



Prayer
Network

Prayer MATTERS

MAY 2025



Dear Prayer Matters readers

Welcome to the May edition of *Prayer Matters*.

We find ourselves in that exciting season between Easter and Pentecost. When we think about Jesus' followers in this time of transition, we so often remember their bewilderment and uncertainty as the one they had loved and devoted themselves to was leaving them for the last time. We also look ahead with anticipation to that remarkable day when the Holy Spirit was poured out in the Upper Room. In fact, the Gospels tell us that Jesus breathed the Spirit on them several times over those baffling weeks. The book of Acts tells us that they were together in prayer; presumably they were already beginning to sense the presence of God with them in different and powerful ways, even in the midst of their fear and unknowing. As we journey through the bewildering and sometimes frightening events of our own time, may we know the presence of God with us as never before, and may we turn frequently and joyfully to fervent prayer.

Throughout this month, our Sabbath Prayer reflections give us an opportunity to drop in on

those meetings which the disciples had with Jesus between his resurrection and Pentecost. We also have some prayers to mark Deaf Awareness Week and Mental Health Week. We will take time to pray for our Salvation Army periodicals and for our online content too. We pray for the South West Division and the North East Division, and our Friday Justice and Reconciliation prayers focus on the proposed legislation to legalise assisted dying.

And if you feel the need to get outside for some fresh air, then our Saturday Care for Creation prayers are just what you need, as we sample some of the excellent prayer material in the 'Get OWT – Get outside with Toddlers' resource, which can be found at www.salvationist.org.uk/resources/community-engagement/get-owt.

We thank you so much for your co-labouring in prayer with us, and pray that this month's *Prayer Matters* will be a blessing to you, as we continue to pray for the mission and ministry of The Salvation Army.

Blessings,

Lyndall Bywater
and the UKI Boiler Room Team

MAY



THURSDAY 1 MAY: INTERNATIONAL SALVATION **ARMY - Hong Kong and Macau Territory**

The Salvation Army has been working in Hong Kong for over 90 years and in Macau for over 25 years. The territory's vision is: transforming lives, caring for people and making disciples. The territory also encompasses work with people in need in two provinces of China. Pray that God will bring much blessing through their work and worship, particularly in these days of increased uncertainty on the global political scene. Pray for the leadership team, Colonels Phil and Deslea Maxwell and Major Tsui, Heung-Ying (Minnie).

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



FRIDAY 2 MAY: JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION **Upholding the Value of Life**

As Parliament debates the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill, we pray for God's wisdom and compassion to guide decision-making. 'Choose life, so that you and your children may live' (Deuteronomy 30:19). May leaders uphold the dignity of every person and prioritise quality care over ending life prematurely. We ask for strengthened resources for palliative care, greater support for the suffering, and for those in authority to act with wisdom in protecting the most vulnerable.

(Captain John Clifton, Territorial Justice and Reconciliation Officer)



SATURDAY 3 MAY: CARE FOR CREATION **Get OWT!**

Get OWT! (Outside With Toddlers) is a popular programme that uses nature to nurture young children, building relationships with them and their families by discovering the beauty of creation and God's love. There is a series of sessions called 'Love the Earth' which focus on The Salvation Army's mission priority to care for creation.

Father God, please help us to be open to your Spirit's leading as we seek how and where the Get OWT! material can be used to introduce families to the wonder of the world you have created. As we use these opportunities to come alongside families in our community, we pray that, as they explore nature, they will learn how much they are loved by you, and how each of us has a responsibility to care for your wonderful world.

(Rachel Gotobed, Outreach Mission Partner – Family Ministries)
www.salvationist.org.uk/resources/community-engagement/get-owt



SUNDAY 4 MAY: SABBATH PRAYER **Resurrection reflections - Breath of peace** **(John 20:19-28)**

Jesus comes to his frightened, confused, bewildered friends and his first words over them are: 'Peace be with you!' So important are those words that he keeps repeating them. So important is that all-surpassing peace that he literally breathes it over them. That peace is still available to you and me today, breathed over us by his Spirit.

Where do you long to see peace today? Are there people, places or situations over which you'd like Jesus to breathe his breath of peace? Do you yourself need to feel the touch of his hand and the blessing of his peace?

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



MONDAY 5 MAY: SHARING THE GOOD NEWS **Salvationist.org.uk and Salvationist social media**

We pray our content will help people grow in faith, deepen belonging and unity within our Movement and enable participation in mission. May our online interactions demonstrate the fruits of the Spirit, and create safe and accessible spaces where we listen to and support one another. For those who don't have faith, may search engines and algorithms draw them to our content and the transformational love of God.

