

MONTH
OF PRAYER

DAILY
FOCUS

– WEEK TWO –

GRACE
CHURCH
NOTTINGHAM

DAY 8

SUNDAY 10TH JANUARY

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Topic: Healing from the difficulties of 2020

Written by: Jeremy & Julie Walker

Today's daily focus is by Jeremy & Julie Walker who lead pastoral care at Grace Church.

Healing from the difficulties of 2020: restoration of relationships and mental health, the provision of jobs & fresh opportunity to build community

For all of us, 2020 was a difficult year. There has been bereavement, illness, redundancy, isolation, fear and anxiety and many other experiences that have robbed us of peace and joy. But God has made a way for us to be healed and restored. The bible promises: *God will restore to you the years that the swarming locusts have eaten. Joel 2:25*

We begin with our HURT:

Recognise the hurt

Acknowledge the loss

Grieve for what is missing or gone

Weep with those who weep. Romans 12:15

Next comes HEALING:

Ask God to be in the suffering

Meet with God in grief

Give the hurt to God

Ask for the Holy Spirit to come

Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear.

Isaiah 58:8

Then we find HOPE:

Trust God for the future

Know God's goodness

God works everything together for the good of those who love Him and are called to His purposes. Romans 8:28

Suggestions for Prayer

1. Praying for yourself: write a psalm of sorrow/lament
2. Praying for others: ask God to come into situations that friends, family, colleagues, neighbours are in
3. Praying for the church: strengthening of Home Group communities, being back together in the building

DAY 9

MONDAY 11TH JANUARY

Topic: Reaching Nottingham with the gospel

Written by: Pete Kourpas

Today's daily focus is by Pete Kourpas who is involved with a number of outreach ministries including Prison Ministry and the 12 o'clock service.

Vision Part 2: reaching Nottingham with the Gospel

What a wonderful vision God has given us, to reach Nottingham with the gospel! Thankfully, many have gone before us and established a wonderful Christian presence in our city. Praise God for many wonderful churches, social justice projects and outreach ministries. But although some estimated 20,000 attend churches regularly in the city we must not forget the other 300,000 (or 600,000 if we refer to Greater Nottingham) who as yet don't know the Lord! Praise God, His love never ends in seeking to save the lost and His Spirit is calling us to co-labour and co-operate with Him in the harvest. As His disciples we are called to be His witnesses and ambassadors.

We are living in a time when God has touched people's hearts and minds to consider afresh their need for God. I'm hearing many prophetic voices proclaiming that through the pandemic God is preparing a harvest of souls. I've also heard stories of many people coming to Christ at this time. May we arise and shine in this time and take out the message of Christ to a world that is desperate to know the truth.

So, how can we reach out?

Let's begin by seeking to be His personal witnesses to family, friends, neighbours and colleagues. To do this we must be filled with the Holy Spirit, for only from Him comes power and boldness. Then let's ask God to guide us into seeking the lost through the many outreach ministries of the church: Stay & Play, Children, Youth, Students, Alpha, Street evangelism, Social Justice - food bank, social hub, prison work, 12o'clock and many others.

Prayer points:

1. Pray for a fresh baptism of the Spirit - receive power to be His witness.
2. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you into divine appointments and a lifestyle of personal witnessing.
3. Ask God to guide you into which outreach ministry you can actively be involved in.

DAY 10

TUESDAY 12TH JANUARY

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Topic: Vision Part 3

Written by: Emily Topliss

Today's daily focus is by Emily Topliss who is part of the Grace Church Leadership Team.

Vision Part 3: replication across the UK- future church plants & working well with other churches

The church is God's plan to bring about His Kingdom; we are called to be his hands and feet on the earth. Therefore, the world needs more churches! God has given us a vision play our part and it has been wonderful to see this come into fruition over the years with us planting churches into Birmingham, Manchester and most recently Newcastle. As such, we are now part of a family of churches called Grace Connection. Why not spend some time thanking God for all that he has done in this area and by doing so building your faith for Him to do more? Pray that God will continue to strengthen the relationships between the churches, that we would grow in our love, support and encouragement of one another.

We long for the day when we're regularly planting new, local churches across the UK and beyond. We take the great commission seriously; that we are to be a people that preaches Christ, baptises believers and makes disciples. Church plants come about as God raises up leaders, speaks to them about cities and provides a team to go with them. Pray that God would speak to individuals about church planting. You could pray for different parts of the UK and see if God speaks to you about a particular area or city. We planted a couple of churches within a short period of time, and therefore felt it was right to take some time to focus on and strengthen what is being built in Nottingham. Pray that God would give us wisdom and speak to us about when the time is right to go again!

DAY 11

WEDNESDAY 13TH JANUARY

Topic: Law & Order

Written by: Joey Homfray-Cooper

Today's daily focus is by Joey Homfray-Cooper who is on our One-Thing discipleship year and has been accepted to join Leicestershire Police in Jan 2022.

