

Tuesday 1st- Pray for the members of the **Friendship Club** who would have enjoyed fun and fellowship at the **Christmas Lunch** this week in the Church hall. Ask God to be with the all those who attended the Christmas Lunch in previous years and pray that in 2021 we will once again be able to join together for Friendship Club meetings and outings.

Wednesday 2nd — Pray for **International Students** studying in NI, who may be struggling with anxiety and loneliness this year because of fewer opportunities to attend lectures and to socialize. Pray that local churches and fellow students would help with practical needs where possible and boldly share stories of Jesus.

Thursday 3rd It is estimated there are **one billion people living with disabilities worldwide**. Pray for people living with disabilities in developing countries as many face barriers to social inclusion. Ask God to enable people living with disabilities the chance to participate in public life to their full potential. Pray that God will stay close to those with physical and /or mental disabilities as he gives each one strength to face the day.

Friday 4th- Pray for all the **NHS staff in our hospitals and community facilities** as they battle each day with the consequences of the coronavirus pandemic. Ask God to be with staff members who have to upskill to new and challenging roles, move locations and / or wards to give help where it is needed most. Pray for the medical staff who have to make difficult decisions on prioritizing patient care as the pressures on the NHS continues to increase over the winter months.

Saturday 5th-As Christmas approaches, and this year especially, people are anxious about seeing their loved ones. Many are more concerned than normal. There will, however, be those who, no matter what happens, will have **to be apart this year either due to travel, work or health**. Please pray for those who will not be together this Christmas. Pray that they will know their loved ones are thinking of them even if they can't be together and that people are thinking and praying for them.

Sunday 6th – Take time to pray today that Christians all over the world would be a shining light over all the earth, to bring glory to the Lord. In **Matthew Ch5:14-15 it reads, "You are the light of the world.** A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they might see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Monday 7th – Pray for **Paul Somerville and his work with SASRA**, which is thankfully continuing despite being affected greatly by Covid-19. Give thanks for the work of Scripture Readers and for the soldiers who have come to faith through their ministry. Pray for the work in Aldergrove and Lisburn, where an outreach course has been delayed due to Covid restrictions. Remember also Army Chaplains as they serve God within the military.

Tuesday 8th – Please pray for all **migrants** who have made the courageous decision to overcome adversity and look for a better life by leaving their homeland. Pray for migrants who are fleeing war, torture, persecution and poverty. Pray for people who risk everything they have including their life and those of their families to become strangers in another land. Ask God that we open our eyes to the sacrifice these people have made to escape war torn countries throughout the world.

Wednesday 9th- Along with concerns over being able to **travel** to see loved ones there is always the fear of **bad weather conditions**. As we head into the winter and days become much colder there is always the danger of frost, ice or even heavy falls of snow. Please pray that people will take care on the roads and obey speed limits etc. Pray that drivers will focus on what they are doing, have consideration for others and will take time and care to reach their destination safely.

Thursday 10th – Please pray for the collection and distribution of **Christmas Shoeboxes** this year, especially due to the increased difficulties caused by Covid-19. Remember particularly Operation Christmas Child and Blytheswood Care. Pray that these shoeboxes will remain intact and reach the people for whom they are intended. Pray that those who receive them will be blessed and joyful and that through the shoeboxes they might learn of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Friday 11th- Give thanks for Laura Kelly, **PCI's Head of Personnel**, and her small staff team. Ask God to be with them in the many functions they carry out on behalf of the church regarding employment matters both within the departments in Assembly Buildings as well as our residential homes and units. Pray for wisdom as they give advice and facilitate in disciplinary procedures and hearings. Pray for resilience and stamina under heavy workloads and encouragement in work that can be very demanding at times.

Saturday 12th -The latest Covid-19 restrictions have had a major impact on **weddings and funerals** which are limited to 25 people. Remember those in our congregation who have planned to get married during this period. Ask that they will know God's presence with them in a special way and will enjoy their day despite the restrictions. Pray for God's help as they begin their married life and that he will bless them with his love and goodness in lots of different ways.

Sunday 13th- Find a quiet place and still your heart before the Lord. Pray that God would speak to you as you think about and **reflect on this verse**: Jesus declared, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." (**Matthew Ch 22v37**)

Monday 14th- **Young people who study or work away from home** look forward to returning to their families for the Christmas holidays. This year there will be uncertainty over their travel; some may not be able to go home and some may choose to stay away to protect relatives. Pray for the families and young people in our congregation who may be

affected. Pray for God's strength, wisdom and peace as they adapt to the situation, that wherever they are, they may know God's love and joy at Christmas.

Tuesday 15th – Give thanks for the **non-emergency patient transport services** provided by the NI Ambulance Service. Pray for those who rely on these services to get to routine appointments at hospitals and treatment centres throughout NI, many of whom are vulnerable and dependent on others for this kind of help. Pray that those who were involved in this kind of service before the pandemic (on a voluntary basis using their own cars) will be able to resume this service again very soon.

Wednesday 16th -Please pray for **the ministry provided by PCI to the deaf community** through the Kinghan Church on Botanic Avenue in Belfast. Like most ministries these days, it has moved more 'online' through its Facebook page with videos of signed songs, interviews and worship services from Windsor Presbyterian Church which has been developing links with Kinghan to support its work. Pray that deaf people will greatly benefit from this important ministry among them

Thursday 17th - Christmas is a time when **many people overspend** and for many that becomes an enormous problem. This year, more than ever, is going to be a very difficult year for many and the danger that many will spend more than they can afford. People will be struggling to provide the Christmas they are used to. Please pray that people will not end up spending what they can't afford. Pray that people will realise it is not the value of the gift which is important but the thought behind it.

