

PRAY WITH THE WORLD CHURCH

PRAYERS AND REFLECTIONS FROM
THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

5 March 2023 - 10 June 2023

USPG⁺ UNITED SOCIETY
PARTNERS IN THE GOSPEL

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INTRODUCTION

As we pray with our partners around the world, lifting our many and varied concerns to God, we journey with each other through the densest part of the liturgical year. The self-scrutiny of Lent gives way to Christ's love and forgiveness at Easter. The Ascension, heralding the changing nature of relationships, makes way for the gift of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, promising unity in diversity. We end with Trinity Sunday, when communion gives way to community as we are drawn into the heart of God.

Propelling this movement forward is a desire, implicit in the biblical narrative as it gathers pace, and explicit in the stories of our partners from across the Anglican Communion. A desire - God's desire - for justice, for right relationships. Put simply, it is a desire for us to live in right relationship with our maker, with ourselves, with one another and with our environment.

Our Christian journey is a constant movement towards justice, towards oneness with God and his creation. Whether seeking to be good neighbours through challenging stigma and exclusion in Tanzania, protecting the environment through effective waste management in Zambia, supporting Ukrainian refugees in Poland, championing youth employment in the Caribbean or scrutinising USPG's colonial past to build just relationships in the present, our stories unite us in a common cause: to act justly, love mercy and to walk humbly with our God.

5-11 MARCH

GOOD NEIGHBOURS AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE: A VIEW FROM THE CARIBBEAN

Adapted from 'Good neighbours among young people: A view from the Caribbean' by Clifton Nedd, Caribbean Facilitator for the Anglican Alliance and a member of the Anglican Consultative Council

Where are our young neighbours to find Christ today? How easily do they become lost in the crowd? Who are their wise teachers?

At the end of Luke 2, we find a young Jesus in the Temple. He has stayed behind after his parents have completed their Passover ritual. They find him with the teachers, learning by listening and asking them questions, and by sharing his views, too. We are told he increased in wisdom and stature, and in divine and human favour.

Likewise, young people need to be aided to grow in relationship with others. The Caribbean has high youth unemployment coupled with a demand for highly skilled labour, which it imports. The Church must involve itself in tertiary education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training, and invest in mentorships and apprenticeships.

As we build these networks, let us recall the disposition of the Temple teachers: they taught (and Jesus listened), he asked them questions (and they answered), they allowed space so he could share his understanding (and people were amazed), and he provided answers (so we assume they asked him questions). There is a dialogue and form of engagement that we must model if young people are to know Christ's promise: 'I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.' (John 10:10)

To read the full reflection from Clifton Nedd, see USPGe's Lent Course 'Who is our neighbour?'

Sunday 5 March (The Second Sunday of Lent)

**Spirit of God, strong as the wind
and gentle as the dove,
blow into our hearts
and fill them with your love
that we may be born anew
and know life in all its fullness.**

Monday 6 March (United Nations 67th Commission on the Status of Women, 6-17 March) Let us pray for the countries of the Caribbean and their peoples. May they stand strong under the weight of their colonial history and find freedom to grow their identity and prosper.

Tuesday 7 March (St Felicity and St Perpetua) Let us pray for those persecuted for their faith. May they find solace in the prayers of others, fortitude under threat and hope in despair.

Wednesday 8 March (International Women's Day) Let us pray for women throughout the world. May they know dignity, equality and fullness of life, and courage and solidarity in the face of oppression.

Thursday 9 March Let us pray for educators and all who seek to impart knowledge and skills. May they encourage a spirit of enquiry and life-long learning, and a humility that brings wisdom.

Friday 10 March Let us pray for the Churches of the Caribbean and the Anglican Church in the Province of the West Indies. May they work together to build communities confident in their faith and identity.

Saturday 11 March Let us give thanks for young people and the gifts they bring. May we listen to them, take delight in mutual learning, and seek to nurture adults who value and encourage one another

12-18 MARCH

GOOD NEIGHBOURS AND CLIMATE JUSTICE: A VIEW FROM AFRICA

Adapted from 'Good neighbours and climate justice: A view from Africa' by Linet Musasa, a member of the Anglican Council of Zimbabwe, and the Partners in the Gospel Comprehensive Climate Change initiative

The Partners in the Gospel Comprehensive Climate Change (PCC) is an initiative of three Anglican Provinces, the Church of the Province of Central Africa, the Church of the Province of the Indian Ocean, and the Anglican Church of Tanzania.

