

Prayer diary

Transforming lives and communities



Summer 2019

Bringing hope, assurance and sustenance in later life

Revd Dr Anne Townsend is a contributor to *Bible Reflections for Older People* and a key supporter of BRF's Anna Chaplaincy. This BRF team trains and supports a rapidly growing network of individuals who are passionate about pastoral care in later life, providing for the spiritual needs of many older people around the UK.



Dear friends

In compiling these prayers at the beginning of 2019 we face a time of uncertainty. We don't know what the year will bring. We don't know exactly what challenges will face us as you open this booklet in May. But we do know that we want God to be the author of our lives and work. And so we ask you to please join us in prayer for these next four months – whatever they bring.




engaging with the Parenting for Faith resources, and to see the passion of the Anna Chaplaincy network, with its growing body of experience and understanding of the spiritual needs of older people. Pray for all involved as they seek to help young and old in their journey of faith.

Please especially pray for:

- **The second Messy Church International Conference, bringing together over 200 delegates from around the world.** Let's pray that the conference will envision, inspire and send Messy Church leaders home with greater enthusiasm, increased confidence, new skills, new friends and joyful hearts.
- **More Christians to take up the habit of daily Bible reading.** Thank God for our Bible reading notes contributors. May we find new ways to make it easy and enjoyable for more Christians to read the Bible.
- **Our programme teams.** It's especially exciting to see how families and church workers are

- **The Barnabas in Schools team** as they work on new materials to be launched next term for the new academic year.
- **The BRF staff team and trustees** as we make big and small decisions about the use of the skills and resources God has given us.
- **Funding to keep the work going.** God has provided for BRF for almost a century now. In an increasingly challenging economic environment, we trust him to continue to do so.

Thank you for standing alongside us and supporting us in prayer.

Canon Richard Fisher 
Chief Executive, BRF



Sign up for our latest news to keep up-to-date with what's going on at BRF at brf.org.uk/keepintouch

‘Not a chore – a daily delight!’*

Sunday 5 May

Pray that readers of our daily Bible reading notes will delight ever more in God’s word.

Monday 6 May

Pray that all our readers may spend a little more time with God today and make every national holiday a holy day.

Tuesday 7 May

Pray for the writers, editors and readers of *Day by Day with God*, our Bible notes for women who want to grow in their faith and make a difference in the world.

Wednesday 8 May

Pray for all ministers, priests, ordinands and theology students who use *Guidelines* Bible notes. May their daily private prayer and reflection sustain them through the challenges of their professional ministry.

Thursday 9 May

Pray for those who already enjoy *Bible Reflections for Older People* and for opportunities to reach new readers to whom these notes could bring encouragement and assurance.

Friday 10 May

Pray for those who came new to daily Bible reading this Lent. Pray that they will settle into a continuing routine of prayer and reflection and soon know the blessings of this practice.

Saturday 11 May

Pray that our newest series of Bible reading notes – *Holy Habits Bible Reflections* – will quickly gather enthusiastic readers.

*David Winter, describing *New Daylight*

For those who give their time

Sunday 12 May

Pray that all those who volunteer their time in support of BRF’s work would enjoy a day of rest and refreshment, drawing close to God.

Monday 13 May

Pray for inspiration, encouragement and energy for Messy Church leaders and helpers. May God provide others to share the work.

Tuesday 14 May

Pray for volunteers working for BRF’s Anna Chaplaincy. May God give them wisdom and sensitivity to know how best to help and encourage the older people they minister to.

Wednesday 15 May

On this International Day of Families, pray that all volunteers involved in BRF’s work would know how best to balance their commitments with their family responsibilities. Pray for any whose family members are suffering at this time.

Thursday 16 May

Pray for church volunteers with a vision to bring the Parenting for Faith approach to the families in their congregations. May they be supported, and may God direct them to the families he wants to grow in this way.

Friday 17 May

Pray for those who run group subscriptions for BRF’s Bible reading notes. May God bless them richly as they offer this service to others.

Saturday 18 May

Pray that all who give their time might be rewarded with thankful feedback, and that they might know God’s protection and blessing.

For Anna Chaplaincy, in Dementia Action Week

Sunday 19 May

Pray for our welfare systems and for those giving informal care to relatives and friends – often people who are in their later years themselves.

Monday 20 May

Give thanks that we're generally living longer; as we recognise that some of this entails living with confusion as a result of dementia, pray for families and individuals affected.

Tuesday 21 May

Pray that the national churches across all denominations will get involved with Anna Chaplaincy and other initiatives to support those in later life.

Wednesday 22 May

Pray for a broadening of access to Anna Chaplaincy across the country, giving a boost to the spiritual lives of people in older age around the UK.

