

# St James' by the Park



# Prayer Pack

## for the

# Summer Term



# Holiday @ Home

## Holiday @ Home Checklist

We are planning a fun afternoon for older people connected with the church and their friends. We want to offer a sociable occasion to those whose horizons might be becoming more limited, plus others who would like to join in. This will be one of a number of similar events in the city in conjunction with Caraway.

Our theme is "**Holiday@Home: Explore New Zealand**". Many people planning a holiday start with a list: here's ours, with suggestions for prayer for each area. Take the items in any order, pray as you are led – and please tell us if we have missed anything!

**Thank you, The Elderberries team**

### When and where?

**Monday June 26th, 2-4.30 pm,**

**St James' by the Park Church will become New Zealand!**



### Who is going on the trip?

- **Guests:** Pray that the afternoon attracts those who will benefit from it, and that they will have confidence to come.
- **Staff:** Give thanks for an encouraging response to the initial appeal for help, and that more will join in.



### How will we get there?

- Transport: pray for offers of transport to and from the venue if needed, so all who wish can join the trip
- Tech: give thanks for video & audio technology to transport us virtually; pray for good choice of materials and that it will all work.
- Loaned objects will help us feel we are away



### What will we see and do?

- Experience the country through videos
- Learn more through quizzes and other activities
- Try some crafts



### What sort of accommodation?

- Make the church inviting, with a layout suitable for our guests
- Risk assessment and safety considerations



### What do we need to take?

- Activities that people will enjoy
- Friendly smiles
- Lots of patience



### What's the food like?

- New Zealand influenced and enjoyable
- Consideration of any dietary needs
- People to prepare and serve it

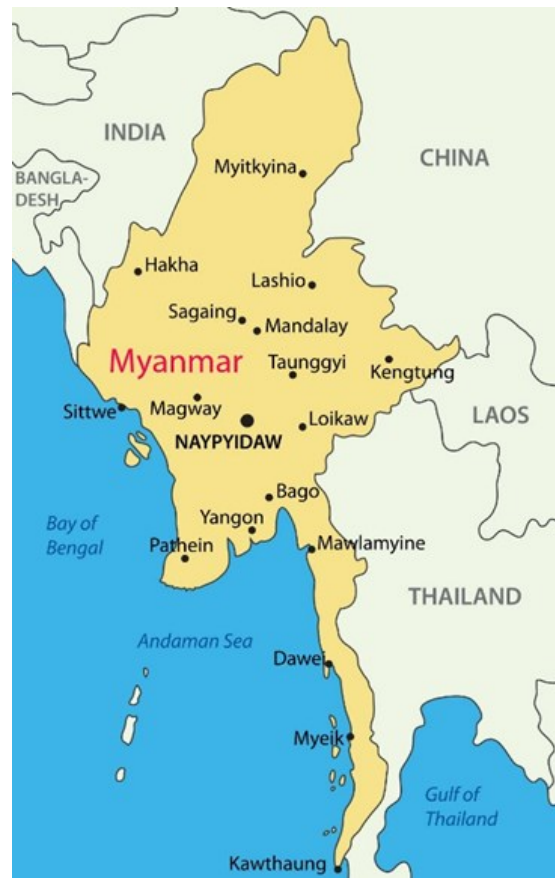


# Prayer for Myanmar

**Explore the map of**

**Republic of the Union of Myanmar:**

What do you notice?



**Now do the quiz.**

**Circle your answer – the figures are approximate so you get the big picture**

1. How many people live in Myanmar? a. 53 million b. 67 million c. 78 million
2. How many ethnic groups do you think live in Myanmar?  
a. 14 tribes b. 47 tribes c. 135
3. How big is Myanmar compared to the UK?  
a. half the size b. twice the size c. three times the size
4. What is the capital of Myanmar? a. Yangon b. Nay Pyi Taw c. Mandalay
5. What is the major currency of Myanmar? a. Kyat b. Bhat c. Rupee
6. What age do people live to in Myanmar? a. 55-60yrs b. 60-65 yrs c. 65-70 yrs
7. What is the main religion of Myanmar? a. Hinduism b. Islam c. Buddhism
8. What percentage of people are Christian? a. 2% b. 6% c. 8%
9. How many Anglican Christians live in Myanmar? a. 60,000 b. 72,000 c. 83,000
10. Will you pray for Myanmar today? a. yes b. no c. maybe

**Practice a common greeting:**

The main languages spoken in Myanmar are Burmese and other large tribal languages.

