

Hear our prayer

April – July 2017



**'When I
needed a
neighbour,
were you
there?'**



We believe in life before death

Week beginning 2 April

Hope in the wilderness

Read: Ezekiel 37:1-14

In this final week of Lent, pray for those who are in a wilderness of weariness, at risk of losing hope that things will ever improve. Pray that they will find the strength to choose hope, whatever the circumstances.

Pray for the Christian Aid team in Ethiopia and their country manager Yitna Tekaligne. Give thanks for the hope the Ethiopia Appeal brought to those facing the worst drought in three decades last year, for the schoolchildren who were fed, and

the safe drinking water and emergency supplies provided to the most vulnerable families.

*Lord God,
speak life and breathe hope
into the dry and weary places
in our lives and in your world.
Amen.*

Week beginning 9 April

Dirty money?

Read: Matthew 21:1-13

Holy Week, the week Jesus overturned the tables of the money changers, and the week we pray for all those taking part in the Big Bank Shift campaign.

Pray for courage for those who will visit banks and attend banks' AGMs over the next month. Pray that their voices will be heard as they ask banks to shift from investing in fossil fuels to clean energy.

Pray for all who are coming to the end of the *Count Your Blessings* journey this week. (caid.org.uk/lent)

*Help us to turn the tables, Lord
to transform how our money is used
to bring life before death
for those most affected by climate
change.
Amen.*



Week beginning 16 April

Were you there?

Read: Matthew 28:1-10

When soldiers started murdering and looting in his village in South Sudan, Michael (pictured below) had to flee to the swamps with his family. That would be frightening for anybody, but for Michael it was even more traumatic – because his eyesight is very poor, he had to be guided through the water to safety.

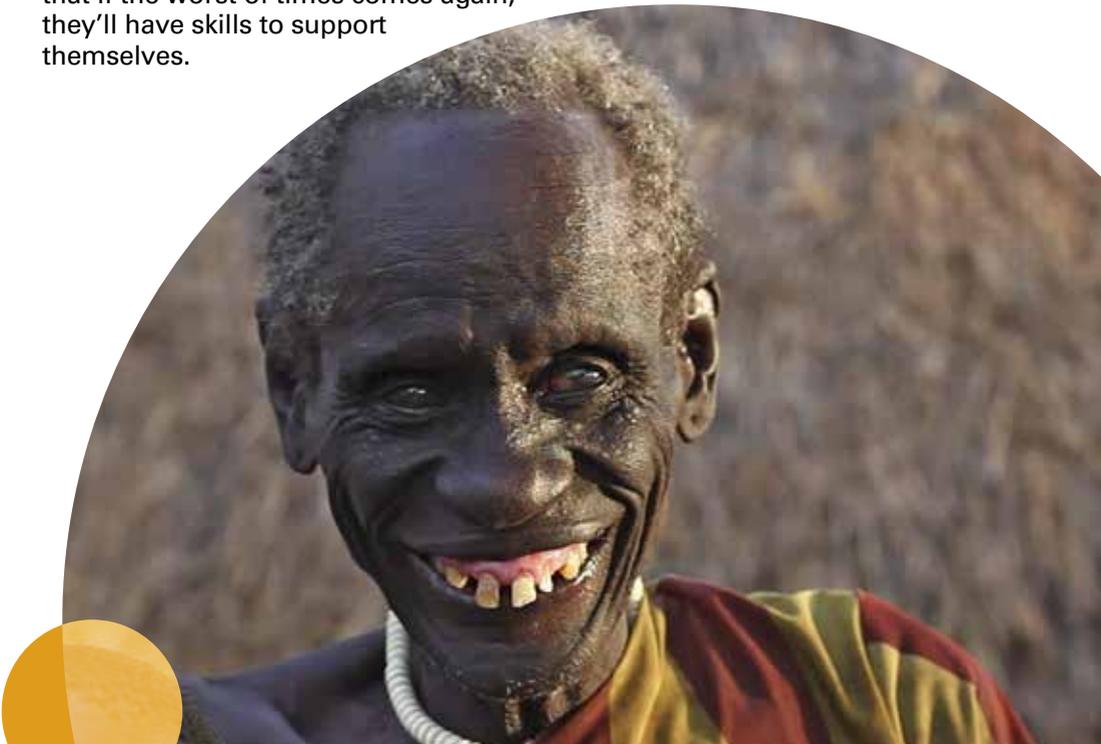
When Michael returned home, he found that everything he owned had been stolen or destroyed. But our local partner organisation was there. We gave Michael new fishing hooks so he could feed his family. Now he's teaching them how to catch fish, so that if the worst of times comes again, they'll have skills to support themselves.

Pray that the Christian Aid Easter and South Sudan Crisis Appeal will bring necessary supplies and new life to communities on the brink of starvation and facing famine in South Sudan.

Give thanks for Earth Day on the 23rd April. Pray that it will help us experience a deeper connection with nature and as a global community.

*Our Father, it is your universe,
it is your will, let us be at peace;
let the souls of your people be cool;
you are our Father,
remove all evil from our path.
Amen.*

*(A prayer from Nuer, South Sudan
From Heart of Prayer, Anthony Gittins CSSp, 1985)*



Week beginning 23 April

Freed from death

Read: Acts 2:14a, 22-32

Pray for communities in Nepal remembering the second anniversary of the devastating earthquake that struck on 24 April 2015. Pray for the many who were bereaved and who are still rebuilding their lives.

Pray for World Malaria Day on 25 April. Give thanks for twins Isua and Yakubu from Nigeria, (above and on the front cover) and the many children like them who have recovered from malaria.

