



# PRAYERLINES

JANUARY 2007



| *sharing Jesus, changing lives*



'Golgotha', Gebre Kristos Desta, Ethiopia

# PRAYERLINES



**Your mercies are new every morning...  
Lamentations 3:23**

One of God's best gifts is a fresh day and with it the chance of a fresh start. The coming of a new year evokes the same feeling.

This is an important year for CMS. We are part of public celebrations for the bicentenary of William Wilberforce's Bill abolishing the slave trade in the British Empire.

Wilberforce was invited to be the first CMS President. He declined because of work pressure but became a vice president. Most of the CMS co-founders were associated with Wilberforce's struggle and 2007 is an invitation to re-discover the vision and values of our founders and ask ourselves how they are to be lived out and prayed out today.

Thank you for your prayers.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Martin". The script is fluid and cursive.

John Martin  
CMS Head of Communication  
Email [john.martin@cms-uk.org](mailto:john.martin@cms-uk.org) or ring 020 7803 3311.

# WEEK 1

30 DECEMBER – 5 JANUARY

## WEEKEND FOCUS

### A NEW EXODUS

**Saturday: Read Isaiah 52:11–12**

Israel's flight from Egypt was in great haste and at great risk. In contrast, says the prophet, its exodus from Babylon will be planned, unhurried and risk free because it signals how the victory of God is complete. God's people are thus summoned to wake up, purify themselves and go. Getting the preparation right is vital in mission. Here's a cue to hold in your prayers people preparing for mission service and those who work with them.

### HUMILIATION AND EXULTATION

**Sunday: Read Isaiah 52:13–15**

Here's the servant again and two themes emerge: his *humiliation* and *exultation*. We meet a figure *marred* (verse 14) and *awesome* (verse 15). Traditionally Jewish teachers believed this passage speaks of Israel as God's servant. Christians have found in it a poetic entry point for meditation on Jesus and his sufferings. Here we have the power of God at work in human weakness and this takes us to the heart of how mission works.

**M**

Having recently completed her Master's in Theology, Emma Johnson has just begun her CMS short-term placement in Zambia, teaching theology at St John's Anglican Seminary in Kitwe. Pray for honest, open relationships with students and colleagues.

**T**

Gill Whiting (former exchange co-ordinator with the Interchange Team) plans to begin an 18-month placement with Tabora Diocese in Tanzania this month. Pray for her as she begins working with the office of Bishop Sadock Makaya.

**W**

Please also remember to pray for Bishop Makaya and the responsibilities he carries, that he would look to God for the wisdom, strength, clarity and vision for the work he has been called to do in this very poor, rural region in western Tanzania.

**T**

Robbie Langford, mission partner in Sudan, asks us to pray that peace will become a reality in the south and the east, and in Darfur, and for churches working to reconstruct the south; for their protection and blessing; and that they will work in unity.

**F**

Ann Moore at Kisiizi hospital gives thanks for Twebaze, a porter who has become a Christian. One day Twebaze returned home, drunk, and found his child had been admitted to hospital very sick. He realised then that he needed Jesus.



Robbie Langford, CMS mission partner working with the Church of Sudan's education programme

# WEEK 2

6 – 12 JANUARY

## WEEKEND FOCUS

### ENDING THE CYCLE OF DEATH

**Saturday: Read Isaiah 53:1–12**

There are lots of unsolved mysteries in this poetic account of the servant from birth to his horrible end. We're not told how human sicknesses or sorrows are transferred to the servant or how his suffering brings healing. But it works and continues to work.

The servant – a nobody in human terms, even without a name in this series of songs – breaks the cycle of death. Read, re-read and wonder.

### A BELOVED WIFE

**Sunday: Read Isaiah 54:1–7**

Our theme here is a new start and new hope. From Sarah to Hannah to Elizabeth there is a thread of Bible stories of barren women blessed with children. These become a metaphor for the love of God for his chosen ones and the gift of children is a mandate to be a blessing to the whole world. God has renewed relations with his unfaithful wife, but with this comes responsibilities. We are redeemed to be people in mission.

