

LIFEWORDS

Lifeworlds Prayer, September 2018

*For everything there is a season,
a time for every activity under heaven.*

Ecclesiastes 3:1, NLT

As we look towards the final months of 2018 it's a time to consider what changes we might be anticipating, feeling anxious about, or looking forward to, in our lives, communities and world.

Change is one of the few constants we experience in life. In Ecclesiastes the writer reflects that "there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven". Our lives are made up of weeping and laughing, planting and uprooting, times to keep and times to throw away. Yet through it all the Bible invites us to lean into God's goodness, putting our faith to work, even when we struggle to make sense of the situations or challenges we face. Later on in Ecclesiastes 3 we are told that "people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end" (Ecc 3:11) – a reminder that we cannot always understand what God is doing or how things will work out in the future.

This month as we pray for people all around the world, we pray for strength and assurance in God's love. We ask for help to trust in the timing and purpose of each new season remembering that, "God has made everything beautiful for its own time" (Ecc 3:11).

Welcome to the September edition of Lifeworlds Prayer. This month we're praying for prisoners in Kenya, giving thanks for our first year as Lifeworlds, thinking about what peace means to us, and taking a look at what's new for Christmas.

2–8 September

Prayers for prisoners

Last month we shared news about chaplains working with Lifeworlds Kenya in 12 of Nairobi's prisons, remand centres, and young offender institutions. We asked our UK supporters to send messages and prayers for us to pass on to inmates and have received over 250 in the first few weeks. Thank you! Here are three of these messages which we will be sending on to Kenya:

- “After being told by my doctor that I had a serious illness and only two more years to live, I stayed firm on this verse: “For I know the plans I have for you’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future,” Jeremiah 29:11. This year I celebrate the 22nd anniversary of life after my doctor’s diagnosis! God can do all things.” – *From Peter*. Pray that prisoners will discover that God knows them and cares for them, no matter their situation.
- “Jesus said, ‘Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me.’ We pray you will find peace and hope in Jesus and one day we will meet face to face in heaven with our lovely Saviour.” – *From Mary and Duncan*. Give thanks for everyone who has taken the time to send a message of encouragement to prisoners. Pray that inmates find peace in the midst of a harsh and often hopeless environment.
- “The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged,” Deuteronomy 31:8. I will pray for you. God bless you.” – *From Bruce*. Give thanks for this amazing truth. Pray that prisoners would feel God’s presence as they live out their time in prison and look to the future.

To join in and write a message of Scripture or prayer for prisoners in Kenya, please visit www.lifeworlds.global/prisons.

9–15 September

A new look: 12 months later

It’s been one year since we adopted our new look as Lifeworlds. With this came fresh ideas for creative ways in to the Bible for even more people. Join us as we give thanks for new growth and exciting opportunities.

- Since relaunching last September we have welcomed 1,300 new churches, groups and individuals on board in the UK. This has been through people ordering Bible resources, requesting gift packs, making donations, subscribing to *Interact* magazine, and signing up to our email newsletters and prayer diaries. Give thanks for these new relationships and opportunities to engage so many more people with God’s Word.
- Through our 130-year history from Scripture Gift Mission, to SGM Lifeworlds, to Lifeworlds, our mission has always remained the same – helping people everywhere experience the Bible’s life words as good news for their lives, and for the world. Give thanks for churches, trusts and organisations who partner with us, volunteers who freely give their time, Lifeworlds teams all around the world, and individuals all working together to help people discover and explore life with Jesus.
- In the past year we have taken a closer look at our literature range to ensure its accessibility, usefulness, and impact. Give thanks for additional titles being added to language ranges, and other titles being given a fresh look. We are now working

to redesign *Daily Strength*, *Living with Loss*, and *Why Me?* Please pray that we receive the financial resources needed to make this possible and can continue resourcing people, prisons, hospitals, churches and more.

If you would like to make a gift to support the work of our literature ministry, please visit www.lifewords.global/give.

16–22 September **International Day of Peace**

Each year on 21st September the United Nations gives the world an opportunity to talk about, celebrate, and take action for peace by setting aside the International Day of Peace (also known as Peace Day). Here at Lifewords we want to help people know and share the peace that Jesus offers.

- Our youth platform VerseFirst invites young people around the world to live out the Bible's life words in their everyday lives – using social media as a starting point. Part of VerseFirst's message is to encourage young people to discover God's peace in the midst of life's highs and lows. Give thanks for this safe, online space where young people around the world can explore God's Word, and experience good news for their lives.
- NINE BEATS – an initiative sponsored by Lifewords – engages audiences with music, thought and art based on the ancient wisdom of the beatitudes. Pray that through the NINE BEATS album and *Ninefold Path* resources, people will hear and respond to the challenge to be peacemakers – putting Jesus' teaching into practice. You can join in and find out more at www.9beats.org/ninefold-path.
- This year many will reflect on the loss, hope and promise of peace that emerged 100 years ago at the end of WW1. "This anniversary is a big cultural and historical occasion," says Lifewords Executive Director, Danielle Welch. "But it's also a mission moment for the church – an opportunity to talk honestly about the brokenness of the world and the healing and restoration of the gospel." As Lifewords continues to resource churches, chaplains, schools, prisons, events and organisations with free copies of *WW1 Active Service St John's Gospel*, give thanks for the opportunity to reach generations with Scripture, and share God's light and love through the Bible's life words.

To order free resources for your commemoration events and services, please visit www.lifewords.global/ww1.

23–29 September **Turning our world OUTSIDE/IN**

Last Christmas we produced a new Bible booklet – OUTSIDE/IN – to help welcome everyone, everywhere into Jesus' invitation of life and love. We received hundreds of orders and you shared a record-breaking 152,000 Christmas resources in total last year – thank you! We have been working to make this Christmas story of welcome and inclusion more accessible to different audiences. Here's what's new this year:

- This year Lifewords has partnered with Biblica – the International Bible Society, and disability charity Livability, to create a more inclusive and accessible OUTSIDE/IN. The booklet now uses a larger text size to aid people experiencing sight difficulties, and Bible verses from Biblica's NIV (the New International Reader's Version) for

simplicity. Give thanks for these new partnerships with Biblica and Livability, helping us share awareness, understanding and importance of accessibility.

- Christian organisation Torch Trust has a worldwide vision for people with sight loss. This year they will be producing copies of OUTSIDE/IN in braille and in large print, helping audiences who are blind or partially sighted. Give thanks for organisations like this who work for inclusion in society, and pray too for those who will discover, explore, and experience OUTSIDE/IN in a way they can easily access and relate to.
- In 2018 many downloaded the OUTSIDE/IN animation and engaged school children, youth groups, community members, and churches with the Christmas story. We have now added a voiceover and British Sign Language to accompany the updated visuals, music, and text. Give thanks for the teams we are working with to help make this possible, and for the financial resources received to help meet these needs.

Please visit www.lifewords.global/christmas to see what's new and let the story of Christmas turn your church and community OUTSIDE/IN.

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 make a donation to our work online at www.lifewords.global, by post or by calling 020 7730 2155.