The PCC initiative seeks to promote sustainable and innovative waste management practices that minimise the impact of climate change on humans, animals and marine life.

Mark 12:31 teaches us to love your neighbour as yourself. The PCC follows this teaching by reaching out to churches and communities with waste smart techniques and training. Through promoting a cleaner and safe environment free from waste and emissions, human, animal and marine life is preserved according to God's will.

In Psalm 104, the Psalmist surveys creation and expresses awe and praise for God and God's creation, which, as good stewards of Christ's teaching, we have the responsibility to preserve.

Through addressing practices that are harmful to the environment, public health and economies, the PCC initiative is an outworking of Christ's teaching about love of God and neighbour. The campaign upholds love for the neighbour and fruitfulness; we cannot be fruitful while we do not take care of the resources God has given us.

To read more about the PCC initiative, see USPG's Lent Course 'Who is our neighbour?'

Sunday 12 March (The Third Sunday of Lent)

Loving Creator,

Give us grace to cherish your earth

that all may enjoy its bounty.

Guide us to discover the living water

that quenches thirst, dispels greed,

and fills us with love for our neighbour.

Monday 13 March (Commonwealth Day) Let us pray for the countries of the Commonwealth. May they work together to conserve the earth's natural environment and support each other to protect the poorer nations.

Tuesday 14 March Let us pray for the Comprehensive Climate Change initiative. May its work to protect against environmental damage be fruitful and enduring.

Wednesday 15 March Let us pray for the Anglican Provinces in Africa. May the Churches work together to respond to climate change and be a voice for climate justice.

Thursday 16 March (United Nations 67th Commission on the Status of Women, 6-17 March) Let us pray for the Commission on the Status of Women as it considers technological change. May the digital age provide opportunities for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

Friday 17 March, St Patrick Let us pray for the people of Ireland and recall the life of St Patrick. May we, with him, bind unto ourselves the virtues of the star lit heaven and the sun's life-giving rays.

Saturday 18 March Let us give thanks for the beauty of the earth. May we give reverence to God's creation and be attentive to its needs.

19-25 MARCH

GOOD NEIGHBOURS FOR A MOTHER IN NEED: A VIEW FROM TANZANIA

Adapted from 'Good neighbours for a mother in need: A view from Tanzania' by Fran Mate, Regional Manager for Africa at USPG

The Anglican Church in Tanzania runs the Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV (PMTCT) programme. Through this programme, the Church offers comfort and support to pregnant HIV-positive mothers who feel rejected and stigmatised.

'My neighbours used to discuss my HIV status and laugh at me,' says Anna Mwendwa, a young mother. 'Then I was introduced to the programme which changed my fate [and] helped me give birth to a healthy baby.'

The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37) tells how a priest and a Levite see a fellow Israelite who has been beaten and left by the roadside. Both leaders see the needs of the man, yet continue on their way. A Samaritan, an outsider, also comes along. He is the last person expected to help, yet it is he who has compassion, stopping and helping the man at his own cost.

Through the PMTCT programme, the Anglican Church in Tanzania demonstrates that our neighbour is the person who is in need of compassion. God calls us to love one another despite our differences. Our neighbour is the one we may find hard to love but whom God is calling us to extend mercy and grace.

To read more about the PMTCT programme see USPG's Lent Course 'Who is our neighbour?'

Sunday 19 March (The Fourth Sunday of Lent, Mothering Sunday)

**God, our mother,
you tend us with care
and look with compassion on the world.
Give us the same
that all may come to know your love and grace.**

Monday 20 March, St Joseph Let us pray for husbands and fathers. May they have the compassion and steadfastness of St Joseph and know courage and joy in the face of challenge.

Tuesday 21 March (United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination) Let us pray for all victims of racial prejudice, discrimination, and persecution. May we be aware of our own bias and be strengthened to stand up for racial justice and equality.

Wednesday 22 March Let us pray for the work of the Church in Tanzania. May its programme to prevent the transmission of HIV from mother to child, reduce stigma and ensure the health of mother and child.

Thursday 23 March Let us pray for those living with HIV and AIDS. May they have access to treatment and support, and know kindness and respect, and freedom from fear.

Friday 24 March Let us pray for the Anglican Church in Tanzania, its leaders, and people. May they work together to further the Kingdom of God and seek life in all its fullness.

