

**MARCH 2025**

*Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed, the motion of a hidden fire, that trembles in the breast. James Montgomery (1771-1854)*

All religions pray. God and prayer are inseparable. Belief in God and belief in prayer are elemental and intuitive. The Hebrew Scriptures is full of commands and inducements to pray, and the great stories of deliverance and victory are all examples of prevailing and answered prayer. Jesus spent time alone to pray, taught his disciples a prayer of unity, and we are called to be a people of prayer.

Matthew 6:5-6 is where many of us probably find ourselves in prayer; 'But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall recompense thee' as the King James version of the Bible so lyrically puts it. Please do continue with this, and let the Spirit of God guide you through this Pentecost experience. Let the inner dwelling of God continue to transform and guide.

Spending time in Lugazi in Uganda, I was awake early every Wednesday. On this day the Christian leaders, and local Imams pray for the UK; to alleviate our poverty, our spiritual poverty that we may come alive to God and all the Trinity, for us Christians, for Allah to our Muslim neighbours, to know of the true generosity of the God of all creation and wonder who promises so much more than we can possibly comprehend and know. This was an eye-opening experience and Wednesday remains my day of national prayer.

In this time Lent, Easter then Pentecost I write to encourage us all in prayer. Oakmere Methodist Church is open for prayer on Monday mornings [11.00-12.00]. This is specifically for seeking God's vision for the now closed Chapel as we look for Resurrection before our Farewell Service led by ex-President of Conference John Bell on June 8<sup>th</sup> at 4.00 pm, Pentecost Sunday. Five of us were amazed by the depth of vision God gave this gathering, breathing new life into our thoughts and this is just the start! May God enable greater clarity in the days ahead.

At this time the Circuit Stewards are seeking God's vision for us as we seek good governance and adding impetus into the mission of God in our various localities. Please pray for them.

Garden Lane, Caldby Valley, Wesley, Helsby, The Heath, Frodsham ... all our Churches and Chapels are seeking steps forward in bringing new life, joy, peace, worship and transformation where we are. We are hoping to have a Circuit Prayer diary up and running from September. Please pray for this.

The Revd. Claire Rawlinson joins us in September; please pray for her as well as Neil, Alison, Susie, Michaela, myself and our faithful Supernumeraries.

Mark Smyth, a much-loved Local Preacher has broken his leg in a nasty twist of fate, and his response has been; please pray for quick healing so he can be out and about again, encouraging us to know the love of God. Pray for Mark and all of our Local Preachers, especially for new ones to answer the call that God is placing on people's hearts (we have a new LP on Note from June) – praise God.

Yes, there is Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, Myanmar, refugees, migrants, students, hospitals and many, many others in need of prayer. This letter is a call, a reminder to pray in this Lenten time, and IF there is any news on prayer, any prayer meetings, any ideas, any gatherings, please do let Liz Barton know and we will let the Joyful News ring out.

Grace and peace

Gordon

The Revd. Brian Powley served as the Superintendent Minister in Chester and as the Chair of the Chester and Stoke District. He entered the Methodist Ministry in 1963 and was much loved by all who encountered him. Revd. Powley passed away in York earlier this month and a letter of condolence from the Circuit has been sent to his family.

Congratulations to the excellent weekend of celebration at Halton Trinity in Runcorn, and if you have good news to advertise and share please do let us know and we will joyfully share these on the Circuit website and through this monthly letter.