"မင်္ဂလာပါ" (Mingalaba): This is the most common greeting in Burmese language. It can be used at any time of the day and in any situation.

**Copy the flag or print it out and write your prayers for Myanmar on it.**

The flag is aspirational but is a good guide to praying for Myanmar as well.



**Yellow** for unity, conformity, wisdom, happiness.

**Green** for fertility, conformity, fairness, and being a peaceful, pleasant, and green nation.

**Red** represents bravery and decisiveness.

The **white star** stands for purity, honesty, fullness of compassion, and power.

### **Prayers for the Church of the Province of Myanmar**

1. For Bishop James and his wife Ruth as they lead the work in Sittwe Diocese facing many difficulties.
2. For strength and recovery for many people following the recent Mocha Cyclone which has devastated church buildings and homes and particularly that they will be able to have money to buy new zinc roofs before the monsoons come.
3. The oversight of the Winchester Diocese companion link with Province of Myanmar, especially for + Debbie and + David and ++ Stephen Oi, particularly that Winchester Diocese will find a good way to send money to Myanmar that does not break UK financial sanctions against Myanmar.
4. The dioceses of the Province as many struggle with different ethnic conflicts and face a brutal military regime. Christians often face much oppression, persecution, hardship, very high unemployment, lack of communication and little education.
5. Wisdom for the church leadership as they navigate the political climate, the military junta, and the need to demonstrate national leadership.
6. Youth migration to Yangon with all the vulnerabilities that poor young migrants face in the city.
7. Food security and the ability to sustain a basic livelihood in many rural areas.
8. Spiritual growth and the opportunities to develop more missionary dioceses in spite of persecution.
9. For SJbtP as we adopt this link in prayer and giving and for there to be mutual encouragement as we walk together.
10. Whether you would like to pray more often for Myanmar.



# Prayer for CMS

**Thanks to generous CMS supporters, like St James by the Park, Muslim seekers are finding faith in Jesus despite enormous pressures.**

## **Prayer Activity:**

Get different members of your family or group to read these different stories, discuss what has struck you about each one and then pray for these situations. Remember the reality for many who turn to Jesus in Muslim communities are often turned out of their own families, homes and livelihoods. They often suffer much as a consequence but also yearn for their families and friends to know Jesus in a personal way. Many of these followers of Jesus wish to remain within the wider Muslim culture, rather than become what may be perceived as a 'western Christian', that is one that embraces western cultural lifestyle.

***These next four stories are from CMS.***

<https://churchmissionsociety.org/stories/unimaginable-pressures-uncontainable-joy/>

## **Story 1: Amid pressures of war – Jesus brings peace**

We begin in Syria, where a young Muslim girl, Fatima (all names changed for security), shares her story: "My country has been devastated by civil war. After seeing so much death and destruction, I was very angry with God. I did not love him because I believed that he did not love me. I even doubted his existence. My family had many broken relationships and we all struggled to cope. I tried following strict religious rituals to find peace and meaning but nothing worked. I had heard about Isa (Jesus), but all I knew was that he was a prophet of the Christians.

"One day I met a Christian woman. She was very kind and I shared some of my struggles with her. She offered to pray for me. She had such a joy and love in her face that I accepted her prayer and her invitation to visit her church.

"I was so touched during the singing part of the service. I felt overwhelmed with a sense of joy to see people worshipping God like that. I went back the following week and soon I tearfully but joyfully surrendered my life to Jesus. I love this God, my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He has been healing my old wounds and has given me peace even while our country is in war. Thank you, Jesus!"