Thursday 23 May

Pray for a recognition that people living with dementia may have much to teach others about the joy of living in the present moment.

Friday 24 May

Pray for Debbie Thrower and the network she leads of those ministering among older people: Anna Chaplains and others in equivalent roles.

Saturday 25 May

Pray for parishes and communities establishing regular activities for people who have retired and who might otherwise feel isolated and lonely.

For families and those who work with them

Sunday 26 May

This week is the half-term break for many schools around the country. Pray for rest for staff and pupils, and pray for those in churches who will be serving by offering activities throughout this week.

Monday 27 May

Pray for those families for whom the holidays create more pressure on family life in terms of childcare and finance.

Tuesday 28 May

Pray that all types and sizes of families will be able to support, value and enjoy daily life, journeying together through its highs and lows.

Wednesday 29 May

With many families more geographically dispersed, pray for increased opportunities for younger and older people to interact and enjoy the richness of relationship together.

Thursday 30 May

Give thanks for all those working to support families through various agencies and services such as food banks.

Friday 31 May

Pray that parents and carers of children with specific needs, whether physical, mental or emotional, may be able to support the children and feel supported themselves.

Saturday 1 June

Give thanks for the many volunteers in churches who work alongside families in the church and local community.

A waiting time

Sunday 2 June

Thank God for the way Messy Churches are sprouting up in so many churches, bringing new life to families.

Monday 3 June

The first Christians shared stories about Jesus as they waited for his return. Pray for Messy Church leaders to share God's story effectively with families.

Tuesday 4 June

Those early Christians must have felt bereaved when Jesus left them. Pray that the new book *Seriously Messy* will help Christians to process their experiences of bereavement and death in a church and family context.

Wednesday 5 June

As Christians of all denominations join in prayer for evangelism this week through Thy Kingdom Come, pray today for five people you know to come to know Jesus.

Thursday 6 June

Ask God for churches, especially Messy Churches, to be filled with the gift of the Holy Spirit, as Jesus promised his disciples in Acts 1.

Friday 7 June

Please hold the BRF Messy Church team before God today, praying that he would empower them to share Jesus' love in all their writing, in their speaking and among the people they meet.

Saturday 8 June

As the first disciples met together to wait on God before the new start of Pentecost, pray for Messy Churches to know when to wait and when to start a fresh way of making disciples.

Celebrating and learning together

Sunday 9 June

This Pentecost, thank God for his gift of the Holy Spirit and his promise that where two or more are gathered, he is with them.

Monday 10 June

Pray for those organising BRF events over the summer, particularly the women's conference and the Festival of Prayer, that they may have the energy and wisdom to do the job well.

Tuesday 11 June

Pray for those who will attend BRF events this summer, that they might have the space they need to reflect afterwards on what they have learned and to deepen their relationship with God.

Wednesday 12 June

Pray for those attending our women's conference on Saturday, that they will have safe travel and that any concerns they may have will be put to rest.

Thursday 13 June

Pray for the speakers and workshop leaders at our events, that they may be inspired to speak God's word, to encourage those at the events and to share their faith.

Friday 14 June

Thank God for all the opportunities we have throughout the year to meet, to celebrate and to learn more about him.

Saturday 15 June

Pray for those speaking at the BRF/*Woman Alive* conference today, and that participants will be blessed by the opportunities to worship, to pray and to learn more about God through the psalms.

Helping children meet and know God

Sunday 16 June

Pray that dads, grandads and godfathers would creatively and confidently model a relationship with God. Ask for comfort for those who find Father's Day challenging.

Monday 17 June

Pray that more people would access the Parenting for Faith podcast, and that it would encourage and equip parents and carers who listen to it.

Tuesday 18 June

Pray that churches with few children attending would love and disciple those children well and have more opportunities to reach out to their community.

Wednesday 19 June

Pray for parents to find a community with whom they can be honest about the highs and lows of parenting for faith, offering each other prayer and practical support.

Thursday 20 June

Pray that the Parenting for Faith course would inspire parents and carers to point things out to their children while they are at home, in church and out and about, that help them understand God and how he fits into their life.

Friday 21 June

Pray that church leaders and their spouses who are parents would have wisdom and patience and develop good support networks.

Saturday 22 June

Pray for children's and youth workers as they encourage and support parents and carers and strengthen links between church and home.

For schools and education

Sunday 23 June

Pray for those who work in schools in all capacities, that today might be a day of rest and refreshment to strengthen them for the week ahead.

Monday 24 June

Pray for wisdom for those who make decisions and policies about education.

Tuesday 25 June

Pray that those who volunteer in schools in any capacity will feel valued and encouraged. Pray also for positive relationships between schools, community and church.

Wednesday 26 June

With the pressure that exams can place on family life, pray for peace for pupils in the midst of exams and their families.

