be processed efficiently
- the wider team of freelance editors and proofreaders, who ensure that a high quality is maintained in all our publications



Prophecy-giving God, may all BRF Ministries authors and editors be gifted to write more than they realise, to inspire to better than they are and to challenge or comfort beyond their knowing, with timely words of insight and wisdom that will last and bear fruit for your kingdom. Amen.

#### For BRF Ministries and its volunteers

An inconsistent prayer life weakens our relationship with Christ. In those moments, we may wonder... where do I begin... how do I rekindle my relationship with Christ? Often we have so much to say, and yet it seems as though the right words are just not there! Romans 8 reminds us that the Spirit intercedes for us.

Zithelo Sibanda, The Upper Room, Sep-Dec 2023

#### Thought for the week

Paul advises us to be watchful when we pray (Colossians 4:1) which surely means keeping our spiritual eyes and ears open for the promptings of God's Spirit whenever we tune into God's presence.



#### Pray with us for

- BRF Ministries staff who are taking holidays during August, asking that they may be kept safe and be refreshed following the previous busy months
- those who volunteer their time to write articles, post prayers, support events and lead workshops on behalf of BRF Ministries
- friends of BRF Ministries, who have committed to support our ministries financially with regular giving, and those considering joining their number
- those who promote and distribute Bible reading notes and promote our ministries in their local church
- volunteers who are Anna Chaplains or Anna Friends, the Messy Church support teams and the Parenting for Faith champions

Loving God,
may we show love today:
a love that is big, beautiful and bountiful;
a love that blesses all,
because we have been blessed with love from you.
For your love's sake,
Amen.



## For BRF Ministries and prayer

It is all too easy to be critical of the contemporary western church, which in the drive to become relevant may be tempted to adopt questionable means to achieve popularity. Yet we must be brave enough to consider how we ourselves are faring and whether or not prayer is still central to the life of our church.

Tony Horsfall, Knowing You, Jesus (BRF, 2023)



#### Thought for the week

It's hard but the Christian experience of answered prayer is that God most often chooses to join us in the midst of our troubles rather than simply remove them from us.

#### Pray with us for

- those who pray regularly for BRF Ministries, that their own prayer lives may be deepened and blessed by the quotes and prayers in this diary
- the staff team meeting each day at 2.00 pm to pray for each other, their work and the different ministries
- those who receive the weekly email prayer bulletins, that God may use their vital hidden ministry to bless the work of BRF Ministries
- Martyn Payne and Karen Laister who compile this prayer diary, that its content may continue, not only to inform, but to resource God's praying people
- a renewed commitment from all of us, as part of the BRF Ministries family, to intercessory prayer



Lord God. there is nowhere where either your people are not present or your Spirit is not at work, and so we take heart that we can be part of this truth, one way or another, by our presence, or by our prayer. Amen.

## For BRF Ministries and its management

At times, I have given up on spiritual disciplines when life has simply felt too hard and I have had no energy left. And yet I also know what a trap that can be, as prayer and worship hold such power and lift my spirit as well as my gaze.

Claire Musters, Christmas Voices (BRF, 2023)

#### Thought for the week

'Prayer is not asking. Prayer is putting oneself in the hands of God, at his disposition, and listening to his voice in the depths of our hearts.'

Mother Teresa



#### Pray with us for

- renewed vision and energy for Richard Fisher as he leads BRF Ministries
- the health and spiritual well-being of the senior management team: Richard Fisher, Karen Laister (pictured), Julie McNaughton and Jules Morgan
- the weekly management meetings, asking that it may always be God's agenda that is followed and God's priorities that are pursued
- all those who have leadership roles within the wider BRF Ministries family, that they may they know they are loved, supported and prayed for by us
- the vice presidents of BRF Ministries and the vital contribution their experience and wisdom brings

Good shepherd God,
just as you guide, guard and gift
your people in love and faithfulness,
may those who look after others
in your kingdom work
follow your example:
as pastor-managers and servant-leaders,
to bring hope and blessing
to all in their care this day. Amen.



## For BRF Ministries and fundraising

Read scripture as a dialogue between yourself and God. Turn your thoughts into prayer. Have a conversation with God as you read. Allow your prayers to be formed and shaped by what you are reading.

Tony Horsfall, Knowing You, Jesus, (BRF, 2023)



#### Thought for the week

When we decide to pray, we are reminding ourselves again of the truth that God has always been there 'online' waiting for us to connect. God has never logged off!

#### Pray with us for

- God's blessing on all those who generously support BRF Ministries
- those who are prayerfully considering leaving a legacy to BRF Ministries in their will
- good health, energy and inspiration for Julie McNaughton, who as head of fundraising, coordinates projects, initiatives and strategic relationships with funders, trusts and donors
- the fundraising team: Harry Clough, Jane Dutton, Tabitha Griffiths, Simon Green, Helen Morrison and Phil Turner
- God's blessing on the readers of the BRF Ministries Advent book 2024, Embracing Humanity by Isabelle Hamley, which is published on Friday



**Bountiful God**, may our faithful graft and giving this day be crowned by the fullness of your glory, and may our little gift for good be multiplied by your greatness Amen.

#### For BRF Ministries and church leaders

I have... noticed a huge difference in my own sense of well-being when I go first to God in prayer and offer situations to him. I have also learned to recognise when my mind is refusing to budge from focusing on the problem. This is something I find hard, but taking time to meditate on the truths about who God is... floods my heart with a sense of peace.

Claire Musters, Christmas Voices (BRF, 2023)

#### Thought for the week

God is not just there when we pray but is a loving presence in all of our living, whether we recognise that or not.



#### Pray with us for

- church leaders, who find inspiration from the publications and online resources of BRF Ministries
- your own church leaders as they seek to enable the mission that God has entrusted to your own congregation within the local community
- Karen Laister, as she works with Christian organisations in the UK and worldwide
- the commissioning of authors for future publications
- all volunteer leaders, who are starting up again after a more relaxing time in August

Lord, help us to make every effort to be at peace with one another. Let your kingdom come.

Lord, help us to work to bring harmony between heaven and earth. Let your kingdom come.

Lord, help us to be united in prayer, and be bold in our asking. Let your kingdom come. Lord, help us to gather in Jesus' name, and discover your presence among us. Let your kingdom come on earth, as it is in heaven.

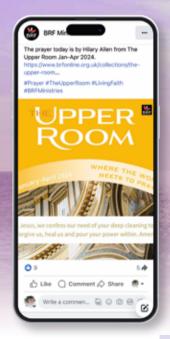












## Pray with us online, join us on

facebook.com/brfcharity



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instagram.com/brfcharity



# The prayer of BRF Ministries

Faithful God,
thank you for growing BRF
from small beginnings
into the worldwide family of BRF Ministries.
We rejoice as young and old
discover you through your word
and grow daily in faith and love.
Keep us humble in your service,
ambitious for your glory
and open to new opportunities.
For your name's sake.
Amen.

As a charity, we rely on fundraising and gifts in wills to deliver Anna chaplaincy, Living Faith, Messy church and Parenting for Faith. Your gift helps us impact thousands of lives each year.

Please support our work

brf.org.uk/give +44 (0)1235 462305

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