**Across the Middle East and North Africa, People are following Jesus in the face of great challenges**

## **Story 2: In the darkness of displacement – Jesus brings light**

Our next stop is Lebanon, where many displaced Syrian people are staying and where CMS mission partners report: "A couple told us, 'We are glad we became refugees and came to Lebanon, because we found Jesus.' When we look at all that refugees go through with the loss of their homes, poverty, lack of belonging, we think it's awful. But in the midst of this darkness they have found the light of the world. And they know it is worth it."

Some who have begun following Jesus are now sharing that light: "Some of our friends are starting home groups among Muslim people who are cautious about coming to church. They want to hear about Jesus but, until they are ready to follow him, coming to a friend's house is easier. Recently, we had the privilege of leading one dear lady in a prayer of commitment to Jesus. All the work of teaching her about Jesus had been done by our Arab friend, but she wanted us to lead her in the prayer, and we were very glad to do so!"



## **Story 3: After unjust treatment – Jesus brings joy**

Next, we head to North Africa, where Layla, a Muslim woman, was devastated after her husband died, leaving her alone with their small child. Then, six months later her husband's family kicked the two of them out of the home. Layla resorted to supporting herself through prostitution, leading her to feel deeply degraded. In her desperation, she wondered if following Jesus could bring meaning to her life. She wrote to a Christian website, who passed her details to a local Christian couple. After being in contact by phone for some time, this couple met up with Layla. They shared the gospel with her and Layla wept and surrendered her life to Jesus. The couple shared: "She is being discipled and is now a transformed person. She visited our church and shared her testimony with boldness and great joy. Praise God!"

## **Story 4: Amid family rejection – family in Christ is found**

Elsewhere in North Africa, CMS mission partners leading a church tell us: “We were recently connected with Shabir, who has come to faith within the past year and was looking for local fellowship. The joy he expressed at recounting how he had come to know Jesus could hardly be contained. He has attended our Sunday services and weekly prayer meetings, providing him with vital support and community.

“A couple of years ago he shared an identical dream with his sister – a dream they took to the local Muslim leader, who was unable to interpret it. Shabir now knows the man in these dreams was Jesus. Having kept his faith secret for a number of months Shabir has begun to be more open, sharing his story with his sister. His father and brothers have begun to suspect something is going on – and a recent refusal to attend Friday prayers resulted in Shabir suffering a beating and expulsion from his home. Please hold him in your prayers as he continues to walk with Christ despite facing pressures we can hardly even imagine.”

### **Some other prayer points:**

- Courage, resilience, wisdom and unity for those leaders who are encouraging this movement of discipleship making.
- That key trainers in the movement will have freedom of movement, and visas/ access.
- For young believers in Christ to have companions on the way to disciple and mentor them.
- For training resources for this discipleship-making movement.
- For appropriate funding needed to sustain the growth.
- For families in the faith who are learning how to follow Jesus in culturally appropriate ways.

# Prayer for SCRATCH

**Shirley High Street** has been dubbed derogatively as mutant mile. Go on the internet and do a search for mutant mile. How does that make you feel about your neighbourhood?

**Read Matthew 9:36** - What does that make you think or feel about Shirley?

**Try and walk around the poorer areas of Shirley** and observe and pray for the people you see. **Sit on benches on or near the High Street and consider the lives of many in Shirley.** Many will be struggling with high bills, the cost of living crisis with food prices still rising and mental or physical health issues. What do you notice about the people passing by? **Have a meal in one of the excellent local cafes** and pick up the vibes.

Our Mission partnership with SCRATCH is one way to respond to the needs around us. **Why not visit their website. <https://www.scratchcharity.co.uk/>**

**SCRATCH delivers furniture to households** who are referred to them from Social Services, Local Council or registered charities and demand has risen by nearly 20% in terms of referrals. Mike Smith says "we do approximately 2,500 Dorcas deliveries per year, these are furniture packages. In addition, we supply around 1200 white goods (cookers, washing machines, fridges) per year and issue about 8000 top up vouchers with a value of £50 each, per year. We also do removals, and provide paint free of charge."

