

# **MARRIAGE RESOURCE**

## **PRAYER DIARY July- September**

### **July**

#### **Other Organisations**

- 1 Praise God for the work of CARE, the Christian Institute and Christian Voice, in upholding Christian values in our nation, and pray for guidance for them.
- 2 Pray for the Evangelical Alliance, that it will encourage its many member churches to do more for marriage, (and please write to ask the EA to do so).
- 3 Explore (formerly Students Exploring Marriage) are seeking more couples who are willing to answer questions about their marriage from Lower Sixth-Formers.
- 4 Pray for Nick Gulliford as he continues to encourage the development of Community Family Trusts; and that local Councils will allow their Registrars to encourage couples to have marriage preparation.
- 5 Give thanks for the informative weekly email marriage newsletter produced by Dave and Liz Percival of 2-in-2-1, and pray that more will ask for it, and read it.
- 6 The Salvation Army have a marriage counselling service. Pray that it may be used to restore marriages inside and outside The Salvation Army.
- 7 The Church of Scotland's Social Responsibility work includes work for marriages and families. Pray that they will be guided and encouraged in all they do.
- 8 Pray for Sue Burridge, the Church of England's Marriage and Family Policy Adviser, as she encourages dioceses to do more for marriage.
- 9 Give thanks for the active support that Roman Catholic Bishops give to marriage and family work, and pray that churches will follow their lead.
- 10 Pray for Paul Finn, as he encourages and advises on marriage work in Assemblies of God Churches.

#### **Marriage in Crisis**

- 11 Lift to The Lord those you know who are struggling in marriage and ask Him to show you how to pray for them. Pray that the book 'The Divorce Remedy' will be of help to many.
- 12 Pray for those who feel lonely and isolated in their marriage. Pray that they will return to being each other's helper, comforter and best friend.
- 13 Pray for couples in difficulties – for a willingness on both sides to work at their marriage relationship, to listen carefully to each other and to admit fault.
- 14 Pray for those who are caught in a cycle of miscommunication and misunderstanding, that *today* there will be an opportunity for clear communication leading to forgiveness and healing.
- 15 Pray for the children of parents who are struggling to relate, that God will protect them from verbal, emotional or physical harm.

- 16 Pray for those who are exasperated and don't know where to turn, that the Lord will show them a way through their problems. Pray that they will seek counselling, or find help from couples who have been to the brink and back themselves.
- 17 Pray for those who counsel and care for those in crisis. Pray that God will give them wisdom, patience and insight to lead couples to a changed and renewed relationship.

### **Summer Holidays.**

- 18 Give thanks for holiday times, times apart from the pressures of work, times for recreation and renewal and refreshing. Praise God that rest is part of His plan for us.
- 19 Pray for families that this holiday time will be a time of building and deepening relationships and not of isolating and growing apart.
- 20 Pray for single parents, especially those who struggle with conflicting responsibilities of working and school holidays.
- 21 Pray for spouses and families, especially those who do not normally spend much time together, that during their summer holiday they will be able to relax and deepen their love.
- 22 Pray for those who cannot afford to get away, that the Lord will meet their needs for rest and recreation and touch them in a special way. Pray too for those whose plans have been changed by illness or other crisis.
- 23 Pray for packing and preparation to go away, which is often a pressured time – pray for co-operation and for peace.
- 24 Pray for those attending Christian houseparties, camps and beach missions, both for participants and leaders, that their family life will be enriched and blessed.

### **Your Church**

- 25 Give praise and thanks to God for the local church of which you are a member. Pray that it will increase its work for marriages.
- 26 Pray specifically for the marriages of those in positions of leadership in your church, that such couples will have time for each other.
- 27 Ask the Lord if there is some way in which you could encourage your minister or pastor in his/her marriage, and do so, e.g. pay for them to go on a marriage enhancement event.
- 28 Pray that your church will adopt an integrated and ongoing ministry to marriage, on its own or together with churches nearby. Pray for lay couples who could give a lead in this.
- 29 Pray for the ministry of your church to those who are soon to be married. Pray for those who provide marriage preparation; ask that they will be open to develop it further, and will consider using a pre-marriage questionnaire (inventory): PREPARE or FOCCUS.
- 30 Pray for any ministries in your church which encourage and the married, either through enhancement events or courses, National Marriage Week events, or teaching and preaching, that this ministry will be fruitful, and ongoing.
- 31 Pray for all those who give prayerful pastoral care to married couples, either through mentoring, support or guidance in difficulties, or counselling.

