

Prayer diary

Transforming lives and communities



Spring 2019

A faith for many people in many nations

BRF is dedicated to making RE in primary schools relevant, stimulating and fun, through its professional education service, Barnabas in Schools. The newest Barnabas RE Day theme is Christianity around the World, which shows children the diversity of cultures and locations in which Christians celebrate their faith.



Dear friends

Thank you for partnering with us in prayer. It is so important to us that everything we do is supported in this way. We value every one of you who takes time to pray for the work that we are involved with.



As we begin 2019, please could you pray for:

- Lives and communities changed through BRF's programmes and resources during 2018. We thank God for those helped in their spiritual journey, as well as those who have come to know Jesus for the first time. May this continue throughout 2019.
- Preparations for the second Messy Church conference, which will bring Messy Church leaders from across the UK and around the world together in May 2019. Discipleship will be the focus. We hope it will also be an unmissable opportunity to learn, be inspired and to meet other Messy Church leaders and friends.



- Realisation of the Parenting for Faith vision to change a nation by helping Christian parents nurture their children's faith. With its easy-to-use techniques and practical resources, may this programme be accessed by more families and churches.

- Churches and individuals using our new Lent resources as they approach Easter: *Lent with New Daylight*, *At Home in Lent* by Gordon Giles and *Celtic Lent* by David Cole.
- All our programmes that help schools and churches in their local communities – Barnabas in Schools, Messy Church and The Gift of Years – particularly for the opportunities they may have to share the Easter story.
- The resources that we need to deliver our work: the skills needed, time available and funding required.

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

A new school term

Sunday 6 January

The Sunday before the start of a new term can be an ominous time. Pray that all Christians working in schools will use this day for rest, refreshment and taking any concerns to God.

Monday 7 January

Religious education can be undervalued; pray for changes in schools and academies this year that enable staff, children and young people to take faith seriously.

Tuesday 8 January

Our Barnabas in Schools team are preparing for the new term; pray for safe travel and for inspiring encounters with pupils and staff that leave a long legacy.

Wednesday 9 January

Many Christians are responsible for managing local schools and academies; pray that they show humility, wisdom, patience and a professionalism that witnesses to their faith.

Thursday 10 January

As pupils settle into the spring term, pray that the next few weeks offer encouragement and hope to those who struggle with academic subjects.

Friday 11 January

The Barnabas in Schools team are creating new resources for teachers to download; pray that these materials will be useful, practical and widely shared.

Saturday 12 January

Pray for the many Christians who serve as school governors, that their support and encouragement would enrich the life of all staff and pupils.

A lamp for our feet, a light for our path

Sunday 13 January

Pray for all readers of BRF's daily Bible reading notes, that God would sustain them in the discipline of dwelling in his word.

Monday 14 January

Pray for new readers of our Bible reading notes. As they establish routines for the year, may they quickly discover the good that flows from spending precious time with God.

Tuesday 15 January

Pray for all writers of BRF's Bible reading notes. Thank God for their experience, wisdom and skills and pray that their reflections may always be fresh and authentic.

Wednesday 16 January

The founding vision of BRF was that people should be helped to go deeper in God's word. Pray that our Bible reading notes will help today's readers to 'go deeper'.

Thursday 17 January

Pray that readers of our Bible reading notes will share their experience and encourage others to try the notes for themselves.

Friday 18 January

Pray for those who use *Bible Reflections for Older People*. May these notes bring comfort, solace and assurance to the frail and vulnerable.

Saturday 19 January

Pray for each series by name: for the readers, writers, editors and designers of *New Daylight*, *Day by Day with God*, *Guidelines*, *The Upper Room*, *Bible Reflections for Older People* and *Quiet Spaces*.

Parenting for Faith, empowering families

Sunday 20 January

Pray for parents to have the boldness to share their own experiences of faith with their children.

Monday 21 January

Pray that children and their parents will be open to hearing about the faith of older people in the family.

Tuesday 22 January

Pray for openings within denominations and church networks for the BRF team to have encouraging, productive conversations about Parenting for Faith.

Wednesday 23 January

Pray for church leaders' families as they try to find the best way to guide churches while also helping their own children flourish in faith.

Thursday 24 January

Pray for parents whose children's faith is going through a rough patch. Pray that the children will sense God's heart for them, and for comfort and peace for their parents.

Friday 25 January

Pray for wisdom and strength for Becky, Parenting for Faith's Local Coordinator, as she supports and equips local churches who are running the Parenting for Faith course.

Saturday 26 January

Pray for creativity and wisdom for Anna, Parenting for Faith's National Coordinator, as she develops the website, and meets with those who influence families nationally.