Thursday 27 June

Pray that those who set education policy would support and develop RE in our church schools.

Friday 28 June

Pray for peace for pupils preparing to leave one school and begin at a new school in September. May they will feel confident to embrace the change and the new opportunities.

Saturday 29 June

Pray that as staff come towards the end of term they will have the energy and enthusiasm to engage with the extra summer term activities.

For our walk with God

Sunday 30 June

As many churches meet together today to worship, pray for church leaders – locally, nationally and internationally – that the Lord would guard and guide each of them in their own personal walk with him.

Monday 1 July

Commit your week to the Lord and ask that he would deepen your knowledge, love and trust of him (Psalm 37:5).

Tuesday 2 July

‘Blessed is the one... whose delight is in the law of the Lord’ (Psalm 1:1–2). Pray that we would not only read and learn God’s word, but also delight in it.

Wednesday 3 July

Pray for opportunities to strengthen and encourage others through what you have learned in your own walk with God.

Thursday 4 July

‘He leads me beside quiet waters’ (Psalm 23:2). Pray that, from his word, God would provide rest and comfort to those who are struggling or suffering.

Friday 5 July

‘I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!’ (Mark 9:24). Pray that God would strengthen and sustain those you know who are wrestling with faith.

Saturday 6 July

The Festival of Prayer takes place today in Oxfordshire. Pray that those attending this conference would be inspired and refreshed in a lasting way.

For abundant provision

Sunday 7 July

BRF needs donations to pay for its charitable work, including the work of the programme teams. Pray that the right people will hear and respond to this need.

Monday 8 July

We’re currently planning our annual Messy Church £100 fundraising appeal. Thank God for the churches that gave generously last year; may even more get involved this year.

Tuesday 9 July

Pray for our next Supporters Day, a fantastic opportunity to tell people more about our work.

Wednesday 10 July

As we roll out some new fundraising initiatives for The Gift of Years, thank God for the creativity and dedication of all those involved in this work and pray that it will bear fruit.

Thursday 11 July

Pray for restful holidays for our Fundraising team; may they return to work inspired to face the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Friday 12 July

Please pray for efficient planning for our next BRF Partners event.

Saturday 13 July

Thank God for every individual, church and organisation that has supported BRF over the last year; pray for God’s blessing and abundance in their own lives.

For BRF staff

Sunday 14 July

Pray that all BRF staff would be spend time today resting and enjoying the blessings of family and friends.

Monday 15 July

Pray for the Supporter Services team. May they be an expression of God's love and care for all who are in contact with them.

Tuesday 16 July

Pray for any members of staff who are struggling, whether with work difficulties, family problems, financial responsibilities or other challenges; may they know God's peace, assurance and provision.

Wednesday 17 July

Ask for God's blessing and protection on the spouses, parents, children and close friends of BRF staff.

Thursday 18 July

Pray for good relationships between BRF's staff members. Pray that all would follow BRF's values of integrity, excellence, collaborative working, adaptability and innovation.

Friday 19 July

Give thanks for all those who have worked for BRF in any capacity over the last almost 100 years. Pray for any in retirement – that God would continue to use them for his kingdom purposes.

Saturday 20 July

Pray that God would continue to bring to BRF skilled and dedicated staff who can offer the best of contemporary approaches to the work of the organisation.

Ending the school year

Sunday 21 July

For teaching staff, this week will require every last reserve of energy to be managed well. Pray that all who call on God for strength, are given it.

Monday 22 July

Ending the school year can be bittersweet: the holidays beckon, but there are also significant goodbyes to be said. Pray that all manage this transition well.

Tuesday 23 July

Some pupils are about to change schools. Pray that any underlying fears are met with thoughtful support and reassurance.

Wednesday 24 July

Some staff will be retiring from the profession. Give thanks for their many years of service, and pray that retirement becomes a creative blessing for them.

Thursday 25 July

Pray for all those school support staff whose monthly income is about to drop because they are paid only during term time. Pray for good budgeting at home and prudent decision-making.

Friday 26 July

Pray that your local schools manage this last day well, with a spirit of good celebration. Give thanks for all the dedication that has made your local schools 'work' this year.

Saturday 27 July

Pray for those families who for various reasons have not been looking forward to the holidays. Whatever their circumstances, ask God to offer them moments of rest and peacefulness.

For BRF trustees and management

Sunday 28 July

Give thanks for BRF's trustees, whose generous contribution has helped the work continue to grow in scope and impact, almost a century after its beginning.

Monday 29 July

Pray that God would supply trustees' personal and spiritual needs. May he call each one to a closer walk with him, that they might discern his will for BRF.

Tuesday 30 July

Pray for Richard Fisher, BRF's Chief Executive. Pray for health, vision, wisdom and stamina to lead the organisation through the economic, social and spiritual challenges of our day.

