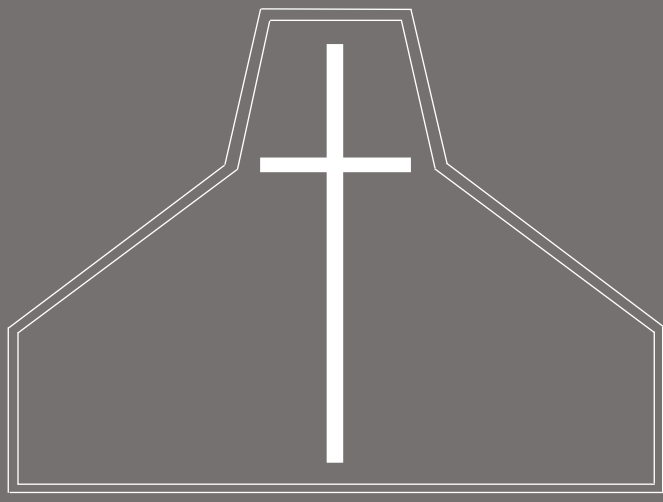


“Never be lacking zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer”

Romans 12: 11-12



Prayer Diary December 2021

St Columba's
Parish Church

Wednesday 1

Midweek Service: Pray for the Midweek Service and for those who attend that the worship time and sharing around God's Word may be a delight to the Lord and to each other. Pray for Philip as he conducts the Midweek Service that the Lord will bless the preparation for the preaching of His Word.

Thursday 2

The Bible Society: 'Open the Book' in Ghana is impacting the lives of children throughout the country as they experience Bible stories and understand the meaning of the Bible's message. Teachers are telling of improved behaviour and more children continuing their education. Daniel is 11 years old and he says "I love Bible stories because they can change your life". Pray for Daniel as he seeks to complete his education and live a life following the Lord. Pray for all schoolchildren in Ghana, for open ears and hearts as they listen to 'Open the Book' volunteers. Pray that God's Word is nurtured in these children as they are often the only family members who are able to read that they will be able to share God's Word with parents and siblings. Pray also that the children will experience lasting transformation in their lives through reading Scripture.

Friday 3

Little Fishes: Remember the regular Friday morning meeting together of Carers and Toddlers and leaders. Pray for a safe and secure environment for everyone and uphold the leaders as they seek to present a faithful witness for Christ who loves little children. Pray for a joyous preparation for Christmas and the presentation of the Christmas message with those who come along week by week.

Saturday 4

Christmas Café: Pray for the Christmas Café which is taking place this afternoon in the Hall and Church buildings and the opportunity it presents to engage with people and share the Gospel message of Christmas. Give thanks for all the willing volunteers who cater and serve refreshments and for those involved in fun-activities such as the Angel-Hunt that people will be drawn close to the Lord and have cause for reflection and response to the meaning of Christmas. Pray also that many will partake of Christian resources on offer and engage with the Fairtrade stall.

Sunday 5

Church Services: Pray for the Word of God as it is proclaimed today that it will be sharper than a two-edged sword as it is heard

and pray that it will be heard with thoughtfulness and fruitfulness in people's hearts. Pray for Philip as he prepares to preach God's Word and give thanks for his ministry that the Lord will be pleased to bless the preaching in His Name and use him mightily to His glory. As we share the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper today let us quietly give thanks to God in Advent for the coming of Jesus as we prepare to celebrate Christmas and also for His Death at Calvary for us as our Saviour and Lord. For God so loved the world that He gave us His Son that whoever lives and believes in Him shall not die but know everlasting life. Give thanks for His promise and His gift.

Monday 6

Men's Group: Remember those who regularly meet week by week on a Monday evening and enjoy the enrichment of sharing together in competition-activities and fellowship from week to week. Pray for those who have been unwell recently which has meant a fluctuation in numbers attending.

Sunday 7

The Guild: Remember those who regularly share in the fellowship of the Guild and for the pastoral care and concern expressed for each other. Give thanks for the speakers who have visited

during this half of the current Session and for the Christian areas of work and witness which have been shared. Especially pray for the work of 'Home for Good', a recently-formed Christian charity which seeks to place vulnerable children and teenagers into loving and caring homes to make a transformational difference to their lives. This is the chosen Guild project for this year. Pray that the proposed new Lead for Scotland will be successfully appointed.

Wednesday 8

Midweek Service: Pray for the Midweek Service and for those who attend that the worship time and sharing around God's Word may be a delight to the Lord and to each other. Pray for Philip as he conducts the Midweek Service that the Lord will bless the preparation for the preaching of His Word. Remember the Carol Service at Lammermoor Gardens this afternoon at 2pm as residents come together in Christmas praise to the Lord.

Thursday 9

Scripture Union: SU wants to develop two key areas: 1. digital ministry and 2. ministry with those at the margins (disadvantaged). Pray for the first steps of recruitment to be solidly established and that new partnerships may emerge.

