



Christian Aid Week 2020

Nork with Burgh Heath Hour of Prayer - Monday 11th May 2020

This week is Christian Aid week and so I have put together this simple prayer resource, focusing on the Christian Aid Coronavirus response for our prayers at our Prayer Hour (Monday 11th May) and also for use throughout the week in our homes.

After some introductory information on the overall Coronavirus Response from Christian Aid, it focuses on Christian Aid's work with five specific countries, followed by some prayers which have been written by Christian Aid to help us to pray for the Coronavirus crisis in general at this time.

Further information on the work of Christian Aid (and this week in particular) can be found here:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>

All information included in this PDF has been taken from this website.

We hope to be able to hold a Christian Aid event in the Autumn to raise funds for this excellent charity, but all is dependent on how things progress with the pandemic.

I do hope these resources are helpful.

Love and prayers,

Alex

07312 113019



write:

The coronavirus outbreak threatens the health of our neighbours near and far. Together we must respond quickly to help the most vulnerable.

Coronavirus has shown us that our futures are bound more tightly together than ever before.

And now it is spreading across the world's poorest countries, putting people living in poverty at great risk.

These people are already facing a lack of water, food and healthcare. Some are homeless. Some are living with underlying health issues such as HIV.

As coronavirus infection rates speed up, they will feel the impacts of the virus deeply. We must respond now.

Coronavirus impacts all of us. But love unites us all.

Christian Aid's response

Together with our local partners, we are working quickly to limit the impact of coronavirus in some of the most vulnerable communities around the world.

We are drawing on our experience from the Ebola crisis and helping communities to prevent and delay infection.

We are providing essential soap, water and handwashing training.

We are ensuring urgent health messages get through to help keep people safe.

We are working through our networks of church partners and faith-based organisations to reach the most vulnerable at this critical time.

We're responding now

Christian Aid is responding to the coronavirus outbreak in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.

We're working together with partners and faith leaders to inform people about the risks, offering hygiene and hand washing sessions, equipping health facilities with supplies and providing training to frontline aid workers.

We're providing food packages to some of the most marginalised families and ensuring protection for women affected by domestic violence.



Coronavirus Response: Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh



Our work with Rohingya refugees

Christian Aid has been working with Rohingya men, women and children since they were forced to flee Myanmar three years ago.

We have been providing humanitarian assistance to 150,000 Rohingya refugees and 50,000 host communities in Cox's Bazaar in Bangladesh.

Working with other agencies, we have been providing critical support covering health, water and sanitation, food and shelter for both those living in the refugee camps and their host communities.

The potential impact of coronavirus

Living in a refugee camp is already challenging at the best of times. Camps are overcrowded and lack proper hygiene which increases the potential for the rapid spread of the coronavirus.

Across the refugee camps, 80% of families report having at least one person with a serious illness requiring medical treatment.

In addition, 80% of families report having problems with their temporary shelters and only 67% report having soap.

The coronavirus pandemic compounds the situation and puts their lives at increased risk.

Our immediate response

In order to reduce the risk of transmission, operations in the camps have been reduced to the provision of essential services. All non-essential visits to the camps have been suspended – but our work continues.

Christian Aid has an office in Cox's Bazaar and in Camp 15 with a large warehouse. We have a team of 25 experienced and skilled national staff working together with local NGO partners (Dustha Shasthya Kendra and Dhaka Ahsania Mission) to ensure we respond effectively, particularly in the areas of health and water and sanitation.

To prevent the spread of the virus we are:

Raising awareness of the virus and sharing hygiene messages to people in the camps in their local Rohingya languages. We are doing the same with the host communities through community volunteers and religious leaders. We are also using posters and sharing messages using megaphones.

Helping doctors in the camps receive training so they can treat infected people and train other doctors in health facilities.

Conducting door-to-door handwashing training sessions.

Christian Aid expects to train 85-100 healthcare staff on infection, prevention and disease control. We're also ensuring healthcare staff are equipped with personal protective equipment (PPE) and that handwashing stations are available at the entrances to 10 health facilities.

In addition, we will build additional handwashing stations throughout the camps, and distribute hygiene kits (containing antiseptic liquid and soap) to 50,000 people.

Coronavirus Response: Nigeria



Our response in displacement camps

Christian Aid has been working in camps in Borno state, northeast Nigeria since 2016, to provide essential food to internally displaced people.

We've provided food to 48,550 people, including children and pregnant and breastfeeding mothers. We continue to deliver life-saving food on a monthly basis.

The potential impact of coronavirus

In these overcrowded camps, people lack proper hygiene facilities. The disease would spread rapidly in these circumstances. Thankfully, there have not yet been any confirmed cases in the camps, so our work continues with additional precautions in place.

Our immediate response

The Nigeria team is working hard to ensure they can continue this essential work without putting people living in the camps, or those delivering aid, at risk of getting the coronavirus.