(Bethany Gibson, Online Content Editor)



TUESDAY 6 MAY: SERVING AND CARING **Deaf Awareness Week**

Heavenly Father, you have created us in great diversity, and such is the wonder of it all that we can scarcely encompass it in our minds and hearts. However, you know us in such intimacy because we are your creation and we are your children through Jesus, your Son. We pray today for those whose hearing impairments impact their lives through isolation and communication challenges. We thank you for the gift of BSL (British Sign Language) – a creative language, for the gift of lipreading and for the gift of speech, which often gets taken for granted.

(Major Julian Rowley, Newcastle-under-Lyme Corps)



WEDNESDAY 7 MAY: GROWING IN FAITH **Deaf Awareness Week**

We thank you for giving people the ability to live full, fruitful lives despite the challenges of hearing impairments of varying severity. We ask for courage and resilience for those who are deafened during mid-life as a result of injury or industrial or percussive impact on their hearing abilities. We pray for their families, thanking you for the advocacy they offer, often struggling against bureaucratic processes, lack of resources and awareness, even against prejudicial attitudes within society. Help us, Lord, to embrace this diverse group, both those within the deaf community and those who are deaf yet live their lives outside the deaf community.

(Major Julian Rowley, Newcastle-under-Lyme Corps)



THURSDAY 8 MAY: INTERNATIONAL SALVATION **ARMY - Kenya East Territory**

We pray today for the work of The Salvation Army in Pakistan, asking God to renew and strengthen all those who are finding ways to shine the light of Christ. We pray that the Holy Spirit will give them insight to know how to communicate the gospel in ways that connect with those they meet. We pray too for the leadership team: Colonel Diana MacDonald, Colonel MacDonald Chandi, Lieut-Colonel Safdar Iqbal and Lieut-Colonel Asia Safdar.

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



FRIDAY 9 MAY: JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION **The Impact of Assisted Suicide on the Most Vulnerable**

There is growing concern that assisted suicide could pressure people who are elderly or disabled, or those who feel like a burden. 'Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves' (Proverbs 31:8). We pray that legal safeguards of life will be strong and that the voices of disabled advocacy groups will be heard. May society value every life, ensuring that the most vulnerable are protected and treated with dignity and care.

(Captain John Clifton, Territorial Justice and Reconciliation Officer)

You can read a pastoral letter on the topic of Assisted Suicide from the Territorial leaders here - <https://www.salvationist.org.uk/articles/assisted-suicide-leaders-letter>



SATURDAY 10 MAY: CARE FOR CREATION **Tree-mendous Trees!**

Thank you, God, for the wonderful world you have made,
and for tremendous trees!

For the chunky, rough bark of the strong tree trunk,
For the leaves that give shelter to birds and other animals,
For the flowery blossom that smells beautiful in spring,
For fruit like apples, pears and cherries.

Today, we celebrate the importance and beauty of tremendous trees!

Thank you, God, that you made our wonderful world.

Please help us to look after your world and each other.

(Rachel Gotobed, Outreach Mission Partner – Family Ministries)



SUNDAY 11 MAY: SABBATH PRAYER **Resurrection reflections – Bread of restoration** **(John 21:1-14)**

This story brings us the discouraged, disorientated, directionless disciples who aren't sure what they're supposed to do next, so they go back to the old, familiar ways of night-time fishing. But their story isn't over; it's about to begin. Jesus comes with fish and bread, to restore their faith and reignite their zeal and courage.

Have you 'gone fishing'? Are you avoiding something because it feels altogether too daunting or confusing? Are you unsure whether you've got what it takes to do the next thing? What do you need to ask Jesus for? What might he be giving you, to restore your strength and confidence?

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



MONDAY 12 MAY: SHARING THE GOOD NEWS **War Cry**

Thank you, Lord, for the lives that have been changed as a result of the ministry of the *War Cry*. We pray that even more people will come to know you through the pages of the magazine and the hundreds of people who are involved in its distribution every week. Bless the team who work to put the magazine together and continue to give them creativity and inspiration.

(Major Andrew Stone - Editor)



TUESDAY 13 MAY: SERVING AND CARING **Mental Health Awareness Week (12-18 May 2025)**

Dear Lord, I pray for all of us who are affected by mental health struggles. Please give us hope, and remind us that we are special, that you love us and that you are always there beside us. I pray that we will move forward in our recovery journey, and that you will help us to be there for others, to support and understand them in their recovery too.

(Major Lynden Gibbs, Core Recovery Development Officer)



WEDNESDAY 14 MAY: GROWING IN FAITH **North East Division**

Pray for the continued identification and release of local leadership across the division. We are seeing people come forward, expressing a wish to discern what God is saying to them. Pray for wisdom as these conversations continue. We have eight young people on the latest cohort of our Transformers programme. We thank God for them and pray that God will continue to speak to them powerfully through the programme teaching experience, and through the support of their mentors.

