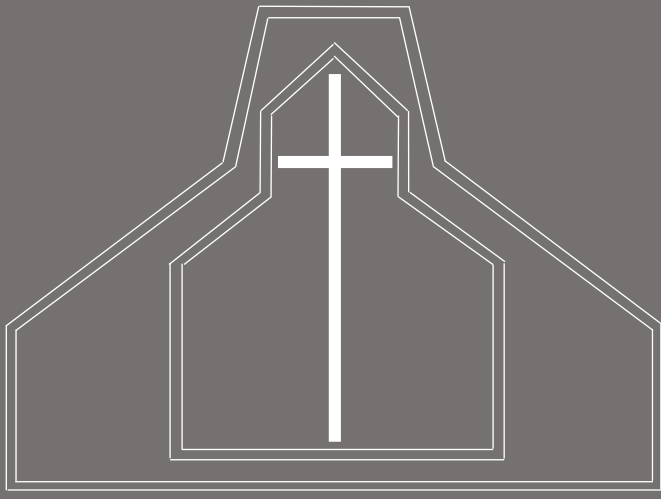


For the eyes of the Lord
are on the righteous and
His ears are attentive to
their prayer.

1 Peter 3:12



Prayer Diary

December 2023

St Columba's
Hillhead
Parish Church

Friday 1

Little Fishes & Busy Bees: Give thanks for the good number of children and their carers who attend each week and for the steadfastness of the leaders as they prepare each week to make the environment safe and inviting for those attending on Wednesday/Friday mornings. Pray for numbers to be maintained and increased and for a spirit of joy and peace in the time of sharing together. Pray that those who attend may be touched by the spirit of the Lord working in and through the leaders. Remember the leaders who faithfully week by week prepare for the meetings and for the work which this regularly involves setting up and tidying away. Pray for wisdom and support for the leaders as they seek to plan for Christmas and direct the progress of the Groups. Pray for the building of meaningful relationships with the children and carers.

Saturday 2

Christmas Café: Remember the Christmas Café in St Columba's this afternoon. Give thanks for all the preparations that have been made and those involved in the planning and staffing of the Event, especially the visit of the alpacas. Pray that this may be a particular source of interest and that people in the community as well as the congregation may be drawn to share in the

fullness and purpose of the Christmas Café. Pray that people may be curious to know more about the full meaning of Christmas and to know Jesus.

Sunday 3

St Columba's Hillhead: On this first Sunday in Advent continue to pray for the upbuilding of the life and fellowship of the congregation as we look towards the celebration of the Lord's birth at Christmas. Pray that as God's people within our Church we may work for the Lord together in unity and love and that the mission of the Church will know God's blessing in life and witness. Give thanks for the continued coming together and growth in fellowship of folks from both congregations and for the natural ways in which this is happening such as over tea and coffee on a Sunday morning. Pray that this may continue to strengthen and deepen the love and unity of God's people and that with encouragement to and from each other congregational life will be strong in the Lord especially as we celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper today. Pray also for those attending the Hearts that are Hurting Service this afternoon in Hillhead at 3pm. Pray that they may know the Lord's comfort and the empathy of each other for wounded hearts and spirits. Give thanks for the well-maintained premises we have as a

Congregation; pray that they may continue to be well-utilised and that God will bless that use and keep the buildings secure in and for the community.

Monday 4

Israel and Gaza: Continue to remember this ongoing complex situation and pray that God's peace would fill the hearts and minds of everyone who is suffering as a result of this conflict. Pray for:

- 1) Peace - an end to the violence - and remember world leaders with influence in the region to make wise decisions that lead to lasting peace.
- 2) Safety - for all civilians, that God would protect them from harm, particularly the most vulnerable, including children, older people and people with disabilities. Remember aid workers as they seek to provide vital humanitarian assistance and medical supplies and pray for their protection. Pray for safe access to food, water, sanitary items, medical supplies, fuel and electricity. Especially remember people forced to flee their homes - pray for safe places to stay and that they will be able to return home.
- 3) Hope - remember those who are terrified and traumatised, mourning and suffering in Israel and Gaza. Ask the Lord to save them from despair, for the trauma and violence they've

experienced not to overshadow hope. Pray that people in Gaza and Israel and those in the wider region wouldn't lose hope, that peace is possible.