## August

### The bereaved and the lonely

- 1 Give thanks that some churches are providing bereavement groups, care and counselling for those who have been bereaved. Pray for all involved, and for more churches to do so.
- 2 Pray by name for anyone known to you who has recently lost their spouse. Pray too for those who continue to grieve and who have found little comfort for years after their loss.
- 3 Pray for those who, having been widowed, are too elderly or frail to continue living alone and face a change of home and routine, as well as the loss of their spouse.
- 4 Pray for those who re-marry after being widowed. Pray for sensitivity and adjustment, for each of the spouses. Pray for those who prepare them for marriage.
- 5 Pray for those who have been deserted by a spouse, who face not just the loss of a partner, but that rejection and all the emotional turmoil that surrounds them.
- 6 Pray for those who live in hope of a spouse returning, especially for children who long for the reunion of their parents.
- 7 Give thanks for the Bereaved Parents Network (of Care for the Family), and pray that it may become known to those who have suffered the trauma of the death of a child.

### Marriage Milestones

- 8 Give thanks to God for the MR Marriage Milestones leaflets, published and supplied by the Christian Publicity Organisation. Pray they may become more widely known and used.
- 9 Pray for those who are experiencing a dull or demanding marriage and feel they have made a mistake. Pray that they will each listen to the other, and will each help the other enjoy their marriage and will each avoid third party entanglements.
- 10 Pray for any couples known to you who have recently had a baby or newly adopted a child. Pray that their marriage will be blessed by the precious addition of a child, and that they will adjust well.
- 11 Pray for couples who have their last child leaving home, pray that this will be a time for them to strengthen their love for each other and to enjoy common interests.
- 12 Pray for any couple who are coping with the shock and stress of redundancy. Pray that they will learn all that the Lord wants to teach them, and support each other.
- 13 Pray for those couples who are either forced by circumstances to swap traditional family roles, or those who choose to reverse roles. Pray for fathers who undertake the majority of childcare, and that mothers will still have quality time with their children.
- 14 Pray for couples adjusting to the joys and trials of retirement, for new routines and new activities. Pray that some will become involved in helping marriages, a much needed ministry.

## **Marriage Resource's resources**

- 15 Give thanks for the many people who have been helped through the resources from Marriage Resource.
- 16 Give thanks for the leaflets that have been produced in recent years and are supplied for us by the Christian Publicity Organisation.
- 17 Pray that Churches will find and use the page 'Taking Marriage Seriously in Your Church'.
- 18 The four pages on Marriage Preparation and Mentoring are designed to help churches choose a course or design their own course. Pray that they will be used.
- 19 Pray that the pages on Marriage Enhancement and Helping Marriages in Difficulties will help churches to plan their ministries to married couples in their churches and beyond.
- 20 Pray that the pages on Chastity, Marriage First Aid, and Marriage Thanksgiving and Rededication Services will be of help to more churches.

## **Relate and other organisations**

- 21 Many people with marriage difficulties talk to Relate for help. Give thanks for all the marriages that have been restored through Relate counsellors.
- 22 Pray that all Relate Counsellors will have the renewal of marriages as their primary aim.
- 23 Relate counselling has been of help to many spouses who have problems with sexual intercourse. Give thanks for that, and pray that this help will become widely known.
- 24 The media often ask Relate for comments on news items. Pray that their spokespeople will make helpful contributions.
- 25 Relate was founded (as the National Marriage Guidance Council) with the Christian values of lifelong, faithful marriage and chastity before it. Relate dropped those values in the 1960s. Pray that it will adopt them again.
- 26 Scottish Marriage Guidance is the equivalent organisation in Scotland. Pray for their work.
- 27 Some Church of England Dioceses have Family Life and Marriage Education (FLAME) officers and/or groups. Pray that they will gain a hearing as they try to encourage marriage work in parishes.
- 28 The Mothers Union is more widespread than FLAME but in the UK its meetings are chiefly attended by retired people. Pray that it will be effective in supporting marriages.
- 29 Give thanks for what is being done in Afro-Caribbean churches for marriage, and pray that more may be done.
- 30 Nothing is known to Marriage Resource of marriage support from the centre in the Methodist, URC, Baptist, Elim or new denominations. Please pray for whatever good things are happening, and for an increase.
- 31 Pray for Intimate Life Ministries as they offer one-day Marriage Preparation and one-day and three-day intensive Marriage Counselling.