Saturday 25 March, The Annunciation (United Nations International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade) Let us give thanks for Mary, the mother of Jesus. May we recall her words as we remember all victims of slavery: 'He has put down the mighty from their thrones and exalted the lowly.'

26 MARCH – 1 APRIL

GOOD NEIGHBOURS: A VIEW FROM SRI LANKA

Adapted from 'Good neighbours breaking down barriers: A view from Sri Lanka' by Father Rasika Abeysinghe, a priest in the Diocese of Kurunagala in the Church of Ceylon

The history of the Church in Sri Lanka has seen a long and enriching journey, continuously and critically asking this question, 'Who is my neighbour?'

In asking this question, we are striving to break down the worldly constructs of class and creed. In Sri Lanka, class and creed have become the most mixed elements and present a variety of categories of communities.

We have found much traction in our endeavour in the midst of the worst economic crisis in the history of Sri Lanka. The work of the Church in this area transcends the Christian and non-Christian divide, providing food, aid and pastoral care for anyone who has been pushed to the brink of poverty and vulnerability. The work transcends the many classes of communities as each grapples with its own struggles.

In all these examples, as we strive for change on behalf of others, we have found they have changed us even more. We find ourselves overcoming our own pre-existing thoughts and prejudices. It would be our failure not to be aware that as we grow up, we have been accepting and nurturing human constructs.

And so, we must take care to break down these barriers within ourselves in the first place and then this will be visible in our actions.

To read more from Father Rasika Abeysinghe see USPG's Lent Course 'Who is our neighbour?'

Sunday 26 March (The Fifth Sunday of Lent - Passiontide begins)

O God in whom there is no beginning or end

no hierarchy or division,

show us our prejudices,

heal our divisions and hurts,

and make us one in Christ.

Monday 27 March Let us pray for the Church of Ceylon in Sri Lanka. May its people know the bond of fellowship through prayer and action.

Tuesday 28 March Let us pray for the healing of class divisions wherever they exist. May we see each other through the eyes of Christ, recognise our common humanity and work for justice.

Wednesday 29 March Let us pray for a greater understanding between faiths. May we learn to listen to one another with open hearts and find ways to work together for the common good.

Thursday 30 March Let us pray for all who live in poverty and distress. May they experience the bonds of community and be carried by care and compassion.

Friday 31 March Let us pray for the Diocese of Kurunagala. May its work amongst struggling farmers and labourers, and those of different faiths, aid those most affected by Sri Lanka's economic crisis.

Saturday 1 April Let us give thanks for those who seek to work across divisions. May they be enriched by difference and emboldened to share all that is life enhancing.

2-8 APRIL

GOOD NEIGHBOURS IN TIMES OF WAR: A VIEW FROM EUROPE

Adapted from 'Good neighbours in times of war: A view from Europe' by The Ven Dr Leslie Nathaniel, Archdeacon of the East, Germany and Northern Europe

At the time of writing, there are around seven million internally displaced people in Ukraine, who have moved mainly from the East to the West of the country. A further six million Ukrainians have been forced to flee the country since Russia invaded.

The Diocese in Europe has chaplaincies in both Ukraine and Russia, which presents a challenge. How do we approach chaplaincy in these places? We seek to respond with a theology of need, recognising that all churches and partners have something to give and also to receive. This interchange does not mean that one receives the same as one gives but simply that the gift corresponds to the need of the other.

One of the Diocese's greatest strengths is the breadth of its connections, not just across Europe but across the world. In the earliest days of the war, this proved to be vital in dealing with a huge movement of people, while also preventing human trafficking.

The Diocese is able to offer a hospitality of welcome as people cross borders and move to new places. Chaplaincies in Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Latvia, Estonia, Finland and the Czech Republic are providing Ukrainian refugees with ways to move forward in life, and places where they can relax.

To read more from The Ven Dr Leslie Nathaniel see USPG's Lent Course 'Who is our neighbour?'

Sunday 2 April (Palm Sunday)

**Christ in our darkness risen,
help all who long for light
to hold the hand of promise
till faith receives its light.
(Brian Wren, b. 1936)**

Monday 3 April, Monday of Holy Week Let us pray for refugees fleeing war and terror. May they receive care, understanding and hospitality in the countries to which they flee.

