

Pray with us

Anna Chaplaincy | Living Faith
Messy Church | Parenting for Faith



1 SEPTEMBER 2024 – 4 JANUARY 2025

Prayer diary

*Inspiring people of all ages to
grow in Christian faith*

'My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth'
(Psalm 121:2).

In this last prayer diary of the year, we are looking back, looking forward, but most of all, looking up!

When I was part of the BRF Ministries morning of prayer last January, we were all very conscious of the challenges ahead for the charity. Like many other mission organisations we were wrestling with finances, staff changes and the need to reassess priorities. Like other charities we turned to God to ask for a renewed direction and for the resources they need.

There are plenty of Bible stories about the people of God facing impossible odds or challenging circumstances, and being forced to do what they, and we, should always do, namely put their trust – our trust – firmly in God. It was King Jehoshaphat, who said 'we do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you' (2 Chronicles 20:12).

So, as we look back and note how God has answered our prayers and look ahead to the challenges that are still there for BRF Ministries, we need to remember to focus not just on the difficulties but on the God who does not change.

God has bigger plans for us than we can imagine. Whether our situations look the same as this year ends or very different, is not what matters. God will still be God; Jesus will still be the same; and God will be doing a new thing because that's the way God is.

Thank you for joining us in prayer, as together we look up to the One who will supply all our needs through Jesus Christ our Lord.

With prayers



Martyn

Martyn Payne

BRF Ministries volunteer prayer advocate

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

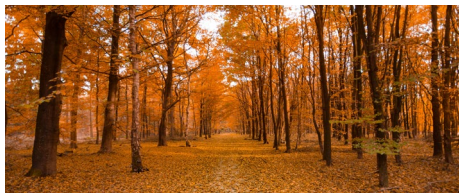
For BRF Ministries and its fellowship

Not long after my conversion I came across 'Prayers of Life' by Michel Quoist. One of his prayers is entitled 'Help me to say Yes', and it contains this profound truth – that God needs our 'Yes' even as he needed Mary's 'Yes' to come to earth. This understanding that joyful surrender is at the heart of discipleship has never left me and even today, many decades later, it remains one of my guiding principles.

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


Thought for the week

God is always at work in our world, mysteriously through messenger angels and also through you and me.



Pray with us for

- **God's inspiration** for those teams launching Messy Churches this September
- **God's guidance** for Christian parents, seeking to bring up their children to know and love the Lord Jesus
- **God's grace** to be at work through Anna Chaplains, who seek to draw alongside older people in their communities
- **God's word** to bear fruit in the lives of those who open up the new season of Bible reading notes and publications
- **God's love** to be increasingly experienced and shared in and through the lives of all who support BRF Ministries



Lord, grant us this week
what we need,
so we might be and become
what we should,
for as long as we are able,
until you come to take us home.
Amen.

For readers of BRF Bible reading notes

To stay alive physically, we need to breathe. To stay alive spiritually, we need to pray.

Graham Booth (and others), *Celtic Rhythms of Life* (BRF, 2023)

Thought for the week

‘Prayer is a surge of the heart, it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy.’

Saint Therese of Lisieux



Pray with us for

- enrichment and blessing for those using the Bible reading notes this week
- wisdom for the Bible reading notes editors: Gordon Giles, Jackie Harris, Eley McAinsh, Daniele Och, Rachel Tranter and Olivia Warburton
- those parents listening to the new series of the Parenting for Faith podcast, asking that God will encourage and inspire them
- today’s Anna Chaplaincy team day and this next season of Anna Chaplaincy training
- ourselves as we open up God’s word today, prayerfully and attentively, listening out for what the Lord wants to say to us

**Creator God,
whose heavens declare your glory,
and whose skies proclaim your handiwork,
forgive our shameful deafness
to what your damaged and hurting world
is saying to us every single day.
Help us all to listen before it is too late,
and to learn how to cherish our planet
as a gift to us, so we might pass it on faithfully
to the next generation. Amen.**



For the BRF ministry of Anna Chaplaincy



Communication between us and God obviously does not happen via voice call, a text message and email or the like. It is a ‘spirit to spirit’ thing.

Iain Dunbar and Peter Wilkinson, *Good Call*
(BRF, 2023)

Thought for the week

‘Whether we realise it or not, prayer is the encounter of God’s thirst with ours. God thirsts that we may thirst for him.’

