

prayer **in** action



We are so grateful for your prayers and support. Thank you for lifting up our work in prayer. This month we are following the Prisons Week prayers to support prisoners in England and Wales (see WIA pages 8 – 9).

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.
John 8.36 (ESV)

8 – 14 November

Praying with prisoners

Spirit of grace and truth, we ask for your constant presence through the days, weeks, months and years of imprisonment. For your steady refusal to be shut out by cell walls, steel doors or reluctant and stubborn hearts. Break through the fear and isolation, shatter all pretence and deceit, guide our thoughts and actions, setting before us the example of Jesus the prisoner. Bring us face to face with the unlimited and sacrificial love of God for all his children, so that we can know we are not alone.

Praying with the victims of crime

Comforter Spirit, ease the distress and suffering of those whose lives are locked down because of crimes committed against them. Move through others to bring reassurance that they are not alone, physically or in the depths of their souls. Unlock doors that reveal a path of healing through hurt and injustice to a more peaceful place, where trust and confidence can be gradually restored.

15 – 21 November

Praying with families

Spirit of life and light, walk with us through the confusion and pain of lives forever changed by crime and imprisonment. Give us the strength to bear feelings of anger and betrayal; and to cope with the unfamiliar and frightening. Show us how to bridge the gulf which keeps us apart, revive relationships and bring reconciliation. Take our fears away and give us peace, that we can know that we're not alone.

Praying with communities

Spirit of God, who dwells within people and places, help us magnify your kindness and goodness to overcome ignorance, alienation and hostility, to be able to see each other as people created and connected in God's image. Humble us by your power that we might have the courage to come together, physically distanced but united in purpose, called by name to serve God and our neighbours. Pour your gifts upon us, so that we can fulfil your trust in us to do our part, that your kingdom may come on earth as it is in heaven.

22 – 28 November

Praying with those working in prison

Spirit of refuge and renewal, be alongside all who are called to work in prisons. Give daily strength to serve courageously and faithfully through the continuing constraints of lockdown. Be present in the bringing of order, compassion, food, comfort, and humanity to all held in custody. Sustain and enable us in times of exhaustion and weariness through the sureness of your love and power.

Praying with those working in the criminal justice system

Spirit of wisdom and mercy, lead those responsible for exercising justice in the way of truth; bring discernment, fair minded judgement and a willingness to confront injustice as they consider the lives of others. In every role and place of work through the whole criminal justice system, guide and empower people to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with Christ in his strength and in his Spirit.

