

Baptist Family in Wales Prayer Day

Sunday 28th February 2010

“The prayer preceding all prayers is, ‘may it be the real I who speaks. May it be the real Thou that I speak to’.” C.S. Lewis



Over the last few years, representatives from the Baptist Colleges, Baptist Unions and Associations in Wales along with BMS World Mission have been meeting to share, pray and encourage one another in our Christian life and witness. This year it is hoped to encourage all our fellowships, groups and gatherings to set time aside specifically to pray for the work here in Wales. On **Saturday 27 February**, the Baptist Union of Great Britain responding to President Kingsley Appiagyei's call to prayer, will encourage people to pray in a focused way for world mission and the work of BMS. Then on **Sunday 28 February** a gathering momentum of prayer is envisaged as throughout Scotland, England and here in Wales, a national day of prayer for Baptist life, work and witness is envisaged – which again will also include prayer for BMS. Then on **Monday 1 March** BMS will hold their third annual Day of Prayer, starting some seven or eight hours ahead of GMT in places such as China and Thailand. From there it moves on through India, Nepal and onto the Middle East; rolling on through Africa and Europe, across the Atlantic to Brazil and onto Peru and Ecuador, some five hours behind GMT. If we believe in the power of prayer, then this is a great time to prove it! Maybe even handing this resource onto someone in your Church who could take responsibility for its use would be a good starter. We really do hope that this resource will encourage us all to pray – for one another – use it in your church, at home, in work or school – no matter where – let's pray!

“Lord God you created the world and established its nations. We thank you for the nation of Wales and for its rich diversity of life. From North to South, East to West we pray for every community, every neighborhood whether in areas of social deprivation or success, social decline or expansion; we thank you that in our diversity you are the God of all, revealed perfectly in your Son Jesus. May our unity through faith in Him transcend our human divisions so that your purposes in Him are fulfilled through us”.



Prayer Ideas

In addition to the prayers pointers in this resource, this section offers further suggestions to help local churches and small groups develop prayer activity.

- Using the prayer pointers in this leaflet, copy them onto small pieces of paper. Invite each person in your group to take a piece of paper and then lead the group in turn in a short prayer that responds to the particular statement that is written on it.
- If your group is not used to praying out loud together, or a significant number in it do not feel comfortable doing this, why not try writing prayers together? Put people in smaller groups of three or four and again offer them some of the statements or themes that have been included in this resource. Give each group 10-15 minutes to write a prayer together that reflects their response to the issue they have been considering. Once this is complete, invite one person in turn from each group to read out their prayer allowing a short period of silence in-between each one.
- Invite someone who is involved in a specific area of local Baptist Church life, work or witness to come along and speak. Explain that you are participating in the 'Baptist Family in Wales Prayer Initiative' and emphasise that they do not need to try and preach a sermon - but simply come and share something of the role that they have and suggest ways through which the Baptist family in Wales can support and pray for them and their work.
- Ask people from within your church community what prayer support they would value as they seek to serve Christ through their daily work? Why not invite them to write some prayers of intercession in response to the challenges, issues and rewards that they face in their role? These could be included in one of your services.
- Challenge people to pray for others who are involved in a similar line of work in a different part of Wales.
- You might encourage people to write prayers over a map of Wales or on a background of the Welsh flag. This could be displayed in an appropriate place for all to see.
- Why not actively seek to develop a relationship with another Baptist Church in a different part of Wales? You might contact one of the Unions to help form a partnership. You could agree to pray for one another specifically and regularly through contact and information sharing – you may never meet, but you can pray for one another!

Prayer pointers

Pray that the Baptist Family in Wales will sense a growing unity of purpose as we serve Christ together. Pray that church leaders will give attention to the Bible's teaching on mission and that people in the churches will realise that following Jesus equates to being a missionary disciple. Pray for the Baptist Colleges in Bangor and Cardiff as they seek to prepare women and men for Christian service at home and overseas. May we all be open to God's guidance to do mission wherever we are.

Pray that our relationship with BMS World Mission will flourish. Pray especially for the BMS Link-up scheme in Wales – that God will use the relationship between the groups and Link workers to deepen the understanding of mission within our churches and to inspire and challenge the prayer supporters in addition to sustaining and blessing the overseas mission workers.

