

## Prayer Diary – December 2024

*Lord, pour your Holy Spirit on Cromer.  
Lord, pour your Holy Spirit on the Church.  
Lord, pour your Holy Spirit on me. Amen*

Please check the Weekly Update for up-to-date news.

### USUAL WEEKLY SERVICES AND EVENTS

#### Sundays

- 8.45 am Traditional Holy Communion at the Parish Church.  
10.30 am Informal service at the Parish Church, with CCKids  
Refreshments after both services.

*Both Parish Church services will be streamed on the Cromer Church  
YouTube channel. (Go to YouTube and search for 'Cromer Church')*

- 10.30 am Service at St Martin's with refreshments.

#### Mondays

- 2.00-5.00 pm Free Mustard Seed meals at St Martin's

**Tuesdays** Small groups meet in the afternoon and evening.

- 9.30 am CC Toddlers in the Parish Hall (term time)  
7.15 pm CC Community Choir rehearsal in St Martin's

**Wednesdays** Small groups meet morning, afternoon and evening

- 10.00 am Holy Communion  
10.00 am Cornerstone Café  
2.45 pm Open the Book at the Junior School (term time)

**Thursdays** Small groups meet afternoon and evening

- 9.00 am Mustard Seed at St Martin's  
2.30 pm Meeting Point in the Parish Hall (term time)  
2.45 pm Open the Book at the Infant School (fortnightly in term time).

#### Fridays

- 6.45 pm Choir Practice in the Parish Church  
2.00 pm Table tennis group at St Martin's

## PRAYER SUGGESTIONS FOR DECEMBER

*See below for prayer requests from Mission Partners and others*

- Sun 1** Our services, children's groups and youth group. Our church leaders; our children's and youth group leaders
- Mon 2** Our Christmas Tree Festival
- Tue 3** A solution to plastic pollution
- Wed 4** Our Mission Partner: Open Doors
- Thu 5** The desperate suffering of people in Palestine, Lebanon and Israel
- Fri 6** Our Mission Partner: Michelle Proctor
- Sat 7** Tomorrow's worship and teaching. (Theme: 2 Thessalonians 2v13-16 – Stand fast!). Speakers: Will Warren (Parish Church), Julia Chamberlin (St Martin's)  
Pray for our own opportunities for mission
- Sun 8** Our services, children's groups and youth group. Our church leaders; our small group leaders
- Mon 9** Our Mission Partner: Good News for Everyone
- Tue 10** The persecuted church
- Wed 11** Women suffering violence; education for men inflicting the violence
- Thu 12** Our Mission Partner: Mission Without Borders
- Fri 13** Safety for people in the UK and in particular our region  
Pray for our own opportunities for mission
- Sun 15** Our services, children's groups and youth group. Our church leaders; national church leaders
- Mon 16** Mustard Seed Christmas meals
- Tue 17** Our Mission Partner: Bible Society
- Wed 18** The people of Ukraine, who are enduring such suffering
- Thu 19** People everywhere who do not know the true meaning of Christmas
- Fri 20** Our Mission Partner: Christians Against Poverty
- Sat 21** Tomorrow's worship and teaching. (Theme: 2 Thessalonians 3v6-18 – No slacking!). Speakers: Julia Chamberlin (Parish Church), Will Warren (St Martin's)  
Pray for our own opportunities for mission
- Sun 22** Our services, children's groups and youth group. Our church leaders; other local church leaders
- Mon 23** Our Mission Partner: CPAS
- Tue 24** Families and children

- Wed 25** Christmas Day. Speakers: Will Warren (Parish Church), Joanna Haywood (St Martin's)
- Thu 26** Homeless and lonely people
- Fri 27** Our Mission Partner: London City Mission
- Sat 28** Tomorrow's worship and teaching. (Theme: Matthew 1v18-21 – God with us)  
Pray for our own opportunities for mission
- Sun 29** Our services, children's groups and youth group. Our church leaders; Christian church leaders across the world
- Mon 30** Our Mission Partner: Hope into Action
- Tue 31** Peace in the coming year

## **PRAYER REQUEST DETAILS**

**The persecuted church: UK** (Contact: Ken Nash)

Lorcán Price, Legal Counsel for ADF UK, writes:

“In the UK, we're seeing modern-day ‘thought crimes’ reminiscent of dystopian fiction. Recently the Home Office announced the implementation of nationwide censorship zones (started at the end of October), which will penalise anyone found guilty of ‘influencing’ someone within 150m of an abortion facility. The ban on ‘influencing’ is eerily ambiguous, leaving innocent people open to punishment for engaging in consensual conversation or even silent thought.”

Take, for example, husband, father and army vet Adam Smith-Connor. Motivated by his personal experience of the trauma and loss surrounding abortion, he now silently prays in public for those affected by such decisions. Despite praying with his back turned to a facility to avoid any impression of intimidation, Bournemouth authorities fined him and subsequently pursued criminal charges.