Friday 18th- Pray today for **the men in our congregation**. Pray that God would direct them in all that they do. Pray that all the men of our church would turn to the Lord in prayer asking for wisdom and guidance in their decision making. May those men who are husbands love their wives, just as Christ loved the church and may all those men who are fathers bring their children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Pray that God would protect the men of our church and pray that they would stay close to the Lord each day.

Saturday 19th – Pray that each member of the congregation would do all they can **to help those people in need**, especially during this season of giving. Perhaps you could fill a shoe box and leave it in with a charity shop or leave some toys to a local children's home or hospital. You could leave food at a food bank or even volunteer to help out. Perhaps you could wrap up some gifts and leave them in to a nursing home where they could be distributed to residents who may not receive any gifts. Take time to meditate on this verse: "Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward them for what they have done."(Proverbs 19:17)

Sunday 20th – Help us to spend some time every day leading up to Christmas, thinking about the **significance of the birth of Jesus**. Pray that this special time of year would be more real to us than ever before. Pray that we would talk about God and His Son, Jesus, in our

homes with the people around us, read the bible, pray, sing Christmas carols, light a candle, worship the Lord, read daily devotionals and be creative in our walk with Him.

Monday 21st - This year, more than ever, there will be many families struggling to cope. Thousands of people will turn to the **Salvation Army** for help this winter who want to be there for all the people who are facing poverty because they have lost their jobs and livelihoods, or for those struggling to feed their children, for the elderly who never felt as lonely as they do now and also for the homeless. Please pray for the work of the Salvation Army and that people will donate on line to their Christmas Appeal.

Tuesday 22nd - Give thanks for Rev David Allen who took up the position of **PCI's Deputy Clerk of the Assembly** at the beginning of November. Ask God to help him settle into his new role, getting up to speed quickly with all that's involved. Pray for Revs Jim Stothers and Robert Bell who have taken on the roles of Acting Secretary to the Council for Mission in Ireland and responsibility for all aspects of PCI's chaplaincy work, respectively, in place of our current Moderator, Rev David Bruce.

Wednesday 23rd - Today we want to think of the 3000+ children and young people who are currently reliant on **foster care** in Northern Ireland. Give thanks for those who are willing to provide a stable home with patience and understanding for these children. Pray that the children will find the help they need to be able to thrive, realise their potential and find fulfilment. Pray that more people will open their homes to bring hope, love and family to a child in the care system today.

Thursday 24th - As we look forward to Christmas in these very unusual times let us not forget **the real reason we celebrate Christmas**. When people are concerned about how they can afford gifts or are worrying how to obtain them while afraid to go shopping let us not forget the most important gift of all, the gift of Jesus coming to earth. Pray that people will remember that Christmas is about celebrating the birth of Christ. Pray that they will remember that Jesus is the reason for the Season.

Friday 25th - It's **Christmas Day!** Thank our Father in Heaven for sending us His precious Son and for all the friends and family we have in our lives. We may not have been able to celebrate special birthdays and events with them over the past number of months but give thanks that we can spend some time with them over this festive period. Remember especially those who may be on their own but under God's church we are all one family. Let's celebrate our Saviour's birth together!

Saturday 26th - Remember **those who have to work over the Christmas period**. Pray that God will give them joy in their work, a sense of service and strength to keep on going through these difficult times.

Pray for hospital staff, care workers and all key workers who have had to go above and beyond this year for all of us. Pray that God will remind them of His love and allow them to know His peace.

Sunday 27th - Thank the Lord **for the gift of prayer** - although there are so many things that have been subject to restrictions - prayer is not. Bless our prayer times either as a formal group in Church, or as individuals or families and help us to talk to the Father continually. As we have had to do throughout this pandemic, help us to focus on the positives and to leave the negatives at the foot of the cross. Give thanks for all the opportunities we have to pray and that more people will be encouraged to avail of the various scripture/ reflection materials online.

Monday 28th - In the UK there was a 20% increase in babies being killed or harmed during the last lockdown. Pray for families who are experiencing social isolation, poverty, mental illness or substance abuse and where **children are at risk of neglect**. Pray that social workers and those in **safeguarding roles** are able to identify high risk babies and toddlers and are not hampered by coronavirus restrictions in getting help and support to these vulnerable children.

Tuesday 29th - In the past two decades there has been an acceleration in the starting of **Bible translation projects**. Ask God to inspire, equip and encourage missions, such as Wycliffe Bible Translators, to push forward with this vital work. Give thanks for modern technology, which helps their work to progress faster. Pray with boldness, that within the next two decades, all of the world's 7353 languages will have at least parts of the Bible and that these will be used for "teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness." (2 Tim 3v16)

Wednesday 30th - Many **have lost jobs and many more are concerned about theirs or the possibility of losing them**. There are many who are living with great uncertainty about the future and how to support their families. Pray for the Government as they work to maintain jobs for people through the furlough scheme and other incentives. Pray especially for young people who are having great difficulty in finding their first job and whose future is very uncertain.

Thursday 31st - At the end of 2020, a year of disruption and change, we look forward with uncertainty into 2021, and yet still we have hope, as we remember and give thanks that "**Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever**". (Heb 13v8). Give thanks to God for the positive things that we have encountered over the year, new births, renewed friendships, learning to adapt to new ways of living and recognizing the importance of being content in our own surroundings.



Prayer Diary December 2020

This diary is designed to help you to pray for the life of our congregation. We would encourage you to take it and use it on a daily basis, asking God for His hand in all that we are and do.

Scripture Reflection Luke Ch 2 v 11

Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.