Give thanks for young people flourishing in faith and pray for steady spiritual growth and fruit in the lives of those who are attending Spotlight, Equip, Connect Groups, Pupil Leadership Training, SU Groups and weekends.

Friday 10

The Boys' Brigade: Continue to give thanks for and remember the leaders and boys as they meet together in all Sections. Pray for enjoyment as they meet and work towards achieving and attaining their awards and that the boys will want to keep coming to do this. Pray that the leaders will be encouraged as they prepare week by week and that the boys will see them as good role models.

Saturday 11

Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF): Give thanks that recently MAF Pilot Wim Hobo flew 1178kgs of vegetable seeds (aubergine, amaranthus, okra and collard greens seeds) to Pieri, South Sudan for partner organisation Tearfund. Please pray for a good harvest and for the water in the lake to remain enabling the seeds to be watered. Pray also that the community will see improvements in health and that intercommunal violence will end and Pieri will remain peaceful.

Continue to pray for Jo Crotty in her recent return to classroom teaching and her relationships with her class in Ukarumpa.

Sunday 12

Sunday Club and Bible Class: Give thanks for the young people who week by week take their place within the life of St Columba's. Pray for their continuing growth in faith and involvement within the life of the congregation and for their witness among their peers outwith the congregation that they may be steadfast in their love for the Lord. Give thanks for the faithful leadership of those who prepare and lead the young folks in their learning to nurture their Christian growth. Remember especially those who will come together this afternoon at 3pm for the Service for 'Hearts that are Hurting', a poignant time to draw near to God for His comfort.

Monday 13

Lodging House Mission: Pray especially for the work of the Day Centre which is a vital haven for a variety of reasons to those who are vulnerable. For many, attending the Day Centre is the first step in reducing the feelings of isolation and loneliness which are often caused by living a chaotic life, homelessness as well as mental illness. Pray especially for the Support

Staff and Counsellors as they seek to develop trusted relations to help identify the individual needs and wants of the men and women who seek help and advice.

Tuesday 14

Christians Against Poverty (CAP): Pray for the local CAP Group which exists as a national debt counselling charity that works through local churches to relieve poverty and help people out of debt. Pray for those who offer free debt counselling to people living in our area. Pray that people will seek their help early to prevent further debt increasing and receive practical and emotional support to show people there is always hope. Pray also for the local foodbank, that in the current economic climate those who need and seek assistance with food provision may be welcomed and provided for and hearts open to give gladly to provide food items. Remember those who willingly serve as volunteers to provide this service that they will be safe and secure.

Wednesday 15

Following Jesus/Friendship Groups: Give thanks for all those who come together in these Groups and have the opportunity to meet and share together. Pray that God will be very close to them especially at this time of Christmas and for a spirit

of fun and fellowship as they learn about God's continuing love for them. Pray especially for the carers that they may enjoy an opportunity to meet and share together in mutual support and encouragement.

Thursday 16

'Out of the Box' Theatre Company: Give thanks for the visit to St Columba's of the 'Out of the Box' Theatre Company for their presentation of 'Steve the Shepherd' this evening as an outreach in sharing the Christmas message. Pray that their talents may be used widely for the Lord in reaching out to people and especially that people may be drawn to come to St Columba's this evening to see and hear the Gospel message proclaimed in drama, music and fun. Pray that people's hearts will be opened to respond to the message.

Friday 17

Bethany Christian Trust: Pray for 'Connect to Community' for those leaving prison. For many people leaving prison the idea that Someone cares for them so much that they can count the hairs on their head is quite alien. People who have been in prison don't like to think about numbers as they have a prison number which follows them through the system and when they are released they quite often

just become another statistic. 'Connect to Community' seeks to make sure that does not happen. Pray for those who accompany those who are vulnerable in this way that they can learn through the care of Bethany's volunteers that God cares and has a purpose for them.

Saturday 18

Those who are Unwell or in Hospital: Remember those who are unwell, awaiting investigation, diagnosis, surgery/treatment especially in the current demand upon the Health Service. Pray that they may receive their required care as promptly as possible. Remember and give thanks for all Healthcare staff amid great pressures on them to respond to increasing demands upon them for their help and care especially as the winter season reaches its peak.

Sunday 19

The Church at Worship: 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 the celebration of the Nativity this morning as the Church family comes together to worship the newborn King. Pray that many will know Him as Lord. Remember the Joint Carol Service with Hillhead this evening that God will be glorified to His pleasure and delight.

Monday 20

The Bereaved: Remember those who have lost loved ones, especially those in recent days and personally known to us. Pray especially at this time of Christmas for parents/families who have lost a child through miscarriage/ stillbirth/illness in early years/childhood. Remember those who have suffered through sudden trauma. 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.