Pray that God will raise up a new generation of leaders within the life of our Churches, Associations and Unions. Pray also that God will call people from Baptist churches in Wales to serve overseas with BMS.

Pray for children and young people in Baptist Churches across Wales. Ask the Lord to bless and protect them in their young and tender years. Thank God for the BMS Action Team tour which comes to Wales during May and June. It gives the opportunity for young people who are passionate about mission to share their recent experience of working overseas in churches, youth groups, schools and colleges. Pray that God will use this unique opportunity to bring people to Christ here in Wales and to challenge Christians to do mission.

Now is the time for us to be praying for young people to offer themselves to go on the Action Team scheme in September 2010 as the closing date for applications is during March.

Give thanks to God for the growing sense of unity amongst the Baptist Unions, Associations and Colleges here in Wales. Pray for the various people in positions of leadership and responsibility that they might have wisdom, insight and vision. Thank God for the relationship between BMS and the sister Unions and Associations and for the growing co-operation between them. Pray that the interaction will bear fruit and that God's mission to Wales and to the world is prominent in all joint events.

The South Wales Baptist College will be making two significant appointments this year: a new Principal, to succeed Dr John Weaver on his retirement in summer 2011, and a new tutor to replace Dr Roy Kearsley, who retires at the same time. This is therefore a key moment in the life

Resources

There are some great prayer suggestions to download from the BMS World Mission website at www.bmsworldmission.org/prayer

Prayer pointers might be gleaned from visiting the websites of the Baptist family in Wales – SWBA <http://www.swba.org.uk>

BUW <http://www.buw.org.uk>

BUGB <http://www.baptist.org.uk>

Y Coleg Gwyn <http://www.northwalesbaptistcollege.org.uk/welcome.htm>

South Wales Baptist College <http://www.swbc.org.uk>

NWBA <http://www.nwba.org.uk>

Bible Study Idea

Ephesians 6 verses 10-17 are well known. The armour of God is always a popular study subject, but verse 18 of the passage should play a key part in our spiritual lives.

In C.S. Lewis' book, "The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe", the children are depicted running for their lives from the "white witch", and whilst in hiding they hear an approaching sleigh. Instead of the "white witch" they are instead greeted by "Santa Clause", who brings each of them a gift.

All of us love to receive gifts, but what happens when these gifts come with a specific purpose? What happens when the shiny new gift, in Peter's case, is a sword, which he will need for battle? Lucy receives a potion but its purpose is to heal any injury! All of a sudden these aren't just gifts, they are tools for each of them to use on their journey in a specific way.

In Ephesians 6 we find a list of armour, a list of gifts given to us, a list of tools for us to use on our journey. These gifts make up the armour of God, an armour that has to be used, for example, the shield of faith is there for our protection and the gift of faith is freely available to us all.

God is longing for us to be fully equipped to go forward as his people, to be able to stand strong, to be ready to defend the faith, to be a light on a hill there for all to see.

The children in C.S. Lewis' book find themselves in the battlefield, defending good from evil, protecting the innocent against the unjust. And each of them is called to use their gift. Peter uses his sword and Susan uses her bow, but as the battle unfolds each of them has to come to the aid of the others.

Susan uses her bow to pick off an attacker on her brother, saving his life. Edmund puts himself in the way of a deadly blow aimed at Peter, which leaves him seriously wounded, but Lucy's, the bottle of potion, is used to restore Edmund's health.

The four children each had their individual gifts. Each of them had put on their armour for battle. How often do we each put on the armour God has provided for our daily battles?

But even with all their individual armour on, even armed individually with swords and bows; there came a point in battle when they needed each other.

Verse 18 is the most wonderful clarion call to us as individual Christians, when we stand, we stand united, we stand as individuals but also as part of an army of God's people, and we have a responsibility to one another to pray, "be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints". The final piece of our armour isn't anything we can do for ourselves; instead it is something we need to do for each other, like the children in Narnia, when we work together and support each other we can overcome much more than we can on our own.

So on this day of prayer, take the opportunity to pray for your fellow saints, to add the final piece of their armour for them in prayer. As we stand as one we can pray as one for the future of our churches, our communities and our nation.

**And pray in
the Spirit
on all
occasions
with all
kinds of
prayers and
requests.
With this in
mind, be
alert and
always keep
on praying
for all the
saints.**

Ephesians 6:18