Southampton Council has **asked SCRATCH to operate the central-government Household Support Fund** as they deliver such value for money, this is nearly £1m. This has led to SCRATCH taking on more staff to administer the scheme which includes top up vouchers for electricity and white goods such as fridges, washing machines and electric cookers – a household may receive one type of white good according to set criteria.

**This year we gave £3000 to SCRATCH** in unrestricted funds so that they could allocate the monies to their greatest need. Each delivery to a household including furniture costs between £100-170. 90% of these deliveries are funded but there are some needy households who fall through the gaps in funding. Unrestricted funds enable them to meet such needs or costs that are not covered by grants. In one sense we can see that as SCRATCH delivering 30 furniture packages in the Shirley area. They are very active in Shirley where there is considerable need.



**SCRATCH is well-served by its leadership team** of which **Mike Smith** (former member of SJbtP) is Operations Manager and **Ian Dowdell**, a member of SJbtP, is Furniture Manager, responsible for delivery oversight etc. (see him in action 5 years earlier on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KffKjeKtWcA>). Let's pray for the leadership of SCRATCH and in particular for Ian Dowdell who consistently serves in this key work providing leadership and friendship to so many. Also pray for Jackie Dowdell, (Ian's wife), who is currently recovering from cancer treatment. Also pray for succession leadership as there is always a need for a new generation of leadership to emerge and develop the work into the future.

**SCRATCH is well-served by its staff and volunteers.** It is working with **Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group** supporting asylum seekers (Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group, [swvg-refugees.org.uk](http://swvg-refugees.org.uk)). Many asylum seekers volunteer with SCRATCH but they often face very uncertain futures. There is a lot of camaraderie amongst the staff and volunteers but it can be very hard when an asylum seeker is suddenly removed and relocated elsewhere or deported. Pray for a more fair asylum system and for those working with SCRATCH to have fair hearings, just and clear processes and support from churches and agencies. **Use Leviticus 19:34** "The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God." Most people forget about the asylum seeker or refugee when they talk about loving your neighbour, but thankfully the Torah does the very opposite.

**Look at the recent photo of volunteers and let the Spirit guide your prayers.**



### **Other prayer points:**

SCRATCH is currently reasonably supported but they depend on central and local government contracts and funding is not always guaranteed. They have a very good electricity contract at the moment but this will change in September 2023 and along with other growing fixed costs they will have to find a further £50,000 this year.

Praise God for all the goods and the good they do and that we share in, in this social enterprise through our praying and giving. **For people in great need it is really good news that SCRATCH is here!**



# Youthfest

From **Friday 23rd – Sunday 25th June** over 100 young people (aged 10-18) and 30 leaders will be gathering for **Southampton Youthfest 2023**. The event is designed to bring young people together from churches across Southampton to worship, experience more of Jesus, have fun and connect together. As the team and young people prepare to experience and go home from the event, we would love to pray for the event in the following ways:

## Overall prayer points

- Pray for the theme of the weekend '**Crossroads**' – pray for those young people who feel at a crossroads in their life and in their relationship with Jesus.
- Pray for the topic of identity as we explore that in more detail with the young people.
- Pray for the overall leadership team – Tim and Emily (Highfield Church), Jo (Ascension Church) and Josh (St James by the Park) as they set the vision for the event and handle the overall logistics in last month of planning.
- Pray for the weather – the site is best used when the outdoor space is available to use effectively. Some young people and leaders will be camping too!
- Pray for the follow up to the event that young people would connect together after and churches would know the best way to work together to help their young people know more of Jesus.

Take a look at the picture of the site below and use it to help you pray for the following activities





**Barn 1** – this will be where we will eat and socialise and where our first aid point will be located.

- Pray for our catering team headed up by Caroline as they navigate the logistics of feeding a large number of people.
- Pray for the first aid team as they deal with any injuries that occur. Pray for the overall safety of the event and for there to be best practice in safeguarding.

