

THURSDAY PRAYER 25TH November 2021

Focus: Whitworth House

Let us pray

Lord Jesus, help us to put aside all the cares which separate us from you. Calm our minds and fill us with the knowledge that you are present with us. So enrich our time together that we may grow in fellowship with one another as members of your family. **Amen.**

Thursday prayer

Heavenly Father, you have called us apart to share in a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer. Take our prayers we humbly ask, fill them with your love and power, and use them in the cause of your glorious kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Lord, you are the God of the poor and the friend of the weak, we pray that you will give us the compassion to help those who face difficulties in life. We come to you today to remember those in our communities who are homeless or abused by loved ones. We pray that they will find peace and comfort in the places they now call home. We pray that the material gifts that are collected for the hostels and refuges in the diocese may help them in realising there is love and goodness in the world today. We give thanks for the work of the staff at Whitworth House who are dedicated to helping these young people and pray that now the funding for Whitworth House is more secure, that all the residents will grow towards a positive hope for their future, through Jesus Christ Our Lord. **Amen.**

God of love, whose compassion never fails, we bring to you the sufferings of all mankind; the needs of the homeless, the cry of the prisoners, the pains of the sick and injured, the sorrow of the bereaved, the helplessness of the aged and weak. Strengthen and relieve them, Father, according to their various needs and your great mercy, for the sake of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Let us pray for the work of the Mothers' Union worldwide; for our Worldwide President Sheran Harper, our Chief Executive Beverly Julien and all who work from Mary Sumner House; for all in the Canterbury Province and especially for Provincial President Kathryn Anderson. We give thanks for the support given to us by Marion Pope and those who will lead us in our Trustees Training day

tomorrow so that we may be brought up to date with all the intricacies of being a trustee. We pray for Hazel, our Diocesan President, and give thanks for her leadership and commitment, and for our Vice Presidents and other trustees who give of their time and experience to take the work of the MU in this diocese forward.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

In the Wave of Prayer today we pray especially for the members in the dioceses of

Southern Malawi in Malawi; Northern Uganda in Uganda;
Lafia and Ilaje in Nigeria ; Thoothukudi- Nazareth in India.

We pray too, for all members in our linked dioceses of Lusaka in Zambia, Shyogwe in Rwanda, Sokoto and Ikka in Nigeria and Karimnagar in India and for the Ely diocesan links with Vellore and Kigali.

Dear Lord, give each one strength, courage and empowerment in their lives so that your love may shine through their work and prayer carried out daily in your name. Support all those who are working in very difficult circumstances. Guide them in your ways, spreading your love and peace as a beacon throughout the World. We give thanks for their leaders who give inspiration to their members and for their diverse projects which help their local communities and transforms the lives of so many.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

In the diocesan prayer calendar we pray for the Benefice of St Mary the Great with St Michael, Cambridge. We pray for its Clergy: The Revd Canon Adrian Daffern, The Revd David Bagnall, The Revd Andrew Day, The Revd Shirley Holder, The Revd Devin McLachlan, The Revd Jon Sanders and for the life of the church, the parish it serves and for our diocesan members who worship there, that their light may shine forth in their community.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

Hymn

**Thou didst leave thy throne and thy kingly crown
When thou camest to earth for me;
But in Bethlehem's home was there found no room
For thy holy nativity:**

*O come to my heart Lord Jesus;
There is room in my heart for thee.*

Heaven's arches rang when the angels sang,
Proclaiming thy royal degree;
But in lowly birth didst thou come to earth,
And in great humility:

*O come to my heart Lord Jesus;
There is room in my heart for thee.*

The foxes found rest, and the birds had their nest
In the shade of the cedar tree;
But thy couch was the sod, O thou Son of God,
In the deserts of Galilee:

*O come to my heart Lord Jesus;
There is room in my heart for thee.*

Thou camest, O Lord, with the living word
That should set thy people free;
But with mocking scorn, and with crown of thorn
They bore thee to Calvary:

*O come to my heart Lord Jesus;
There is room in my heart for thee.*

When all heaven shall ring, and her choirs shall sing
At thy coming to victory,
Let thy voice call me home, saying, Yet there is room,
There is room at my side for thee:

*O come to my heart Lord Jesus;
There is room in my heart for thee.*

Matthew 7: 24-27

²⁴ "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: ²⁵ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

²⁶ "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

Reflection

In this familiar passage from St. Matthew's gospel we can reflect on the importance of stability. This is central to the work of Whitworth House; to support these young people to look to the future positively and equip them to cope on their own.