1 – 7 November

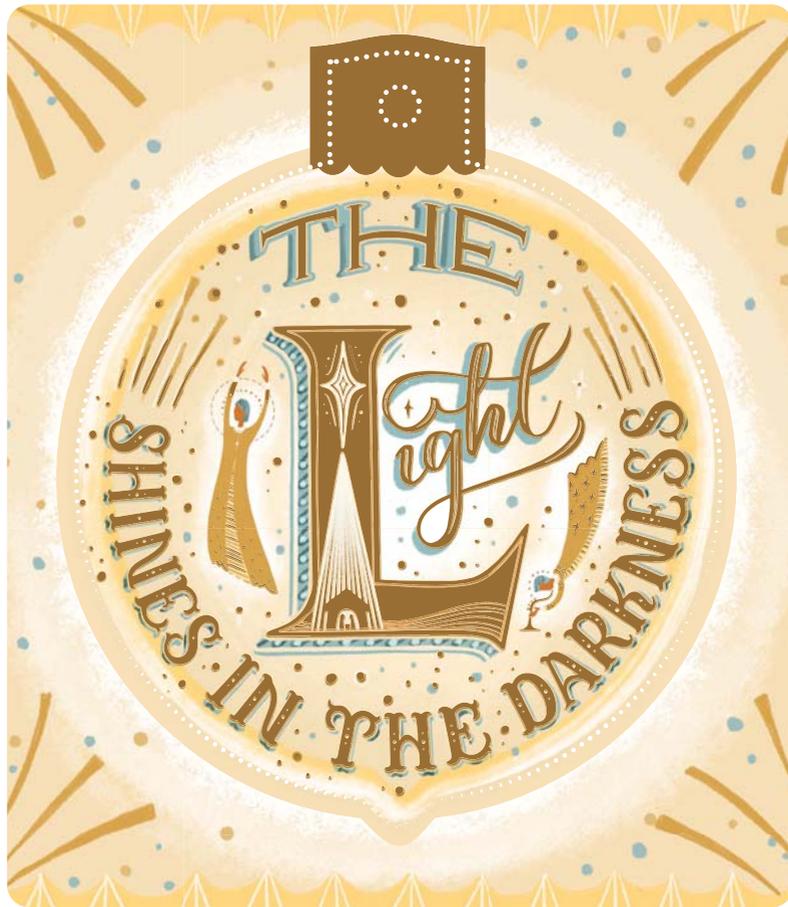
The Prisons Week Prayer

Lord, you offer freedom to all people. We pray for those in prison. Break the bonds of fear and isolation that exist. Support with your love prisoners and their families and friends, prison staff and all who care. Heal those who have been wounded by the actions of others, especially the victims of crime. Help us to forgive one another, to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly together with Christ in his strength and in his Spirit, now and every day. Amen.



November

December



29 November – 5 December

Please join us as we pray for the **Open the Book project in Ghana**. The schools are so pleased to see how pupil behaviour is improving and more children are staying on at school to complete their education.

This week we pray together for the amazing volunteers who give their time to share the meaning of Bible stories with the next generation. The team have already reached over 6000 schoolchildren and we pray that they will achieve their dream of visiting every primary school in Ghana.

This month please pray for the projects being supported through our Christmas charity gifts. Each gift will help bring the Bible's message to people around the world. To see the full selection and give the gift of a Bible this Christmas please visit biblesociety.org.uk/charitygifts

'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom he is pleased!'
Luke 2.14 (GNB)

6 – 12 December

In **Burkina Faso** our **Bible translators** are determined to provide the complete Bible in the languages of the people. Ninety per cent of the population speak native African languages and they are waiting to hear God's word come alive in their heart language. We pray for the translators as they dedicate their lives to this amazing task.

Mozambique has suffered years of internal fighting and families have lost loved ones. Our **Bible-based healing** groups provide an opportunity to talk about their pain and receive support through their recovery journey. We pray for the people of Mozambique, for the pain to reduce and the certainty of God's living hope to break through in people's lives.

13 – 19 December

Not all countries are stable ground for Bible mission. Many are plagued by problems such as poverty and terrorism, or a lack of openness to the gospel. This week we pray for the **leaders of Bible Societies** in countries facing an uphill struggle to keep Bible mission afloat, relying almost entirely on their faith in God and the prayers and kind donations received from their brothers and sisters in Christ.

We pray that they will grow in strength, knowing the worldwide support they have and that new opportunities will open up for them to share the Bible's message and support their communities.

20 – 26 December

Happy Christmas, may God's blessing be on you and your family as you celebrate Jesus' birth!

In **China** church services have started again following the government suspension and Bibles are back on sale in church bookshops. However, so many people are still suffering from the physical and economic impact of the coronavirus outbreak.

Some rural Chinese workers have been unable to return to work in the cities and families are struggling to make ends meet. But through the pandemic and recovery pastors are travelling increased distances to serve their people and make sure that they are supported.

We pray for new Christians across China that they may receive a Bible to enable them to grow in their faith and for fellowship with other Christians who can support them as they begin their life in Christ.

27 December – 2 January

In **Syria** we are reaching out to the younger generations to mend their broken lives and give them hope for the future. Many have been exposed to the horrors of war and have only known war in their short lives. Tens of thousands do not go to school.

We pray for the **new Sunday School leaders** who are stepping up to teach and guide the young. We pray that they can bring the Bible stories to life for children affected by war and help them to be healed from the emotional scars they carry due to extreme trauma.

January

Happy New Year! As we begin a new year please remember our teams in Malawi and across Africa who are seeking to bring the life changing message of the Bible to people who need its message of hope.

Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.
Isaiah 43.19 (ESV)



Youth Bible Advocates team in Malawi sharing God's word through drama

Photography by Alan Kember

3 – 9 January

Pray for women like Loveness, 20, who've recently learned to read through a Bible Society literacy class. Give thanks that, now they can read the Bible for themselves, their faith is coming alive. Pray they will grow as disciples of Jesus, and that their literacy skills continue to develop.