Tuesday 4 April, Tuesday of Holy Week Let us pray for internally displaced peoples. May they find a safe resting place and support in adapting to a strange surroundings and new neighbours.

Wednesday 5 April, Wednesday of Holy Week Let us pray for the work of the European chaplaincies. May they support one another and be strengthened to continue their work amongst those traumatised by war and conflict.

Thursday 6 April, Maundy Thursday Let us pray for those who live with betrayal and rejection. May they find strength to live with brokenness, and healing that brings freedom and peace.

Friday 7 April, Good Friday (World Health Day) Let us pray for those who have lost loved ones in the service of others. May we kneel with Mary at the foot of the cross and know love's endeavour, love's expense.

Saturday 8 April, Easter Eve Let us pray for all in desolation and despair. May the seeds of resurrection grow in their grieving hearts until love is come again.

9-15 APRIL

USPG'S LENT APPEAL: SUPPORTING YOUNG MOTHERS AFFECTED BY HIV

USPG's Fundraising Manager, Rebecca Allin reflects on the 2023 Lent Appeal supporting young mothers affected by HIV, and their children

This Lent we have been praying for young mothers affected by HIV and asking that their babies be born HIV free (see 'Good neighbours for a mother in need', page 8).

Like the good Samaritan in Luke 10, we are called to support people who are suffering injustice in the world. Our church partner, The Anglican Church of Tanzania, is supporting HIV positive women and children in their local communities.

Every year, 8,600 children in Tanzania under the age of 14 are infected by HIV. If the virus isn't controlled, they may grow up and go on to infect others. It is an endless, scary cycle that could be avoided. If a baby is born without HIV, the cycle is broken. A whole new generation could have a brighter future.

The Anglican Church of Tanzania's prevention of mother-to-baby transmission programme is working with local women to ensure they have the information, support, and medical care needed to ensure their babies are born healthy.

This Lent, you might be thinking of ways you could love your neighbour. Please consider giving today. Your kindness will not only provide life-changing HIV medication, but we'll also make sure that any money raised makes a meaningful and permanent difference wherever it's needed.

Donate to the USPG Lent appeal today at www.uspg.org.uk/lent

Sunday 9 April (Easter Day)

**Risen Christ,
break into our lives
and shatter our complacency.
Bring light to our darkness
that we may be born anew
and learn to love our neighbour
as you first loved us.**

Monday 10 April, Monday of Easter Week Let us pray for a deepening of our faith. May the light of Easter shine in our hearts, illuminate our minds, and inform our actions.

Tuesday 11 April, Tuesday of Easter Week Let us pray for all whom we love and who love us. May we nurture and cherish our relationships and find Easter in the ordinary.

Wednesday 12 April, Wednesday of Easter Week Let us pray for pregnant women who lack access to healthcare. May we work towards a fairer world where giving birth is not a major risk to mother and child.

Thursday 13 April, Thursday of Easter Week Let us pray for children around the world. May we pay attention to their needs and learn from their spirit of enquiry and openness.

Friday 14 April, Friday of Easter Week Let us pray for our neighbour near and far. May we reach out to those in need and seek to build inclusive communities where all are valued and none excluded.

Saturday 15 April, Saturday of Easter Week Let us give thanks for signs of new life. May we open our eyes and ears to all that make our hearts sing and discover afresh the hope of resurrection.

16-22 APRIL

SAFEGUARDING THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION

USPG'S Regional Manager for East Asia, Oceania and Europe, Rebecca Boardman reflects on ways to get the climate justice conversation started, in the light of this week's International Earth Day

There are few places where we might feel comfortable and safe to have difficult conversations. I would like to hope that the Church is one; a space to challenge our own thinking, to reflect and lament on where we have gone wrong, and a space for radical creativity and hope.

Churches are places where we need to inspire action on the planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. Places where we can debate and dream, where those who society places on the margins are placed at the centre. Places where justice for the planet and all people are at the heart of action on issues like fuel poverty, food waste, drought, and the impact of natural disasters.

By showing how these crises are linked to our faith, a sermon focusing on care for creation can be a great way to start these conversations. To inspire preachers, each week the Anglican Communion Environmental Network, of which USPG is a member, encourages authors from across the Anglican Communion to provide a reflection on the lectionary readings from the perspective of creation care and ecological justice.

