

National Day of Prayer

Prayer points and additional notes

The Church prayer points

1. Pray that the Lord strengthens His church to disciple one another. Pray the Lord equips men and women for acts of service in the church, and to share their faith earnestly with those in their lives.
2. Remember three of our 'brown site' plans, Hope (Leith), Paisley and Wick. These are churches which have been intentionally closed but which we have plans to re-open. Pray for the Centre for Rural Ministry as it supports and encourages churches in rural areas.
3. Pray for ETS and training Churches as they seek to help our Ministers-in-Training grow in character, conviction, and competence.
4. Pray for the provision of new applicants for ministry coming through our congregations. Pray for those in the process of applying for Free Church Ministry.
5. Pray for the godliness and well-being of our ministers who serve across Scotland and beyond, proclaiming the gospel faithfully in very difficult times, that the Lord would strengthen and uphold them.
6. Pray for all our church planters to stay refreshed and renewed by God's grace. Pray for the latest church plants: Merchant City Church, led by Neil Longwe and David Trimble; Hope Church Leith, led by Derek Lamont; the Spanish-speaking congregation, led by Israel Guerrero; and Gilmerton, led by Colin Ross.
7. Thank God for two new church plants that became fully sanctioned charges this past year: Haddington Community Church and Esk Valley Church. Pray for their stability, for help in finding places to meet and for manses for their ministers, for ongoing spiritual and numerical growth among their members, and for many chances to reach out in their communities.
8. Give thanks for God's blessing and provision for the 11 camps that took place over the summer, the Big Free Rally in October and all the young folks that attended. Give thanks also for the annual teens conference and youth conferences which aim to be a week of teaching and discipleship for youth and young adults.

Additional notes:

There are currently 14 ministers in training across our denomination. Give thanks for this provision. To fill our vacancies and to plant new churches, we need around 70 new ministers in the next 10 years. Pray that the Lord raises up new leaders to serve the Church. Also remember the arrangements for the Ministers Inservice Meeting in Edinburgh (13th- 16th January). This is an opportunity for ministers to gather around the Word and be strengthened in fellowship. The title of this event is the 'Church of Christ'.

Church planting

According to recent church attendance statistics Scotland is an unreached country for the gospel. Church Planting is one area of the church's mission to grow God's community, spread the Gospel, and guide believers. Our denomination has established multiple church plants across Scotland in recent years, including in the highlands, lowlands, cities, and rural areas. You can find more details about our current church plants at this link:

<https://freechurch.org/generation-church-planting/>

Remember to pray for each church planter and their families. Ask that they feel God's guidance and love in their homes and ministries. Pray for great mission opportunities to connect with new people through the gospel. Also, pray for their financial stability. Ask for strength as they navigate the ups and downs of ministry. Pray for their families to experience God's peace and faith during uncertain times. Also, pray for our current church plants to thrive and for more people to come to faith in Jesus. Thank God for those in mother church congregations for their dedication, efforts, and prayers for the plants. Ask for unity and a strong desire to advance God's kingdom to be the focus of these relationships.

10. Pray that we show love and support for our church plants. Thank God for those in mother church congregations for their dedication, efforts, and prayers for the plants. Ask for unity and a strong desire to advance God's kingdom to be the focus of these relationships.

Youth and Young People

Pray that many would come to saving faith in Jesus and, pray that those who would continue to grow in their love for Jesus, and walk with Him daily. Please pray that home congregations would nurture them and help them to grow in their faith and pray especially for the young folks that weren't connected to a church, that there would be continued opportunities to hear and respond to the gospel.

Give thanks to the Lord for many opportunities for teaching and gospel outreach from Camps Programmes from P5-S6, Teens Conference (S5 and 6) and Youth Conference (18-30) which aim to bring our young people together in the word.

The Camps programme will now have an additional kids camp (Arbroath Kids) due to high demand. Praise God for this provision and pray for the 12 summer camps going ahead in 2025.

The Nation prayer points

1. Pray for our National Leaders: The King, Prime Minister, First Minister, MPs, MSPs, Councillors
2. Give thanks to the Lord for the work of the Free Church of Scotland's Public Engagement Group (PEG) and other Christian churches and organisations in Scotland as they respond to consultations and seek to engage with politicians. Pray for wisdom as they look at what consultations to respond to and as they produce responses that are Biblical, informative, and impactful.
3. Pray against proposals at Holyrood and Westminster to ban so called "conversion practices".
4. Pray that our society would uphold the sanctity of life – particularly in relation to proposals to liberalise Abortion and introduce Assisted Suicide. Give thanks for efforts to improve Palliative Care in Scotland.
5. Pray for women and others caught up in prostitution in Scotland. Pray that proposals to help women escape prostitution would finally be given parliamentary time. Pray for all organisations that seek to help women find a way out.