## September

### New academic year

- 1 Give thanks to God for all that families have enjoyed in the holidays.
- 2 Pray for children and young people who are anxious about starting a new school or college.
- 3 Pray for the marriages of those whose youngest children are going away to college, that spouses will be a comfort and support to each other.
- 4 Pray for teachers and academic staff who face considerable pressures; especially for those who are married, that their spouse may be understanding.
- 5 Pray for new opportunities for Christians to be involved in schools in PHSE and other areas where they can teach young people values that will promote good and healthy marriages in the years to come.
- 6 Thank the Lord for the resources for teachers on sex and marriage produced by Care for Education, Family and Youth Concern and other organisations, and pray that they will be purchased and well used.
- 7 Pray for your church leaders at the beginning of new programmes or cycles of teaching, that they will include teaching on chastity and on marriage from time to time.

### Counselling

- 8 Praise God for all those who have done marriage counsellor training. Pray for any you know, that they will be encouraged. Pray for those recently trained, that the Lord will give them confidence that He will work through them by His grace.
- 9 Pray that more counsellors will use the ENRICH and REFOCCUS questionnaires.
- 10 There is a need for more trained people to help in this area. Pray that more will respond to the need for counsellor training, especially husbands and wives together.
- 11 Pray for those couples who have taken the step of asking for counselling but who remain on waiting lists. Pray that God will protect them during this anxious time, and that many will be given "The Divorce Remedy" to read.
- 12 Pray for those who need help but are reluctant to ask for it; pray that they will be encouraged and enabled to find the help they need.
- 13 Praise the Lord for the testimony of those who have been helped by the care and counselling of Christians, and pray that their testimony will be an encouragement to others to seek help also.
- 14 Pray that the use of Divorce Care's 'Before You Divorce' video will cause many to seek to restore their marriage rather than divorce.

## **National Marriage Week**

- 15 Praise God that NMW continues to have an impact both through the church activities and through the media interest.
- 16 Pray for David Percival and his advisers as they plan for the Week in February, and raise finance to cover all costs.
- 17 Pray for magazine editors, that when they plan editorials and articles for their publications next year, they will include good coverage for NMW.
- 18 Pray that media interest generally will grow and that programme makers will schedule helpful marriage material for that period.
- 19 Pray that well known people will speak for marriage during the Week.
- 20 The plans for a Marriage Thanksgiving and Rededication Service, which are on this website, have been used by many churches. Give thanks and pray that more will do so.
- 21 Pray that your church and many other churches will begin planning events for NMW soon. (Ideas are on this website and on the NMW website). Ask The Lord if He wishes you to be involved in them.

## **Broken Marriages**

- 22 Ask the Lord to challenge churches, especially leaders, about their apathy toward marriage and marriage breakdown. Give thanks for those who are increasing their ministry to marriage.
- 23 The statistics of marital breakdown are very sad; pray that people will be neither overwhelmed by them nor apathetic towards them, but will be stirred into action.
- 24 Pray for those whose dreams have been shattered and whose hearts have been hardened by the tragedy of divorce. Pray for people to come alongside them who will show them the love of Christ, and who will help them to have forgiveness for each other.
- 25 Pray for those who have been raised in broken families, that rather than rejecting marriage they will be more determined to make and keep a lifelong commitment if they marry. Pray that our page 'Suggestions for Separated or Divorced Parents' will be useful in helping parents encourage their children regarding lifelong marriage.
- 26 Pray for young children, that they will learn not to blame themselves for their parents' marriage breakdown, and that they will experience God's love in many ways.
- 27 Pray for the broken marriages of the Royal Family, Members of Parliament and of celebrities, that wherever possible they will be restored.
- 28 Give thanks for the work of the Maranatha Community in making people more aware of the need to encourage lifelong marriage.
- 29 Pray for all who campaign for more support for marriage work.
- 30 Pray for Christian leaders and preachers to turn this nation back to God!