Messy Church, making disciples

Sunday 27 January

Pray that the Danish Messy Churches, gathering for their conference today may have a fruitful and joyful time together.

Monday 28 January

Pray for Messy Church teams to have a renewed excitement about serving God and to become even more inspired in the mission to make new disciples of Jesus.

Tuesday 29 January

Please ask God to give fresh insight to Messy Church leaders searching for ways to grow new Christians.

Wednesday 30 January

Hold the many Messy Church 'families' in your prayers as they encounter the living God, together in church and individually in their everyday lives.

Thursday 31 January

Please pray for our Messy Churches in isolated places around the world, where it's hard to find support and companionship. May they find help and encouragement through the website and on social media.

Friday 1 February

Pray for God's blessing on the BRF Messy Church team, Lucy, Jane and Eleanor, as they develop projects, write resources, lead training and encourage leaders to pioneer new ways of being church.

Saturday 2 February

Pray that Messy Churches will be places of healing for any who find church difficult or who have been hurt by the church in the past.



Anna Chaplains, supporting older people

Sunday 3 February

This weekend we remember Simeon and Anna (from whom Anna Chaplains take their name), who trusted in God's promise that they would see the Messiah. May we follow their example.

Monday 4 February

Pray that worship services, in churches, care homes or elsewhere, will connect with older people in their everyday lives, and foster hope, especially in those who feel fragile.

Tuesday 5 February

Give thanks for the volunteers who support Anna Chaplains as they reach out and spend time with people who are lonely.

Wednesday 6 February

Pray for those who are ill and who know they are reaching the end of their days, especially for those who may have no one else to pray for them.

Thursday 7 February

Give thanks for the wit and wisdom of those rich in years.

Friday 8 February

Reflect on someone who has enriched your life, thanks to their long experience and resilience in the face of challenges.

Saturday 9 February

Pray for more people to discern their vocation to Anna Chaplaincy, so as to help the most vulnerable in later life.



Behind the scenes at BRF

Sunday 10 February

Pray for all those who work 'behind the scenes' at BRF this week, and especially for the well-being of all staff working at BRF's head office in Oxfordshire.

Monday 11 February

Pray for all who create BRF resources: may God continue to inspire them to give voice to what is on his heart.

Tuesday 12 February

Pray for peace and encouragement for all those who are striving to meet deadlines and cope with fast-changing technology.

Wednesday 13 February

Pray for those who are in contact with our supporters and customers – in person, on the phone and by letter – and for all the BRF Fundraising and Communications team: may they always help and not hinder.

Thursday 14 February

Pray that those involved in promoting and selling BRF's resources be blessed with new opportunities, and that Christian love would mark all their interactions.

Friday 15 February

In an increasingly complex working world, pray for those who look after BRF's assets and facilities, and those who fulfil a HR role, that they make wise decisions.

Saturday 16 February

Pray for our programme team leaders and those who support them behind the scenes, that they stay close to God so that their work may always reflect his priorities.

For family life

Sunday 17 February

Pray for those who seek to support families both within their church and in their local community.

Monday 18 February

Pray for those volunteers who lead toddler groups, many of whom meet on a Monday. Pray that they might know how valuable their role is in supporting parents and carers who may be desperate for someone to draw alongside them.

Tuesday 19 February

Pray for families who find it challenging to have children at home during the half-term break. Pray for strength and energy to sustain.

Wednesday 20 February

Pray for those who are working to support children in the care system. Pray for the compassion to be able to respond to each individual's needs.

Thursday 21 February

Pray that those who are single, for whatever reason, may feel valued within family ministry, and as part of the family of Christ.

Friday 22 February

Pray for families feeling isolated or detached – particularly those who don't have family support nearby. Pray for opportunities to make connections with other individuals and families.

Saturday 23 February

Pray for those for whom the weekend can be a juggling act of activities – pray for moments of rest and relaxation.

For Messy Church volunteers

Sunday 24 February

Pray for churches starting Messy Church. May they be blessed with families, singles, old and young volunteers, working together to reach the community.

Monday 25 February

Pray for Messy Church teams who feel tired. May God uplift them with new enthusiasm and energy. May God's strength carry them and fill them with the Holy Spirit.

Tuesday 26 February

Pray that volunteers will be able to use their God-given gifts at Messy Church. May each person share their talents with love and grace.

Wednesday 27 February

Pray for continued vision among the Messy Church volunteers. May the vision be clear and heartfelt, led by God.

Thursday 28 February

Pray for opportunities to make new friends at Messy Church. May friendships grow and blossom as God works in them and through them.