Additional notes and prayer points

1. 1 Timothy 2:1-4 tells us:
"First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Where possible specifically pray for your own MPs, MSPs and Councillors by name. Pray that God would give them wisdom to make good laws in keeping with his word. Pray specifically for Christian politicians that they would be salt and light.

2. The members of the Public Engagement Group are: Rev Stephen Allison (Public Engagement Coordinator), Rev Malcolm Macleod (Principal Clerk), Rev Thomas Penman, Mr Jamie Gillies, Ms Catriana Murray Rev Robin Gray. PEG regularly works with the Christian Institute, the Evangelical Alliance, CARE, Logos Scotland and The Bishops Conference of Scotland.

3. The Scottish Government has now shelved plans to ban Conversion Practices in Scotland. However, they have indicated they would support a UK wide ban from Westminster and currently the UK Government are working on proposals.

Issues around a proposed ban on conversion practices represents one of the biggest threats to the spiritual independence of the Church that we have faced since the Disruption. The definition of “conversion practices” lacks clarity, is unworkable in practice and is potentially so broad that virtually any practice which is not “affirming” of those who identify as homosexual, or transgender could be criminalised. This would mean potentially criminalising conversations, pastoral care, sermons, prayer and parental guidance.

Give thanks that the Scottish Government have shelved their plans but also pray that the UK Government would realise it is impossible to introduce a ban on conversion practices without undermining freedom of expression and belief. Pray for wisdom for those working to oppose a ban – especially the work of Let Us Pray (Rev Stephen Allison is an official supporter of this campaign) and the work of Gender Critical Feminists.

4. **Abortion**

The Scottish Government is currently carrying out an Abortion Law Review. They have appointed an Expert Group – however, 10 out of the 13 members of the Group are known to favour, or represent an organisation which favour, decriminalisation. There are no pro-life representatives on the group. It is unlikely any changes will be introduced before the 2026 election, however, the direction of travel is towards a liberalisation of abortion laws.

Buffer Zones around Abortion Clinics have now been introduced in Scotland. The Free Church of Scotland does not advocate for pro-life vigils as a wise or appropriate way to engage with this issue. However, buffer zones are a disproportionate interference with freedom of expression and set a dangerous precedent of the state being able to ban both protests and efforts to persuade individuals to change their mind on controversial issues. A democratic society should allow free and open debate.

As well as these issues around abortion please also pray for issues around the provision of abortion in Scotland. In particular, the continuing practice of abortion pills being used at home despite risks to women. Pray for MSPs to be willing to speak out against abortion, even at significant personal cost.

Assisted Suicide

Liam McArthur’s Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill has been introduced in Scotland and is currently being considered by the Scottish Parliament’s

Health Committee. Pray for those who will be invited to give evidence before the committee – particularly palliative care doctors and disabled groups.

Kim Leadbeater has also introduced a bill in the House of Commons at Westminster (Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill) and Lord Falconer has introduced a similar bill in the House of Lords (Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults Bill).

Pray for MSPs and MPs as they consider the various proposals. Pray that they would continue to protect the most vulnerable in our society for these proposals and uphold principles of human dignity for all and the sanctity of life. Give thanks for the work of Care Not Killing and Our Duty of Care in opposing these proposals. The key vote on the Leadbeater bill will take place on Friday 29th November – pray that this proposal would be defeated.

Palliative Care

Miles Briggs MSP has introduced a proposed Right to Palliative Care (Scotland) Bill and the Scottish Government are now consulting on the future of palliative Care provision in Scotland. Currently there are disparities across Scotland in terms of access to palliative care and palliative care is vastly underfunded, relying heavily on charitable donations. Pray that MSPs of all parties would work together to improve palliative care in Scotland and recognise the need for truly holistic care for body, mind and soul.

5. Ash Regan MSP previously consulted in 2020 as a Scottish Government Minister on Challenging Men's Demand for Prostitution, however, no parliamentary time was devoted to following through with these proposals. Now as an Alba MSP she has introduced a private member's bill - Prostitution (Offences and Support) (Scotland) Bill. The bill aims to criminalise the purchasing of sex and those profiting off the prostitution of others, whilst simultaneously seeking to help victims of human trafficking and prostitution to escape from prostitution. Pray that time would be given for these proposals to finally be brought forward in order to help the many victims of prostitution in Scotland.

The Life of the Nation prayer points

1. Pray for Education in our Schools, for parents, children and teachers.
2. Pray for the Church and Christians engaging with Secular Humanism in the UK
3. Pray for the crisis in the influence of biblical Christianity in the UK
4. Pray for the under-privileged, the poor, and those struggling with addictions.

Additional notes and further prayer points

Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood education (RSHP) is taught in primary and secondary schools. It forms part of the Health and Wellbeing area within the Curriculum for Excellence. RSHP is a broad subject covering topics like friendship, puberty and parenting as well as intimate relationships, sexual health and abuse. RSHP must be appropriate to pupils' age and stage of development.