St Augustine

Pray with us for

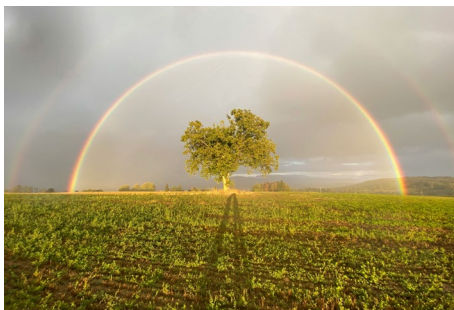
- Debbie, Julia and Marian who are meeting with the local coordinators’ forum on Monday
- the growing number of Anna Chaplains around the country, asking the Lord to give them energy, spiritual wisdom and pastoral sensitivity
- Debbie Ducille, who is planning to complete a ten-year anniversary walk from Alton to Abingdon, to raise awareness and support for Anna Chaplaincy
- BRF Ministries council meeting on Thursday, as they seek God’s guidance for the future
- the Parenting for Faith team taking part in the Playtime Conference this weekend in Sheffield

**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.
Amen.**

For God's provision of finance for BRF Ministries

Life can hurl some storms at us but, within them, we can still be surprised by God's joy – overflowing and without measure.

Clare O'Driscoll, *Bible Reflections for Older People*, May–Aug 2024



Thought for the week

'Prayer should be the key of the day and the lock of the night.'

George Herbert

Pray with us for

- Julie McNaughton, head of fundraising, asking that God will grant inspiration and creativity
- the development of effective campaigns and good communications by the fundraising team members: Harry, Helen, Jane, Phil and Tabitha
- the online introduction to Anna Chaplaincy this week and the continuing professional development of Anna Chaplains this autumn
- open doors as the fundraising team connect with major donors and trusts who are considering supporting BRF Ministries
- financial stability for the charity and discernment to use what God gives wisely

Prayer for Harvest thanksgiving

We praise you, Father God, for this, your amazing world:
 for sunset moths and Siberian tigers;
 for swallow-tailed hummingbirds and spider crabs;
 for Galapagos turtles and Arctic foxes;
 for the Grand Canyon and the Angel Falls;
 for startling sunrises and stunning sunsets;
 for all these many wonders, we give you our heartfelt thanks,
 O Lord our God, majestic in all the earth. Amen.



For the BRF ministry of Living Faith

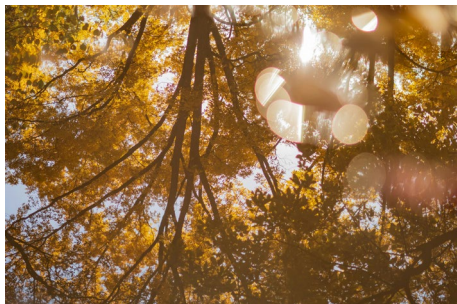
Prayer isn't a set of regulated activities, but the opening of a heart to God, ready to share and ready to receive back the love and wisdom and comfort of an all-knowing, all-encompassing God.

Becky Sedgwick, *Grandparenting for Faith* (BRF, 2024)

Thought for the week

'Prayer enlarges the heart, until it is capable of containing the gift of Godself.'

Mother Teresa



Pray with us for

- Living Faith authors, that what they write might equip, encourage and challenge readers
- the writers of BRF Bible reading notes, that God will guide the choice of their words and the focus for their reflections
- members of the content creation team: Becca, Ben, Dan, Felicity, Rachel and Rose
- those who design the content and write the articles and prayers for social media platforms
- Rachel Tranter in her role as team leader and work with those who write for BRF Ministries

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.

For the BRF ministry of Messy Church



As we ask God to reveal to us any hidden or visible wrongdoings, he will graciously answer our prayers – and give us the strength to take the next steps.

Amy Boucher Pye, *Holding Onto Hope* (BRF, 2023)

Thought for the week

‘Nothing tends to cement the hearts of Christians than praying together. Never do they love one another so well than when they witness the outpouring of each other’s hearts in prayer.’

