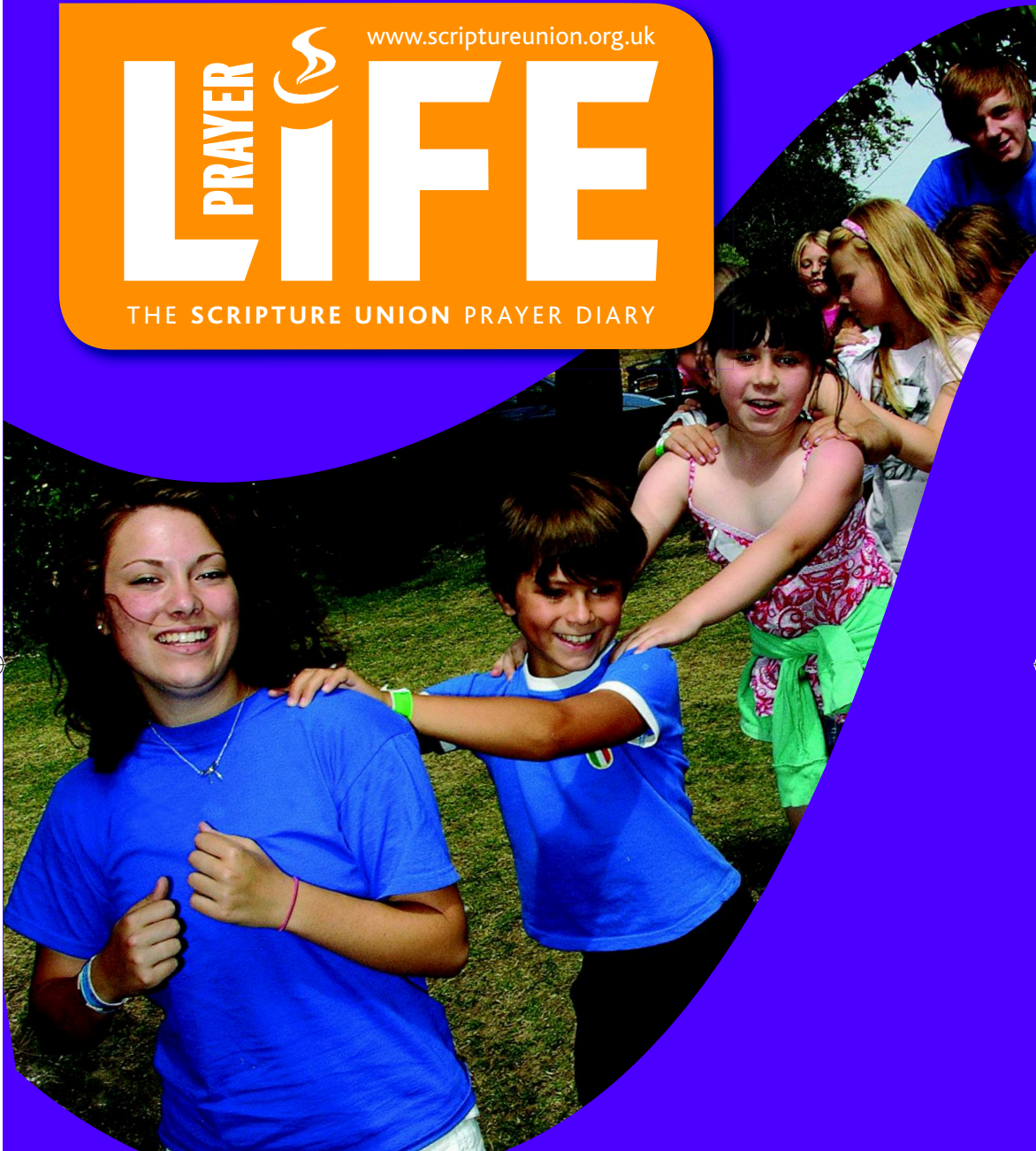


www.scriptureunion.org.uk

PRAYER LIFE

THE SCRIPTURE UNION PRAYER DIARY



DECEMBER 09 - FEBRUARY 10

One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts. They will speak of the glorious splendour of your majesty, and I will meditate on your wonderful works. They will tell of the power of your awesome works, and I will proclaim your great deeds. Psalm 145: 4-6


**Scripture
union**



THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYER

In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ... being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:4,6)

Thank you for your prayers over the last quarter. As you read through the accompanying copy of *The Life* you will find lots to be thankful for – the summer is a busy period for volunteers and staff. More than anything, however, we thank God for his work of transformation over the summer because without that all our activities are in vain. Remember, those stories are just a small selection; there will be many more that we don't even know about. Please pray for God to bring to completion the work he has begun in the lives of those involved in our summer programme.