The case has dragged on for two years and has seen the Council rack up nearly £100,000 legal fees – paid for by the taxpayer. Over a supposed ‘crime’ with a maximum penalty of £1,000! On October 16<sup>th</sup> he was found: Guilty. Guilty for living out his faith; guilty for ‘slightly bowing’ his head in prayer in a public place. He now has to pay £9,000 towards the Council's costs.

*ADF UK*

**London City Mission** (Contact: Elizabeth Bridger)

Two London City Missionaries visited our parish in September, Rebecca Tortelli and Johanna Briscoe.

Rebecca thanks St Martin's for their very warm welcome, interest and support. She says, " Hackney needs your prayer!" With the increasing youth violence, crime and struggles and the dominant secular ideologies, ministering in this area has become increasingly challenging.

Please keep her ministry to youth in your mind for prayer and giving.

*Johanna Briscoe says*

I have been partnering with St Peter's Muswell Hill for 5 weeks, helping people to share their faith with those who have never heard the Gospel, using Scripture to guide their learning and how to use their testimonies as an effective way to connect with people and share the good news of Jesus.

Johanna is taking the same programme ahead in training other Churches to share the Gospel.

She gives thanks for the great encouragements she received from her visit to Cromer!

Please pray for all missionaries as they seek to help the thousands of lonely and desperately needy people for whom Christmas and New Year are intensely lonely times with a much higher risk of increased addiction and suicide.

Please pray for the ministry to the homeless at Webber St, that the love of Jesus may fill them with hope in place of despair.

**Michelle Proctor (SIM)** (Contact: Tim Britton)

*Michelle writes:*

Hello from Zambia,

- Give thanks for rain and pray that as people are planting their maize for the coming year the rains would continue.
- Give thanks for new Doctors joining our team, both Zambian and from overseas, and pray as they settle in to life and work here.
- Pray for local churches over Christmas as they share the true meaning of Christmas.

**Good News for Everyone** (Contact: Jenny Jacquier and Jenny Syder)

*Work in North Norfolk*

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of December, we are offering New Testaments and Explore Magazines to visitors to the Christmas tree displays in the church.

We hope to continue to offer local secondary schools Youth Testaments for year 7 pupils or present the school with a "Bible Pack". Unfortunately, Ivor

who helps with this work is undergoing treatment for cancer and needs our prayer at this time.

Our treasurer has just married, and he and his new wife have decided to move to France. Please continue to pray that local Christians would join our team and help in the distribution of God's word. We are really short of volunteers, and we are not able to do all the work ourselves.

Thank you for all your prayers for us over the past 12 months, thank you for being the most important part of our team.

### **CAP – Christians Against Poverty** (Contact: Jess and Anne Mary Stubenbord)

"Poverty steals our dignity, limits our opportunities and forces us to believe there is no way out."

Poverty is getting worse by the month in Britain with 3 out of 10 children in the UK living in poverty, according to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Now even when the debt counsellors help folk leave debt behind, the spiralling cost of living forces them either back into debt or to do without heating or daily food.

As well as offering debt counselling, money coaching and life skills, CAP now needs to offer emergency food parcels, fuel top up, school uniforms for children whose parents are struggling.

Let's pray that our MP's show increasing understanding of the hardships many of their constituents face and flag up the need to help the financially poorer section of society and put pressure on the Government to reduce energy prices, etc.

Let's pray we have a spirit of empathy with all who for whatever reason have gone into debt, and also show the Lord's generosity to those in need.

"Lord, grant great skills to the CAP and other debt counsellors so that there is lasting change for their customers. Also, may the churches involved with CAP be welcoming and reach out to those in emotional and spiritual as well as financial need. Amen."

### **CPAS** (Contact: Vivienne Benford)

- Please pray for a good response to the CPAS's "The Big Give Christmas Challenge" between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> December.
- From the CPAS Prayer Calendar please pray on the 12<sup>th</sup> for Julie Boyd, Aylsham & District Team and on the 16<sup>th</sup> for our own Will Warren, St. Peter and St. Paul, Cromer.
- Please remember in prayer all the CPAS Staff as they break for Christmas.

## **Hope into Action** (Contact: Katharine Checketts)

### **“The gospel with a house key”**

*by Jon Kuhrt, Hope into Action CEO*

Last week I was in Nottingham and met three very different people who sum up the difference that Hope into Action makes.

