



PRAYERLINES

JUNE 2006



| www.cms-uk.org



'The Golden Bowl', Mafa people, Cameroon

PRAYERLINES



**“To pray is to work, to work is to pray.”
Ancient motto of the Benedictine
Order**

Just about every Christian I know agrees there's a gulf between their world of work and their world of worship. Frankly, most of the ways we've learnt to pray simply don't fit the workplace as we experience it.

It may surprise you to know that that even with 'Christian' work – including working for CMS – the problem doesn't automatically disappear.

Prayer is a bit like gardening. There are few shortcuts to having a wonderful garden. It takes skills, tools and persistence. By encouraging you to pray with the Bible, **PRAYERLINES** hopes to foster fresh skills in prayer. We promised we'd include other prayer helps. Consider using the simple exercise we've included on page 9. You could even try it at the kitchen sink or under the tap in the office washroom.

Thanks for so many encouraging letters and emails.

John Martin

John Martin
CMS Head of Communication
Email john.martin@cms-uk.org or ring 020 7803 3311.

WEEK 1

7 – 13 MAY

WEEKEND FOCUS

HEAVENLY WISDOM

Read Ephesians 3:14–19

Here is one of the great prayers of the Bible. It can, of course, be used as a prayer for ourselves: for inner strength, the empowering of the Holy Spirit, for a greater measure of love, a deepened appreciation of God's infinite love, to be filled with nothing less than the fullness of God. We could take each phrase and claim it for ourselves.

This is foremost a prayer for the entire body of believers: in the first instance it was for Christians in the city of Ephesus, but it's been applied to the life of the Church in every generation ever since. So why not see how you can use it this week?

Seven Prayer Needs of People in Cross Cultural Mission

1. *Victory over mental stagnation.*
2. *Freshness in prayer and Bible study.*
3. *Opportunities to present the Gospel.*
4. *Deliverance from temptation to be proud.*
5. *Wisdom in relationships, especially with close colleagues.*
6. *Strength to overcome temptations brought on by loneliness.*
7. *A redeeming sense of humour.*

Adapted from WorldTeam's brochure, "Praying for missionaries."

M **blah...** a series of conversations hosted by CMS on mission, worship, church and Christianity in today's changing culture (www.blahonline.net), continues on 17 June with a Learning Day on Christian Formation at St Matthew's Westminster, with John Drane and others.

T Today Ian Smith (CMS North Team Leader) is speaking at Full Sutton maximum security prison near York. The isolated prisoners relish hearing what God is doing in other parts of the world, says Ian, and knowing that they are still part of a bigger picture.

W Siân Hawkins is a mission partner with A Rocha, a Christian conservation group, as manager of their Living Waterways programme, which is creating a greener, cleaner Southall and Hayes in culturally and religiously diverse West London.

T Patrick and Helen Mukholi are mission partners in Oxford, where among other things, they are concentrating on expanding their Youth First work – "surfing the wave of life" together with young people. They are grateful for new volunteers.

F The new CMS Church Relations Team is actively looking for new ways to serve churches with whom we have a relationship, and is also seeking to forge new relationships with churches who have a heart for global and local mission.



WEEK 2

14 – 20 MAY

WEEKEND FOCUS

HEAVENLY POWER

Read Ephesians 3:20–21

The prayer we focused on last week, ends here with an outburst of praise: literally a doxology. Has the writer asked too much? Is it realistic to believe mortals can share all God's riches and be filled with his fullness? The answer is a resounding 'yes', and praise is the obvious response.

God can do infinitely more than you or I can even imagine. The stories of mission bear this out. But there's no reason to believe that the God of history only acted in the past. God is still at work and he constantly outstrips even our boldest prayers, and this is true for now and will be for ever and ever.

No surprise, then, this doxology ends with an Amen. It's an Amen that the whole of creation joins in.

"Lord, make me see your glory in every place."
Michelangelo (1475–1564)

M Sister Elizabeth, abbess of the Martha and Mary Sisterhood in Russia, had to step down from her leadership role. The community of nuns and orphan girls they care for has been dispersed and is praying for wisdom and the Lord's leading for the future.

T Father Evmeny, pioneer of Orthodox Alpha in Russia, had to resign as the leader of his monastery. Fr Evmeny has helped dozens find God through the Alpha course and is working with Archbishop Ioann on opening the first-ever Orthodox Alpha office.

W New mission partner Jane Shaw (health care management expert and priest) has arrived in Pakistan but still needs approval for a long-term visa, grace in settling in and opportunities wherever she goes to show the love of Christ by word and deed.

T The construction of a new dedicated mental health facility in western Afghanistan has been completed. It already has more than 2,500 outpatients and will also provide training for medical personnel from other, more poorly resourced provinces.

F Mission partner Michael Green works as a learning disabilities nurse in Jordan. The community-based rehabilitation team he works with is continuing to develop, seeking to help people with disabilities develop the skills they need in everyday life.

A PRAYER EXERCISE

PRAY WITH WATER

God is like water...

God is soothing and comforting like a cool refreshing drink, or warm bath water on a cold day...

God is powerful and disturbing like a tidal wave, a rushing river or waterfall...

God cleanses and refreshes us...