The coming months bring a whole new range of opportunities for God to be at

work. Please pray that the many activities highlighted in this issue of *Prayer Life* have real spiritual impact on the lives of the children, young people and adults taking part. Thank you.

Thank you too for your prayers for the movement during a challenging time of change. We have designated the first Tuesday of each month as a day of prayer and fasting for Scripture Union. For up-to-the-minute prayer pointers please do sign up for our prayer email which is sent out on the preceding Monday; www.scriptureunion.org.uk/prayer is the place to go for more information.

Keith Cival

More food for prayer

Scripture Union also produces a CD called **Prayer Focus**, which includes lively interviews with some of those on the front line of ministry. If you'd like to use this as you pray for SU, we'd be glad to give you a free quarterly subscription. You can sign up on our website or telephone your request to our Supporter Care team on **01908 856052**. You can listen online: www.scriptureunion.org.uk/prayerfocus



HOW TO USE THIS PRAYER DIARY

You'll soon pick up the pattern we're using in this prayer diary. We don't want to presume to tell you how to pray, but we trust that the information we provide is helpful as you ask the Holy Spirit to guide you. Each page covers a whole week. On Sunday we invite you to take an overview of the focus for the week. From Monday to Friday we generally give you five key prayer points but, during the intensive

holiday programme weeks, it's more fluid. Every Saturday we give you the opportunity to take a wider view as we bring you an insight into what SU is doing in another country. If you prefer to pray for SU weekly, then the overview on the back cover will give you all you need. We really appreciate your partnership in the Gospel. Also available at www.scriptureunion.org.uk/prayer

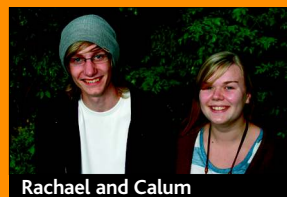


ACTION ABROAD - THE MISSION CHALLENGE

Every year young people find out what it is like to have a life changing experience with God as they join Scripture Union's *Action Abroad* scheme. Their placements, which give them insights into work in a different culture, are mostly for six months with Scripture Union movements around the world. They will be involved in activities such as leading children's camps, working with schools or teaching life skills.

FOCUS FOR TODAY AND THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

SUNDAY 29 Nine young people will be working with the *Action Abroad* scheme this year. Two are already in place and another seven will leave early in the New Year. Pray that this experience will give them a fresh vision of what God is doing in the world.



Rachael and Calum

MONDAY 30 Although our main focus this week is on volunteers abroad, this is a week in which many churches are inviting school groups in to discover the true meaning of Christmas. Remember them in prayer, asking that they will discover something beyond the superficial and commercial.

TUESDAY 1 Rachael Clear and Calum Carswell are now in the third month of their placement with Scripture Union New South Wales. Give thanks for the way they have got involved with the schools work team, and the support they have received. Pray they will be a benefit to the volunteers and staff there.

WEDNESDAY 2 Volunteers will be leaving for other countries in January. Pray that they will settle in quickly and that as they serve God he will build their faith and give them valuable opportunities for Christian service. Pray too for discussions with other countries about the future direction of the scheme.

THURSDAY 3 Training for those leaving in January starts today and will run until Saturday. This is a valuable time for building relationships, understanding roles, developing necessary skills and general enthusing, as well as an opportunity to be with God and discover his strength for the time ahead.

FRIDAY 4 We'd like to grow the impact of *Action Abroad* and increase the number on the scheme. Pray for opportunities to partner with other Scripture Union movements around the world and for more people to hear about the programme. Pray for wisdom in determining the best way forward.

International focus

SATURDAY 5 Scripture Union New Zealand is working with Bible Society and Wycliffe Bible Translators to promote the E100 Bible reading programme to churches. Pray for a great response from Christian leaders so that the launch after Easter 2010 is a real success.



THE SUMMER MAY BE PAST BUT...

It was a particularly fruitful time with holidays and missions running across the country. Many children and young people found God in new ways and have grown in their faith. Others have met with him for the first time. It can be hard when the enthusiasm generated by being with others has passed. They need the continued support of the Christian community and ongoing contact with team members.

FOCUS FOR TODAY AND THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

Pray for all the children and young people for whom the summer was a special time in their faith. Pray for all those who continue to support them especially for churches, Christian friends and team members who make contact with them.



