

Welcome to the FWW Prayer Guide for September, focusing on the economy, workers, and our ministry of workplace chaplaincy. We hope it will be useful for personal prayer, but also for those who lead intercessions in services. Do pass it on to others. Any feedback from use of the Guide would be most welcome.

We also use the Guide as the basis for our monthly online prayer meeting, held on the first Wednesday of each month. The July meeting will therefore be on **Sept 3rd from 1.00 – 1.30 p.m.** (the next will be on Oct 1st). For the Zoom link, and any feedback, please email dickjohnson@faithatwork.org.uk The guide is in three parts: an introduction to the theme; a written prayer or collect; and finally, specific items for prayer.

The economics of immigration

In recent weeks flags have been appearing on lampposts across the county. They appeared on our street in Bromsgrove overnight. Organisers maintain it is patriotism that is the motivation, but one cannot but connect it to the national debate about immigration, with its undertones of racism and xenophobia. As a multi-national family (my wife is Japanese, and our children mixed race) there is something rather disturbing about this. One reason people migrate is economics; the need to find a place and the means to earn a living, in peace and security, away from conflict, poverty and regimes which make this impossible. Migration feeds economic growth and maintains essential services – in health, social care, transport, food production (those who pick and pack our fruit and veg), and many other sectors. There is also a cost when migration becomes contentious – the cost of policing protests and managing illegal migration is just the start.

Jesus, drawing on a core theme from the Hebrew Bible, taught us to welcome the stranger (Matthew 25 v35). And in a reading from the letter to the Hebrews in the lectionary for August 31st (Heb 13 v 1-2), the writer urges their readers to, 'Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.'

**Almighty God, who in your Son Jesus Christ, became a stranger in this world
in order for your love to be made known to all peoples;
inspire us with that love to welcome the stranger, overcome our fear, protect the vulnerable,
and to always seek your justice and peace in our economy and our communities.
We pray in the name of him who died that all might live, Jesus Christ our saviour.
Amen**

Especially we give thanks for:

- The completion, on time, of the closure of the FWW office at Top Barn Business Centre.

And we pray for:

- Refugees and migrants, leaving home to seek peace and prosperity, who are vulnerable to exploitation and danger as they travel, and for charities and volunteers who seek to provide help, food and shelter.
- Those working in our immigration system, as they judge asylum cases, and safeguard the most at risk.
- Politicians both with the power to make a difference, and those who debate the issues, that they may act with wisdom and compassion for the good of all, and not stir up division and fear.
- Those at work in our communities, and workplaces where chaplains visit, who feel anxious because of the current proliferation of flags, and for Christians in speaking up for tolerance and welcome.
- Our FWW Chaplains, as they make their regular visits, that they may be alive to issues of racism and exclusion within the work culture they encounter, and the wisdom to know how to respond.
- Those who work in agriculture and food production, in this season of harvest, as they count the cost of the dry weather over the summer, and for the Farm Community Network, and its helpline volunteers as support those most acutely affected.
- Those who are dealing with long term illness and life limiting conditions, especially from our FWW family.
- In our **cycle of prayer for the work of FWW**, this month we pray for chaplains in Kidderminster – Barbara Pugh and Albert Wilkinson, chaplains to market traders in the town.