

# Prayer

at Baildon Methodist Church

## **What prayer is**

Prayer is talking with God. Often it's asking for help, but you can say anything you want: praise is good, or thanks for past help – even complaining about things if that's how you feel. But it's also listening. Anyone can call out in a crisis to God, who mercifully often answers, but ongoing prayer is something much deeper.

## **Why prayer matters**

What matters is having a living, daily friendship with the Lord. Talking is how we get on with each other, so we talk with our Maker. We were designed to relate to God as our heavenly Father, as shown by Jesus his son, and helped by the Holy Spirit whom God sends to be our Helper within. Prayer is partnership, because it helps us learn to live better the way the Lord wants us to.

## **Can our prayers really reach God?**

God is holy, perfect and 'in heaven', and we are here with our feet stuck in mud and very much less than perfect (sinful, the Bible calls it), but God has gone to great lengths to bridge that gap. Jesus took the blame for all our wrongdoing (sin) by dying on the cross, and thus opens the way to God as loving Father rather than stern Judge. Jesus once called himself 'the way' to the Father, and early Christians often called themselves followers of 'the way' (John 14:6; Acts 19:9). Believe in Jesus, genuinely repent of your sin, and his way lies open.

That's how Jesus is our Saviour. He also becomes our Lord when we put him in charge of our lives and strive day by day to do what he says, which is how we begin to get things right. Prayer opens the door and keeps us in touch. Moreover, God invites and encourages believers to approach boldly in prayer for the help we need.

## How the Church prays

Baldon Methodist Church prays in lots of ways:

1. Public prayer during worship services.
2. Church business meetings usually begin and end with a brief time of prayer, seeking guidance and help with discussion of all the affairs to be decided.
3. Prayer meetings are held in the Prayer Room (also called the Quiet Room, or Room 4 – see page 4 for where this is), each Monday at 7.30pm and Tuesday at 10.30am, but see *Pews News* for any changes to times or venues. They last for an hour, and anyone can pray about what concerns them, out loud or silently. Prayer requests are accepted (see page 3).
4. Special times of prayer are sometimes arranged for the whole church, about particular problems, in the church or the world.
5. A monthly prayer column is published in *Centre Pages* with suggestions about prayer, often based on Bible texts. Short written prayers are included for those who find these helpful.
6. Prayer letters for Bradford North Circuit are sent out each week by email to those who want to receive them. If you want to be included in the mailing list, send your name and email address to: [prayer@bradfordnorth.org.uk](mailto:prayer@bradfordnorth.org.uk)

## How you can pray

You can talk with God anytime, inwardly or out loud (or written down). You can just say what you want, as you would in conversation to a good friend you respect. You don't need special holy words to pray.

Or, if you find it helpful, you can follow the words someone else speaks or has written. That's why there's always a 'Prayer for the week' in *Pews News*, and a few books of prayers in the Prayer Room.

It's good to listen as part of prayer. We speak to God, who also wants to speak to us. So we're wise to give ourselves a bit of inner stillness to be able to hear (even if it's noisy all around us). It's an extraordinary privilege to be able to partner with God through prayer in this way – joyous, but at the same time something to take quite seriously.

See page 4 for a few suggestions on help with prayer.

## **How you can ask others to pray for you**

When we become believers in Jesus, he calls us together into church 'families', and for good reason. Worship together is easier; we can offer and receive practical help, share burdens (practically, or by listening); and we can pray with and for one another.

You can ask anyone you like to pray for you, or with you, but our church has tried to make this easier in a number of ways.

1. Come to either of the weekly prayer meetings (see page 2).
2. Or speak to someone who goes to the prayer meetings, or a steward.
3. Put a prayer request (with or without your name):
  - (a) In the prayer book in the Prayer Room
  - (b) On the prayer notice board (top of the ramp in Wesleys)
  - (c) Hung on the prayer tree in the church porch
4. Email your request to: [prayer@bradfordnorth.org.uk](mailto:prayer@bradfordnorth.org.uk), or go to [bradfordnorth.org.uk/prayer.html](http://bradfordnorth.org.uk/prayer.html)

## **How you can pray for others**

Be a good listener when people talk to you, and pray about what you hear. If it feels right to do so, offer to pray with them.

You can pray at any time on your own, wherever you are; or you can arrange to meet with one or two others with similar concerns for a time of prayer together.

Or come to one of the church prayer meetings (see page 2).

Follow the Baildon Methodist Church Prayer Walk, praying for what you see. It's a gentle walk from the church down to Baildon town centre and back by a circular route crossing no roads. Copies of the walk leaflet are available in the Prayer Room.

Or join the weekly email prayer mailing list: send your name and email address to: [prayer@bradfordnorth.org.uk](mailto:prayer@bradfordnorth.org.uk)

## **Where the Prayer Room is**

Go through the door to the cloakroom in Wesley's (beside the pigeon holes), up the steps and through the door with the glass panels in the shape of a cross – it's sort of ahead of you to the right.

Or if you can't manage steps, go up the ramp in Wesley's and through the glass door into the church, and then through the door immediately on your right. The door with the glass panels is on your left at the far end of the room.

This room is normally available for prayer, while the church is open.

In it you will find space and peace. And there are also booklets, leaflets and other prayer resources which you can use if you want.

## **If you want help with how to pray**

The Bible is the primary source of help and guidance, in this as in so much else. Start with the Psalms, and see how it's done.

But there are also lots of books on prayer (and books of prayers). You will find some of them in the Prayer Room (see above), along with the other material.

If you want to go further there's a vast amount of written material at Cornerstone in Newmarket Street, Skipton (by far the best Christian bookshop in the region), or more locally try Acorn Bookshop in Sunbridge Road, Bradford. And our Circuit website has links to very good helps on prayer: visit [bradfordnorth.org.uk/prayer.html](http://bradfordnorth.org.uk/prayer.html).

Or come to one of the prayer meetings (see page 2).

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