Faith building in the summer

SUNDAY 6

MONDAY 7

'... really helped me to build my relationship with God again... and I'm really determined to keep everything that has been built...' For young people like this who face many temptations and pressures, the experience of the holiday can be lost. Pray that they will retain the sense of God's presence.

TUESDAY 8

'They had a wonderful time and were greatly enriched and excited by all that they did and heard from the Bible study sessions.' Thank God for all those who gained a new interest in the Bible and pray that they continue to read it and experience God's life-changing power.

WEDNESDAY 9

'I just wanted to let you know how wonderful it is that ... became a Christian on camp.' A number of children and young people, some without any church background, have come to faith this summer. Let us thank God and pray that they may grow in relationship God.

THURSDAY 10

'The Junior team were fantastic, all really engaged with everything.' For many young Christians this is their first taste of Christian service. They then go on to serve God in many other ways; they need our prayer as they learn to serve him more effectively.

FRIDAY 11

Churches around the country run holiday clubs with the help of Scripture Union holiday material. Today *Rocky's Plaice*, based on the early chapters of Acts is published. Although it will not be used for some months we can pray for churches as they prepare, and that many children will be reached.

SATURDAY 12

International focus

In July Albea Nalisa took up his new role as SU Coordinator in Vanuatu. Give thanks for visiting groups from Scripture Union New South Wales and their ministry in schools. Secondary school rallies have been growing, especially with the inclusion of a boarding school that had been closed for hosting rallies for a few years.



APPROACHING CHRISTMAS

For weeks there will have been signs of Christmas all around – decorations, advertising, in-store displays, seasonal music in the background. Much of it will diminish the meaning of Christmas. We can pray that all those children and young people who will have heard the truth about Christmas in the last few days, through school groups or through Scripture Union programmes, will continue to think about it.

FOCUS FOR TODAY AND THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

SUNDAY 13

Christmas is a time when those who are prepared to take notice are confronted with the love of God. Pray that children and young people growing up in an increasingly secular society will catch something of what is really being celebrated at this time of year.



Advent pupils in Keighley

MONDAY 14

Many staff and associates will have done Christmas assemblies or lessons, but throughout the year they have also had opportunities to present the story of God's love. Thank God for all the opportunities that exist in schools and pray that they may be used wisely and effectively.

TUESDAY 15

Steve Hutchinson is running the third of three Christmas specials for under-5s. In an age when Christmas is so often misunderstood and misrepresented it is a challenge to get beyond the excitement of cards, gifts and food. But young children with their capacity for wonder can be helped to appreciate the true significance.

WEDNESDAY 16

Pray for those who are preparing to use *Scripture Union's Light* material this coming Sunday as they help children to look at Luke 2 and celebrate with the angels. And users of the GRID will be remembering the new life Jesus gives as they look at Romans 5.

THURSDAY 17

Christmas is often thought of as a time for families. We can pray for those who struggle with loneliness, including many young people but also for Scripture Union's work with families. Many holidays and missions increasingly incorporate a family element, and our resources encourage churches to be family friendly.

FRIDAY 18

Pray for those who leave the staff at the end of the year and who may find Christmas a difficult time; ask that they will experience, through the renewed realisation that 'the Word became flesh', the love and peace of 'Emmanuel', 'God with us'.

SATURDAY 19

International focus

Scripture Union Sweden needs to find a new office base. Please pray that God will lead them to find a place where they can reap benefits from cooperation with other Christian organisations, strengthening their ministry in the areas of Bible reading, study material and the internet.



SCHOOLS

An increasingly small number of children and young people attend church – but they all attend school. Scripture Union specialists not only visit schools but also encourage and resource many local associate trusts as they take assemblies and lessons and support Christian groups in school. *SchoolsLive* provides a fund of ready made ideas for a variety of different groups and situations and is proving increasingly popular.

FOCUS FOR TODAY AND THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

SUNDAY 20

There are still many opportunities in schools. Thank God that many churches invited schools to visit them and think about Christmas. Pray for a continuing response to these events and for those churches that are planning similar events at Easter.



MONDAY 21

Governor Support's first meeting was held on Monday 28 September -15 people attended an initial meeting in Folkestone in September designed to provide support for school governors. There was a request that these be repeated each term. Pray for future plans and for the possible introduction of similar events in other places.

TUESDAY 22

The ministry of *Lifepath* has reached large numbers of primary school pupils. Packs are now available together with 'ready to go' material for four stories. *Lifepath* can be run as a large event or a small event. Let's pray for churches planning their 2010 events.

WEDNESDAY 23

Into the Bible offers a valuable resource for teaching RE at Key Stage 2 (7 to 11s). It introduces 101 stories giving the big picture of the Bible and comes with teaching material and lesson outlines. Pray that it will find its way into more and more schools.