This year 11 residents moved on successfully, 4 of whom returned to live with their families. Three more are looking to move on, two of whom are in full time employment and one has just given birth to a baby boy.

So far this year they have received 30 referrals, of which 12 were accepted, 7 found alternative accommodation and the rest are on the waiting list.

With spaces for 15 residents, there are currently 13 young women in the house, of which 5 are in education, sixth form and college. 2 are in full time employment and 1 part time. 2 are seeking employment and working with ourselves and partner agencies to secure apprenticeships or employment opportunities whilst 2 are exploring volunteering opportunities and 1 who has just recently given birth.

After so much uncertainty as to the future of the house the staff are excited to share that they have been successful in tendering for the Young People's Housing Related Support service on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council which will secure funding for 3 years and can be extended for a further 3 years before retendering.

The partnership is a joint venture comprising 5 groups which includes Orwell Housing who run Whitworth House. It consists of a Partnership Board, Operational Team, Staff Network and Young People's Voice to oversee client outcomes, review local policies and procedures and act as a sounding board on the evolution of the service model.

Whitworth House is recognised as the specialist female service within the partnership. The service will continue to work within a gendered, strengths based approach recognising the additional trauma that many of their young people have faced or continue to face. They will also be increasing staffing levels to offer a concierge service outside office hours throughout the night in recognition of increased needs.

They anticipate this new partnership will be a great benefit to many young people in Cambridge as they come together to share experience, expertise and resources to offer a consistent and quality service across the network.

The staff are really excited in going forward with this new contract which begins January 1st 2022, which will increase the staff team considerably and have the support and expertise of other providers within the young futures partnership. It will be a very new and innovative way of working together

which will improve access to services, clearer pathways and prevent homelessness to many young people going forward. Currently they have been operating on reduced support hours due to long term sickness. This has been met by utilising agency workers which has helped support the team.

This year the team has been linking in with Winter Comfort and other organisations, who are going to be delivering a pottery class to the Whitworth House residents. They also offer yoga and women only groups and are working with the staff to tailor potential activities for younger client groups.

The Whitworth Trust supports the residents by providing their broadband connection and responding to specific requests such as money to buy a bicycle to get to college, or help to pay a deposit on a flat and the occasional treat such as a Christmas meal or an outing. The Trust, which was originally the Friends of Whitworth House, also gives financial support to Women's Aid and Cambridge Aid in their support for women, often helping them with money to buy a particular item of furniture. The turnover of residents at the House seems to have been quite high this year and I am pleased to be delivering 6 welcome bags and 5 washing up bowls filled with some basic essentials for those moving on to their own accommodation. Each welcome bag includes socks, panties, a manicure set, brush and combs and essential toiletries costing about £20, so the wonderful collection of items I received from members will be much appreciated.

Let us pray

“As I have loved you, so you must love one another”. Loving one another like Christ means caring and respecting each other. In fullness of love, we seek to serve one another, to be uplifting, gracious, supporting and encouraging. May God reveal violence, discrimination and abuse in our communities and help us to understand and speak out against all forms of violence. **Amen.**

Support, Lord, the members of the Mothers' Union preparing for the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence Campaign which starts today, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and ends on 10th December, Human rights day. May the witness of them and their supporters keeping a 3 minute silence outside the West End of the Cathedral on Saturday to remember and support 1 in 3 women throughout the world who suffer from physical or mental abuse, be effective in raising awareness to those who pass by. We pray for right and just relations between women and men that together we may transform and overcome violence in all its forms and learn to celebrate our diversity and interdependence. **Amen.**

May we serve with the love of Christ and bring comfort that comes from God. May we share burdens through the power of Christ and bring strength that comes from God. May we view others through the eyes of Christ and show compassion that comes from God. May we respond with the forbearance of Christ and show grace that comes from God. **Amen**

Lord, we beseech you, by the loneliness of your suffering on the cross, be near to all throughout the world who are suffering from natural or manmade disasters, for those living in or fleeing from war torn areas and for those who are desolate and in pain or sorrow ; and let your presence transform their sorrow into comfort and their loneliness into fellowship with you.

Let us remember in our hearts all those who are in need and those who are dearest to us.....

Loving Lord, may you enfold in your arms and uphold, all in need at this difficult time. **Amen**

The Lord's prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name;

Thy Kingdom come;

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

**For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Mothers' Union Prayer

Loving Lord,

We thank you for your love so freely given to us all.

We pray for families around the world.

Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love through the encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage and family life.

Empowered by your Spirit, may we be united in prayer and worship and in love and service reach out as your hands across the world.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

The Grace.