"With God, all things are possible." (Matt. 19: 26) (from Tearfund)

Tuesday 5

Christmas Preparations: Especially pray for the planning and delivery of the forthcoming Christmas events in the Congregation. At this time of the year more people are drawn to visit the Church especially through Christmas events. Pray that they may be drawn nearer to the Lord and to get to know Him more fully.

1) Showing of the Film The Star at Hillhead on Sat. 9th Dec.

2) Carol Service in St Columba's on Sun. 10th Dec at 7pm.

3) Out of the Box Christmas Musical on Thurs. 14th Dec. 6:30pm at St Columba's Hillhead – Mary, Joseph and a donkey called Hank.

4) All Age Nativity Service on Sun. 17th Dec. at St Columba's.

5) Christmas Eve Family Service on Sun. 24th Dec. in St Columba's at 4pm.

6) Christmas Day Service on Mon. 25th Dec. In Hillhead at 10.30am.

Pray that as God's people within our Church we may work for the Lord together in unity and love and that

the mission of the Church will know God's blessing in life and witness.

Wednesday 6

Children and Family Worker: Give thanks for the recent introduction of Cassie Carlsen into our congregational life as our Children and Family Worker. Remember Cassie as she builds up her involvement in our congregational life and witness to the community and that she may feel 'at home' with us. Give thanks that she is with us in advance of the busy Christmas season and for her help in planning for Christmas.

Thursday 7

Jo Crotty: Due to unforeseen circumstances on a visit to family in Australia, with the loss and subsequent cancellation of her UK passport containing her Papua New Guinea (PNG) visa, Jo had had to remain in Australia (she holds dual nationality) with family while she waited to hear that PNG had accepted her request to transfer her work permit to her Australian passport. Give thanks that Jo has family to stay with in Australia and look after her while she is stuck in Australia. Please pray for favour and quick working of PNG immigration services so that she will be able to return to PNG as soon as possible.

Friday 8

Scripture Union: Give thanks for Scottish prayer supporters who have faithfully supported Open Bible in prayer by joining the weekly Zoom call organised by SU International. Give thanks too for Oksana Khimich who leads it - for her resilience, strength of character and strong faith in the Lord. Pray this prayer support brings much encouragement to her and those she mentions in prayer. At this time of the year too SU Holidays review policies, procedures and forms and prepare updates for Team Leaders at the forthcoming January Event Leaders Conference. Pray for good attention to detail. Pray also that Team Leaders and Assistant Team Leaders will be prompted to book in the forthcoming weeks.

Saturday 9

Gabriel Kijjambu, Luwero Community Ministries: Give thanks for this continuing work in Uganda and remember Gabriel as he comes towards the end of his time in the UK and Germany to update supporters of the work and witness of the ongoing Project to educate young people through the School there; teach farming and technical skills; build up the worshipping Christian community; and equip pastors to preach and teach for evangelism. Especially remember Gabriel as he attends and participates in

a Concert for Luwero hosted by Woodhill Evangelical Church, Bishopbriggs, to raise awareness and funding for the Project. Pray that this Event will be well-attended and give glory to God before he leaves the UK to return to Uganda in time for Christmas. Remember his wife Deborah and young daughters who will be delighted to welcome him home after his time away since October

Sunday 10

Sunday Club & Bible Class: Give thanks for the regular attendance by those young people who come to Church on Sundays and seek to know more about Jesus and get to know Him as Saviour and Lord. Pray for the Bible Class meeting week by week- the group is often small-pray that even with small numbers discussion would be good and relevant to all. Remember the leaders in their commitment of service that they would know wisdom and honour the Lord in their preparation and leadership. Remember Noah's Ark as it meets today and pray that the families who are coming along will increase friendships and may have a deepening interest and further desire to come along. Pray for the leaders as they share the Good News about Jesus in an age-and-stage appropriate way. Pray that when those who have been at Noah's Ark on a Sunday morning

come up to the Large Hall for refreshments, they may feel welcomed and very much at one with those of us coming through to the Large Hall from the church building. Remember the Carol Service at St Columba's tonight at 7pm that the message proclaimed will sow seeds of faith into hearts and lives.