THURSDAY 24

We have developed a training in schools work pack to be used in a variety of ways – thank God for the creativity of schools specialists in pulling the material together and pray for the opportunity for it to be used widely around the country by a range of agencies and individuals.

CHRISTMAS DAY

As we celebrate the wonder of God's gift we remember all those children, young people, adults and families who have yet to understand and receive the true meaning of Christmas.

SATURDAY 26

International focus

Following the success of the schools chaplaincy scheme for SU Queensland, Australia, plans are underway for a similar scheme for SU England and Wales. These are to be piloted during 2010. Clear guidance for the future development of such a scheme is required and we can pray that the pilot will help us to see how we should move forward.



HAPPY NEW YEAR

As we move away from Christmas with the wonder of God coming among us still fresh in our mind we prepare for the new year with all the promise and the potential that it brings. A number of young people celebrate New Year at Scripture Union holidays – but we can all pray that this will be a time when we sense God's direction for the future and experience his presence and blessing.

FOCUS FOR TODAY AND THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

SUNDAY 27 About 200 young people aged 14 to 18 will be preparing to join one of the Scripture Union New Year holidays. These have been very special times for many over the years. Pray that, once again, there will be opportunities for God to work in many lives.



Countdown New Year holiday

MONDAY 28 All three holidays, *Countdown*, *Resolution* and *Breakthrough*, start tomorrow. As teams arrive they will be sorting out details and preparing for the young people to arrive. These few hours are always action-packed and it is important that not only is everything in place but the team have time to pray together.

TUESDAY 29 *Countdown* leaders Dave and Kat Stickland especially ask for prayer that all would go smoothly in the new venue, Bearwood College, in Berkshire. As young people prepare to celebrate the New Year together we pray that they may determine to live their lives for Christ.

WEDNESDAY 30 *Resolution* is led by Paul North at Casterton School, Kirkby Lonsdale. Paul gives thanks that a good number have booked in and asks for prayer that there will be a real spiritual impact on the lives of the young people. We can also pray for spiritual sensitivity for the team as they relate to the young people.

THURSDAY 31 *Breakthrough*, led by John Stephenson and Liz Green, is based at the Green Gables Hotel, Scarborough. John has many other responsibilities at this time. Pray for physical, emotional and spiritual strength for the whole team.

FRIDAY 1 As the young people prepare to head home tomorrow from what will have been a memorable experience, we pray that there will be lasting effects and that they will not forget what they have discovered or lose their enthusiasm for God.

International focus

SATURDAY 2 Thank God for the increasing cooperation between African countries and especially for the way in which Scripture Union in Ghana has proved support and training to the work in Benin, Burkina Faso and Togo.



GROWING MINISTRY

Restructuring Scripture Union enables the growth of ministry in a difficult economic climate. These changes involved the loss of some staff roles. Our vision is unchanged; that every Christian should be engaging enthusiastically with the Bible, that every church should be fully equipped to make disciples of children and young people and that every community should have a vital Christian witness to children, young people and families.

FOCUS FOR TODAY AND THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

The introduction of new ways of working means major changes. Pray that we shall be able to make these as smoothly as possible with wisdom, grace and sensitivity and that the new ways of working will take root and open up new opportunities.



Growing face to face ministry

SUNDAY 3

MONDAY 4

New local teams are being formed around the country to facilitate more effective ministry in their areas. New relationships will need to be forged within the staff team and with volunteers, associates and supporters in the area. Pray that this will be motivated by a clear sense of vision for what can be achieved in the community.

TUESDAY 5

If ministry is to grow, more volunteers will be required to catch the vision. Churches will need to join us in partnership too if we are to see more Bible engagement, more children and young people growing in their faith and an emphasis on evangelism among children and young people.

WEDNESDAY 6

Print and digital publishing are closely related with the emphasis on preparing content which can be adapted to appear in a range of ways. Pray that the editors might have wisdom in knowing not only what needs to be said but in creating the right level of flexibility.

THURSDAY 7

Some staff have moved on as a consequence of these changes and face an uncertain future. Pray that as they look for God's way forward, God will strengthen and guide them and that they may know his peace.

FRIDAY 8

Several X:site events take place in the next three weeks. Tomorrow in Bristol (*The Max*) and Milton Keynes. On 23 January, Leeds, Keighley, South Wiltshire (Salisbury), Calderdale and Newbury. Pray that many children will come and will enjoy themselves – but above all that they will meet with God.

