

Prayer diary

Transforming lives and communities



Autumn 2018

Messy Vintage opens new doors for older people

You've heard of Messy Church. Now there's Messy Vintage too – an innovative and inclusive way into worship for older people of all backgrounds. This gentle, sociable approach, developed by BRF and based on Messy Church values, is fast becoming popular in churches, community centres and care homes.



Dear friends

Thank you so much for praying for the work that BRF is doing across our programmes and through our resources. All of us on the staff team at BRF are thankful that what we do is underpinned by your prayers.



We would particularly appreciate your prayers this autumn for the following areas.

- Churches that are exploring and using BRF's 'Holy Habits' series to renew their Christian discipleship – may there be opportunities for more churches and denominations to explore this exciting and effective programme.
- The growing network of Anna Chaplains and others in equivalent roles within The Gift of Years programme, who are providing ecumenical, community-based chaplaincy in their local communities – we pray that this network will continue to grow and that The Gift of Years team here at BRF may have the resources to be able to support this growth.
- The more than 3,500 registered Messy Churches across the UK and around the world – that they may continue to reach families, particularly those of little or no faith. We pray

for the discipleship that is taking place within these congregations and for all that BRF's Messy Church team is developing to support them.

- More parents, groups and churches to discover our Parenting for Faith resources that will support them as they try to help their children discover and grow their own personal relationship with Jesus. We particularly pray that the free Parenting for Faith video-based course may be used widely by individuals and groups.
- For our programmes that help schools and churches reach out to their local communities – Barnabas in Schools, Messy Church and The Gift of Years – that they would have opportunities to share the Christmas message.

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 2 September

Pray for all teaching staff – that in the coming term they will use all their skills and talents to stimulate learning, enquiry and the gaining of wisdom for our next generation.

Monday 3 September

Many schools use this day for staff training and preparation for the new academic year. Pray for clear heads, sensible planning and, this evening, a good night's sleep.

Tuesday 4 September

Pray for all pupils and staff joining what might be, for them, a new school – that they find friendships, encouragement and a place to grow in wisdom, knowledge and ability.

Wednesday 5 September

Pray for all parents and carers sending children to school for the first time – that this great milestone is a time of anticipation, encouragement and joy.

Thursday 6 September

Pray for any pupils from troubled homes – that for them school can be a place of safety and companionship where they can flourish.

Friday 7 September

Pray for head teachers and other school leaders – that in all their decision-making and encounters, they find creative ways to strike the right balance of mercy and justice.

Saturday 8 September

Pray that this weekend provides a time of rest for all those working in school – despite the temptation to overwork.

Kingdom funding

Sunday 9 September

September is a new start for many after the summer break. It's also a great time to start giving regularly to support our work. Give thanks for all our regular donors, new and old.

Monday 10 September

Once again, we're encouraging Messy Churches to donate to the Messy Church £100 appeal. Please pray for a good response, so we can continue to help churches draw more families to Jesus.

Tuesday 11 September

Give thanks for those who have made a special commitment to fund larger projects. May their generosity bear much fruit.

Wednesday 12 September

Our staff are busy making plans for 2019 to help us attract the funding needed to continue transforming lives. Please pray for us during this process.

Thursday 13 September

This month we're encouraging supporters to think about leaving us a legacy. Thank God for all those who will support us in this way.

Friday 14 September

Give thanks for all the staff involved in processing your donations. This important work often goes unnoticed.

Saturday 15 September

Today numerous families will be visiting as many London landmarks as they can during our Messy Runaround fundraiser. It's for a good cause; please pray for fun, laughter and safety for all.

Growing God's kingdom through Messy Church

Sunday 16 September

Please pray for churches starting again with their Messy Church after a break in August, that they will have renewed enthusiasm and energy.

Monday 17 September

We pray for imagination and discernment for churches who are starting, or already turning their attention to, spiritual growth initiatives within the Messy Church Discipleship Pilot.