Monday 11

Men's Group: Give thanks for the ongoing life of the current session of the Men's Group, especially as it comes to the end of the first half of the Session. Remember continuing and new members as they gather together and share fun and friendship in the enjoyment of the activities on offer. Pray that there will be a spirit of enjoyment and fellowship in the Group. Continue to remember John Clayton as Convener and pray that he will know the support of Group members.

Tuesday 12

The Guild: Give thanks for the completion of the first half of the Session of the Guild and for the varied speakers who have shared their message through the past weeks under the current Guild Theme - New Wine, New Wineskins. Pray that members will have been encouraged in their faith through the Session. Remember the Guild Christmas Lunch at Hayston Golf Club today that it may be a joyous time of fellowship and a fitting

conclusion to the first half of the Session for everyone.

Wednesday 13

Midweek Fellowship: Give thanks for the regular weekly meeting of the Midweek Fellowship and for the opportunity to worship God and share fellowship together, especially for those who may not be able to attend Church on Sundays. Praise the Lord for the love, support and encouragement shared amongst those who attend. Pray for Philip as he prepares for this Meeting that the Word of God may bear much fruitfulness in the hearts and lives of those who attend and pray that more people may desire to come along.

Thursday 14

Walk and Talk: Remember the Walk & Talk Group as it continues to enjoy meeting on Thurs. afternoons for an hour or so of walk and conversation. Remember those who regularly share together in this hour of gentle exercise and the opportunity to socially share interest in each other and their lives. Pray for those who come regularly and for new members that each will feel welcomed and know the mutual interest and love gained from 'a listening ear'. Also remember the Out of the Box visit tonight with 'Mary & Joseph and a donkey called Hank'.

Friday 15

The Boys' Brigade: Give thanks that the first half of the Session is coming to completion. Remember all Sections and the leaders who give faithfully of their time and commitment that this will be a positive influence on the boys to regular attendance and a desire to grow in maturity. Especially pray for the need for adult helpers that there will be an interest shown and some willing responders. Pray especially for the Christmas events as well as the regular programme of activities and challenges that there will be enjoyment and a desire to further the interest of the boys to the delight of the Staff.

Saturday 16

Lodging House Mission & Bethany Christian Trust: Give thanks for these Organisations as they provide a very valuable service especially at this time of the year for the homeless and vulnerable within our society. Pray that those who need help and support, especially in these cold, wet winter months, will find care and compassion through the Staff at these Centres. Pray for the Management and Staff that they will have adequate resources to meet the demand of needs upon them and that they may be beacons of light and love for the Lord in difficult circumstances.

Sunday 17

The Suffering Church: Remember Christians who are persecuted for their faith as they, like us, seek to meet to worship God, but in lands with oppressive regimes. In Malaysia, Pastor Raymond was abducted by secret state police 7 years ago. His family are currently suing the Malaysian government to seek justice and answers over his disappearance - the trial is ongoing. Pray that his wife and children will know God's peace, protection and provision over the next few months. Remember especially single parents- especially for mothers whose husbands have been killed for their faith. Ask the Lord to provide for their practical needs and pray that they will stand firm in their faith for themselves and their children. In Nigeria, a man died when he was caught inside the rectory of a Catholic Church after Fulani militants set the building on fire. Please pray for his grieving family, that God will comfort them this Christmas season and strengthen them in their faith. (Open Doors)

Monday 18

The Bible Society, Lebanon: This year the Bible Society of Lebanon is aiming to provide 4500 refugees and underprivileged families with aid packages and Scriptures - addressing their physical needs for food, medicines and supplies as well as their

spiritual need to encounter God's love. Nazha lives with her three younger sisters. Since the economic crisis started, and with the severe drop in the value of local currency, the value of her income from fixing clothes diminished dramatically. The aid packages are a real blessing to her, as she refuses to lose hope and continues to live day by day with complete trust that God will provide. Please pray that each copy of the Scriptures will bring joy and encouragement to refugee families. Pray also that many of them will share God's message with others.