To reduce the risk of spreading the virus, all staff and volunteers delivering aid are wearing protective equipment, such as gloves and masks, and regularly using hand sanitisers.

We have set up hand washing points in the distribution sites, to enable displaced families to wash and sanitise their hands before they arrive at the distribution site, and again when they leave.

Keeping people safe

We now have fewer staff members going into the camps, and we are working with more volunteers based in the camps to reduce unnecessary contact. We are also enabling social distancing to keep people safe.

To raise awareness of the virus, we are using jingles in local languages at distribution sites which inform people of the risks without causing fear and panic.

Coronavirus Response: Myanmar



As this virus continues to spread across the world, we expect Myanmar will be severely affected.

Continued violence in parts of the country, coupled with the risk posed by coronavirus, creates a challenging emergency for vulnerable communities.

There is already poor access to healthcare across the country, and around 300,000 people who have been forced from home are living in camps.

Our immediate response

Christian Aid is already implementing large-scale humanitarian, health and gender projects in Myanmar, together with our partners. With 30 years' experience of working with local partners and faith organisations, we are adapting and developing new projects to respond to coronavirus.

We focus on conflict-affected communities in Rakhine, Northern Shan, Southern Chin and Kachin states, supporting the most vulnerable people in camps, and other hard-to-reach areas.

Our initial response is to provide vital information on prevention, health, water and sanitation support, and to meet basic emergency needs.

How we're protecting vulnerable communities

To prevent the spread of the virus:

- * Our local partners in Northern Shan and Rakhine states are distributing soap to over 30,000 people, demonstrating handwashing techniques and sharing information on the importance of self-quarantine.
- * In Kayin state, we're working closely with health departments and our partner Karen Baptist Convention, to distribute 2,000 surgical masks, 200 bottles of hand sanitiser, 50 pieces of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and 4,000 coronavirus awareness materials.
- * In Chin state, where the first case of coronavirus in Myanmar was reported, our local partner is distributing personal protective and medical equipment for healthcare workers and members of the community, as well as running public health campaigns focusing on hand washing and physical distancing. We are providing soap and food rations to over 15,000 people living in villages currently in quarantine.
- * In Rakhine state, we plan to support our partners by training community groups to produce masks and sanitisers, as well as to install water pipes, and establish hand washing points to improve access to water.
- * We'll support our partners to raise awareness of coronavirus within five communities across Kachin and Kayin states. We'll also provide materials and training to 500 people living with disabilities to produce hand sanitisers and masks, as well as distributing basic cooking items such as rice and oil.
- * We plan to reach people living across Yangon, Mandalay, Kayin, Kachin and Shan states by hosting TV talk shows and running video messages on coronavirus, focusing on the specific impacts the virus will have on women (who make up 70% of health workers) and the additional care that mothers who have recently given birth will need to take.

Coronavirus Response: South Africa



The virus is pushing people further into poverty

Before the virus reached South Africa, one in four people were living below the food poverty line.

Now, our local partners tell us that levels of poverty are overwhelming. Nearly one in two people don't have enough food to eat or are at real risk of hunger.

School feeding programmes are suspended, and many who relied on piece-meal jobs are no longer able to make a living.

Building a safety net for families

The lockdown in South Africa is disproportionality affecting the most vulnerable. Our partner Studies in Poverty and Inequality Institute (SPII), working through Nedlac, has been instrumental in creating an improved safety net for families directly affected by a lack of income.

This comprehensive six-month package, launched by South Africa's president Cyril Ramaphosa, will provide substantially increased grants to people living in poverty.

This historic decision is hailed as a progressive move to put people's dignity at the heart of society.

Moving forward, our partner SPII will work with other civil society organisations, through Nedlac, to monitor grants and ensure they are delivered effectively in the community.

What is Nedlac?

Nedlac is the National Economic Development and Labour Council.

Our partner SPII engages as the formal community lead on this advisory body, jointly with government, labour and business representatives.

Helping people claim their rights

Other partners, including the Shack-dweller Movement (Abahlali baseMjondolo) and the Church Land Programme, have been campaigning for a ban of all evictions, whether legal or illegal, during the pandemic.

This action is to protect people who are living in informal settlements or are homeless to becoming even more at risk of infection.

Keeping people safe

Our partner Bench Marks Foundation is also calling for more respirators to be delivered to mining communities.

People in these communities are more at risk of dying from coronavirus because of widespread respiratory illnesses due to mining activity.

Standing together with marginalised communities

ACT Ubumbano, a coalition of over 30 Southern African partners, is rapidly adapting to coronavirus. Through Ubumbano Voice communities under lockdown are making their voices heard during the pandemic by sharing their experiences and concerns.

Coronavirus Response: Afghanistan



The impact of coronavirus

Afghanistan is a highly fragile country, deeply divided by insecurity, violence and war.

Since January 2020, over 200,000 Afghan refugees have returned to the country from Iran, which has been badly hit by the pandemic.