To find out more and sign-up visit: preachingforgodsworld.org

Sunday 16 April (The Second Sunday of Easter)

Show us how to touch the earth lightly

and challenge one another boldly

to cherish the world in our care.

Let our doubt and greed

give way to faith and belief

that another world is possible,

Our Lord and our God!

Monday 17 April Let us pray for our church communities. May they work together to care for the environment locally and globally, and be beacons of hope for climate justice.

Tuesday 18 April Let us pray for a spirit of openness. May we have courage to hear the voices of those speaking from the frontlines of climate change and the conviction to carry the message.

Wednesday 19 April Let us pray for leaders of church communities. May they create time and space for their communities to meet together to explore safely issues that challenge and perturb.

Thursday 20 April Let us pray for preachers, lay and ordained. May they be attentive to the needs of the world and have the courage to be prophets of our time.

Friday 21 April Let us pray for communities around the world impacted by rising tides, drought, and famine. May we learn to safeguard, sustain, and renew the life of the earth.

Saturday 22 April (International Earth Day) Let us give thanks for the dedication of the 'Preaching for God's World' team. May their work to connect faith and care for our planet be a catalyst for conversation and change.

PRAY WITH THE WORLD CHURCH



Poland:
International Day
of Multilateralism
and Diplomacy
for Peace

Ukraine: Refugee
response from the
Diocese of Europe

The Caribbean:
Young people
in the Caribbean

Tanzania: Prevention
of transmission of HIV

5 MARCH 2023 – 10 JUNE 2023



Bangladesh: Bollobhpur Mission Hospital and International Midwives Day

Sri Lanka:
The economic crisis in Sri Lanka

The Philippines:
Pentacost and multi-lingual worship in the Iglesia Filipina Independiente

Zambia – The Zambia Anglican Council on World Environment Day

23-29 APRIL

PRAYING FOR PEACE

The Anglican Chaplain in Warsaw, Poland, the Revd David Brown, reflects on peace in the light of this week's International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace

As we celebrate the United Nations International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace this week, the Anglican Church in Poland remains greatly blessed by all those people within the Chaplaincy and from outside who are giving so much personally, and through groups, to help support refugees from Ukraine and the people suffering in Ukraine. We have been greatly blessed by financial support for our use from the USPG/Diocese of Europe Lent Appeal, and in many other ways.

Our Church has helped refugees who required assistance in Poland while awaiting permission to travel to England under the Homes for Ukraine scheme and continues to offer individuals help with accommodation and other expenses. We are constantly looking at ways to help other Churches and groups supporting Ukrainian refugees and have begun supporting the Ukrainian House in Warsaw with its assistance programmes for the most vulnerable refugees.

The ongoing war on the other side of Poland's border and the millions of refugees coming into Poland continually remind us of the importance to pray for peace, not just for our nearest neighbours but for all peoples on God's earth.

Sunday 23 April (The Third Sunday of Easter)

**Journey with us, risen Lord,
as we seek to understand your ways
and as we discover your truth,
may our hearts burn within us
and our lives give way to peace.**

Monday 24 April, St George (United Nations International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace)

Let us pray for peace in the world. May all in positions of power actively pursue justice and peace and protect the lives of those who live in danger of war and conflict.

Tuesday 25 April, St Mark Let us pray for all who seek to share the Gospel. May we give thanks for St Mark, for his gift of communication and his faithfulness to the life and mission of Jesus.

Wednesday 26 April Let us pray for the people of Ukraine. May they bear one another's burdens, know fortitude in the face of exhaustion and be upheld by the prayers of those seeking peace and justice.

Thursday 27 April (South Africa Freedom Day) Let us pray for all who are oppressed. May the remembrance of South Africa's first post-apartheid elections inspire us to work for the self-determination of every nation and person.

Friday 28 April Let us pray for families hosting refugees. May their homes be a place of refuge and warmth and may host and hosted be recipients of grace and blessing.

Saturday 29 April Let us give thanks for the spirit of community. May we seek to build bonds of trust and friendship within our communities and support one another in good times and bad.

30 APRIL-6 MAY

THE WORK OF BOLLOBHPUR MISSION HOSPITAL

USPG'S Regional Manager for Asia and the Middle East, Davidson Solanki reflects on the work of Bollobhpur Mission Hospital, Bangladesh, for International Midwives' Day this week

Bollobhpur Mission Hospital is administered by the Church of Bangladesh as part of its health ministry. The hospital is situated in rural Bangladesh, serving residents of the village communities living near the border with India. At the hospital, young women and men train to be midwives, nurses and laboratory technicians.