Tuesday 19

Those who are Unwell, in Hospital or in Care: Remember all those who are unwell, awaiting or undergoing investigation, diagnosis, surgery/ treatment especially in the current demands upon the Health Service. Give thanks for those who are recovering from surgery/treatment and pray that they will know increasing strength and wholeness in the forthcoming days. Pray that those who need medical help may receive their required care as promptly as possible and pray for recovery, healing and strength to endure however God provides. Especially remember those suffering from chronic/terminal illness and pain as people seek to live with the constant reminder of suffering. Remember their

families and carers who also share in the pain and suffering. Continue to remember and give thanks for all Healthcare staff, especially our local GPs and staff amid continuing great pressures to respond to increasing demands upon them for their help and care. Pray for those in long term care, all NHS and Social Care staff as they seek to provide compassionate care especially in a time of increasing demands.

Wednesday 20

Friendship Club & Following Jesus Group: Remember The Following Jesus Group which meets this evening at St. Columba's Hillhead, and The Friendship Club on the second and fourth Wed. evenings of the month. Give thanks for the continuing development of these Groups as part of Prospects Across Scotland and for the recognition that these Groups give to valuing and supporting people with learning difficulties so that they can live their lives to the full. Praise God that this includes having a relationship with the Lord and understanding the Christian faith. Especially remember Pat Muir and her team of helpers who faithfully lead these Groups on Wed. evenings in St Columba's Hillhead in the ongoing work to support people with learning difficulties in our local community.

Thursday 21

Operation Christmas Child: Give thanks for the 55 boxes which were sent from St Columba's Hillhead, as well as the wider operation of this campaign to reach children abroad with these gifts of God's love. Pray that these will be transported safely and reach their destination to bring joy and delight to those who receive them. Pray that they may know the touch of God's hand upon these young lives and His love for them.

Friday 22

Those with Mental Health Issues: Remember those whose mental health is struggling at the moment. Pray that the Lord would draw close to those who are in despair. Especially remember those known to us who may be struggling. Pray that the Lord will give us the right words to say to someone who is suffering and pray for opportunities for healing conversations. Pray for an increase in understanding and empathy for mental health issues in society and within the Church. Pray that those suffering will find comfort and respite and a path to full healing. Remember also those supporting them that they may know be filled with patience, love, hope and healing. Remember those who answer telephone calls for help, especially at this Christmas season, through different agencies that they will

respond with grace and wisdom in difficult circumstances and accentuated demand.

Saturday 23

Tearfund: Church and Community Transformation (CCT) envisions and equips the church in practical ways to work with the local community. Remember Zambia and Tearfund Partner Jesus Care Ministries (JCM) to be able to help transform more churches and whole communities through CCT. Despite much progress in recent years, Zambia remains one of the least developed countries in Africa, with 54% of the population living below the poverty line. Pray that God will move powerfully through the work of JCM to transform individuals and communities. Pray that God will raise up pastors to take part in CCT training and help to bring life-changing transformation to their communities.

Sunday 24

The Bereaved: Remember those who have lost loved ones, especially those in recent days and personally known to us, particularly at this time of Christmas when feelings and emotions can be especially painful. Remember those who have suffered through sudden trauma or chronic illness. Such loss is devastating for anyone who lost a loved one close to them and grieving can be painful and difficult. Pray that the Lord

in His compassion will be close to them especially through dark and difficult days and that those surrounding them may be a quiet and sensitive support. Pray that the message of Christmas, that God comes close to us in the giving of His Son Jesus as the Light shining in the darkness, may be a comfort and hope amidst pain and sorrow. Remember the Family Christmas Eve Service at St Columba's at 4pm as a celebration of anticipation and expectation of the Coming King.

