

LIFEWORDS

Lifewords Prayer, June 2019

When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.

John 11:32–33 NIV

When we encounter Jesus, he meets us with empathy, understanding, and power. Whether it's the peace and re-centring we experience when we pray or spend time in his presence, the words of truth and hope we discover when we read the Bible, or the times when we see his power visible in our lives or the lives of those around us.

In this story from John's Gospel, we read about Jesus going to see Martha and Mary who are grieving for their brother Lazarus, who has been dead and buried for four days. As Jesus arrives at their house, we see Martha, then Mary, and finally Lazarus encounter Jesus. To Martha, who is questioning why Jesus didn't come sooner, he speaks truth. He says; "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die," (John 11:25). When Jesus meets Mary, he greets her with empathy, sharing her pain, and weeping with her (John 11:33:35). Finally, when Jesus goes to the tomb, Lazarus encounters Jesus' power. Jesus raises Lazarus to life, demonstrating his power over death.

When we read the Bible, when we gather to worship, when we serve our community and world, we encounter Jesus. This month as we pray for those meeting with Jesus through one-to-one contact, or through Pavement Project, or through a Lifewords booklet, let us remember that an encounter with Jesus is always life-affirming, life-changing, and life-giving.

Welcome to the June edition of Lifewords Prayer. This month we're updating you on Big Church Day Out, talking about *Living with Loss*, sharing news from Pavement Project in Mozambique, and raising money for global Bible resources.

2– 8 June

1,000 women

Last month, Lifewords and VerseFirst attended Big Church Day Out (BCDO). The annual two-day festival welcomed more than 20,000 families, teenagers, youth leaders, exhibitors, and musicians to take part in a weekend of worship, prayer, and activities.

- Following the launch of Lifewords latest resource, *Day Three: Believe the Women* (D3BTW), Lifewords and VerseFirst shared over 500 copies with visitors. Championing the voices and actions of women, the Bible booklet focuses on the women who were first to witness the miracle of the resurrection at the tomb but were not believed. It uses contemporary and challenging images of well-known women alongside Scripture and invites us to think about and fight oppression and injustice. Please pray that those who received a copy of the booklet would feel encouraged to listen, believe, and support the voices of women in their communities and around the world.
- At BCDO, Lifewords and VerseFirst created an interactive station for guests to write the names of girls and women that they value and want to encounter God's love. People were invited to write names on cards and more than 1,000 names were written and put on display at the festival. Please pray for the women who were chosen, that they may know they are loved and discover their worth and value in God's story.
- "What you're doing is incredible," said Tina from Brighton, wiping tears from her eyes. "Seeing all these women's names hanging up has made me so emotional, because it's come at the right time in my life. You have no idea what this means to me." Give thanks that through one-to-one interactions at events like BCDO people are impacted by the Bible and new ways of looking at the world. Give thanks for all those who had a fresh experience of God's love, hope and truth.

If you would like to get involved, please email uk@lifewords.global with the names of women in your life you value and want to champion.

9–15 June

Living with Loss

Lifewords widely-used resource, *Living with Loss*, has been newly redesigned and is back in stock.

- Developed with bereavement counsellors, *Living with Loss* deals honestly with heartache, anger, fear, and loss. Using Bible verses (many from the Psalms) and evocative photos, the booklet creatively conveys God's heart and compassion. As people experience the loss of a loved one, please pray that they may encounter Jesus' gift of peace of mind and heart.
- For many years, *Living with Loss* has been widely-used by chaplains, clergy, and funeral directors. Give thanks for Christians who are committed to bringing God's love and comfort to people. And pray that they too may be comforted and strengthened in their work.
- "When my husband of 40 years passed away, some members of the Lifewords team visited me and spent time with me," says Jenny from Australia. "They gave me a copy of *Living with Loss* and I've been reading a page of the booklet each night. I cannot say it's not difficult, but it has been so encouraging and has kept me

positive. Thank you." Please pray for everyone who receives a copy, that God's Word speaks to them whatever their situation.

Please visit www.lifewords.global/shop if you would like to order copies of *Living with Loss* or preview its redesign.

16–22 June

Mozambique's girls

Mozambique is a new territory for Pavement Project. In the city of Mocuba, workers have been trained to use the Bible-based counselling tools effectively with children and young people at-risk. Pavement Project worker, Guida, explains how young girls are beginning to recognise their value and self-worth through God's love.

- "Among the many traditions here is the rite of initiation. The purpose of this rite is to initiate girls into adulthood, and for this, they must know how to please men. In some places, they are pressured to even sleep with a 'cleanser' who is a 'healer' and supposedly cleanses anything considered to be wrong from the girl's body. This is an extremely destructive tradition. If a girl does not go through the rite, she is despised by everyone." Please pray that there would be further education and calls for change in Mozambique to promote the welfare of children and young people.
- Guida decided to create a space for the girls that would counter the rite of initiation. She spoke to women in a church about holding a ceremony where young girls could learn about God's love for them. "Girls spend a day and night with women in the church and receive biblical advice for their futures," says Guida. "We've now held this event twice and it is being well-received by families in the villages." Give thanks for the positive progress that is being made through Pavement Project as hearts, minds, and attitudes are being transformed.
- Guida explains that although there are many challenges on a daily basis, she and other team members will continue working to change harmful and damaging traditions in their communities. Please pray for strength and encouragement for Pavement Project workers like Guida who are working to bring hope, healing, and transformation to young people in Mozambique. Pray too that more churches and organisations will partner in this mission.

Please visit www.lifewords.global/pp if you would like to join us in supporting the work of children and young people at-risk around the world.

23–29 June

A need for good news

Since 1888, Lifewords has created over a billion pieces of Bible literature. We've now worked in more than 1,000 languages – many of which have been pioneer languages – and shared these resources all over the world.

- This year, thousands of Bible booklets have been shared with communities worldwide. There has since been a surge in demand, particularly for resources in French, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, and Spanish. Lifewords is urgently working to reprint a range of booklets to support people in need of God's hope and love in their lives. Please pray that Lifewords would be able to raise enough financial support to enable the production and distribution of these resources.

- “Many lives have already been impacted through Lifeworlds range of English and non-English titles,” says Global Bible Resources Director, Jarek Jankowski. “Being able to supply resources in people’s heart language is very important. It allows people to connect with and experience the Bible’s life words in a transformative way.” Give thanks for those who are involved in the translation and production processes. Pray that they may know God’s wisdom and direction in the work they do.
- Among the booklets planned for reprint are *Encounters with Jesus*, *The Way to Life*, *Words for the Journey*, and *You Matter*. “Your booklets are excellent, I love them!” says Riziely from Brazil. “I work with Spanish-speaking immigrants in São Paulo. It is so difficult to find Spanish Bibles, or Bible resources, here in Brazil so receiving material from Lifeworlds in their native tongue makes all the difference. It reaches the heart.” Give thanks for the global impact of Lifeworlds resources. Please pray for everyone who has received a booklet, that they may experience God’s Word as good news for their lives and their communities.

We are needing to raise around £800 to print each of the six titles. Please visit www.lifeworlds.global/give to help Lifeworlds fund this urgent need, and continue bringing God’s hope, love, and healing around the world.

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.lifeworlds.global, by post, or by calling 020 7730 2155.