**M**

The Core Training Programme for volunteers, mission partners in training and new staff runs from 8–19 January. Various CMS staff and supporters will lead seminars, so the training will provide the opportunity to experience CMS ethos and values.

**T**

Alex Gough (Personnel Programmes Adviser) and Carol Walker (Learning Manager) enjoy the opportunity to run some of the interactive sessions as well as co-ordinate the training programme. Pray for energy, and for enabling in their responsibilities.

**W**

During the first week visits will be made to a mosque and a Hindu temple, as well as places of Christian worship. Pray that these experiences, and reflection on them, will be a good foundation for future relationships with people of other faiths.

**T**

The Harrogate CMS Action Group is a CMS association of members that have reframed themselves to bring “the blessings of God’s global” to their own contexts. Tomorrow, Ian Smith (CMS North Team Leader) will address their annual dinner.

**F**

On 14 January CMS’s Paul Thaxter and Gill Poole lead part of a course to prepare a group of ‘world mission facilitators’ for Oxford Diocese, looking at attitudes, practices, skills and resources for nurturing passion for, and commitment to the world’s healing.



Carol Walker, CMS Learning Manager, oversees training programmes

# WEEK 3

13 – 19 JANUARY

## WEEKEND FOCUS

### A COVENANT OF PEACE

**Saturday: Read Isaiah 54:9–13**

In Babylon, Israel not only rediscovered the ancient stories of their own community: they had to deal with rival Babylonian stories. Babylon had its own flood stories and this passage shapes the story of Noah's flood as a Gospel story and a testament to the faithfulness of God. This is our story too.

### GOD'S VINDICATION

**Sunday: Read Isaiah 54:14–17**

Make a list of the promises God makes to Israel here. How would you put these words into language to express God's care for his people today? How does it work? What is our part in care for persecuted people?

**M**

Another date coming up for Paul Thaxter is with the North Wales Methodist Association on 21 January. He will lead a day's workshop on 'cultural exegesis' – helping them to explore and understand the cultural environment in which we do mission in the UK today.

**T**

Pray for the new project in Somalia (see **MISSIONUPDATE**), that our partners in the region will be granted safety and that their efforts to transform child soldiers will be blessed. Pray also that the effects of this work will extend to the wider community.

**W**

Join with us as we pray that many people will be inspired to participate in the CMS Mount Kenya climb in September. Pray that through this effort, African leaders will get the resources they need to become powerful forces for change in their communities.

**T**

From Wednesday to Friday this week, returned mission partners, with their children, will be joining with the CMS core training programme, to share their experiences, and to have a time of refreshment. Pray that this will be an enriching time for all.

**F**

To close the training programme a commissioning and communion service is held. This will be led by CMS General Secretary Tim Dakin, and has the potential to be a very significant time for those whose walk of faith is taking them into new areas.

# WEEK 4

20 – 26 JANUARY

## WEEKEND FOCUS

### GOD'S VALUES

**Saturday: Read Isaiah 55:1–5**

Here is a passage that invites us to question the values of the people around us and to live according to a different set of principles. Re-read verse 2. What message is on offer here for witness in a consumerist society?

### GOD'S WAYS

**Sunday: Read Isaiah 55:6–9**

These words are very familiar as a call to worship. But to appreciate them fully we need to see them in their original context. The invitation is to grasp fully what God offers to his people, to totally re-orient the will to fit in with God's will. But that's a challenge. To think as God thinks means hard work, a lifetime's discipleship.

**M**

On 10 December young people throughout South Asia celebrated 'South Asia Solidarity Sunday' with calls and commitments for peace. Praise God that such an event could take place and pray that as a result, greater togetherness will be fostered.

**T**

Teacher training programmes in Sindh, Pakistan, and elsewhere have a Christmas dimension and so the story is told to many non-believers. Praise God for Jane Jerrard (mission partner in Sindh) and all those who were able to share the Gospel in this way.