The students participating in this training all come from a similar socio-economic background, with 35 per cent of residents in the local area living below the poverty line. Their training at Bollobhpur Mission Hospital means that they can now earn more money elsewhere, in turn allowing them to better support their families.

Bollobhpur Mission Hospital also provides a community health programme, which consists of four outstation village clinics and a team of six community health workers who visit villages in areas near to the hospital. The village clinics are staffed by experienced midwives who are supported by teams of student midwives, who take on this role as part of their training.

USPG feels privileged to partner with the Church of Bangladesh in supporting their health ministry through Bollobhpur Mission Hospital and their community nurses and midwives.

Sunday 30 April (The Fourth Sunday of Easter)

**God, our midwife,
deliver us from harm
and bring to birth in us
all that is life-giving.
Shepherd our longings
and make us one in Christ.**

Monday 1 May, St Philip and St James Let us pray for all who seek to be disciples of Christ. May we, like Philip and James, pay attention to our Lord, hear his voice, and seek to follow his call on our lives.

Tuesday 2 May Let us pray for those in training at Bollobhpur Mission Hospital. May they be equipped to serve their communities as nurses, midwives and technicians.

Wednesday 3 May Let us pray for the protestant churches of the Church of Bangladesh. May they work together to support their ministries amongst poor and marginalised communities.

Thursday 4 May Let us pray for the indigenous peoples of Bangladesh. May they be supported by the Church to strengthen their identity, discover their worth and find their voice.

Friday 5 May (International Midwives' Day) Let us pray for midwives near and far. May hospitals and trainers seek to support them and may we value our midwives for their expertise in bringing life into the world.

Saturday 6 May (Coronation of Charles III) Let us give thanks for all who put duty and responsibility before their own needs. May we pray for Charles III on his coronation day and remember the many who serve their countries and people unseen.

7-13 MAY

THE WORK AND MISSION OF THE LAITY

USPG's Regional Manager for Africa, Fran Mate reflects on the work and mission of the laity

The laity are those who, through faith and baptism, have said 'yes' to God's inviting call and have entered the House of the Lord as members of Christ's mystical body. Each member of the Church Jesus has personally called by name, inviting them through the Holy Spirit to live intentionally as his disciple, and live out their baptismal covenant.

The apostolate of the laity derives from their Christian vocation and the Church can never be without it. The sacred scriptures clearly show spontaneous and fruitful lay ministry and focuses on the celebration of the ministry of all Christians.

Lay ministry offers a chance for church members of all ages to pause and consider their own unique calling to ministry within the community and the Church. The ministry of the laity is 'to represent Christ and his Church, to bear witness to him wherever they may be and according to the gifts given them, to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world and to take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church.' (The Book of Common Prayer)

The laity workers play a very important role in the ministry of the Church. They serve in various capacities and enable the Church to celebrate different skills for the body of Christ.

Sunday 7 May (The Fifth Sunday of Easter)

**Gracious Lord,
open our ears to hear your call
and our hearts to discover your way
that we may learn to live in you
and be bearers of life and truth.**

Monday 8 May Let us pray for the Church throughout the world. May its members live out their baptismal promises and may each find their vocation and ministry.

Tuesday 9 May Let us pray for the laity within the life of the Church. May the Church celebrate their many and varied gifts and appreciate their role in building a community of faith.

Wednesday 10 May Let us pray for lay women. May their ministry be encouraged within the worldwide Church and may those whose vocation to ordained ministry is denied find grace to build and plant.

Thursday 11 May Let us pray for a mutuality of relationship between lay and ordained. May those in positions of power honour their responsibility and work to build up the body of Christ.

Friday 12 May Let us pray for the Anglican Communion. May the Churches seek to nurture disciples who are confident of their faith and assured in their mission to love their neighbour.

Saturday 13 May Let us give thanks for the many unsung heroes of our congregations. May the contribution of each and every person from cleaner to doorkeeper be recognised, valued and celebrated.

