

Phase prayer requests 19th May 2020

1. For the Wellbeing of Young People

This week (18-24th May) is *Mental Health Awareness Week* and we ask you to pray for the mental health of our young people during lockdown. Many are having issues with:

- access to support: many support services for young people are not open as usual, particularly remembering that secondary schools have a pastoral team that the students could normally access at any time. So many young people in need of low-level help are not sure where now to seek assistance. This can mean that small concerns can develop into something bigger. Phase has started to offer on-line mentoring which students/parents can self-refer to.
- self-isolation: issues include making contact with introverts who now may not want to go out and giving appropriate advice to extroverts who are having a build-up of emotions because they are unable to share their feelings with groups of others in their usual way.
- eating issues or self-harm: a lack of routine and not feeling in control of their days / life can lead to old coping habits returning

2. For Parents

The situation for parents in each family is very different. There are no norms anymore. Pray for them as:

- Some parents are working every hour available to deliver essential services, other parents are on furlough and have lots of “spare” time
- Many parents are concerned about long term finances and the stability of their jobs
- Some parents are enjoying doing schoolwork with their children, others are really struggling to deliver lessons and feel they are failing their children
- Contacting parents is not always easy as emails from Phase may go to spam folders
- Parents have their children with them 24/7 at the moment. As a parent recently commented “*One of the advantages of school is that teachers send the children home at the end of the day...parents can't do that!*”

3. For Schools & Teachers

As schools are scheduled to possibly look to open at the beginning of June there is a lot of uncertainty around how this can be achieved safely for teachers and for students, which age groups will benefit the most from returning and a multitude of other issues which need to be considered.

Pray for wisdom for those making key decisions in each school, particularly for headteachers (see below), senior leadership teams and school Governors.

Secondary Schools

Hitchin Boys' School	Martin Brown
Hitchin Girls' School	Francis Manning
The Priory School	Geraint Edwards

Primary Schools

Highbury Infants	Mrs H Avey
Highover JMI	Mrs L Hayes
Ickleford Primary	Mrs Sue Dury
Mary Exton JMI	Mrs Lisa Hayes
Oughton Head Primary	Mrs L Clayton
Our Lady's Catholic Primary	Mrs Ciara Nicholson
Purwell Primary	Mr Richard Cano
Sammuel Lucas JMI	Mrs Tracy Thomas
St Andrews Primary	Ms Deborah Fenn
St Ippolyts Primary	Mrs Rachel Peddie
St Paul's Walden	Mrs Louise Phillips
Whitehill Junior	Mr Steve Mills
William Ransom Primary	Mrs Mary Driver
Wilshere Dacre Academy	Mrs Sarah Smith
Wymondley JMI	Mr T Plunkett

A Prayer from Facebook

As governments are trying to figure out how to ease back into a new normal, please remember:

-  Some people don't agree with the suggested reopening.... that's okay. Be kind.
-  Some people are still planning to stay at home.... that's okay. Be kind.
-  Some are still scared of getting the virus and a second wave happening.... that's okay. Be kind.
-  Some are sighing with relief to go back to work knowing they may possibly save their Business or their homes.... that's okay. Be kind.
-  Some are thankful they can finally have a surgery they have put off.... that's okay. Be kind.
-  Some will be able to attend interviews after weeks without a job.... that's okay. Be kind.
-  Some will wear masks for weeks.... that's okay. Be kind.
-  Some people will rush out to get the hair or nails done.... that's okay. Be kind.
-  The point is, everyone has different viewpoints/feelings and that's okay. Be kind.

We each have a different story. If you need to stay home, stay home. But be kind. If you need to go out, just respect others when in public and be kind! Don't judge fellow humans because you're not in their story. We all are in different Financial - and - Mental states than we were months ago.

So, remember, be kind.

Creative Prayer Ideas

1. Be the Light

Put a candle in the middle of a table. Remember that when life is difficult, we need someone to encourage and help us - to light up our darkness.

- Who do you know that needs encouragement or help today?
- Who needs light in the darkness?

Light the candle, say a prayer and see if you could “be the light” by sending them a message this week.

2. Messages of Kindness

Use one of the craft suggestions below to create a kindness gift for an individual, organisation or school. Write some scripture or a message of kindness / encouragement on the gift. Pray over the gift as you make it and then find a way to deliver the gift to the appropriate. Suggested ideas are to:

- Decorate a pebble or stone
- Write a postcard or letter
- Bake a cake
- Create a bookmark

3. Five Finger Prayers

Draw around your hand and write the name of one person or situation that you will pray for on each finger / the thumb. Commit to pray each day this week for:

- *Thumb* - a young person known or close to you (family or friends)
- *Index finger* - those who point you in the right direction (teachers and Sunday school leaders)
- *Middle finger* - those who lead us (government)
- *Ring finger* - those who are vulnerable at this time
- *Little finger* - pray for yourself!

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