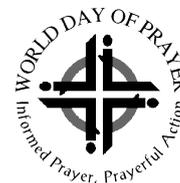


Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2022  
**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**  
**Youth Leaflet**



World Day of Prayer is an international, ecumenical prayer movement involving Christian women in more than 180 countries, and in over 1000 languages. Every year Christians from all over the world, intergenerational and from many traditions, celebrate a common day of prayer on the first Friday in March. We bring before God the needs of the world, and of a different country each year. This year the Service is written by England, Wales and Northern Ireland and part of our involvement will be to pray for these countries. The theme is 'I know the plans I have for you'.

### Leader's Notes

This leaflet provides a number of ideas for use with youth groups. There are two main elements. Firstly there is a bible passage that is being used throughout the World Day of Prayer event from Jeremiah. The focus will then move on to prayer looking at the why and how of prayer and then the possibility that we might be the answer to some of our prayers.

**Bible Passage:** Please ask the youth group to read the bible passage from Jeremiah 29:1-14 then share this reflection.

The background is that the Children of Israel have been taken into exile (slavery) to Babylon far from their familiar surroundings. They are desperate to get home when the prophet Jeremiah sends them a letter telling them what God plans for them.

### Bible passage reflection



#### *Read Jeremiah 29:1-14*

Questions for discussion:

What are your plans for the next three years?

What would you like to be your situation in 15 years' time (location/career/family)?

**Key verse: I know the plans I have for you. I have it all planned out – plans to take care of you, not abandon you, plans to give you the future you hope for.**

**(The Message Jeremiah 29:11).**



### **“I know the plans I have for you I have it all planned out”**

1. How does this make you feel, that God has plans for you?
2. Is God controlling you like a grand puppet master?
3. Do you think this is restrictive?
4. Can you really trust yourself to God to have the best for you in your life or are you happier trusting yourself to make the best way forward in the future?

### **“plans to give you the future you hope for”**

1. Do you think that God is like a parent seeking the best for their children (by the way, parents don't always get this right!!)?
2. Do you trust that God knows you and your unique talents and abilities better than you know yourself and thus you are in the best place to gauge your future?
3. Does it mean that we don't need to do anything for all this to happen - that God has got it all sorted? The very last part of the verse might suggest we get involved with telling God about our hopes - 'Plans to give you the future you hope for'.

### **“plans not to abandon you”**

1. How would the children of Israel feel when they heard this letter read out to them given that they were slaves in exile?
2. Would this statement of not being abandoned change their mood given the message they have been given?
3. Have you ever felt or thought that God has abandoned you...if so...does this statement help you?

### **Concluding points:**

- What is really special about this verse is that God has the best planned for you. He created you to be you and you are unique. God is interested in *your* hopes and dreams
- Your hopes matter a great deal to God.
- Don't stand back and just let life happen - talk to God about your hopes and dreams.
- We are assured in this verse that God is with us even when we are not feeling good about the situations going on around us.
- Talk to him even when you feel on your own as God has not abandoned us.

## Why pray?



Watch the following video clip of a song called “That’s why I pray”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjJyZfDCa88>

What do you think the band are saying in this song and what makes them want to pray?

**One** of the elements of prayer is looking around at the problems of the world and praying for them?

What do you see around you that bothers you that we could pray for?

## How should we pray?

Suggested below is a framework for prayer (ACTS). This can be applied to the World Day of Prayer focus on England, Wales and Northern Ireland (our neighbours). Ask the young people to help fill in the grid (some examples are given).



The chart below will help you in your Prayers. Some suggestions have been given. What can you add to the chart that you wish to pray for?

<p><b>(1) Adoration:</b> Give God praise and honour for who he is as Lord over all</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• God as Creator</li><li>• Jesus as our Saviour</li><li>• The Holy Spirit as our Comforter.....</li><li>•</li></ul>	<p><b>(2) Confession:</b> Honestly deal with the sin in your life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For the times we don’t live by God’s standards</li><li>• When we have let others down</li><li>• When we haven’t done what we should have done.....</li></ul>
<p><b>(3) Thanksgiving:</b> Verbalize what you’re grateful for in the world around you (here we are focusing on England, Wales and Northern Ireland)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NHS</li><li>• Education system</li><li>• Freedom.....</li></ul>	<p><b>(4) Supplication:</b> Pray for the needs of others (focusing on England, Wales and Northern Ireland) – You could use the internet to get more information to be more aware of what to pray for,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Those without employment</li><li>• Drug problems</li><li>• The lonely.....</li></ul>

## How could we be the answer to our own prayers?

### What's your #WDP hope?

- **Aim:** This activity encourages young people to think of the injustices in the world around them and not just to pray for them but also to consider how we might commit ourselves to transforming them.
- **You will need:** Pieces of paper, markers, phone/camera with access to the internet.
- **Explain:** The world around us is broken and full of hopelessness; this is not how God created the world to be. God created us with passions and gifts to make a real difference. Young people can be hope-bringers and culture transformers, to shine light in hopeless places. Just like Grace, from Essex in England.



*'My name is Grace and I'm 24. My hope is...that all those who seek safety in the UK are welcomed, embraced, and given the support they need. When the news in the UK began to fill with stories of people crossing the Mediterranean in dinghies and risking their lives to reach Europe, I couldn't ignore it. My heart broke that people had been forced to flee their homes and were risking their lives to reach our continent. My sadness turned to anger when I saw how European countries, including the UK, reacted to it.*

*The political hostility and physical oppression made me feel sick. I couldn't understand how we could deny safety to those who so desperately needed it. My God is a God of justice and this was a serious and harmful injustice that was happening on my doorstep. In September 2017, I moved to Calais to volunteer with the Refugee Community Kitchen. I ended up staying for 6 months, working as a driver and distribution lead. I learnt so much about humanity during my time in Calais, seeing the very best and the very, very worst of it. Some of our days and weeks in Calais were quite traumatic. We got caught up in teargas, in fights, we witnessed the police beating people and pulling them out of the back of trucks, our friends would tell us stories of their experiences in Libya, in the Sahara Desert, on boats across the Mediterranean, in prison, and often they were quite harrowing. I couldn't bear to think of my friends going through such awful things. God gave me an amazing support network – both in Calais and from home. I think people found hope in friendship. Sure, providing two hot meals a day was vital, but it was by building relationships, checking in on people and treating people as individuals, that we were able to remind people that this was only temporary, that people cared about them and wanted to know their story. That soon, hopefully, they would be safe.'*

Grace's #WDP hope is for refugees. What's your #WDP hope? One of the elements of prayer is looking around at the problems of the world and praying for them. What do you see around you that bothers you that you could pray for? Share an issue that you are passionate about by writing it on a piece of paper, sharing it with the group, and then uploading it on social media using #WDP hope.

Grace was passionate about restoring worth to refugees and her passion led her not only to pray but also to serve in a practical way. What steps can you take this week which will help transform an injustice?

### Close with this Prayer

*God we praise you for being our heavenly Father who loves us, cares for us, has great plans for us and will never abandon us.*

*Help us to pray. Help us to be aware of the hurts and the injustices not only where we live but in the world around us. Help us to pray in faith that this world will be a better place and that people will learn to love you as we love you.*

*And Father when we are part of the answer to the prayers we are praying help us to get active to help a struggling world.*

*We pray these things in the strong name of Jesus.*

**Amen.**