(Major David Burns, Divisional Commander)



THURSDAY 15 MAY: INTERNATIONAL SALVATION **ARMY - USA Southern Territory**

The USA Southern Territory covers Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. We give thanks for many years of faithful service, courageous witness and compassionate caring which The Salvation Army has offered across these states, and pray today that God will give fresh vision for communicating the good news of Jesus, especially to young people and children. We pray for the territorial leadership team, Commissioners Kelly and Donna Igleheart and Colonel Deborah Sedlar.

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



FRIDAY 16 MAY: JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION **Welfare Reform**

Planned welfare reforms could leave struggling people in greater hardship, especially people with disabilities or mental health challenges. 'Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless' (Isaiah 1:17). We pray for compassionate policy decisions that prioritise justice and dignity. May churches and communities rise to support those in need, advocating for fair provisions and offering practical help to those who are at risk of falling further into poverty.

(Captain John Clifton, Territorial Justice and Reconciliation Officer)



SATURDAY 17 MAY: CARE FOR CREATION **Super Space**

Thank you, God, for the wonderful world you have made, and for the sun, moon and stars.

Thank you for making the sun that gives our world warmth and light.

Thank you for making the moon to shine and the stars to twinkle in the night sky.

Thank you for making the planets that help form the universe, but especially for the planet where we live.

Thank you, God, that you made our wonderful world.

(Rachel Gotobed, Outreach Mission Partner – Family Ministries)



SUNDAY 18 MAY: SABBATH PRAYER **Resurrection reflections – Steps to revelation** **(Luke 24:13-34)**

In this story, two disciples are walking together and trying to make sense of it all, when Jesus joins them. The conversation ranges far and wide, from the events of the Passover they've just celebrated in Jerusalem to the ancient tales of their faith. It's just the nattering of three journeying companions, isn't it, and yet it seems to open their minds and rekindle their hearts.

Are you willing to allow Jesus to open your mind and rekindle your heart? What do you need to talk to him about as you walk through your day? What have you read or heard lately which caught your attention? Might it have been something Jesus wanted to show you?

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



MONDAY 19 MAY: SHARING THE GOOD NEWS **South West Division**

When it comes to corps leadership, great things are happening around the division, both in traditional and contemporary settings. But there is an increasing number of corps without officers / spiritual leadership, which puts them in a fragile position. We have various leadership opportunities (Growing Leaders, Young Growing Leaders, Spiritual Leader Apprenticeship, Gap Year and SW Youth Ministries programmes), and we do have some paid spiritual leaders and a local leaders' retreat weekend to equip and support them, but we need more.

(Major Gill Billard, Divisional Leader)



TUESDAY 20 MAY: SERVING AND CARING **Salvationist Magazine**

Lord, thank you for the talents you have given the *Salvationist* team to tell the story of your love in action through The Salvation Army and all who belong to it. Guide them as they listen to you and seek out the voices you are raising up. Equip them as they nurture disciples who will Step Up and Stand Out. Inspire them as they encourage, challenge and include everyone connected with the Army in living out our shared vision, mission and values.

(Ivan Radford, Managing Editor)



WEDNESDAY 21 MAY: GROWING IN FAITH **Salvationist Radio**

Thank you, Lord, for the team preparing shows and podcasts each week. Thank you for the musicians and recording engineers who enable Salvation Army and other Christian music to be broadcast 24/7. We pray for our listeners, from the five-year-old dancing to *Morning Praise with Kids Alive!* to the 95-year-old tuning in to *Sunday Worship* because they can't attend a corps. May our broadcasting bring hope and lead people to Jesus.

(Bethany Gibson, Online Content Editor)



THURSDAY 22 MAY: INTERNATIONAL SALVATION ARMY - Spain and Portugal Territory

We pray today for the work of The Salvation Army in Spain and Portugal, giving thanks for the many people who give their time and energy to preach the gospel, care for those in need and speak out for justice. We pray that the Holy Spirit will breathe fresh life into every part of the Army's worship and service in Portugal, Spain, the Balearic Islands and the Canary Islands.

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



FRIDAY 23 MAY: JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION Bridging Divides

Discussions on assisted suicide and welfare reform often fuel division and hostility. 'God ... reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation' (2 Corinthians 5:18). We pray for respectful dialogue, where people engage with wisdom and grace. May Christian leaders speak with clarity and compassion, may the Church remain united in seeking justice, and may politicians work together to find solutions that serve the common good.