SATURDAY 9

International focus

Pray for regional staff in Scotland as they work together with local chaplaincy teams delivering 'Bubblegum 'n' Fluff' to primary schools throughout Scotland in December, helping children to see Jesus as more than just a baby in a manger. Pray for churches who will host these two hour long presentations and for good relationships to develop.



TELLING THE NEXT GENERATION

Within the Old Testament tradition the stories of what God had done were to be told to the children so that they would appreciate their history and come to worship God. Jesus created a special place for children. Today it is more important than ever that children hear what God has done and have an opportunity to respond to his love for them. Telling God's good news is a priority for Scripture Union.

FOCUS FOR TODAY AND THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

SUNDAY 10 Statistics show that the number of children in contact with churches is declining. This makes Scripture Union's vision for every community to have an effective witness to children, young people and families a major challenge. Pray for faith and wisdom in carrying out the task.



Boys are important

MONDAY 11 Scripture Union has a number of specialists in evangelism work with churches, who encourage local evangelistic initiatives. Pray that many churches will catch the vision to reach children and that they will be prepared to explore new ways of doing so in partnership with Scripture Union.

TUESDAY 12 The first meeting of field staff under the new structures starts today and runs until Thursday, at King's Park in Northampton. Wendy Strachan, Scripture Union's International Children's Ministries Coordinator will also be joining them and helping them to think through effective ways of reaching children in our world.

WEDNESDAY 13 Christian parents face massive challenges in helping their children to grow up knowing God. A course entitled Survival Skills for Christian Parents, which accompanies the book *Families with Faith*, has been trialled and will now be launched more widely. Let's pray that churches will use it and that many Christian parents will be encouraged as a result.

THURSDAY 14 We have been conducting some research into the most effective ways of reaching boys and of ensuring that they remain a part of the church. Prayer is needed for the wider dissemination of the results and for the production of an 'MOT' to help churches to review their work with boys.

FRIDAY 15 Pray for the two new *Top Tips* books published today – *Inspiring All Kinds of Learners* and *Explaining the Trinity to Young People*. A revised edition of *It's Your Move!* is also now available; pray that it will be as well used as previous editions and will be a great blessing to all those who receive it.

International focus

SATURDAY 16 In Guatemala Scripture Union work is established in schools in two cities, reaching more than 3,000 students every year. They now face the challenge of establishing the schools ministry in the city of Guatemala itself. Pray that despite difficulties God will enable Pastor Eduardo Marroquin, the National Director, as he leads this work.



AROUND THE WORLD

Scripture Union is active in over 130 countries in the world. National movements are united in their aim to make God's good news known to children, young people and families and to encourage people of all ages to read the Bible daily. Some face real challenges; all can testify to the power of God at work.

FOCUS FOR TODAY AND THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

SUNDAY 17

In a wide range of cultures Scripture Union staff bring the message of life and hope and introduce people to the transforming power of God. Thank God for those he has called and for the gifts and skills he has given to each.



Action Abroad: South Africa

MONDAY 18

Terrorist incidents have created panic amongst Pakistani children and many parents are no longer sending their children to school. In Sri Lanka, children continue to be traumatised by conflict and the devastation families have suffered as a result of the 2004 tsunami. Pray that Scripture Union staff will act wisely and creatively as peace-bringers.

TUESDAY 19

A long awaited Youth Ministry Consultation takes place in the Pacific Islands this month. Pray that all travel and financial issues will have been resolved and that the event will run smoothly, providing new stimulation, ideas, expertise and encouragement to staff and volunteers and resulting in new initiatives for work with young people.

WEDNESDAY 20

Pauline Hoggarth, Scripture Union International Bible Ministries Coordinator, retired at the end of November 2009 after 10 years of service. Please pray for wisdom and discernment for all those involved in appointing her successor when the time comes and for God's clear leading to his man or woman for this work.

THURSDAY 21

Over the next few years there will be changes in regional leadership in East and West Asia Region and in Europe Region. Please pray for those who are responsible for the search process and for those whom God may be calling to these leadership positions.

FRIDAY 22

Scripture Union and Children Matter! will be supporting the Children's Ministry Conference in Eastbourne 22-24 January with seminars, workshops and resources. This represents a new partnership with the Kingsway Trust. SU Affiliate Sharon Prior is leading a Bible study and Children Matter! will host a seminar stream for those in children's ministry leadership.

SATURDAY 23

International focus

Thank God for the vast opportunity for the SU ministry in Liberia. Pray for the resources to carry out the work in a country that was under war for 14 years. They need equipment, material and money to pay the staff.