Wednesday 31 July

Pray for the BRF senior management team – the heads of Content Creation, Fundraising and Operations, and Marketing and Communications. May they lead with vision, purpose and integrity, inspiring and enabling those reporting to them.

Thursday 1 August

Pray that God would speak clearly to BRF's leadership about how he wants them to approach the difficult decisions of this time.

Friday 2 August

Pray that God would open doors for BRF and make new connections that offer new ways to help people know and follow Jesus.

Saturday 3 August

Pray that God would reign over all BRF's activities. Give thanks that he will 'meet all our needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus' (Philippians 4:19).

For families through the holidays

Sunday 4 August

As many families head off on holiday, others are unable to get away. Pray they will find refreshment and happiness together at home.

Monday 5 August

Pray that families facing a time of transition would place their hope and confidence in God as they look ahead to new beginnings.

Tuesday 6 August

Pray that all who have recently attended a Parenting for Faith course will benefit from putting their new skills into practice.

Wednesday 7 August

Pray that families attending Christian festivals and camps will have fun, and that what they experience there will have a lasting impact.

Thursday 8 August

Hundreds of people have led Parenting for Faith courses this year. Pray for a summer of rest and refreshment, as God shows them how to follow up.

Friday 9 August

Pray that families find time to enjoy connecting with God and with each other, sharing their journeys of faith.

Saturday 10 August

Pray for parents preparing for older children to move away from home soon; may they be reassured that their children are precious to God and held in his love.

For the Anna Chaplaincy network

Sunday 11 August

Pray for a widening sense of calling to this specialist ministry among third and fourth ages – both lay people and those who have been ordained.

Monday 12 August

Pray for all members of the network, including the Anna Friends and volunteers who work alongside them.

Tuesday 13 August

Pray for improved quality of life for men and women post-retirement in this era of unprecedented longevity.

Wednesday 14 August

Pray for more churches to recognise their key responsibility to understand the spirituality of ageing and to help deepen the discipleship of those in the second half of life.

Thursday 15 August

Pray for Debbie Thrower and her team, especially as they plan the annual gathering of all network members across the UK this autumn.

Friday 16 August

Pray for good practice among all who work to improve the lives of people in care homes and of those who struggle to live independently.

Saturday 17 August

Pray that Anna Chaplains would help alleviate loneliness in the older people they pray for and with. Pray for those who have no one else praying for them.

Resourcing individuals and churches

Sunday 18 August

Pray that BRF's Bible reading notes would have an impact on the lives of those who read them, from all parts of the world, drawing them closer to God and to his word.

Monday 19 August

Pray for BRF's authors. Ask God to give them wisdom, humility and insight as they write to encourage and challenge others in their faith.

Tuesday 20 August

Pray for the team at BRF who work on all aspects of BRF's books and Bible reading notes. Thank God for their skills and their passion to provide Christian resources that truly affect readers' hearts.

Wednesday 21 August

Thank God for the contributors to BRF's Bible reading notes. May their wisdom and warmth draw people towards Jesus.

Thursday 22 August

Ask God to enable BRF's prayer and spirituality resources to draw readers into a more intimate, genuine, two-way relationship with him.

Friday 23 August

Pray that BRF's resources for church leaders would bear fruit in the lives of churches from all denominations.

Saturday 24 August

As the end of the school summer holidays approaches, pray that our schools resources will be used with integrity and creativity to show children God's love for them.

Messy Church discipleship

Sunday 25 August

Thank God for a recent report from the Church Army Research Unit that confirms Christians of all ages are growing as disciples through Messy Churches.

Monday 26 August

Pray for Messy Churches who feel under-supported and under-resourced. Pray that their churches find ways to transform their ministry.

Tuesday 27 August

Pray for Messy Churches that are reaching families with no meaningful past contact with church; may a real sense of community be developed.

Wednesday 28 August

Thank God for individuals having spiritual conversations through Messy Churches; may they develop strong journeys of faith.

Thursday 29 August

Thank God for the many Messy Churches exploring the sacraments, further outreach and exciting new leadership styles.

Friday 30 August

Pray for lay people who lead Messy Churches; may they feel supported and encouraged, as individuals of all ages are nurtured on their journey with Jesus.

Saturday 31 August

Pray that Messy Churches are envisioned by the opportunities they offer to help families with their relationship with Jesus.

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The BRF Prayer

Almighty God,
you have taught us that your word is a lamp for our feet
and a light for our path. Help us, and all who prayerfully read your word,
to deepen our fellowship with you and with each other through your love.
And in so doing, may we come to know you more fully, love you more truly
and follow more faithfully in the steps of your son Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forevermore.
Amen



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