14-20 MAY

THE ASCENSION

USPG's Global Theologian, the Revd Dr Peniel Rajkumar reflects on the Ascension

The ascension happens at a crucial point in the life of Jesus's disciples. After the initial trauma of the crucifixion the disciples are getting used to a new reality – Jesus's resurrection. They are used to encountering the Risen Christ in unexpected faces and places, like during their encounter with a 'stranger' on the road to Emmaus. This makes them hopeful, and in Acts 1:6 we see them expectantly ask Jesus whether this is the time when he would fulfil their long-held hopes of the restoration of their kingdom. It is at this precipice of hope that Jesus is taken away from them.

No wonder then that the disciples are perplexed and are caught gazing up toward heaven, struggling not to lose sight of that source of power around which they have learnt to rebuild their lives. The message of the ascension story to the disciples is to not cling to familiar ways of knowing God, but to be open to new ways in which God might be active in the world.

The ascension conveys the powerful truth that it during times of God's seeming absence, when the last signs of our hope seem to fast disappear behind the clouds of hopelessness, uncertainty, doubt, and despair, that God chooses to enter human lives with transformative intimacy and depth.

Sunday 14 May (The Sixth Sunday of Easter)

**Loving Lord,
when we fear you are absent,
remind us that we are not orphans.
Embolden us with your Spirit
and in drawing close to you
transform our lives.**

Monday 15 May, Matthias the Apostle (United Nations International Day of Families) Let us pray for the wellbeing of families of all shapes and sizes worldwide. May they be protected from poverty, discrimination, and abuse, and sheltered from environmental destruction.

Tuesday 16 May (United Nations International Day of Living Together in Peace) Let us pray for people to live together in unity and peace. May they be united in difference and diversity and seek to find solidarity in their desire for peace and harmony.

Wednesday 17 May Let us pray for those who have lost loved ones. May they know the support of friends and the comfort of God's presence.

Thursday 18 May, Ascension Day Let us pray for each other on our journeys of faith. May we let go of things that impede our growing in faith and open our hearts to receive Christ in unexpected people and places.

Friday 19 May Let us pray for theologians worldwide. May their study of the scriptures expand our horizons and deepen our faith.

Saturday 20 May Let us give thanks for God's gift of love. May we love Christ with all our heart and strive to keep his command to love one another.

21-27 MAY

ACCOUNTABILITY AND CARE

USPG's Research and Learning Advisor, Jo Sadgrove reflects on accountability on the anniversary of George Floyd's death

One of the challenges of spending time thinking about history, the past, and our corporate archives is connecting what might seem like other times and different worldviews to present-day activities and concerns. The death of George Floyd remains a stark reminder that patterns of thinking laid down in another time, in the era of transatlantic slavery, persist in the present and continue to perpetuate violence and dehumanisation.

Thinking about how the power imbalances of the past continue to exist in the present-day functioning of the Anglican Communion, sometimes perpetuated by agencies like USPG, remains a necessary if uncomfortable part of our work. Whilst USPG no longer trades in human beings, how does its investment portfolio continue to prioritise profit over people? Where does USPG continue to use the security of its financial power to foster dependency rather than agency amongst partner churches who are sometimes reliant on funding?

We are members of organisations and institutions with troubling histories. Holding in balance their purpose in the present whilst honouring those who have been marginalised in their pasts through historical analysis is a critical part of our moral accountability and our duty of care to those historically marginalised partner churches whom we seek better to serve.

Sunday 21 May

(The Seventh Sunday of Easter - Sunday after Ascension Day)

**Risen and ascended, Lord,
give us eyes that look with compassion on the world
and hearts that rage at injustice.**

**Give us breath to raise our voice in protest
and hands and feet that bring life not death,
and, by your grace, make our broken body whole.**

Monday 22 May Let us pray for all who study the past. May lost histories be brought to light and shameful histories be named that we may build honest relationships in the present.

Tuesday 23 May Let us pray for the work of USPG as it seeks to come to terms with its colonial past. May it learn to sit with discomfort and may its partners grow in confidence.

Wednesday 24 May Let us pray for ourselves as we seek to acknowledge our own shortcomings. May we have the courage to name them and may we know God's grace to change.

Thursday 25 May (Anniversary of George Floyd's death) Let us pray for the Black Lives Matter movement. May we work towards a world free from prejudice and may all who seek racial justice be upheld by the power of solidarity.

Friday 26 May Let us pray for all who have lost loved ones through acts of racial violence. May they know comfort and support and may their stories challenge us to fight prejudice and discrimination.