Give thanks that 20 new Yao literacy facilitators were trained last year, and there are now more than 60 trained teachers running classes in Malawi. Pray for skill and inspiration as they guide women through the course, and thank God for their commitment to serve.

10 – 16 January

Almost 4,000 children's Bibles and Scripture activity books have been provided to churches in Malawi over the last 18 months, for use in Sunday schools. Pray that these resources will bring the Bible to life for children and they will understand God's word in a new and meaningful way.

Malawi has an overwhelmingly youthful population, so pray the Church will prioritise children's ministry and commit to passing on God's word to the next generation. Pray for all those working in ministry with children and youth people across Malawi, like the Youth Bible Advocates team (pictured left) sharing God's word through drama.

Malawi is one of the world's poorest countries – and the poorest people here have been severely impacted by the coronavirus pandemic lockdown. Pray for wisdom and compassion among the nation's leaders.

17 – 23 January

Our team have had to suspend much of their activity in Malawi during this time, and have been hit financially by falling Bible sales. Pray for the wellbeing of our staff, and pray that as soon as restrictions allow, vital Bible work can once again resume.

Please pray for the women taking part in our Bible-based literacy programmes across Africa. We pray that the programme will open up new opportunities for women and a new faith and discipleship as they read the Bible for themselves for the first time.

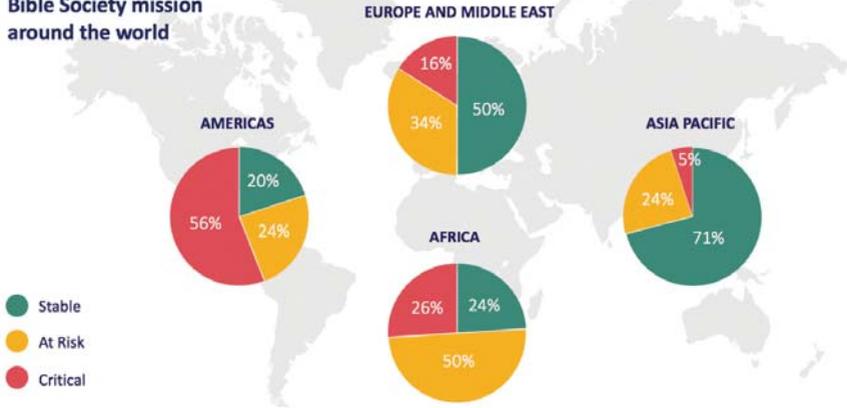
24 – 30 January

Thank God for the health of our colleagues and their families in Africa during these uncertain times. Please pray for them as they start to pick up activities now that lockdown restrictions are easing. Pray for wisdom and alertness, as well as joy, creativity and passion to continue doing God's work as they serve the Church once again.

Please pray for African countries facing not only extreme economic difficulties but also political instability brought on by terrorist groups. Please pray specifically for Mozambique, where killings by Isis in the centre and north of the country (in particular Cabo Delgado Province) are increasing, and armed insurgents are wreaking havoc amongst the populations. Pray too for the Sahel region (specifically for our teams in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso), which is also subject to mounting terrorist activities from Boko Haram and other Islamist extremists.

February

Impact of Covid-19 on Bible Society mission around the world



Bible Society bookshops and ministries in 88 countries are at risk of closure as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and national lockdowns. Please join us in prayer for our brothers and sisters around the world.

*For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.
1 Corinthians 12.12 (ESV)*

Almost 500 projects to translate, distribute and share the Bible with millions of people are under threat. And the most vulnerable communities will be hardest hit – at a time when many are turning to God's word for hope and comfort.

The crisis, affecting more than a third of the Bible Society network, has been triggered by plummeting Bible sales and income in some nations. There's no money to pay staff or keep the doors open. Even our most impactful and well-organised teams are under huge pressure.

A 'Rescue and Recovery fund' has been created to support Bible ministry in 88 nations. Critical funding is being redirected to pay staff and rent. Struggling Bible Societies are being helped with things like online Bible sales, to generate income. And in the long term, staff are being supported so they are ready to re-launch Bible ministry when restrictions lift.

Please pray for the Bible Societies at risk, that Bible work will be kept alive around the world. To find out more go to **biblesociety.org.uk/rescuefund**