Tuesday 18 September

Pray for Messy Church families and others to be encouraged to nurture faith at home in fun ways that bring households closer to Jesus and to each other.

Wednesday 19 September

Hold before God the teams wrestling with how they might add extra opportunities for Christian growth for their Messy Church members.

Thursday 20 September

We pray for Messy Churches to find inspiration to improve what they do through the five values of hospitality, creativity, celebration, being Christ-centred and being all-age.

Friday 21 September

Please ask for the blessings of enterprise and resilience to fall on the BRF Messy Church team, especially on our new intern, who starts this month.

Saturday 22 September

As Winchester Cathedral holds a Messy Cathedral event today, please pray for all churches large and small to have the courage to help families and others know Jesus.

Developing discipleship through 'Holy Habits'

Sunday 23 September

Thank God for the Bible's inspirational record of the first Christian community, and for the new 'Holy Habits' resources based on Acts 2:42-47, which help whole churches embark on a journey of discipleship together.

Monday 24 September

Pray that God will use 'Holy Habits' to make many new disciples, and deepen the discipleship of those already following Jesus.

Tuesday 25 September

Pray for Andrew Roberts, the 'Holy Habits' programme leader, as he tours the country sharing the vision. May God give him energy, resilience and inspiration, and keep him safe.

Wednesday 26 September

Pray for the churches already committed to 'Holy Habits'. Ask God to guide and encourage them at every turn.

Thursday 27 September

Pray for churches hesitant about adopting 'Holy Habits'. Ask God to give them a deep desire for the transformation this could bring to their community.

Friday 28 September

Give thanks for the churches and groups that piloted the resources. Ask God to bless them as they continue to be shaped by the holy habits they have formed.

Saturday 29 September

Pray that all young people involved in 'Holy Habits' churches may be encouraged to share their experience and their creativity, so that the whole community can learn from and be inspired by them.



Parenting, caring for and nurturing children

Sunday 30 September

Pray that those who have been on a church Parenting for Faith course would help and encourage others with what they have learned and discovered.

Monday 1 October

Pray for great communication between the children/youth leaders who look after kids on a Sunday and the parents/carers who do so for the rest of the week.

Tuesday 2 October

Pray that new people would discover the online Parenting for Faith course and be helped through it.

Wednesday 3 October

Pray that those in the church without children would have great opportunities to encourage children and parents in their church family and feel loved and included by them.

Thursday 4 October

Pray for wisdom, inspiration and energy for each of the Parenting for Faith team as they speak at events, share with others and create resources.

Friday 5 October

On World Teachers Day, pray that Christian teachers and pupils would know God's presence with them at school.

Saturday 6 October

Pray that people would easily access the Parenting for Faith resources they need, and feel confident about sharing them with others.



For the autumn of life

Sunday 7 October

Pray for BRF's The Gift of Years team, who work to support the spiritual needs of older people and develop the Anna Chaplaincy model.

Monday 8 October

Cultivating stillness is part of the discipline of holiness, so we pray for quiet minds and receptive hearts. Especially pray for those attending today's BRF Quiet Day.

Tuesday 9 October

Pray that those who spend enforced time alone may be delivered from loneliness. Pray for more Anna Chaplains (and others in similar roles) to help ease any distress.

Wednesday 10 October

Take a few moments to give thanks for our senses and the tranquillity to reflect on what we can do, rather than what is no longer possible, owing to age or circumstances.

Thursday 11 October

Pray for the growth of The Gift of Years network around the UK to encourage older people in their spiritual journey.

Friday 12 October

Give thanks for all the organisations in the Christians Together Against Loneliness coalition. May their voice be heard locally and nationally.

Saturday 13 October

As the number of older people grows, pray for more funding for BRF to support the growth of The Gift of Years.

Resourcing individuals

Sunday 14 October

Give thanks for the books and Bible reading notes that BRF has published this year and those still to come, as well as the teams who have worked hard to produce them.

Monday 15 October

Pray for those exploring our resources – especially those doing so for the first time – that they may find something relevant to their own journey that is valuable to them.

