

Prayer Guide for March 2023

In a speech on March 1st the Governor of the Bank of England, Andrew Bailey, spoke about inflation and what the bank is doing, through interest rates, to bring it under control. Amongst all the figures - food inflation up 17%, fuel inflation beginning to fall - perhaps the most important comments were two reminders, to himself and his listeners. First; that, when the bank was set up more than 300 years ago, its purpose was 'to promote the good of the people of the United Kingdom'; and secondly, that the data, 'can only tell us so much [for] it is important to hear the human stories – the impact [this crisis] has on people's lives'. The Bank of England holds regular Citizens' meetings, in order to hear first-hand how people are coping – or not.

We also need to listen to these stories, in order to bring to God, in prayer, those most severely impacted. We rely on God knowing, better than we, what their needs are. But God still wants us to ask, understanding what those needs are; seeking his compassion, mercy, peace and justice for all suffering economic challenges that stretch them to the limit.

Almighty God, look with compassion on all your children,
who suffer through the continuing cost-of-living crisis;
those who are hungry, anxious, homeless, and have no hope.
And as we seek your mercy,
so inspire us to respond with Your love towards all in need.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ,
who gave all he had that others might live.
Amen

Especially we pray for:

- Hope for all who cannot pay their bills and feel despair and abandonment.
- Those on low pay, or a fixed income, for whom continuing inflation brings real anxiety.
- Those involved with and affected by strikes and industrial action, and all concerned for negotiating settlements – for wisdom and compassion. Especially remembering those working in education, and the NHS.
- As the war in Ukraine enters a second year, for willingness to seek peace and justice.
- For those starting training this month (March 13th) to be Workplace Chaplains on a national online course being led by Dick Johnson, and including new volunteers in Worcestershire.
- For FWW trustees at their quarterly meeting (March 9th) as they consider plans to sustain and develop our work of chaplaincy in these difficult financial times.
- For Dick and FWW trustee Martin Allen taking part in a debate at the Anglican Diocesan Synod (March 11th) on promoting chaplaincy as a means of putting faith into action.
- In our cycle of prayer this month:
 - For FWW Chaplains in Alvechurch – Sue Brotherton and Helen Ayling, and giving thanks for the ministry of Philippa Brakes, who has recently stepped back from chaplaincy.
 - FWW Trustees, representing the Baptist Church – Stuart Sandys, and our search for a second Baptist trustee.