(Captain John Clifton, Territorial Justice and Reconciliation Officer)



SATURDAY 24 MAY: CARE FOR CREATION Amazing Animals!

Thank you, God, for the wonderful world you have made and for all the amazing animals.

For dogs that bark and cats that purr. Thank you, God!

For mice that squeak and rabbits with twitchy noses. Thank you, God!

For lions and tigers that roar. Thank you, God!

For monkeys that chatter and crocodiles with snappy teeth. Thank you, God!

Thank you, God, that you made our wonderful world.

Please help us to look after your world and each other.

(Rachel Gotobed, Outreach Mission Partner – Family Ministries)



SUNDAY 25 MAY: SABBATH PRAYER

Resurrection reflections – A climb and a call (Matthew 28:16-20)

This story finds the disciples up a mountain – probably one of the places where they've been with Jesus during his ministry. Are they hopeful for a glorious encounter, maybe another Transfiguration? What they get is a commission. It's time to go – for Jesus and for them.

The Great Commission, as it's called, is for all of us to play our part in. But what are the specific things which Jesus has commissioned you for in this life? Is it a public commission which everyone can see, or is it something more 'unofficial': a knowing deep within yourself that Jesus has given you a particular job to do? If that's not you, then why not think about what 'making disciples' might mean in your life today. Don't get caught up on how others do it. What does it look like for you?

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



MONDAY 26 MAY: SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

North East Division

Please pray for wisdom to discern what God is saying to us through our Mission Focus Groups across the division. In some areas we are seeing real synergy and a determination to minister in a collaborative way. Pray for Majors Mark and Linda Billard, our Divisional Officers for Mission, for a continued revelation from God as they facilitate these groups. Pray also for wisdom for the team as we hear feedback from our advisory groups, both the Divisional Advisory Council and youth and children's groups. May we hear God speaking, and may we have the boldness to respond.

(Major David Burns, Divisional Commander)



TUESDAY 27 MAY: SERVING AND CARING

South West Division

More corps officers and spiritual leaders are feeling the pressures of their ever-changing roles. These pressures include being a pastor and delivering mission to their local communities, at the same time accepting more tasks such as increasing compliance, safe mission, HR, finance and admin, to the degree that it could be robbing them of their joy in ministry and is becoming overwhelming. Please pray for the ability to set healthy boundaries, a regular Sabbath, and to leave margins for a more joyful ministry.

(Major Gill Billard, Divisional Leader)



WEDNESDAY 28 MAY: GROWING IN FAITH *Kids Alive!*

We pray that *Kids Alive!* will continue to grow seeds of faith in all the children who read it, particularly those without a background of faith; that each article and Bible comment will provide opportunities for families to come together to talk about faith and living healthy lives; and that, in an ever-changing world, children will know how loved they are by God, and be encouraged to live their lives following the example that Jesus gave.

(Cara Mott, Editor)



THURSDAY 29 MAY: INTERNATIONAL SALVATION **ARMY - India Eastern Territory**

The territory comprises the eastern states of India, as well as the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal. We pray for the work happening with children, families, elderly people and those in desperate need of food and accommodation. We pray for a deep sense of God's presence in everything the Army does to build the Kingdom of God in India. We pray for wisdom and guidance for the territorial leadership team, Colonel Lahlmingliana Hmar, Colonel Lahlimpuii Chawngthu, Lieut-Colonel Prakash Chandra Pradhan and Lieut-Colonel Rani Phula Pradhan.

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



FRIDAY 30 MAY: JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION **Mobilising the Church for Justice**

Prayer must lead to action, calling us to stand for justice and mercy. 'What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God' (Micah 6:8). May Christians and churches be stirred to advocate for the vulnerable, offer practical support and speak truth in public life. May we reflect Christ's love by standing for justice and caring for those in need.

(Captain John Clifton, Territorial Justice and Reconciliation Officer)



SATURDAY 31 MAY: CARE FOR CREATION **Marvellous Me!**

Thank you, God, for the wonderful world you have made,
and for making me marvellous!

For my eyes to see and my ears to hear,

For my nose to smell and my mouth to taste,

For my body so that I can move about and play.

Thank you, God, for making me so special

and for loving me very much.

Thank you, God, that you made our wonderful world.

Please help us to look after your world and each other.

(Rachel Gotobed, Outreach Mission Partner – Family Ministries)

Find the Get OWT! Resources at www.salvationist.org.uk/resources/community-engagement/get-owt

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 **The Salvation Army, SA Prayer Network,
1 Champion Park, London, SE5 8FJ**

 **020 7369 4539**

 **salvationarmy.org.uk/prayer-network**

 **facebook.com/saukprayerpage**

 **saprayernetwork@salvationarmy.org.uk**

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