Tuesday 16 October

Pray for those attending the Christian Resources Exhibition, including BRF staff. May it be a time for meeting together and discovering new resources.

Wednesday 17 October

Pray that readers may go beyond the pages of our books, discovering more about encountering Christ and sharing that discovery with their own communities.

Thursday 18 October

Pray for all those who have attended a BRF event this year, that the experience and learning will continue to have an impact on their day-to-day lives.

Friday 19 October

Pray for the events to come in the year ahead, for those organising and leading them and those planning to attend.

Saturday 20 October

Pray that everyone involved in producing BRF's resources – authors, editors, designers and others – may continue to be sustained in their faith and inspired to help others grow in theirs.

Members of one body

Sunday 21 October

Pray for BRF's Board of Trustees. May each trustee continue to be 'transformed by the renewing of their mind' (Romans 12:2) so they may be able to discern what God's will is for BRF.

Monday 22 October

Pray for Richard Fisher, BRF's chief executive. Please pray for him to lead with wisdom, stamina and inspiration, and for the ability to handle a heavy workload with grace.

Tuesday 23 October

Pray for the senior management team at BRF. Ask for God's blessing on the heads of departments: Content Creation, Finance and Operations, Sales and Strategic Relationships, and Fundraising and Communications.

Wednesday 24 October

Pray for BRF staff with a customer-facing role. May they have the grace to demonstrate God's love in all their interactions, especially in times of stress.

Thursday 25 October

Pray for our relationships with our suppliers. May we honour God in all our commercial dealings, especially when difficulties arise.

Friday 26 October

Pray that in today's fast-changing, pressurised working landscape, BRF teams would be able to stay on top of the workload and be quick to learn new skills and adapt to new methods.

Saturday 27 October

Pray that BRF staff would know God's love and care in their home lives. May each person find a way to balance work, rest and time with family and friends.

God loves a cheerful giver

Sunday 28 October

Pray for all who generously volunteer their time to support BRF programmes – especially that God would speak through all the volunteers serving at Messy Churches around the world today.

Monday 29 October

Pray for all Anna Chaplains in The Gift of Years network and those in equivalent roles. May they bring comfort and cheer to all they meet this week.

Tuesday 30 October

Pray for those who take God's love into hard places or to hurting souls: for protection, discernment, wisdom, patience and energy to face difficult situations and conversations.

Wednesday 31 October

Give thanks for those who volunteer for behind-the-scenes jobs, such as making tea, washing up, preparing and clearing rooms, giving lifts and doing administration or publicity.

Thursday 1 November

Ask God to bless those who help distribute BRF's Bible reading notes in churches.

Friday 2 November

Pray for the health and well-being of all volunteers. Especially hold before God any who may be ill, in need, or have serious concerns for their families and close friends.

Saturday 3 November

'Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain' (Psalm 127:1). Pray that volunteers would be able to discern wisely how they should invest their efforts, and that they might be richly rewarded.

For children and families

Sunday 4 November

Pray for those who serve in children and families ministry in churches. Pray for BRF's children and families ministry team as it seeks to provide resources for this work.

Monday 5 November

Pray for families as they begin a new week – many of whom will be getting back into busy routines after the half-term holiday.

Tuesday 6 November

Pray for BRF's role within the National Children's Ministry Network – an interdenominational group linked to Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

Wednesday 7 November

Pray for those families who face challenges in their family life due to financial concerns, particularly as the Christmas season approaches. Pray especially for single parents.

Thursday 8 November

Pray for BRF's work with denominational leaders and other national organisations as we seek to support each other in serving children and families across the UK.

Friday 9 November

Pray for those who play a significant part in the nurturing of children's lives – parents, carers, godparents, sponsors, friends, family and others.

Saturday 10 November

Pray for those churches who don't have many families with children in their congregation but would like to have more attending.

Pray, love, remember

Sunday 11 November

Commend those who have sacrificed their lives in bitter conflicts down the years to the love of God and their eternal rest in his kingdom.

