

January 2022 Prayer News

PRAYER TOPICS FOR THE MONTH

This month pray that you will obey Christ's
 Great Commission in [Matthew 28:18-20](#)

Week start	Prayer topic
2 Jan	Pray about your congregational mission and about your personal missional strategy to tell people the good news about Jesus Christ
9 Jan	Ask God to lay on your heart the people whom he is wanting you to pray for and to prepare you to show them Jesus Christ and what he brings in the way he wants you to take.
16 Jan	The apostle Peter says in 1 Peter 3:15 "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have": pray that you will be always be ready.
23 Jan	Ask the Lord to "grab your heart" for his work. Pray for his help and strength to do whatever it is he wants you to do.
30 Jan	The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.

Contact
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 with your prayer news for next month

Into the Future

Church mission is not a version of *I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here*. There are no trips to take, no cross-cultural moments to experience, no crickets or grubs to eat, no spiders in your hair, no souvenirs to bring home.

This year of 2022 is the year when within the Church of Scotland every planned congregation is to be missional. We cannot hold off any longer. It is our solemn duty to reach out with the good news of Jesus Christ to our contemporaries in the revised parishes. If we do not, then humanly speaking, we will die out and cease to be.

There is no silver bullet to do this or to strike the heart of God's people with his urgent task. We need to dig deep into what mobilises God's people to mission in the first place and we must ask some hard questions to do so.

Asking Hard Questions

A trip to some steamy jungle and engaging with some primitive tribe is not the important factor here. Rather it is to ask how can we reach with the message that we have and they do not—the people next door to us, are in our street, and those with whom we work.

Where do we begin? How do we learn more about our city, our town, or our community and its people—about the people where we live?

We don't have to look far. They are people just like us. If you prick them they bleed the same red blood. The pains you feel, they feel. The delights you know, they know. They have expectations similar to yours. You already relate to them. There are finer details that you need to be aware of, but you already have a head start. But you have more. Have you not found in Christ reconciliation, forgiveness, acceptance, peace and an inexpressible joy—just the very same thing that they seek?

Of course we shall want to pray for the people around us. We should also pray that the Lord will "lay them on our heart", and that we have a "burning" concern and care for them. You see, our prayers should be more about us than them! People must be more than just statistics, or "pew fodder", and notches on the church door. Behind every name is a person in need—in need of rescue, and in their hearts they are crying out for help. We are to be passionate about them as flesh and blood people. We are

to want them to find what we have found in having Christ in our own hearts.

We have previously seen how passionate the apostle Paul was to tell the learned professors and philosophers in Athens about the Saviour who had rescued him ([Acts 17:16-34](#)). He wanted them to know the Lord Jesus as well.

What we are called to in mission is not really rocket science—or are we so locked into to how difficult this is going to be that we cannot see the opportunities we have close to home? The vast majority of what you need to learn and understand about the people around you is already there and you can get going with mission right away. There is no need to be defeatist—it is not as difficult as you might think.

Great Commission Work for Everyone

Of course, we still need to go to people. We have to get amongst people but God is ready to "grab your heart" for his work. He will be your helper and strength.

Be aware, though, that sometimes our going is limited or not possible. We are committed but there are real barriers that are not related to sin, fear, or disobedience. Sometimes we're limited, perhaps for a season, or sometimes for life. Yet be assured that God has valuable work for all his people. It may not be possible to engage directly in mission but there will always be cross-carrying sacrifice.

The bottleneck is not with God, government, or restrictions. The problem might be our fail-

ing to think outside the box. This should lead us back to the Bible where we find at least four other means God has given the church to mobilise us.

So, don't throw up your hands and quit. You might just discover that the most strategic new mission ministry for you is right under your nose; as it has been the whole time.

Four Ways to Support Mission

Pray

Paul needed to travel to many places for an initial visit to get to know how to pray, give, or minister, but that's not true for us. We can pray for the people around us straightaway.

Prayer is powerful. In Luke 10:2, Jesus commands us to pray: "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest." Even when we can't go out, we can pray!

Give

Those who go out need resources. Your sacrificial giving is crucial to seeing the harvesters getting resources for people to be reached. If people are giving their time and energy to reaching people then we can take ownership of getting them there. Even when we can't go ourselves, we can give sacrificially to support.

Welcome All

God is bringing us the most strategic individuals of the world, like the Ethiopian eunuch in [Acts 8:26–40](#), within reaching dis-

tance of our churches. There is great diversity. We can find Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists—to name but a few—all around us.

Such opportunities represent a strategic crossroads. There are also students around, many of whom will return to their home elsewhere. Their time with you may be their only opportunity to hear the good news of Jesus. What if, like the Ethiopian eunuch, these students returned as Christians primed to spread the gospel in their home communities? Even when we can't go elsewhere, we can reach even the nations living among us.

Mobilise

The church always needs to have a prophetic voice to call us back to God's global mission. A mobiliser is someone who has a passion for the world and a passion to pass the gospel on. Mobilisation is coming alongside the work of God in someone's life to transform their heart toward the things of God.

If we want to finish the Great Commission and see Jesus worshipped all around us, then mobilisation must happen. None of this requires travel. We have enormous opportunity to plant seeds for a new harvest of global workers. Even if we can't go, we can mobilise the church here and now.

May we be encouraged, regardless of our circumstance, to step into God's great mission in this world, beginning in this New Year. Reach out to those in need around you in the name of Christ.