COUNT ME IN

At the heart of Scripture Union's history are volunteers who have always been responsible for delivering much of the ministry. Without their energy, enthusiasm and commitment holidays and missions would not take place. For many this is their first experience of Christian service and an ideal training ground for future ministry. Every year many return, but new volunteers are also needed in a world where there are many other demands.

SUNDAY 24

FOCUS FOR TODAY AND THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

This week we give thanks for all those who volunteer so faithfully. They ensure that children and young people have a good time, they provide good role models and they build relationships which enable them to communicate the gospel with integrity.



Volunteers' preparation

MONDAY 25

Pray for new volunteers to come forward. The *Count Me In* website is our key means of communication and is being updated with details of this year's opportunities. It is important that the website and the *Count Me In* leaflets reach the right people.

TUESDAY 26

There will be new leaders at *All In!*, *Survival*, *Bcoz Ur Wrth It!*, *Shine!* and *Impact* holidays and at Nefyn and Abersoch missions. Pray that all these new leaders will catch God's direction and will provide clear leadership to the teams. Where leaders have yet to be found pray for the right people to come forward.

WEDNESDAY 27

X:site events are led by volunteers, associates or staff. This Saturday *X:sites* will be taking place in Gloucester, Birmingham and North Wiltshire and the teams will be putting the finishing touches to various parts of the fast moving programme designed to provide a place where Christian children can gather and invite their non-Christian friends.

THURSDAY 28

Volunteers come in many guises. They help with administration, provide consultancy and our Trustees and Council members give guidance and stimulation. The Scripture Union Board, consisting of Trustees and leadership team is responsible for the direction of the movement. They meet today at a key time in our history. Pray that God will give wisdom.

FRIDAY 29

This weekend holiday and mission leaders will be meeting together for fellowship and training. This is an important weekend for setting the tone for the activities which will take place at Easter and in the summer. We can pray that as they study the Bible, pray and think together, God will stimulate and inspire them.

SATURDAY 30

International focus

Scripture Union in Cote D'Ivoire thanks God for the success of the youth workers training seminar conducted by Mike Smallbones from South Africa in September. They ask us to continue to pray for peace in their country.



MULTIPLYING MINISTRY

Scripture Union's vision is to increase the spread of ministry to children and young people. Associate workers and trusts around the country are a key part of this. Supported locally and with an in-depth knowledge of the local scene, they are in an ideal position to work with children and young people in schools and churches. Their good relationships with schools open the way for them to help with assemblies, lessons and Christian groups.

FOCUS FOR TODAY AND THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

SUNDAY 31 Good relationships between associates and the local schools are vital to ensuring a continued presence. Good relationships with local churches mean prayer and financial support. Pray for the building of these good relationships in the community, especially in areas where there are new trusts or workers.



Mark Tiddy

MONDAY 1 Several new workers have started recently: Angela Cope (Bedford), Ben Mayho (Oswestry), Ian Sarginson (Southport), Dumaeza Nhlapo (Stort Valley), Catherine Montgomery (Stroud), Laura Pennington and Carol Carter (York) and Chris Baker (Letchworth). Some have just completed the schools work training course. Pray that they will be able to put what they have learned into practice.

TUESDAY 2 There is a new trust in Birmingham, called The Feast. Natasha Griffith is working with Action Now volunteer Jenni Creasy. They aim to bring Christian and Muslim young people together to talk about faith and provide a Christian presence in schools where the majority are Muslims.

WEDNESDAY 3 A new trust was formed in Hunsley, East Yorkshire, in September with Mark Tiddy working part-time in secondary schools, and part-time in a local church. In Stafford, associate Chenda Nuttall is employed by the Methodist Church. We can pray that they will quickly establish a presence in the local community.

THURSDAY 4 In Newbury there is a new team leader, Tania Wolak. Tanya and full-time worker Hayley Clarke are joined by part-time workers Esther Butler and Elisabeth Fforbes-Stone in delivering sessions in schools. Thank God for those who give their time in this way.

FRIDAY 5 In Butcombe and Blagdon (near Bristol), a number of local churches are working towards forming a trust and are hoping to appoint both a secondary and a primary schools worker in the first half of next year. Finding the right candidates is essential.

International focus

SATURDAY 6 In Cambodia there are many opportunities to start work with young teens. Pray that the right worker might be found to take up this challenging ministry, in this country which has a troubled history and where Christians are a small minority.



INVESTING IN YOUNG PEOPLE

Young people have a bad press; many are suspicious of their behaviour. Yet they have great passion and long for outlets. They want to be recognised and valued, trusted and given responsibility. Scripture Union workers create opportunities for young people to grow in faith and to serve Jesus, helping them to reach their full potential, by giving them freedom while providing support and guidance.