Monday 12 November

Give thanks for the people and places we love most, and for memories of good times shared in warm, hospitable company.

Tuesday 13 November

Pray for the honesty to approach God just as we are, admitting when we have let down others as well as ourselves.

Wednesday 14 November

Pray that we may have the courage to admit when we are wrong and to grow in humility and kindness.

Thursday 15 November

Reflect on the people who have made us who we are – parents, teachers, friends and neighbours – and think of those we may be influencing in big, or small, ways.

Friday 16 November

When negative thoughts assail us, help us to recognise the things we can change, and lay to rest any obsessive thoughts that threaten to spoil an otherwise pleasant day.

Saturday 17 November

We remember those who are wrongly imprisoned, or tortured, for their religious or political views and all who suffer while serving long sentences.

God's Messy world

Sunday 18 November

Thank God for the Messy Churches registering in the USA this year following last year's first US conference. Pray for the Messy Church USA board members.

Monday 19 November

Thank God for the many Messy Churches using creative activities to help families engage with Messy Baptisms and walk closer to God.

Tuesday 20 November

Pray for Messy Church congregations to make more connections with their local communities and organisations.

Wednesday 21 November

Thank God for the opportunities and conversations that arise during the Messy Church meal-time. As people of all ages sit down and eat together, may they share friendship and their experiences of God.

Thursday 22 November

As we discover more and more Messy Churches in countries across the world, thank God for the opportunities to link up on social media and elsewhere as a worldwide family.

Friday 23 November

Pray for a warm welcome towards single people who approach Messy Churches to find Jesus. May they grow in faith and make new friendships within the Messy Church family.

Saturday 24 November

We pray for the impact of Messy Church training days on individuals and churches. Pray for the new freelance team to help our small Messy Church team deliver training across the UK.

For the world we're in

Sunday 25 November

Pray that through the obedience and inspiration of its management and staff, BRF would play a growing role in God's plans for his world.

Monday 26 November

Pray for the local community in Abingdon, Oxfordshire, of which BRF's head office is a part. May we respond faithfully to opportunities to witness to God's love.

Tuesday 27 November

Thank God for the global reach of BRF's programmes. May we partner with others overseas according to God's plans and perfect timing.

Wednesday 28 November

Pray that BRF's programmes and resources would speak God's word into today's political and social environments – inspiring and challenging people to act in accordance with his will.

Thursday 29 November

Pray that all in the BRF community would bear witness to God's truths in the way we conduct our lives.

Friday 30 November

Pray that BRF may be a responsible steward in matters of finance and the environment, especially in our procurement and operations.

Saturday 1 December

Pray that in a world of noise, our digital and printed communications would not be an additional burden, but rather a blessing to God's people and to his work.

Advent: the coming of God

Sunday 2 December

On this Advent Sunday, pray that Christian believers throughout the world experience the presence of the God who comes in Jesus Christ.

Monday 3 December

Pray that those reading David Kerrigan's BRF Advent book, *The Prince of Peace in a World of Wars*, might see Jesus more clearly as the one who brings peace.

Tuesday 4 December

Remember those who live alone, as they approach Christmas. May they have a firm assurance that Jesus is Immanuel, 'God with us' (Matthew 1:23).

Wednesday 5 December

May we be truly grateful for the love, generosity and humility of God, demonstrated in the coming birth of Jesus.

Thursday 6 December

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 Christmas period.

Friday 7 December

As Christmas approaches, pray for church leaders and preachers who will have extra services to prepare, that they might retain the beauty of Christmas in their own lives.

Saturday 8 December

Pray for the Barnabas in Schools team as the school term draws to a close – that they might be encouraged by feedback from children and teachers alike.

Christmas in schools

Sunday 9 December

Pray that in the busy season of Advent and Christmas in schools, there would be the opportunity to learn about and engage with this Christian celebration and all its richness.

Monday 10 December

Pray that in all the excitement, pupils will have the opportunity to reflect on the awe and wonder of this season.