Slowly dip your hands in a bowl of water or under a tap...
try to open yourself to God's presence...

Offer a prayer that God will ...
comfort you...
challenge you...
cleanses you...
refresh you...

Consider applying this exercise as you pray for people and places you meet this month in **PRAYERLINES**.

Mennonite Church (adapted)

WEEK 3

21 – 27 MAY

WEEKEND FOCUS

GOD'S NEW COMMUNITY

Read Ephesians 4:1–3

There is nothing like a tale of a prisoner of conscience to alert the public to a cause. Think of the impact of the jailing of John Bunyan, Nelson Mandela or the house arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi. When Paul appealed to Caesar he may have calculated that his incarceration might have a similar effect.

The guards to whom Paul was chained became, literally, a captive audience. But the unfairness of the situation must have resonated with fair-minded people and triggered curiosity about this new faith.

Being a prisoner provides the writer with iron-clad credentials to exhort people to endure suffering and to live lives worthy of their calling as Christian disciples.

Just about everywhere CMS works there are Christians who suffer for their faith. Pray that they will exhibit all the characteristics listed in verses 2–3.

“Eternal God, the refuge of all your children, in our weakness you are our strength, in our darkness our light, in our sorrow our comfort and peace.” St Boniface (675–754)

M

The family of Bishop William Waqo (Provincial Secretary, Anglican Church of Kenya) and people of northern Kenya mourn his death in a plane crash, with 15 Kenyan government officials, who were travelling to the north for a peacemaking mission.

T

Since 1978 John Padwick, mission partner in Nairobi, Kenya, has worked with African Independent Churches. John is passionate about encouraging their leaders to work together to articulate their visions for the future of Africa.

W

Dr Ruth Huelser, GP and mission partner in Tabora, Tanzania, is grateful for doors opening to work with the Sisters of Mother Theresa orphanage, home to 50 children mostly under three-years-old and about 70 older children and adults with disabilities.

T

Dental health advisors Chris and Polly Barton are mission partners with the Diocese of Kigezi in Uganda. From Rugarama Health Centre, they train, support and advise health personnel and work with communities and schools to improve dental health.

F

Mission partner Rodger Petch at St Francis of Assisi College in Wusasa, Nigeria invites people to pray for leadership changes there and security for the campus after recent attacks in the area. May the staff and students be a witness among the tensions.



Dr Ruth Huelsner, mission partner in Tanzania

WEEK 4

28 MAY – 3 JUNE

WEEKEND FOCUS

THE UNITY OF CHRIST'S BODY

Read Ephesians 4:4–7

Here are seven unique characteristics that form the basis of the Christian hope: one body, one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and most importantly for people living in the pagan atmosphere of the Mediterranean basin, one God – not many. One important conclusion we can draw here is that unity among Christians is a non-negotiable.

Again it's a great prayer agenda for the people and places we meet in **PRAYERLINES** this week and for the entire body of Christ world wide. For example, that CMS people in mission will in their life and work witness to the one-ness of the body of Christ even where there is great diversity of customs and cultures. That CMS and all our partners will experience unity in the faith they share.

We must alter our lives in order to alter our hearts, for it is impossible to live one way and pray another.

William Law, 1686–1761

PRAYER FOCUS

CMS IS MOVING TO OXFORD

M A new CMS office in Seoul, Korea is now open for business – the culmination of more than two years' work and our partnership with the Anglican Church in Korea. We are excited by the opportunities and fresh mission challenges in North East Asia.

T The Rev Simon Na has been appointed to oversee the work of this new base. He asks for wisdom and strength for him and his colleague, Chris(tine) Kim, who are busy developing new systems and communication structures.

W Ina and Paul Watson, along with their daughters, Abi and Hannah, serve in Kandy, Sri Lanka, where among several other things, they are working to raise awareness of the need for care for the elderly and continue in post-tsunami work.

T In the Philippines mission partners Lee and Sally Proudlove praise God for carrying them and Ethan and Lily through their first year. Lee is a pastor in the local church and Sally is helping co-ordinate a united Christian response to child trafficking in the area.

F Catherine Lee, mission partner who teaches in Taiwan is back to work full-time after recovering from an operation. Her church organised a rota of visitors in hospital that involved 153 people! She is now thinking through new work possibilities in Taiwan.

This is a critical year for CMS as we plan the move of the UK offices from Partnership House in London to our new base in south-east Oxford in 2007. We value your prayers immensely and will keep you updated in PRAYERLINES.

We are grateful that the initial building works on Thames Court have been completed on time and safely. Please keep praying that we will continue to partner with the right companies so that further development will run smoothly.

Please remain in prayer concerning those staff members of CMS who are deciding whether to continue working with us in light of the relocation. As the time of the move draws closer, pray for wisdom for them as well as their families.

Strategic decisions about the move will be made at the July trustees' meeting. Please begin praying for those involved. Also, we continue to ask God's blessing as we reflect further on creating a mission-hearted community in the Iffley Road houses.

PRAYERLINES is produced by the Church Mission Society, Partnership House, 157 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UU
Tel 020 7928 8681 Email info@cms-uk.org
Registered Charity Number 220297

Because

I live

you

also

will live

John 14:19