Charles Finney

Pray with us for

- Aike, Messy Church lead, asking for opportunities to network with other organisations
- the Anna Chaplain training course and Anna Friends welcome session
- Sally and Jane as they coordinate training and support the Messy Church network
- delegates implementing learning from ‘Messy Church Goes Wild’ days
- Messy Church teams as they plan sessions leading up to Christmas



**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 senior management team at BRF Ministries

The challenge in our journey of faith is to keep our hearts soft, humble and bowed low before him. We allow God to take control when we pray daily in surrender to him... Prayer and praise, and the acknowledgement that it is Christ alone who gives us the grace to smile and stand, is the formula for counting it all joy.

Olivia Warburton (ed.), *Loving My Neighbour* (BRF, 2023)



Thought for the week

‘To get a nation back on its feet, we must first get down on our knees.’

Billy Graham

Pray with us for

- the senior management team, asking that the Lord might hold each one of them close and in step with God’s Spirit
- Richard Fisher, chief executive (pictured), asking God to renew his vision and fill him with wisdom and grace to lead this ministry for God’s glory
- senior management meetings, away days and times of prayer together
- Spirit-inspired and collaborative meetings with outside agencies
- a good work–life balance for those in leadership, both as a model for those they care for and for their own discipleship walk with the Lord

**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, advocate and act on behalf of others,
for the growth of your kingdom.
Amen.**



For the BRF ministry of Parenting for Faith

How might Jesus be knocking on the door of your heart? What kind of message might he have for you? I invite you to spend some time in prayerful imagining, asking the Holy Spirit to guide you as he reveals what he might say for your good and his glory.

Amy Boucher Pye, *Holding Onto Hope* (BRF, 2023)

Thought for the week

‘Prayer is not eloquence, but earnestness; not the definition of helplessness, but the feeling of it; not figures of speech, but earnestness of soul.’

Hannah More



Pray with us for

- the Parenting for Faith freelance team and for training they do locally and nationally
- those reading Parenting for Faith publications and listening to podcasts, that they will be encouraged to pass on their love for Jesus to their children
- Lucy, Kate and Becky as they support the network, asking for God’s leading in their times of planning and prayer
- the Parenting for Faith *Jumpstart* course and the annual Anna Chaplaincy gathering taking place this week
- the team planning the Forge conference taking place next month



Lord God, we recognise you as the source of all that is good, in us and through us. May we be drawn into the intimacy of your love, as the sure, still point of our lives. And may the light of this truth shine out from us to welcome others into their own experience of God’s glory. Amen.

For discipleship resources from BRF Ministries

Prayer is not so much about getting God to do our will as making ourselves available to do his will. We may also begin to realise that it need not be about words and making demands to God, but more to do with silence and offering situations to God for him to do as he pleases.

Tony Horsfall, *Spiritual Growth in a Time of Change* (BRF, 2024)



Thought for the week

‘Prayer does not fit us for the greater work; prayer is the greater work.’

Oswald Chambers

Pray with us for

- BRF Ministries’ Advent publications *Embracing Humanity* and *A Calendar of Carols*
- our ministry activities, that they would encourage prayer and Bible reading that support Christian discipleship
- online discipleship material including *Messy Basics* for Messy Church, Parenting for Faith online courses, Anna Chaplaincy training and the Spiritual Care Series
- churches using Holy Habits material to encourage missional discipleship
- our own daily discipleship using BRF Ministries’ resources, whether accessed in print, in person or online

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 whatever we say, do and write,
and in the way we live our lives,
each and every day.
Lord, multiply your work among us in these days
for your kingdom’s sake. Amen.



For volunteers, supporters and champions



Prayers don't have to be long-winded. Short prayers throughout the day strengthen our relationship with God. The apostle Paul tells us to 'rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances' (1 Thessalonians 5:16–18, NRSV).

Mary Hunt Webb, *The Upper Room*, Jan–April 2024

Thought for the week

'Beware in your prayers, above everything else, of limiting God, not only by unbelief, but by fancying that you know what God can do. Expect unexpected things above all that we ask or think.'