Tuesday 11 December

Pray for those schools who run Nativity plays and for those who may be hearing the Christmas story for the first time.

Wednesday 12 December

Pray for those church leaders and local volunteers who will visit schools during this Advent season. Pray that positive ongoing relationships will develop.

Thursday 13 December

Give thanks for those volunteers who support, pray and serve in schools in any way and for those who have retired from working within education.

Friday 14 December

Pray that this weekend will be a chance to rest for anyone involved in the busy activities within schools.

Saturday 15 December

Pray for those who find this season difficult for any reason, whether through loneliness, bereavement, financial pressures or other challenges.

Christmas at home

Sunday 16 December

Pray for boldness in inviting friends and family who don't normally come to church to carol services and Christmas events.

Monday 17 December

Pray for ideas and opportunities to be generous to those in need over the Christmas period.

Tuesday 18 December

Pray for bereaved families who will be missing a family member this Christmas, for peace and for comfort.

Wednesday 19 December

Pray for families to find their own traditions that honour God and that help them to connect with him throughout the Christmas season.

Thursday 20 December

Pray for renewed energy and strength for parents who find the busy Christmas period stressful or draining.

Friday 21 December

Pray for great 'faith conversations' between different generations as extended families meet together.

Saturday 22 December

Pray that in each home there would be a renewed sense of awe and wonder that Jesus came to earth as a tiny, helpless baby.



The birth of the Christ child

Sunday 23 December

As this busy week begins, pray with the whole BRF family, for stillness and calm, joy and peace.

Monday 24 December

Pray we may all experience a sense of spiritual waiting and anticipation amid the materialism of the season.

Tuesday 25 December

Let's be grateful for the precious gift of Jesus and for God's forgiveness through him.

Wednesday 26 December

Be aware of the presence of God with each one of us today – a presence promised in Jesus, Immanuel, 'God with us' – and be thankful.

Thursday 27 December

'Glory to God in the highest heaven,' the angels sang at Jesus' birth. Praise the Lord, who deserves the glory.

Friday 28 December

When the wise men saw the star, they were overjoyed. From our own joy of seeing Jesus this Christmas let us all offer the gift of our lives to God afresh.

Saturday 29 December

At Jesus' birth God commands the angels to worship him. Today, let us worship the Saviour with our whole being.

Scripture quotations taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version (Anglicised edition) copyright © 1979, 1984, 2011 by Biblica. Used by permission of Hodder & Stoughton Publishers, a Hachette UK company. All rights reserved. 'NIV' is a registered trademark of Biblica. UK trademark number 1448790.



At the end of the year

Sunday 30 December

Thank God for those whose lives have been enriched, troubles have been eased, and faith has been invigorated by BRF's books, Bible reading notes, events and programmes in 2018.

Monday 31 December

Whatever we've faced this year, let us thank God for having been our loving Father, constant companion and guide – whether or not we've sensed it.

Tuesday 1 January

As a new year begins, pray we may all 'Go out into the darkness and put [our] hand into the hand of God', which is 'better than light and safer than a known way' (Minnie Louise Haskins).

Wednesday 2 January

Pray for those returning to work and school after the break – especially any for whom it's a daunting prospect, for whatever reason.

Thursday 3 January

Pray that the Barnabas in Schools team would have many opportunities this term to train teachers to deliver inspiring RE lessons in primary schools.

Friday 4 January

Pray that all BRF staff will have the grace to submit their lives to God, so that in the year ahead their wills may be aligned with his and their work fruitful.

Saturday 5 January

Thank God for the ways in which he will provide for BRF this year. Give thanks that he is working all things together for good, in ways that we can't yet imagine.

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 for evermore.

Amen



brf.org.uk



BRF, 15 The Chambers, Vineyard, Abingdon OX14 3FE
+44 (0)1865 319700 | enquiries@brf.org.uk
brf.org.uk

The Bible Reading Fellowship is a Registered Charity (233280)