One was a young man, whose life had been terribly affected by drug addiction which drew him into homelessness. After committing to rehab, he moved into a Hope into Action house and is now working and serving as part of a local church, with big dreams for the future: *‘I want to do what you are doing and change people’s lives.’*

Another was a father, who came with his wife and young family to the UK as refugees. They had nowhere to go after their temporary accommodation ended and felt it was a miracle to be offered a Hope into Action home. *‘I have no words to describe how grateful I am for what you have done for my family, what you are doing is a true blessing.’*

And finally, I met a leader from Trent Vineyard church, who told me about how working with Hope into Action helps them serve the poor in a long-term way: *‘We are in it for the long-haul – to see lives changed’.*

### **This is the work that your support enables us to do.**

In John Mark Comer’s book *Practicing the Way* (SPCK, 2024) he quotes these words about followers of Jesus who show ‘radically ordinary hospitality’:

“They see God’s image reflected in the eyes of every human being on the earth...They open doors; they seek out the under privileged. They know that the gospel comes with a house key.”

## **Bible Society** (Contact: David Anderson)

This Christmas, The Bible Society is providing Bibles in places where wars are raging. Our support is offering peace through Jesus to civilians and soldiers on the front lines.

### *A story from Ukraine*

Recently, Deputy General Secretary Anatoliy Raychynets returned from a trip to visit troops on the front line in woods outside Bakhmut. They met soldiers who were manning a cannon, but also reading Psalm 91.

‘We were interrupted by shell explosions,’ said Anatoliy. ‘When I found myself in a trench next to a soldier called Kyrlo, he told me that two weeks ago we had come and given him a Bible.’

Kyrylo told him: 'I have never been to church, never read the Bible, because I never had one. Here, at the combat positions, in short moments of silence, I started reading prayers from the Book of Psalms, as you advised me back then.

'I feel warmth inside me while reading. I have never experienced anything like this in my life. I realised that it was God who came to me, a sinner, at the age of 57. He came here, to the swamp, to the horrors of the war, to find me. Thank you for the Bible. It revived me to a new life, a life with God.' Then Kyrylo asked Anatoliy to pray with him.

'A few minutes later, when everything had quieted down, we continued reading Psalm 91. My voice was a bit hoarse because it was -10 degrees in the forest and I was quite cold,' said Anatoliy.

'God works in an amazing way. His word is alive and active. Thank you that we have Bibles and are able to give them to people in different circumstances.'

### **Mission Without Borders (MWB)** (Contact: Anne Attfield)

As our Church ends its financial support for 'Mission Without Borders' in December when the statutory three-year commitment concludes, I would ask you to continue praying for their staff and volunteers working in the six poorest countries in Eastern Europe.

#### *Ukraine*

Please pray for the children trying to continue their education in the midst of war and air raid alarms. Continue to remember families who are suffering, especially one displaced family who lost their daughter in a missile attack. Please pray for the safety of those distributing the 'Operation Christmas Love' boxes in war zones.

#### *Moldova*

Please pray for people attending the mission's emotional support meetings, that they will find healing and hope in Jesus. Pray for the Bible Correspondence coordinators in their work of sharing the good news to the communities the mission supports.

#### *Bulgaria*

Please pray for the political situation after parliamentary elections. Pray for protection and healing from illness this winter, for the elderly and for families supported by the mission. Many children and adults have been suffering from a respiratory virus.

#### *Romania*

Please pray for good leaders after the Presidential and Parliamentary

elections. Pray for the health of the children the mission supports in Romania, as many have been ill and missed a lot of school.

*Bosnia- Herzegovina*

Please pray for the country's economy. High inflation and constant price changes make life very difficult for poor families. Pray that the good news of hope and love will bless all who come to the mission's Christmas events.

*Albania*

Please pray for the single parents the mission supports, that they would come to know God's strength, wisdom and provision as they care for their children.

**Open Doors** (Contact: Judith Anderson)

*2025 World Watch Launch in Parliament, Jan 15th.*

This year sees many newly elected MPs for whom this will be a new experience. Over 50 have already signed up to attend. Please pray that many more, including our own MP Steff Aquarone, will agree to attend, and that the meeting will have a real impact on them and bring about lasting support for persecuted Christians around the world.

*Bangladesh*

Children from Christian families suffer greatly at school. They are ostracised and bullied by other children, and alas, by their teachers, who downgrade and criticise their work. Their school years are made miserable by isolation and marginalisation.

Open Doors arranges a 3-day Christmas gathering for many of these children, and it is the highlight of their year. They have fun, gifts, friendship, and teaching to build them up in their faith. Please pray that this is a time of healing and happiness.

On Dec 4th, Open Doors has a webinar, focussing on the plight of Christian children. Please pray that many will watch this webinar and be inspired to pray.

*Arise Africa Campaign*

Our church sent 98 signatures supporting this campaign last month. The campaign continues until 2026. Please pray that world leaders become increasingly aware of the situation facing Christians in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Sudan and Nigeria are countries greatly affected, as war continues to decimate communities. Open Doors is actively engaged in helping thousands of displaced Christians living in squalid IDP camps.

Please pray for peace to come to African countries.

Please send prayer requests for January to Katharine Checketts  
by **Monday 16th December**