Andrew Murray

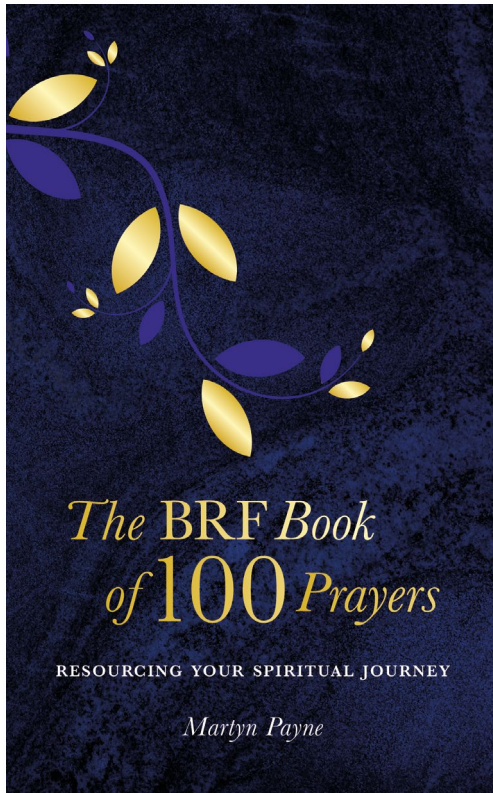
Pray with us for

- all who lead Remembrance services in these next days, in care homes, within a Messy Church context, or as families talking together at home
- volunteers in the Messy Church support teams who help with training, writing and prayer
- local church champions, representing BRF Ministries in their churches and networks; and those who distribute Bible reading notes in their local church
- today's Parenting for Faith 'Babies and toddlers course' online
- Anna Friends, who support Anna Chaplaincy work in churches and in local care homes



Holy Father,

as we pray, we are with you in heaven,
and you are beside us on earth.
Through Christ, may the two become one,
so that your kingdom comes on earth.
For you created me in love;
you made me for love;
you redeemed me by love.
Please fill me with your love. Amen.



Prayer of Remembrance

A prayer from The BRF Book of 100 Prayers

*Remembering God,
you never forget to keep promises and show mercy,
and through Christ you re-member us in love.
Thank you that the death of those dear to us matters to you.
Just as Jesus promised the dying thief
that he would be remembered in heaven,
so we can be sure that they will be remembered
because your memory never fails;
and whether we live or whether we die
we and they will be with you forever.
Amen.*

Martyn Payne

Hardback

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brfonline.org.uk

For the council and trustees of BRF Ministries

God doesn't love you because you are a good person or because you do everything right. He loves you because he is love: that is his nature, consistent in every season of our lives... We simply need to trust him, in both the good and the bad times, and always remember the power we have available to us in prayer.

Olivia Warburton (ed.), *Loving My Neighbour* (BRF, 2024)

Thought for the week

'Is prayer your steering wheel, or your spare tyre?

What wings are to a bird and sails to a ship, so is prayer to the soul.'

Corrie Ten Boom



Pray with us for

- God's strength and inspiration for Colin (chair) and Paul (vice-chair)
- the Parenting for Faith Forge East conference at Letton Hall, Norfolk from Tuesday to Thursday this week
- the BRF Ministries' council, including Colin, Andrew B, Alistair, Christina, Paul C, Paul G, Sarah, Julian, Andrew H, David, Verity and Mike
- today's BRF council meeting and the network get-together for Anna Chaplains
- Richard Fisher, as he works closely with trustees, discerning with them what the Holy Spirit is saying about the future direction for BRF Ministries

A Prayer for the season of Remembrance

Merciful God,
you remember every life lived,
every pain suffered and every grief endured;
and you hold those memories forever safe
in your heart of love.

We lift before you in this season of Remembrance,
loved ones who have died in times of peace and of war,
trusting them to your loving care. Amen.

For the staff team at BRF Ministries

Prayer is the offer of heart-to-heart conversation with a God who loves us, cares for us and who has promised to take part in the conversation too.

Becky Sedgwick, *Grandparenting for Faith* (BRF, 2024)

Thought for the week

‘To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.’

Martin Luther



Pray with us for

- today’s online introduction to Anna Chaplaincy and tomorrow’s network meeting
- the pop-up small group for Parenting for Faith on the theme of Christmas taking place on Tuesday this week
- Eley, Iona, Karen, Simon, Stuart and Tracey in the marketing and communications team
- staff prayer times each day
- James, Maria and Taura in the support services team; John and Tabitha in the IT and systems team

**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 those reading Advent books and resources

I came to realise that, though my prayers did not reverse the outcomes of situations in my life, my prayers did change me. Prayer gave me the ability to open my heart and mind to new possibilities... The answers to our prayers may not be what we have hoped, but there will be answers. Do not give up on prayer.

Sheryl Black Chai, *The Upper Room*, Jan–April 2024

Thought for the week

‘There is no other way that Christians, in a private capacity, can do so much to promote the work of God and advance the kingdom of Christ, than by prayer.’