SUNDAY 7

FOCUS FOR TODAY AND THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

Young Christians want to live faithfully and courageously for Jesus against the backdrop of a constantly changing and varied youth culture, the pressures of a secular society and the pressure of their peers. Pray for Scripture Union staff, associates and volunteers as they support them.



Faith sharing training

MONDAY 8

Thank God for the growing use of *SchoolsLive*, our web-based collection of resources for primary and secondary school groups. Pray for those who prepare the material and for the groups that use it, that it may help young people see how the Bible speaks into their lives. www.schoolslive.com

TUESDAY 9

Scripture Union staff are working on ways of helping young people to share their faith effectively with their contemporaries. In many schools a young Christian may be the only one in their class or young group and talking about faith can be extremely challenging; they need courage, conviction, confidence and sensitivity.

WEDNESDAY 10

Growing up in a multi-faith world is confusing and it is important that young Christians know how to relate to people of other faith backgrounds. Respecting others, while believing that Jesus is unique, is a real challenge. Pray for the work of *Youth Encounter*, in Birmingham, as it seeks to help them.

THURSDAY 11

Christian teachers probably have more contact with unchurched young people than any other Christians. They count this a great privilege, but being effective witnesses and role models can be hard and comes on top of the pressures which all teachers face. Pray for them and for Scripture Union workers who support and resource them.

FRIDAY 12

Churches do not always find it easy to communicate with today's young people. Scripture Union's resources, the *GRID* (for 11 to 14s) and *SUBstance* (for 14 to 18s) are resources which will help young people think about what they believe and help them to mature as Christians.

SATURDAY 13

International focus

In the Czech Republic God has opened the door of a primary school in Nucice with the launch of two Bible clubs. Pray for good relationships with the children in the school so that they will come to the clubs and that God will open the hearts of the children and their parents.

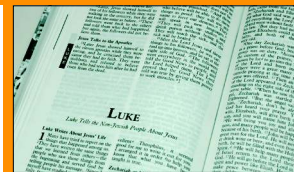


GROWING BIBLE USE

Recent research confirms that there is a decline in Bible knowledge and Bible reading in the churches. Without this knowledge Christians are weakened in their faith, impoverished in their understanding and less effective in their witness. Encouraging people of all ages to engage with the Bible regularly is therefore a major ongoing challenge. New ventures such as *WordLive* have been encouraging but a more are needed.

FOCUS FOR TODAY AND THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

There is a need for new motivation within the churches and fresh initiatives to support them. We need to pray for a renewed desire for the Bible, and for the provision of resources that will help people to discover the power of God's Word.



Promoting Bible reading

SUNDAY 14
MONDAY 15

Scripture Union worker Steve Hutchinson is leading a holiday club at Hill View church this week. Pray that this, and all similar activities may not only help children meet with God but will give them a lasting desire to look into the Bible for themselves.

TUESDAY 16

One of Scripture Union's traditional strengths has been providing resources to help children and young people meet with God through the Bible. In a rapidly changing world we need to find new ways of helping them. Pray with us for clear understanding of the way forward and the ability to deliver it.

WEDNESDAY 17

Many churches have appointed Bible Enthusiasts, who share something of their own experience of hearing God speak to encourage and support others. We can pray for more people to take on this valuable role and, with our support, that their influence will grow.

THURSDAY 18

Give thanks for the growth of *WordLive* with over 20,000 regular users, and for the many stories of the way in which people have been drawn closer to God. Pray that the number will continue to grow and that those who benefit from *WordLive* will be moved to give, to support the development of the www.wordlive.org website.

FRIDAY 19

Christian bookshops are a key means of promoting Bible guides. Many of them have limited space and lack the time to do all that they would like, to promote reading. They need prayer and encouragement. Pray for those in Scripture Union who support them and provide them with promotional ideas and resources.

SATURDAY 20

International focus

Ghana: In March this year, Professor Sam Kofi Afrane was elected as the new National Council Chairman. Pray for him as well as the General Director, Jude Hama, as they provide leadership for the SU ministry in Ghana.



FOCUS ON WALES

Wales has been blessed by God with revivals in the past but today much of this is just a distant memory with chapels closed or attendances declining. Working with children and young people has many challenges; secularism, the traditionalism of many churches, Christianity being seen as something from the past. Despite this there are signs of life in many places.

FOCUS FOR TODAY AND THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

SUNDAY 21

Contrasts between North and South Wales present many challenges to ministry. Travel can be difficult and different outlooks, history and church background mean that different approaches are required. We can pray for wisdom and sensitivity for Scripture Union staff and associates.