Monday 25

Christmas Day: Give thanks for the Church's celebration of the Birth of Jesus and for the gift of God in giving us His Son. Pray for a joyous celebration of His Birth this morning as the Church family comes together in worship to the newborn King. Pray that many will know Him as Saviour and Lord and that people will not leave the Church without knowing they have knelt down and met Jesus. Pray for families meeting together today to celebrate Christmas that it will be an enriching time together knowing that Jesus was born into a family life and love at Bethlehem.

Tuesday 26

Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF): A senior nurse at Balimo Hospital in Western Province, Papua New Guinea (PNG) says there are no resident doctors there, just some

that come for a few weeks at a time. Nurses are extremely short-staffed and medication is in short supply. Access to medical help and personnel is limited. Give thanks for MAF's support in serving these communities with the supply of medicines and patients from the outstations as well as emergency flights. Pilots also carry a Bible Box with Bibles in different languages, reading glasses for those with poor eyesight, Christian resources and audio Bibles. Give thanks for those who obtain items from the Bible Box and pray they will find their lives enriched by God's Word. Pray also for more doctors to be willing to serve remote communities in PNG and that Jesus will be shared amongst staff and patients that they will want to find out more for themselves.

Wednesday 27

Warm Welcome: Give thanks that the Warm Welcome opportunity at Hillhead is being used to support people and provide Food Bank service. Especially praise God for the extension of this service during the Oct. School Week when soup and sandwich lunches were on offer to people and children, in cooperation with Kirkintilloch Baptist Church. Pray that this opportunity may have had a positive impact in the lives of those who attended. Pray also that the Hillhead building

will be seen as a beacon of light for Christ in the community and people will be drawn to the light.

Thursday 28

Ukraine: Continue to remember all those affected by the war in Ukraine especially as we approach the dawn of another New Year. Remember especially refugees in neighbouring European countries. Pray for those families with members that are separated from each other; for those who have lost loved ones and where homes and communities have been devastated. Pray that God in His mercy may bring an end to the suffering and loss of life. Pray for peace and security for Ukraine and pray for world leaders that they may exercise wisdom and discretion. Give thanks for churches in Ukraine that amidst the hardships and challenges they face, continue to hold out the hope there is in Jesus and be able to offer practical help where it is needed.

Friday 29

National and Local Government: Lift up all those in positions of authority across the United Kingdom across the political spectrum in a time of division and discontent. Uphold our Prime Minister and First Minister of Scotland and their members of Government that they may exercise integrity and wisdom in

their life and work. Pray that policy-makers will be thoughtful and discerning as they make decisions and draft new policy. Remember the Government's negotiations with public service workers. Pray that frustrations around pay and working conditions can be resolved satisfactorily. Especially lift up Christians in politics. Pray that they will be able to live out their faith in their work and influence Government for good. Ask the Lord to give strength when times are difficult and pressure is upon them because of their faith.

Saturday 30

Our Neighbours: Pray that we might be good neighbours to all those amongst whom God has placed us, especially at this Festive Season. Pray that through our inter-connection of relationships and lives the light and love of Christ may be made known. Pray that people may seek to know more about Jesus and be drawn closer to Him. Pray for opportunities to allow this to happen.

Sunday 31

New Years' Eve: Let us quietly reflect on the year past and give thanks to the Lord for His gracious presence with us throughout this past year, through its ups and its downs as many of us have known. Let us learn from the past and so be stronger to face the future with what it may hold. King George VI,

not usually a compelling speaker, inspired and reassured the nation by quoting a poem in his Christmas message of 1939 I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year, 'Give me light that I may tread safely into the unknown'. And he replied 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God'. May this be our prayer today- pray that we will walk even more closely into and through the New Year holding the hand of the Lord ever more closely.