Tuesday 21

Those with Mental Health Issues: The last few months have been difficult for many in loss of social support and encouragement. Pray for those who are suffering mental health issues and those who seek to provide caring support. Remember their families who experience pain watching loved ones suffer and often feel helpless and isolated too. Pray for those in the NHS and those in the wider Caring Agencies who are under great pressure from increased demand for their services through increased waiting times. Pray especially for those known to us who are experiencing difficult times in these days.

Wednesday 22

Vaccination Programme: Pray for the continuing rollout of booster jabs for Covid and flu - that they may be widely available and taken up across all age groups, especially for those who are vulnerable. Pray for those in work situations who feel vulnerable. Remember healthcare staff who are at the forefront of the effects of virus-circulation and who feel under pressure by constant demands for their care. Also remember those with other health conditions who are also waiting for further treatment and medical assistance especially at this demanding time when pressures are exacerbated.

Thursday 23

The Suffering Church: Remember the work of Open Doors, Barnabas Fund and Christian Solidarity Worldwide which all work to provide hope and aid for the persecuted Church, especially at this time of Christmas all around the world. Give thanks for answered prayer in strongly Islamic Somaliland where six Christians were released from detention on 5th August after charges against them were dropped. They had been charged with a variety of offences including apostasy from Islam and spreading Christianity as well as inciting others to commit public order offences. Pray that there will be no

backlash against the tiny Christian community of Somaliland. Pray also for a good response to appeals from Madagascar's Christians for help in their famine crisis.

Friday 24

Christmas Eve Service: Give thanks for the expectation of the coming of the Saviour of the World born as a baby at Bethlehem and God's coming into the world as a human being to identify with us. Remember especially family life at this time and God's grace in coming to us in this way. Remember the Family Christmas Eve Service this afternoon at 4pm as the children especially come in anticipation and excitement to the Lord's House.

Saturday 25

Christmas Day: Take time to reflect and give thanks for the graciousness of God in sending His Only Son into the world to be its Saviour. Give glory to God in the highest and offer a prayer for peace and goodwill on earth especially in these very uncertain days of conflict and division. Pray that many people across the world may turn to the Prince of Peace for hope and the deeper meaning to life. Give thanks for those who are able to come together with others today and remember especially those who are vulnerable and homeless.

Sunday 26

Sunday Worship: Give thanks for the freedom of being able to come together in All Age Worship this morning to praise the Lord for the joy of the Christmas season and His precious gift of His Son to us and for us. Remember Christians around the world not able to meet openly in worship for fear of harm or arrest and pray for their safety and security. Give thanks for their faithfulness and their desire to honour the Lord.

Monday 27

The Housebound: Remember the housebound who are unable to leave their homes for one reason or another. Pray that they may not feel isolated but have people to call and others to call upon them intermittently to ease their isolation especially after so many months of lockdown and now with the darker days of winter. Pray that they may know the peace of Christ in their hearts to know they are not alone.

Tuesday 28

Christian Aid: Give thanks for the recent sum of £565 + Gift Aid which was given in St Columba's for the wider work of Christian Aid. Be thankful that we enjoy a clean water supply. The Christmas Appeal seeks to provide jerry cans for collecting clean water, build more boreholes, provide

seeds and farming tools and give mums the chance to set up small businesses (like the mums in Malawi who have established a small juicing business to sell in the market collected from the baobab trees). Climate chaos in countries such as South Sudan have forced mums to give their children dirty water which they knew was not safe but have no choice. Pray for Christian Aid's work in this vital area to change lives. Pray for the local Christian Aid Committee which seeks to inform local churches of the importance of Christian Aid's work and raise awareness and funding to support the wider work.

Wednesday 29

The Leprosy Mission: Pray for staff worldwide who are speaking out and conducting The Leprosy Mission's advocacy work as TLM works to its advocacy strategy for 2019-2023. Pray that TLM will achieve the goals of the strategy, including the fight to repeal all laws that discriminate against people affected by leprosy. Especially remember Alice Cruz as the UN's Special Rapporteur for leprosy. Her work is vital in holding governments to account and encouraging them to provide or change policies so that people affected by leprosy are cared for. Pray for her work, that it will be successful and she will see the best ways she can make a difference.

Thursday 30

Tearfund: Pray for the 'House of Hope' in Chad run by Tearfund's local church partner SERBAD and home to more than 120 girls who have escaped female genital mutilation, providing shelter and food and paying for education. As more girls come in it has become challenging to provide for all their needs. Some girls have walked hundreds of miles to take refuge in the centre. Pray that this vital work will receive the necessary resources to fulfil the needs of these vulnerable girls.

Friday 31

New Year's Eve: Let us quietly reflect on the year past and give thanks to the Lord for His gracious presence with us, 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. 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 - that we walk into and through the New Year holding the hand of the Lord ever more closely.