Y Cam Nesa!

MONDAY 22

Churches in Pontyclun, Swansea, Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan and the Llyn Peninsular are planning for Easter Cracked, multi-media Easter presentations to which local schools will be invited. Pray for the churches in their planning and for a good response from the schools.

TUESDAY 23

Staff worker Matt Lewis is involved in outreach during the first week of March with a team of students from Capernwray Bible college – working in the schools in and around Penarth. They will be giving students an insight into what Christians believe and the way that they live.

WEDNESDAY 24

Thank God for the Welsh edition of *It's Your Move!*, *Y Cam Nesa!*, and for the way that it has been used in schools. Pray that as schools and churches make their plans for this year they will look for creative ways of using it with children moving from primary to secondary education.

THURSDAY 25

SU Associate Row Robinson runs the Cilcoed Christian Centre with her family, working with children and young people, through school assemblies, monthly events, church links and camps. 'Koinonia' (fellowship) is at the heart, as people come and share the love of God. Pray that God will raise up young people keen to 'walk-the-talk'.

FRIDAY 26

Missions in the summer are regular features at Abersoch, Aberystwyth, Criccieth, Nefyn and Tudweliog. Pray that as teams prepare for the summer they will know God's guidance. Pray too for year round work in Criccieth.

SATURDAY 27

International focus

Scripture Union in Western Australia runs the Blokes program which is designed to provide mentoring for teenage boys. Pray that God would be glorified in the relationships that leaders build with the participants and the schools.



PRAYER DIARY AT A GLANCE

Your prayer diary in brief. Use one topic for each week.

<p>NOVEMBER 29</p> <p>Nine young people will be working with the <i>Action Abroad</i> scheme this year. Two are already in place and another seven will leave early in the New Year. Pray that this experience will give them a fresh vision of what God is doing in the world.</p>	<p>JANUARY 17</p> <p>In a wide range of cultures Scripture Union staff bring the message of life and hope and introduce people to the transforming power of God. Thank God for those he has called and for the gifts and skills he has given to each.</p>
<p>DECEMBER 6</p> <p>Pray for all the children and young people for whom the summer was a special time in their faith. Pray for all those who continue to support them especially for churches, Christian friends and team members who make contact with them.</p>	<p>JANUARY 24</p> <p>This week we give thanks for all those who volunteer so faithfully. They ensure that children and young people have a good time, they provide good role models and they build relationships which enable them to communicate the gospel with integrity.</p>
<p>DECEMBER 13</p> <p>Christmas is a time when those who are prepared to take notice are confronted with the love of God. Pray that children and young people growing up in an increasingly secular society will catch something of what is really being celebrated at this time of year.</p>	<p>JANUARY 31</p> <p>Good relationships between associates and the local schools are vital to ensuring a continued presence. Good relationships with local churches mean prayer and financial support. Pray for the building of these good relationships in the community, especially in areas where there are new trusts or workers.</p>
<p>DECEMBER 20</p> <p>There are still many opportunities in schools. Thank God that many churches invited schools to visit them and think about Christmas. Pray for a continuing response to these events and for those churches that are planning similar events at Easter.</p>	<p>FEBRUARY 7</p> <p>Young Christians want to live faithfully and courageously for Jesus against the backdrop of a constantly changing and varied youth culture, the pressures of a secular society and the pressure of their peers. Pray for Scripture Union staff, associates and volunteers as they support them.</p>
<p>DECEMBER 27</p> <p>About 200 young people aged 14 to 18 will be preparing to join one of the Scripture Union New Year holidays. These have been very special times for many over the years. Pray that, once again, there will be opportunities for God to work in many lives.</p>	<p>FEBRUARY 14</p> <p>There is a need for new motivation within the churches and fresh initiatives to support them. We need to pray for a renewed desire for the Bible, and for the provision of resources that will help people to discover the power of God's Word.</p>
<p>JANUARY 3</p> <p>The introduction of new ways of working means major changes. Pray that we shall be able to make these as smoothly as possible with wisdom, grace and sensitivity and that the new ways of working will take root and open up new opportunities.</p>	<p>FEBRUARY 21</p> <p>Contrasts between North and South Wales present may challenges to ministry. Travel can be difficult and different outlooks, history and church background mean that different approaches are required. We can pray for wisdom and sensitivity for Scripture Union staff and associates.</p>
<p>JANUARY 10</p> <p>Statistics show that the number of children in contact with churches is declining. This makes Scripture Union's vision for every community to have an effective witness to children, young people and families a major challenge. Pray for faith and wisdom in carrying out the task.</p>	