Jonathan Edwards

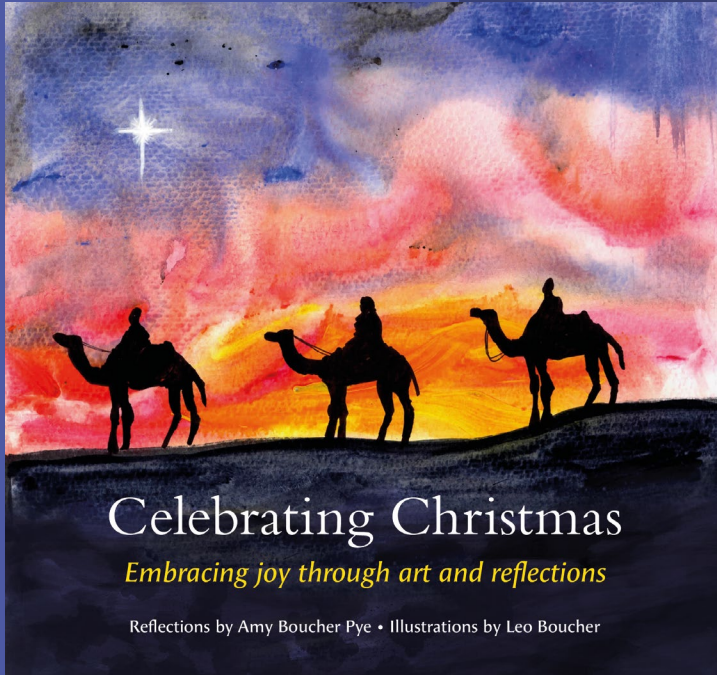


Pray with us for

- those reading and using Advent resources this year
- Rachel Tranter, leading the content creation team and her work
- for the content creation team as they produce online resources, aiming to balance accessibility, relevance and a good budgeting.
- the marketing team promoting Living Faith publications
- for all of us in the BRF Ministries’ family, to be encouraged and strengthened, during Advent, to open our hearts to the coming of our Lord this Christmas season



**God of prophecy,
speak into our Advent waiting
with words of inspiration and courage,
that we might find in you
a great light in our darkness,
a voice in our wilderness,
a highway in our desert,
and a new bloom in our dry land.
We wait for you, we look to you,
desire of all the nations
and hope of the whole world. Amen.**



Prayer for Advent and Christmas

A prayer from Celebrating Christmas

Jesus, you bring light and life. As I yield to you, your presence within me burns away that which is not holy. Help me to welcome your clarifying light, that I might be free of any sin that clings. May your light within be a gentle and welcoming beacon, a signal in these dark times of a safe haven. Amen.

Amy Boucher Pye

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For the BRF ministry of Messy Church

If we are taught to pray daily for God's forgiveness as we forgive others, then part of that prayer is also for the grace to forgive ourselves.

Olivia Warburton (ed.), *Loving my Neighbour* (BRF, 2024)



Thought for the week

'It is possible to move people, through God, by prayer alone.'

Hudson Taylor

Pray with us for

- God's blessing on the growing number of Messy Churches in the network
- for Messy Church advocacy of intergenerational mission and ministry. On Tuesday, the Anna Chaplaincy team vision day
- team meetings, for a positive synergy and fruitful outcomes between Messy Church and other all-age, fresh expressions of church
- relationships and collaboration with international Messy Church
- the Facebook Live sessions, and the team as they plan more of these for next year

**Bethlehem God,
whose first coming was surrounded
by suspicion and shame, and by death and dying,
draw near this Christmas to all those
who are caught up in the terrors and horrors of war.
Inspire all who are working for peace and
reconciliation,
and who long for the day when all will come
to taste God's gift of living bread,
from Bethlehem, the House of Bread,
the birthplace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.**



For the BRF ministry of Anna Chaplaincy



Prayer is the gift God has given us to help us make a difference. It is powerful and can break through barriers that seem impregnable. Whatever is going on... you can pray.

Becky Sedgwick, *Grandparenting for Faith* (BRF, 2024)

Thought for the week

‘Prayer is nothing else than being on terms of friendship with God.’

