

## Prayer Guide for May 2023

***We use this guide at the monthly online lunchtime prayer meeting, and commend it for use in personal prayers, and in leading intercessions at a service. Our May prayer meeting will be from 1 – 1.30 pm on Wednesday May 3<sup>rd</sup>, with the next meeting on Tuesday June 6<sup>th</sup>.***

*May brings an unprecedented number of public holidays – three – and so the theme for our prayers this month is time off from work.*

*There are laws which regulate working hours, including the Working Time Regulations 1998. Unless exemptions apply the maximum average weekly working hours are 48, with a minimum of 11 consecutive hours rest in any 24 hour period, and 5.6 weeks of paid leave. With agreement workers can opt out. Since the UK left the EU discussions continue to scrap or change these laws by December 2023. The expectation is that, in seeking greater productivity and growth in the economy, worker's rights will be eroded, which will place further pressure on people already seeking more overtime, where available, to pay rising bills.*

*All this contributes to stress, illness, and a growing imbalance between work and the rest of life, with a consequent negative impact on relationships and families.*

Almighty God, whose Son had his work, but also rested and prayed,  
we pray for all those who work long hours beyond their control;  
those burdened by their work which is more than they can manage, poorly paid or difficult,  
and those who find that rest and relaxation eludes them.

May all find balance in work and life, knowing your love, compassion and care;  
and fulfilment in all they do whether through work,  
at rest, or in spending time relaxing with others.

We pray in the name of Jesus Christ.

**Amen**

Especially we pray for:

- Those denied proper rest and holidays from their work.
- All who have to take on extra work covering vacancies, and the work of colleagues off sick.
- Justice and fairness in the laws that regulate time off work as changes are made.
- Those working overtime in order to make ends meet.
- Those without work.
- Refugees from war, conflict and poverty risking all for a better life for their families.
- King Charles and the coronation, and all who will be working longer hours during the holiday period.
- FWW chaplains as they visit people at work - for grace, discernment and insights as people share their experience of work and rest.
- Planning for the future of FWW as we seek to provide more chaplaincy when money is scarce, and for the Spring Seminar on June 8<sup>th</sup> at Pershore Baptist Church as we celebrate the work of chaplaincy and the hope, compassion and care it brings to many.
- In our cycle of prayer this month for:
  - Chaplains in Upton – Amy Wearing (Team Leader), Richard Barley, Sarah Braithwaite.
  - FWW Trustees: Representing the United Reformed Church across Worcestershire, Andrew Mann-Ray.