**W**

At Quetta Christian Hospital, Pakistan, the student nurses are Christians but with little knowledge of their faith. Their enthusiasm for Christmas dramas enabled mission partners Joan and Nigel Bull to help them come towards a personal commitment.

**T**

Michael and Sarah Puttick and family started their short-term placement in Tansen hospital, Nepal, in November. They ask for prayer that their children, Alex, Mari and Caragh, would not only adjust but also understand a little bit why they are there.

**F**

Remember Simon Na (Regional Co-ordinator) and our small staff team in Seoul, who are working on a training course that focuses on equipping workers for eventual assignments in Japan. Please pray that they would have all the resources they need.



Nigel and Joan Bull, based at Quetta Christian Hospital, Pakistan

# WEEK 5

**27 JANUARY – 2 FEBRUARY**

## WEEKEND FOCUS

### GOD'S PROMISES

**Saturday: Read Isaiah 55:10–13**

There is nothing provisional about the promises of God. Nothing humans do will nullify these promises. God is working his purposes out and once given his word will not return empty. Better to rely on God than resort to human ways or wisdom. Divide a sheet of paper into two columns. On one side list some examples of God's ways. On the other make a list of the contrasting human ways.

**Sunday: Read Isaiah 56:1–12**

One of the great themes of the Bible is the call to wait. God has so often signposted his intentions but the follow-up action often seems a long time coming. God not only equips his people for action, he equips them to stay put while his purposes are fulfilled and there are instructions on how to live pending God's next move. Try to compose a prayer asking God to help you wait for something you are hoping for.

**M**

CMS Asia Director Chye Ann Soh asks for prayer for the Rt Rev Paul Kwong as he takes up his place as the new Bishop of the Diocese of Hong Kong Island. Pray that God would grant him wisdom and vision for the years to come.

**T**

Pray for mission partner Katie Hart who has just completed a three-year secondment to Medical Services International, based in the southern Chinese province of Yunan. Pray for discernment as to her future assignment in China.

**W**

Continue to pray for the situation in North Korea, particularly for unhindered access to key contacts among Christians, and for the interaction that continues in pursuit of the peaceful reunification of the Korean peninsula.

**T**

The Guizhou Bible School in China continues to grow. Caroline Fielder (Churches Together China Forum) and Chye Ann Soh have recently visited to lend support to students and staff as they prepare for a leadership change of the Guizhou provincial council.

**F**

The Archbishop of Canterbury's visit to China, with visible CMS presence and participation, brings new possibilities for the sustainable development of relationships with the Church in China. Pray for insight as to what programmes should be implemented.



Canon Chye Ann Soh, CMS Asia Director

# A PRAYER EXERCISE

## PRAYING OUR ANGER

Tell God what you are angry about, for example in

- the world
- national life
- your community
- church life
- individual life

Write it down on a sheet of paper. Crumple up the paper and throw it. Then pray, “God, I entrust this to you.”

*O Lord my God,  
my one hope,  
hear me,  
that weariness may not lessen my will to  
seek you,  
that I may seek your face ever more with  
eager heart.*

St Augustine of Hippo

# PRAYER FOCUS

## CMS IS MOVING TO OXFORD

**The latest prayer requests about the move of the UK offices to Oxford in 2007.**

We have been blessed with safety and good progress in the building works. Please pray that this would continue.

There are many details to figure out regarding how to manage all the logistics of the move of the office operations from London to Oxford. Please pray for wisdom for those who are making decisions as to how this will all be handled.

As we enter the new year, recruitment for new staff for the Oxford office will begin in earnest. Please pray that we will find enthusiastic, mission-minded, talented people for the positions that need to be filled.

For all of these things, as the moving date draws closer, we pray for a spirit of calm anticipation as we look forward to what God will do in and through CMS.

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**I have  
come  
that they  
may  
have  
life**