**Barn 2** – this is where our main teaching space will be located .

- Pray wisdom for our speakers (Jimmy, Joy, Lauren and Debbie) as they teach on the subject of 'Crossroads'.
- Pray for young people to encounter, listen and experience the realness of relationship with Jesus.
- Pray for our worship bands as they lead us in different styles of worship.
- Pray for those young people who will find the main sessions a challenge.

**Cabins** – These are the accommodation for some of the young people and will have young people from different churches sharing cabins.

- Pray for young people across the churches to integrate and connect with one another.
- Pray for those young people who are anxious about being away from home or staying with others.
- Pray for good sleep and rest on the weekend!

**Dorms** – This is the accommodation for the leaders.

- Pray for unity and bonding of the leadership team as they work together for the weekend in an intense youth work environment.
- Pray for those who are giving up precious weekend time, thank God for them and praying blessing on their time.
- Pray for those leaders stepping into roles of responsibility on the weekend that they would feel equipped and confident in those areas.

**Football pitch** – This is one of the areas where our free time activities will be taking place.

- Pray for good engagement with activities and for connections to be made over these activities.
- Pray for safety in our Water Fight!
- Pray for those who will struggle with the lack of structured time.

**Car Park** – The event brings together churches from across the Southampton area.

- Pray for Highfield Church, Ascension Church, Holy Saviour Church, Limitless Mercy Church, Sholing Baptist, New Community Church, St Thomas Church, Thrive Church, and St James by the Park Church.

# Children and Families

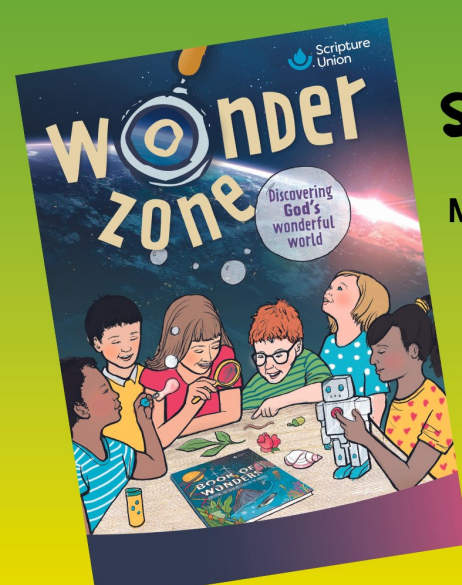


**FATHER'S DAY BREAKFAST**

Join us for this special celebration  
for fathers  
on June 10th  
from 10am -12pm  
@ the Parish Hall

COME READY TO HAVE GOOD  
CONVERSATION, GOOD FOOD AND A  
GOOD TIME!

**Father's Day Breakfast**, which will be on Saturday June 10th. Please pray for a good number of intergenerational fathers to be there, that it would be a safe space, and that they would all be encouraged, including the speaker.



**The Wonderzone  
Summer Holiday Club**

**Monday July, 24th to Friday July, 28th**  
**9 to 12 am each morning**  
**St James by the Park Church**  
**for Children ages 3-11**

Wonder Zone is a five-day Bible-based children's holiday club. During the Wonder Zone holiday club children will participate in various activities, including games, arts & crafts, and experiments while discovering the wonders of the world (and beyond!) and how the God behind all of it wants to get to know them too.

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### Other Prayer points:

- **Prayer Spaces, which will run to the end of June:** This is an opportunity where children in years 3-6 are able to come into the library on Thursdays during the lunch hour to learn about prayer. They do this by participating in different activities that explore various aspects of prayer (i.e. sharing things they are grateful for, practicing forgiveness, kindness, etc.)
- **Summer activities for Junior Church on the Sundays in August:** Please pray for clear ideas that are easy to facilitate and that there would be a clear connection made to what is happening during the service.

## Children, Youth and Families Vision:

Providing fun spaces where local children, youth and families connect with God, each other and the wider community as they live out disciple-making.