Teresa of Avila

Pray with us for

- God’s Spirit to work in and through today’s Anna Chaplains’ local coordinators forum
- God’s blessing on newly appointed Anna Chaplains
- those leading workshops and seminars run by Anna Chaplaincy at local, diocesan and national training events
- those planning workshops in collaboration with other organisations
- ‘times of refreshing in the presence of the Lord’ for the team when they come together in person or online for prayer and planning



**Rock of ages,
you call people in their old age
to serve and speak for you,
such as Moses, Caleb, Anna and Lois.
Help us in our churches, and in our wider society,
to honour and value those
who have lived long and experienced much,
recognising your sure promise that,
even into old age, all can bear fruit for you.
Amen.**

For the BRF ministry of Parenting for Faith

Paul speaks of our wordless prayers and the Holy Spirit's groans as he intercedes for us. Hannah weeps; Deborah celebrates; Abraham negotiates; Gideon questions. There are so many pictures of prayer...

Becky Sedgwick, *Grandparenting for Faith* (BRF, 2024)

Thought for the week

'Our prayers may be awkward. Our attempts may be feeble. But since the power of prayer is in the one to whom we pray and not in the one who prays, our prayers do make a difference.'

Max Lucado



Pray with us for

- Christian families engaging in Christ-centred routines and habits during this Advent season
- the continuing influence of Anna Hawkins' book *Being God's Child*
- Parenting for Faith blogs and courses online which tackle specific issues of concern to Christian parents
- team meetings and wisdom for new initiatives for 2025
- those reading *Parenting Teens for a Life of Faith*, as they look for inspiration about how to help older children choose faith for themselves

**Christmas God,
who, before the world began,
planned to come to us in Jesus,
we celebrate your gracious gift of love
wrapped as a baby and lying in a manger.
Help us to treasure this eternal present
by daily welcoming your abiding presence
into all our living, from this moment on.
May we, like the Christ-child, grow up
into fullness of life with you.
Amen.**



For Christmas joy, hope and thanksgiving

What is prayer but that invisible process which strengthens us with a power beyond understanding?

Elizabeth Rundle, *New Daylight*, Jan–Apr 2024

Thought for the week

‘Prayer makes a person godly and forms in that person the mind of Christ. If we really pray, we will become more like God, or else we will quit praying.’

E.M. Bounds



Pray with us for

- those sharing the miracle of Christmas with families, older people and in traditional services over these next days
- those reading about the mystery of Christmas, that they, and we, may grow in wonder at God’s love
- those hearing about the truth of Christmas for the first time this year, that they might come to faith
- those who will find this week difficult
- hope for all who find themselves without shelter this Christmas



God, who now is with us,
we kneel before you this day,
amid the straw, sawdust and splinters
of our imperfect lives,
to welcome the Christ-child
as our Lord and King.
May his life renew and redirect us
into the ways of love, peace and forgiveness,
because, in Christ, it is now ‘us with God’
from this day and forever more. Amen.

For our staff, with thanksgiving as this year ends

We also have a responsibility to pray that we might discern God's voice and that we might then speak God's words.

Martyn Percy, *An Advent Manifesto* (BRF, 2023)

Thought for the week

'The one who sings prays twice.'

St Augustine of Hippo



Pray with us for

- Penny Clarke, head of finance, giving thanks for her diligence and expertise
- Jules Morgan, head of people, giving thanks for her support and care of the team
- for supporters, donors and people who pray for BRF Ministries
- thankful hearts as we look back on a year of God's blessings and grace
- a new determination to stay close to God in prayer in the year ahead, trusting BRF Ministries' future and our lives into God's faithful care

Lord God of yesterday, today and forever,
we thank you for all we have learned about you
in the year that is passing
and we welcome this new year as a gift.
At the same time, we acknowledge that,
unless we are changed,
by asking your Spirit within us to make us new,
any outer newness will be in vain.
Forgive our yesterday;
bless our today;
and transform our forever,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



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

brf.org.uk/weekly-prayer-emails

This week pray with us for...

 BRF Ministrés

- the Anna Chaplaincy network across the UK and for all who have such a passion for this ministry
- all our readers and subscribers, and for all who write for us as part of our Living Faith ministry
- Messy Churches around the world – for their leaders and teams and for all the families that are involved
- parents, carers, grandparents, godparents and all in the church and wider community who play a part in our Parenting for Faith ministry

Find more BRF prayer points in our weekly prayer update.
Thank you for praying for us and with us; we are praying for you.

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.

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