Friday 1 March

Pray for each Messy Church volunteer that comes closer to God in their ministry. May teams and congregations grow closer together, and grow closer to God.

Saturday 2 March

Give thanks for the fun and enjoyment that Messy Church volunteers encounter at each session. May they shine before others in God's love and joy.

Lent with New Daylight

Sunday 3 March

Pray for groups all over the country beginning their journey through BRF's *Lent with New Daylight* Bible reading notes. May God be present in their reading, sharing and discussion.

Monday 4 March

Give thanks for the long and popular ministry of Margaret Silf, and particularly for her insights into contemplative prayer in this week's *Lent with New Daylight* reflections.

Tuesday 5 March

Give thanks for the fun of Shrove Tuesday pancake-making, then ask God to prepare hearts and minds for the more serious work of Lent.

Wednesday 6 March

Margaret Silf says, 'Ash Wednesday is a doorway into a special time of reflection.* Pray that people will be moved and inspired at church services throughout the country today.

Thursday 7 March

Pray that as Lent begins, 'we may meet God each day in our heart's wordless silence:*

Friday 8 March

Pray for those who are setting out on the Lenten journey without human companionship. May God feel especially close and real to them in the weeks to come.

Saturday 9 March

Give thanks for Jesus' faithfulness and resilience in the wilderness. May his example inspire and sustain us always.

*Quotes from *Lent with New Daylight* (Lent 2019).

For direction and provision

Sunday 10 March

BRF staff are this month meeting to look at the impact of our work over the last twelve months and to decide where we go from here. Please pray for wisdom.

Monday 11 March

The end of the financial year means it's time for us to plan our fundraising activities for 2019–20. Please pray for wisdom, energy and lots of good ideas!

Tuesday 12 March

Thank God for all our regular givers. Their gifts enable us to plan more effectively and commit to new initiatives that help change lives.

Wednesday 13 March

The new financial year, starting in April, can be the best time to apply for grant funding. Please pray that we will be able to secure the funding we need to develop our work further in 2019–20.

Thursday 14 March

We'll soon be asking people again to consider leaving a gift in their will to BRF. Thank God for all those who have chosen to support us in this way.

Friday 15 March

Please pray that more churches will feel inspired to support Messy Church. Their gifts are vital to the Messy Church mission.

Saturday 16 March

As we share the impact of our work with key donors please pray that they will be inspired to support us in the future.

For older people's ministry

Sunday 17 March

This St Patrick's Day, please pray that we, in our generation, will have the same zeal to share the good news of Jesus Christ with young and old, as the fifth-century saint whose life we mark today.

Monday 18 March

Pray for more churches to establish Anna Chaplaincies to support older people and their relatives and carers specifically.

Tuesday 19 March

Given the changing nature of older age, as 'baby boomers' enter the 'Third Age' of maturity, pray that churches will be bold in their plans to deepen the spirituality of those in their later years.

Wednesday 20 March

Pray for more kindness and tolerance towards us as we age.

Thursday 21 March

Pray for all who give their time and talents to support initiatives enriching the lives of older people in their churches and communities.

Friday 22 March

Pray for foresight for church leaders framing their mission and ministry to people across the entire age spectrum.

Saturday 23 March

Pray for those who live alone and who long for someone to talk to.

For all BRF's writers

Sunday 24 March

Give thanks for the dedication of all who write for BRF – commissioned authors and staff writers who create content for our books, websites, social media and promotional materials.

Monday 25 March

Pray that everyone involved in producing BRF's resources may be sustained in their faith and inspired to help others grow in theirs.

Tuesday 26 March

Thank God for the creativity of writers who enable BRF to publish resources on Bible engagement and application, prayer and spirituality, church mission and ministry, and Christian life and practice.

Wednesday 27 March

Pray that God would lead authors to develop projects that speak powerfully to Christians today, and also reach out to those who know little of him.

Thursday 28 March

Pray that God would bless all the work of our authors and help them to balance their different commitments.

Friday 29 March

Pray for the editors of our Bible reading notes as they build strong teams of contributors and work faithfully with them to make each series as good as it can be.

Saturday 30 March

Pray for all those who write for our programmes – Messy Church, Barnabas in Schools, The Gift of Years and Parenting for Faith.



For mothers and others

Sunday 31 March

On this Mothering Sunday, pray that mothers would see the significance of their influence on their children, and understand how impactful they are.

Monday 1 April

Pray for all those who have found Mothering Sunday difficult: those who have lost children, are struggling with infertility, or are grieving for their own mothers.

Tuesday 2 April

On World Autism Awareness Day, thank God for all he is doing in and through those with autism, and for the blessing they are to their families and our communities. Pray for rest and joy in their families.