More info: <https://www.christian.org.uk/campaign/rse/>; <https://cve-scotland.org.uk/rshp-in-schools-in-2023/>

Christianity and secular humanism in the UK

- Pray for the crisis in the declining influence of biblical Christianity in the UK.
- Pray that our nation will see that man is not the centre and the measure of all things but that in the Christian worldview God is the measure of all things, and that humanity has worth because it was made in God's image.
- Pray for that Christians will grow in their faith and be equipped to engage with society in a secular age.
- Pray for the Evangelical Alliance and the Christian Institute as they engage with MSPs and MPs in Holyrood and Westminster.

(More info: <https://www.christian.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/secular-humanism.pdf>)

The Influence of Christianity prayer points

- Pray that our people will realise the emptiness and the absence of fulfilment of Secular Humanism and that they will come to seek the fulfilment that only Jesus and the Gospel can give.
- Pray that the identity crisis faced by so many of our young people will be resolved by a growing understanding of a Christian worldview, our identity as those who are created in the image of God, and who have a new identity by believing in Jesus.
- Pray for the Evangelical Alliance and the Christian Institute as they engage with MSPs and MPs in Holyrood and Westminster.
- Pray for the blessing of God on the preaching of the gospel to stem the tide of secular humanism and to see the revival of biblical Christianity in the UK.

Additional notes

It is clear that Christianity is in decline across the UK. 46.2% of the population in England and Wales identified as Christian in 2021, down from 59.3% in 2011. This was the first time in a census that less than half of the population identified as Christian. The 2022 census showed that 38.8% of the Scottish population identified as Christian, down from 54% in 2011.

The under-privileged, the poor and those struggling with addictions

- Pray for the drug pandemic in Scotland, particular the tragic number of drugs overdoses in Scotland. Pray for wisdom and creativity of legislators to find new solutions and proper support.
- Pray for the providers of Drugs Rehabilitation centres, especially those operating from a Christian perspective, that these would provide hope to the hopeless.
- Pray for all families and friends affected by drug deaths in Scotland.
- Pray that the Government will take steps to addressing poverty by improved welfare system, making childcare more accessible and affordable to low-income parents, increasing benefits for children, such as child benefit and free school meals, and raising and protecting family income so that they can afford essentials.

Additional notes

Too many people in Scotland are becoming homeless because of the housing emergency. **Every 16 minutes a household becomes homeless in Scotland.** In the year 2023/24 there were **40,685** homeless applications made to local authorities. Of these, **33,619** households were assessed as being homeless or threatened with homelessness. The number of households that became homeless this year rose by 4% compared to the year before.

(More info: <https://data.gov.scot/poverty/>)

https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/housing_policy/homelessness_in_scotland

Praying for the World prayer points:

1. Give thanks for our Mission Partners who serve so faithfully across the nations. Pray for our gospel workers in the Middle East, Central Asia and areas where it is challenging to be a Christian.
2. Please pray for protection and provision for displaced people in Gaza, Lebanon and the region - for shelter, safety, and basic needs to be met, and for healing and comfort. Please pray for support and safety for churches and aid organisations working in challenging environments.
3. Give thanks for recent local missions with our Partners, Operation Mobilisation (OM). Hope for the Hebrides missions were held in South Uist and Carloway. Pray that the planted seed will grow.
4. Muriel Macleod is working in Taveng, Cambodia with OMF. Pray for the ladies from Krung and Brao who recently benefitted from training in Phnom Penh to help with leading ladies meetings.
5. Give thanks for the Ishbel Mackenzie memorial scholarship fund, for students at African Bible University Uganda. Pray that a new group of indigenous African leaders will be raised up.
6. Please pray for those affected by recent flooding in Spain. Pray that those displaced would find comfort in the Lord, and that resources will be given as they look to rebuild.

Additional Notes:

Please pray for the ongoing protection of Mission Partners and that the Lord would continue to show the light of the gospel through them, in nations where there is so little opportunity to witness. Pray for those serving across the world, that the Lord would make His name known across the nations through the service of His people.

Middle East (Israel / Gaza): There were 1,200 known Christians in Gaza before the conflict, it is estimated that only 300 remain. Pray that they will have resilience and faith in a horrendous situation. Pray that the Jewish people will call on the Messiah whom they have rejected.

Valencia Floods: Please especially remember the Iglesia Bautista Reformada in Valencia, Spain. The main pastor who has 3 young children has lost everything in the recent flood.

Cambodia, OMF: A church leaders training was held from 13 - 16 Nov where the focus was on being a missional church. Pray the time together will have reignited a vision to share the gospel with other tribal minorities and Cambodians, as well as reaching those from their own language groups across the borders in Laos and Vietnam.