Saturday 27 May Let us give thanks for friendships across divisions. May we always strive to understand difference and to build bridges that foster unity and community.

28 MAY-3 JUNE

PENTECOST

USPG's Chaplain, the Rev Jessie Anand reflects on Pentecost and languages

On the first day of Pentecost, hearing people speak in different languages and understanding the mighty works of God was a first-hand experience. Today in the world church, Pentecost reminds us of the importance of gathering multilingual worshippers to witness Christian unity.

In the Philippines, Filipino Christians from 7,640 islands, and speaking many different mother tongues, worship in the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (Philippine Independent Church) and the Episcopal Church. There are 183 languages in the country. Among them, Tagalog and English are the official languages. The presence of multilingual worshippers in Philippine's churches, and their witness in their communities, certainly promotes the Pentecostal experience in the life journey of Filipino Christians.

In Saint Luke's Episcopal Cathedral at Quezon City in Manila, the worshippers had a vision to include deaf people and people who do not speak. Many worshippers have undertaken sign language training which helps to unite all worshippers in a meaningful Pentecostal experience. No one is excluded on grounds of language.

Pentecost enables us to rise above the limitations of our own languages. It is transformative and demonstrates the inclusive nature of God's kingdom.

Sunday 28 May, Pentecost (Whit Sunday)

**O Breath of life, come sweeping through us,
revive your Church with life and power;**

**O Breath of life, come, cleanse, renew us,
and fit your Church to meet this hour.**

Elizabeth Ann Head (1850-1936)

Monday 29 May Let us pray for the island peoples of the Philippines. May they rejoice in their different languages and identities and find unity in their national identity.

Tuesday 30, The Visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth Let us pray for women in the Philippines. May their strong ties of kinship bring mutual support and may they find strength in solidarity.

Wednesday 31 May Let us pray for those who are unable to communicate through speech. May we be attentive to their ways of communicating and find paths to inclusion and community building.

Thursday 1 June Let us pray for all who communicate through sign language. May those who teach signing and those who learn to sign inspire others to do the same.

Friday 2 June Let us pray for peace and stability in the Philippines. May its government build a nation free from fear and oppression and work to build a society that is just and fair.

Saturday 3 June Let us give thanks for the gift of the Holy Spirit. May we listen to her promptings and be open to both challenge and comfort.

4-10 JUNE

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT IN ZAMBIA

USPG's Regional Manager for Africa, Fran Mate, brings a reflection from Zambia for the United Nations World Environment Day

World Environment Day, which falls on 5th June, urges all of us to protect our natural surroundings and with good reason. For example, an estimated seven million people die each year from causes related to air pollution.

World Environment Day encourages worldwide activism on everything from littering to climate change. It is both a global celebration and a platform for public outreach.

In Zambia, one of the biggest environmental challenges is plastic waste. Zambia has poor waste management services and single-use plastic is at the top of the list of the waste generated countrywide. Poor or non-existent solid waste management services in some areas and high levels of illegal dumping of waste in public places have contributed to the biggest challenge of environmental pollution being faced by the country to date.

During World Environment Day, the Zambia Anglican Council will facilitate activities such as awareness walks, speeches, and exhibitions, and will advocate for the reduction of plastic and waste emissions. The Church realises that it has a very important role to play in stopping or reducing plastic and waste emissions.

Sunday 4 June

(Trinity Sunday - United Nations International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression)

Loving God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
through your being
show us how to love one another,
to live in harmony with our neighbour,
to care for our planet
and to be at one with the Earth.

Monday 5 June (World Environment Day) Let us pray for all events marking World Environment Day. May they raise awareness of the harm caused by environmental degradation and challenge us to take meaningful action.

Tuesday 6 June Let us pray for the Zambia Anglican Council. May it work in partnership with other Churches and organisations to spearhead environmental protection in Zambia.

Wednesday 7 June Let us pray for clergy and church leaders. May they demonstrate the importance of protecting the environment and work with church members to make a difference.

Thursday 8 June, Corpus Christi Let us pray for the Church worldwide. May it seek to be Christ's body on earth and through sharing his life bring life to others.

Friday 9 June Let us pray for the government of Zambia. May it work to raise awareness of environmental damage and seek to implement policies to protect the country's health and environment.

Saturday 10 June Let us give thanks for the Church of the Province of Central Africa. May its dioceses support one another and be resourced to meet the region's environmental challenges.

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