Wednesday 3 April

Pray that God's grace will enable adult sibling relationships to strengthen, and be places of encouragement and peace.

Thursday 4 April

Pray that God would comfort those who are living far from their extended families, and provide them with community that would care for them.

Friday 5 April

Pray for parents whose children are grown up. Pray for wisdom as they continue to parent, encourage, counsel and love their children as adults.

Saturday 6 April

Pray for those families who are juggling the life of a blended family. Pray that God will knit them together in his love.



Developing holy habits

Sunday 7 April

On this fifth Sunday of Lent, pray that God would deepen the understanding of all who strive to be faithful disciples of Jesus, and particularly those using BRF's 'Holy Habits' resources to help them.

Monday 8 April

Pray that God would 'Tune our hearts and ears that we might know and, knowing, live his wise and holy way.'^{*}

Tuesday 9 April

Pray for the teams pioneering the 'Holy Habits' approach across the country. May God encourage and sustain them, and bless their work by adding 'daily to their number'.

Wednesday 10 April

Thank God for the interest in 'Holy Habits' in other countries. Pray that he will guide all the complex discussions and decisions involved in bringing this resource to his worldwide church.

Thursday 11 April

Pray for 'Holy Habits' lead author, Andrew Roberts, as he works with churches embarking on the 'Holy Habits' journey.

Friday 12 April

Pray that 'the bright vision of the kingdom of God will inform our imaginations as we look to the future together.'^{*}

Saturday 13 April

Pray for all those preparing to lead worship tomorrow. May God inspire them to explore 'different ways of worshipping.'^{*}

^{*}Quotes from BRF's 'Holy Habits' series of resources for churches.

Following Jesus through Holy Week

Sunday 14 April

On this Palm Sunday, let us remember Jesus' triumphal entrance into Jerusalem and rejoice that our King has come.

Monday 15 April

Pray for all those completing their reading of Gordon Giles' BRF Lent book, *At Home in Lent*, that their minds and hearts are prepared for the Easter resurrection.

Tuesday 16 April

Pray that BRF's new guide *Lent with New Daylight* would foster or reinvigorate a habit of regular Bible reading for many who have been using it this Lent.

Wednesday 17 April

Give thanks for all those touched by the work of God through BRF initiatives this year. Pray that God would especially bless them throughout the Easter period.

Thursday 18 April

As Easter approaches, pray that church leaders and preachers, with extra services to prepare, may yet know the gift of Easter in their own lives.

Friday 19 April

Let us give thanks today for Christ's sacrifice on the cross and his love for us on Good Friday. May it shape the way we lead our lives and the work that we do.

Saturday 20 April

Pray for all BRF staff and supporters who are enjoying time off over the Easter period – for the opportunity to rest and recharge.

For the school holiday

Sunday 21 April

As we celebrate Jesus' victory over death and sin this Easter Sunday, let's pray for rest and relaxation for those who are on holiday from the school term.

Monday 22 April

Pray for all Christian teachers and staff who are fulfilling their calling to serve in this profession. Pray that they will feel affirmed in their work.

Tuesday 23 April

Pray that school governors will be able to offer support to their school and its staff in this important role.

Wednesday 24 April

Pray for schools' administrative and caretaking staff, who play an important part in running and maintaining schools.

Thursday 25 April

Pray for those at the national level with responsibility for education – for wisdom in making decisions that will shape the lives of young people.

Friday 26 April

Pray for those who find the traditional education system a challenge and are taught in other kinds of establishments.

Saturday 27 April

Pray for positive experiences in the lives of young people; they are in the important years of formation that will equip them for life.



The Messy Church International Conference

Sunday 28 April

Pray for the BRF team organising the second Messy Church International Conference, which starts on Friday.

Monday 29 April

Hold the conference planning team (Lucy, Paul, Alison, Miriam, Jenny, Robin, Barry, Charis, Michelle) in your prayers, as they finalise workshops, practicalities and worship.

Tuesday 30 April

Pray for the 200 people travelling to the conference from across the UK and around the world, that God would prepare them to receive his wisdom, joy and direction.

Wednesday 1 May

Pray that God's Holy Spirit will permeate every moment of the conference, so that each delegate will be filled with light and life to take back to their own local situation.

Thursday 2 May

Pray particularly for Claire Dalpra from the Church Army and Andrew Roberts, lead author of BRF's 'Holy Habits' resources, as they prepare their talks for the weekend.

Friday 3 May

As the conference begins, please pray that those travelling will have safe journeys and feel wonderfully welcomed and that they have arrived among friends.

Saturday 4 May

Pray that delegates would meet God in some way today, and find at least one new friend.



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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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