

LIFEWORDS

Lifewords Prayer, December 2018

*The Word became flesh and blood,
and moved into the neighbourhood.*

John 1:14 MSG

At Christmastime it can be easy to take the nativity story for granted. Through school plays, carol services, greetings cards and advent calendars, we are offered a view of this familiar story: Mary and Joseph, angels and shepherds, the Magi and King Herod. A stable, a manger, and a baby. It can be both cosy and reassuring, yet also distant and unknowable.

When we look at this verse from John in The Message, we zoom in on the here and now of the incarnation – the New Living Translation says that Jesus “made his home among us”. Jesus was born, grew up, and lived among people like us. A different culture and time, but still people with lives, jobs, and families. People experiencing good times and bad times.

This is profound and mind-blowing, yet also incredibly comforting. In the midst of a chaotic world, and sometimes chaotic lives, Jesus knows what it’s like to be us, with all the ups and downs we face. But it’s also a challenge to be more like him – he has shown us how to love, act and give. He came as good news for the world, and we are called to do the same.

Happy Christmas! Welcome to the December edition of Lifewords Prayer. This month we’re going OUTSIDE/IN, praying for children in Chile, sharing news from Indonesia, and working to provide more Bible resources around the world.

2–8 December

Welcome into the Christmas story

As Christmas draws near, we're sharing a story this week about OUTSIDE/IN and the message of God's love and welcome for everyone.

- This year, Lifewords has partnered with Livability, Biblica, Torch Trust and CPO to ensure as many people as possible can access OUTSIDE/IN and be part of the Christmas story. The booklet has been redesigned using larger print and the latest accessible version of the Bible, making it easier to read for those who are visually impaired or have a lower reading age. Please pray for people as they share OUTSIDE/IN in schools, churches, hospitals, and at events and services. Ask God that hearts would be open to receive God's message of peace and hope.
- There is a new version of the OUTSIDE/IN animation for 2018, with voiceover and British Sign Language interpretation. There are also posters, banners, and postcards, plus large print and Braille versions of the booklet available from our partners – which can be accessed from the Lifewords website. Give thanks for the diverse range of resources available this Christmas. Pray that these may help support communities and organisations as they plan their Christmas services, events and outreach.
- Each month WAVE (We're All Valued Equally), a group in London, holds a monthly inclusion service for adults with learning disabilities, their carers, and friends. Members worship together through Makaton, drama, and crafts. "I recently picked up a copy of OUTSIDE/IN from an event I attended," says church administrator, Jo, "And it's amazing! I'm so pleased we can offer the Word of God in an inviting and accessible way." Give thanks for new opportunities to reach wider audiences through OUTSIDE/IN. Pray that people who feel marginalised in society may discover how valuable and relevant they are to God.

To receive copies of OUTSIDE/IN in time for Christmas services and events, please place orders by **Monday 17th December** at www.lifewords.global/christmas.

9–15 December

Children in Chile

Although it is one of the most developed countries in South America, large numbers of Chile's child population are living in tough situations.

- According to a 2017 UNICEF report there are more than four million children living in Chile aged 17 and under. Almost 30% of them are living below the poverty line, 6.6% are involved in child labour, and 71% have experienced at least one form of abuse. Please pray for vulnerable children living in fear, deprivation, and hopelessness. Pray that they may encounter God's love, peace and comfort from those working to transform their lives.
- From 6-8th October Pavement Project arrived in Chile and held training sessions for a group of 12 workers using the green bag app. "After this wonderful time of training with the green bag app, I feel like a torch," said Edith, one of the workers. "I can now perform better in my job and take God's light to the children and young people I work with." Give thanks for new opportunities to counsel children affected by trauma, using Pavement Project.
- Carlos, another worker on the training course, said: "This new tool of restoration is an answer to my prayers. Although I'm a psychologist, I didn't know how to help

children share their pain in this way. I can now help them more deeply while using the Bible to bring comfort.” Give thanks for God’s wisdom at work in the Pavement Project team. Please pray for these relationships and partnerships, and ask that God would grow the work of Pavement Project in Chile.

To continue supporting Pavement Project’s global training sessions, and help provide more resources and counselling sessions, please visit www.lifewords.global/pp.

16–22 December **Bringing calm in Indonesia**

Indonesia is the world's largest island country. Its position between the Indian and Pacific oceans means that it is prone to natural disasters, which have an enormous impact on the people living here.

- This year villages, towns and cities in Indonesia have been hit by volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, tsunami, and flooding. Please pray for the safety and well-being of survivors after experiencing such destruction. Pray that they will receive essential supplies and medical help in these conditions, and find God’s restoration and renewal in the midst of the chaos.
- Yos – a volunteer who works with Lifewords Indonesia – took Bible booklets to the affected areas, sharing them with people in need of hope and help. Please pray for people like Yos who have given their time to help rebuild the lives of many. Pray too for organisations, churches, chaplains and government initiatives working to bring relief, help, and hope to the victims involved.
- Two of the Lifewords booklets shared in the affected areas by Yos, as well as by pastors and chaplains, were *Picking up the Pieces* and *Who Cares About Me?*. Give thanks for these tools that help provide comfort and clarity for those that read them. Pray that as people read God’s Word they would know a new love, peace, and hope in their lives.

Please continue praying for communities in Indonesia. If you would also like to make a gift please visit www.lifewords.global/give.

23–29 December **The gift of giving**

Lifewords works worldwide creating ways into the Bible. One of the ways we do this is by producing Bible literature in a range of languages, helping resource and equip people everywhere.

- We are now working to meet the need of providing more Bible resources to help people experience the Bible’s life words as good news in their lives – but we can’t do it without you. Please pray that we are able to meet the financial ask for printing and producing booklets so we can continue resourcing chaplains, youth workers, pastors, teachers, and many more. Give thanks for everyone that has been praying for the global mission work of Lifewords, and those that have made gifts, allowing Lifewords to continue sharing God’s joy and promise around the world.
- This year, more than 2,500 new people, churches, and organisations have joined Lifewords by ordering Bible resources, donating towards project work, and signing up for email news, prayer and campaigns. Give thanks for all new and existing supporters partnering with us in this work and sharing the same vision and values

to make the Bible accessible for everyone. Give thanks for the generosity of many helping us remove barriers of cost for people finding a way in to the Bible.

- Last year Barbara* from Kent shared her story about how one booklet helped change her heart during a time of loneliness. "I felt so isolated ever since my husband passed away a few years ago," said Barbara. "I kept myself to myself. Then one day I was given a copy of OUTSIDE/IN. As I read through the pages, it made me want to spend time with people instead of distancing myself. I haven't got years and years left so I want to try and spend time embracing people with the kind of love this booklet shows God gave." Give thanks for the opportunities we have to reach out to our communities with good news. Please pray for people who may experience loneliness – especially during the Christmas season. Pray that they may discover God's light and peace as we extend God's invitation of welcome.

**Name has been changed.*

To help welcome more people like Barbara into God's story, please support Lifewords Bible literature ministry at www.justgiving.com/campaign/welcome.

Thank you for praying with us! Your partnership in prayer is vital to all that we do as we share the Bible's life words around the world. You can also make a donation to our work online at www.lifewords.global, by post or by calling 020 7730 2155.