Law & Order: protection, reduced crime & drug/gang warfare to be ended

With new legislation and government restrictions in place, the pressure on police forces around the country has only increased. The fact that criminals still continue to operate during the pandemic means that more than ever, Nottinghamshire Police need the backing of our prayers.

During the time of Noah, humanity had filled the earth with violence and evil acts. The ways of humanity grieved the heart of God and He decided to intervene through the flood. In the New Testament, Jesus prophesied that before His return to earth, it will again be "...as in the days of Noah..." (Luke 17:26). He also warned that when lawlessness increased, the love of many will grow cold (Matt 24:12). However, Jesus gave Himself for us, the greatest act of love, to redeem us from all lawlessness (Tit 2:14). Let us ask again for a divine intervention for a reduction in crime throughout our city.

In 2000 a BBC News article read 'A police inspector said the power of prayer led to a dramatic fall in crime. An Inspector, who was an area commander, said crime in the area for which he was responsible was reduced overnight after he sent out a prayer request to 19 churches in the area. Youth crime fell by 40%, crime went from 35 to one or two incidents a week and overall crime fell by 10% in two years.'

The power of prayer is the same today as it was in 2000, and also as we read about in the Bible. Wouldn't it be miraculous if instead of negative news stories of increasing crime, the power and grace of our Lord 'stole the headlines'.

Prayer Points

- Pray that Jesus Christ will touch the lives of victims of violence and crime, and that he will comfort them.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit will reduce crime and violence throughout Nottingham and that people who have fallen into crime will find the love of Christ.
- Pray that Grace Church's social justice outreach will reach those who need support to be lifted out of crime and into the journey that God has planned for them.

DAY 12

THURSDAY 14TH JANUARY

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Topic: Nottingham Churches

Written by: Steve Silvester

Today's daily focus is by Steve Silvester who leads Nottingham City Prayer and is the Rector at St. Nics Church.

Nottingham Churches: Christ's Church united, God's power released & our city blessed

We are blessed! While many good relationships already existed, the birth of Nottingham City Prayer in 2015 has led to a level of unity that is the envy of other cities. This also finds expression through FAN (Faith Action Network), where Christians from different churches work side by side in ministering to the needs of the city.

The Bible ends with a vision of a city in which Christ's church is truly united and people of every nation, tribe and language worship God and the Lamb together; a city where God's power is released and where there is no sun because the glory of God is its light; a city that is truly blessed because God is as near as can be: his dwelling is among his people (Rev.21.3).

Please pray:

- That the church in the city will be open to the deep work that God wants to do during this pandemic – shaking, re-focusing, humbling and surrendering.
- That the church would demonstrate to the rest of society what racial justice and mutual respect look like. Pray also that churches will become increasingly diverse ethnically and socially.
- That Christians from different churches living near to each other would be effective witnesses for Christ in their neighbourhoods.
- That the church would be bold in proclaiming Christ and speaking into the deep longing for connection and purpose that people have experienced since the outbreak of Covid-19.

DAY 13

FRIDAY 15TH JANUARY

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Topic: Government & COVID-19 Response

Written by: Rachel Glass

Today's daily focus is by Rachel Glass who works for Public Health England and is currently on one of the COVID teams advising the government on other countries and international travel.

UK Govt & COVID-19 response: godly wisdom, good decision-making & blessing upon the vaccine rollout(s).

Our government has the challenge of balancing COVID health risk, economic impacts, unintentional consequences of COVID restrictions on our mental, physical and emotional wellbeing and providing for other health needs to make the best decisions for the country. We often hear during the briefings that the option chosen is the 'least worst' option available – this cannot be easy with the latest evidence changing each month and I'm so grateful we live in a country with world leading science and an engaged government.

Let's pray for the leaders and government of our country to be wise in their choices, to have the right people informing them and to make the right decisions to care for all people groups across our society. We can also pray for renewed energy, as I imagine it will have been a gruelling time to be in government, and to focus on the challenges of today and still make choices that will enable a safer year ahead.

The vaccine is a promising tool to reduce transmission and protect those most vulnerable from infection. Let's pray for effective rollout, that all those who accept it are reached quickly, and pray that this vaccine will be effective for all the different variants currently circulating. A current unknown is whether those who are vaccinated could carry COVID and whilst not get infected themselves could still transmit the virus to others. Let's pray this is not the case and that the vaccine will be effective in preventing onward transmission. Let's also pray that we can support lower income countries and have a global perspective the promotes equality with the vaccine roll out.

I would also encourage you to pray for the scientists, data analysts and public health doctors who have been working flat out through 2020 to inform policy decisions. Let's pray for peace, for renewed strength and for Godly influence of Christians working in public health to bring Kingdom culture into these discussions.

DAY 14

SATURDAY 16TH JANUARY

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Rest

Take time today to enjoy Jesus, family, friends and the things that refresh you.