There are currently lockdowns in six areas of Afghanistan, including Herat city and Kabul. As of 30 April, there have been almost 2,000 confirmed cases and 61 people have died.

Our immediate response

We're focusing our work on communities who are particularly hard to reach. We are working with local partners across Afghanistan to support people to stay safe and to access reliable information about coronavirus.

Through our regular radio programme in Herat province, we're raising awareness of coronavirus and advising people to stay at home.

In Kabul and eastern Afghanistan, we have been sharing health information in mosques, informal settlements and communities. We have provided hygiene kits, containing life-saving soap, to 1,400 people. We've also led awareness-raising sessions and provided hand sanitisers for 600 displaced women.

In Badghis, the risk of coronavirus in crowded displacement camps is very high. We have provided cash to 300 families who have been displaced by violence and drought, to help them return home.

We're also working with 450 human rights advocates in Herat and Badghis to ensure that health messaging is embedded in our community development work.



Prayers in a time of coronavirus

Love never fails

Even in the darkest moments, love gives hope.

Love compels us to fight against coronavirus alongside our sisters and brothers living in poverty.

Love compels us to stand together in prayer with our neighbours near and far.

Love compels us to give and act as one.

Now, it is clear that our futures are bound together more tightly than ever before.

As we pray in our individual homes – around the nation and around the world – we are united as one family.

So, let us pause and find a moment of peace, as we lift up our hearts together in prayer.

Prayers of thanksgiving and intercession

For the health workers tending the seriously ill
for the scientists working on a vaccination
for the researchers analysing data and identifying trends
for the media outlets working to communicate reality
for the supermarket workers, hygiene and sanitation providers
for the good news stories of recoveries and effective planning
for the singing from balconies by locked-down communities
for the recognition that isolation doesn't need to mean loneliness
for the notes through letterboxes offering help and support
for the internet and telephones and technology that connects
for the awakened appreciation of what is truly important
Thanks be to God.

For those who are unwell and concerned for loved ones
for those who were already very anxious
for those immune suppressed or compromised
for those vulnerable because of underlying conditions
for those in the 'most at risk to coronavirus' categories
for those watching their entire income stream dry up
for those who have no choice but to go out to work
for those who are afraid to be at home
for those who are more lonely than they've ever been
for those who are bereaved and grieving.
God be their healer, comfort and protection,
be their strength, shield and provision
be their security, safety and close companion

And raise up your Church

to be your well-washed hands and faithful feet
to be present to the pain
to respond with love in action
if even from a safe distance.

God, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

A prayer for times of isolation

'For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come... will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.' (Romans 8:38-39)

God of heaven and earth,
in these times of isolation,
apart from loved ones
distant from friends
away from neighbours
thank you that there is nothing
in all of creation,
not even coronavirus,
that is able to separate us from your love.

And may your love that never fails
continue to be shared
through the kindness of strangers
looking out for each other,
for neighbours near and far
all recognising our shared vulnerability,
each of us grateful for every breath,
and willing everyone to know the gift

of a full and healthy life.

Keep us all in your care.

Amen.

A prayer for medical workers everywhere

Restoring and healing God,
thank you for medical workers everywhere,
embodying sacrificial love in these challenging times
putting the welfare of others before their own
staying away from their family and loved ones
comforting the concerned and bereaved
reassuring the anxious and vulnerable
working to heal and restore people who are ill.
Be their guide, strength, wisdom and hope.

We pray for those in authority to do right by them
for proper protective equipment to be provided
and for their dedication to be met with much gratitude
and appreciation when they return home, exhausted.

And we pray for medical workers around the world,
where resources and protective equipment
are always in short supply, not only now but always.
May these extraordinary times
lead to deep and necessary changes in how our world works,
resulting in a genuine effort to address the profound injustice
of life expectancy being determined by geography,
to awaken us all to the reality of how connected we all are
and to work together to create the community and world

we all want to be part of.

So help us, God,

Amen.

A prayer for a global pandemic

'Love...bears all things,

believes all things,

hopes all things,

endures all things.

Love never ends.'

(1 Corinthians 13:7-8)

Loving God,

strengthen our innermost being

with your love that bears all things

even the weight of this global pandemic

even the long haul of watching for symptoms

of patiently waiting for this to pass

watching and waiting,

keeping our gaze fixed on you,

and looking out for our neighbours

near and far.

Instil in our shaken souls

the belief and hope that all things

are possible with your creative love

for strangers to become friends

for science to source solutions

for resources to be generously shared

so everyone, everywhere, may have what they need
for your perfect love that knows no borders
may cast out any fear and selfishness that divides.

May your love that never ends
be our comfort, strength and guide
for the wellbeing of all and
the glory of God.

Amen.

A prayer for the church

May your love that never fails
strengthen the weak
encourage the fearful
calm the anxious
heal the sick
through your church –
your washed hands
and feet on earth –
distant but still present
virtual but still connected
apart but still helping.
God in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Amen.

The prayer that Jesus taught us

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours

now and forever.

Amen.