Pray for the work of the Centre for Gospel Health and Development

Services in Nigeria, which seeks to improve the health of those living in poverty.

Pray for the Forth, Tay and Erskine Bridge Crosses happening in Scotland in April and May: for safety, fun and lots of sponsorship!

*Lord Jesus,
freed from death,
comfort the bereaved
and inspire us to keep working
for fullness of life for all.
Amen.*



Week beginning 30 April

Walking together

Read: Luke 24:13-35

Pray for Vision 2020, Christian Aid's future way of working. Pray that we will build bridges based on the principle: 'My future is bound up with your future', and that we will forge a truly global partnership.

Pray for the Christian Aid Ireland team and for its Chief Executive, Rosamond Bennett. Pray for the Gala Dinner on 5 May, to be hosted by

the Lord Mayor of Belfast to mark 60 years of Christian Aid Week. Pray that this will be an uplifting event and raise much-needed funds for Christian Aid's work.

*Emmaus Road Jesus,
help us to recognise you
in the company of a friend,
in the face of the
stranger,
in the sharing of
bread.
Amen.*





Week beginning 7 May

Life abundant

Read: John 10:1-10

Thursday 11 May marks 10 years since the Gaza blockade began.

Nabeel Abu Shanab, pictured above, once had a happy life farming the land that he treasures, growing produce for export. He used to travel from Gaza to Israel to sell his goods. Now, like most Palestinians, he struggles to provide for his family.

With the support of Christian Aid partner, the Agricultural Development Association, he was learning new farming techniques to boost his income. But the lands around his neighbourhood were shelled in 2014 and his greenhouse was destroyed. He says he feels hopeless.

Pray for an end to the blockade, so the people of Gaza can begin to recover and rebuild their lives. And pray for all parties to stop targeting civilians. Pray for Nabeel and his family, and for the work of the Agricultural Development Association, who are helping communities eke out an existence in extreme circumstances.

*God of life,
we pray for all that has been
stolen, killed and destroyed
by the 10-year blockade of Gaza.
We pray for healing, hope and peace
and an end to the blockade.
Amen.*



Week beginning 14 May

A safe place to call home

Read: Psalm 31

Nejebbar fled violence in Afghanistan, but her hopes for a safe, peaceful future for her family feel like a distant dream. They've spent the past six months in a tent in a refugee camp in Greece, with little protection from the hot sun and the wind and rain.

Pray for Nejebbar and all those stuck in refugee camps in Greece. Pray for their mental health and that they will be supported to continue their journey to safety.

Give thanks for the dedication of so many volunteers who have made Christian Aid Week possible for the past 60 years.

*God of life,
we pray for all who are stuck in
refugee camps.
May they find the strength and hope
they need,
may they be granted compassion and
safe passage,
may they find a safe place to call
home.
Amen.*



Week beginning 21 May

Lord of Heaven and Earth

Read: Acts 17:22-31

Pray for the 'God of creation, God of justice, God of the poor' conference taking place at Lee Abbey, Devon, this week. Pray for Christian Aid staff Ashley Leighton Plom and Christine Allen who will speak at the event.

Pray for the Christian Aid Scotland team and the head of team, Sally Foster-Fulton. Pray for the team attending the Church of Scotland 'Heart and Soul' event in Edinburgh on 21 May, for meaningful conversations and helpful connections.

Pray for all who speak on behalf of Christian Aid across the UK and Ireland, that they will encourage, inspire and challenge all who hear to live out the gospel imperative of ending extreme poverty.

*Lord of Heaven and Earth,
in who we live, and move
and have our being.
Help us to be your representatives
at work in the world,
speaking with clarity and bringing
hope of another possible world.
Amen.*

Week beginning 28 May

Bearing witness

Read: Acts 1:6-14

Pray for the Christian Aid Wales team and the head of team, Huw Thomas. Pray for the Urdd Eisteddfod at Bridgend from 29 May – 3 June, the largest national touring youth festival in Wales, and the Christian Aid team which hopes to connect with the young people there.

Volunteer week runs from 1-7 June. Give thanks for the many volunteers who give their time and talents to the work of Christian Aid in the UK and Ireland. Pray for those who help in our offices, for our volunteer speakers and teachers, for our media and campaigns

volunteers, and for all who give time in their churches and local communities to raise awareness and funds. Pray that staff and volunteers may work together in effective partnership.

*Thank you, God,
for all who constantly
devote themselves to
prayer and for all who
bear witness to your work
in the world by volunteering
in many ways for Christian Aid.
Amen.*





Week beginning 4 June

Pentecost peace

Read: John 20:19-23

This week marks the 50th anniversary of the Six-Day War, after which Israel gained control of East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Mark the 24th of each month in your calendar to join in the global ecumenical prayer vigil for peace in the Middle East. This vigil began on 24 December 2012 and will continue across the globe, on the 24th of every month, until the Israeli occupation is dismantled, violence in the Middle East ends, and all can celebrate a just

and lasting negotiated resolution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

*Pray not for Arab or Jew,
for Palestinian or Israeli,
but pray rather for ourselves,
that we might not
divide them in our prayers
but keep them both together
in our hearts.
Amen.*

Week beginning 11 June

Three in one

Read: 2 Corinthians 13:11-13

Friday 16 June is the Day of the African Child. Pray for the thousands of children who were orphaned by the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone in 2014-15. Give thanks for the role the faith community played to educate and inform, in order to prevent stigma and a return of the disease.

Pray for the Christian Aid Team in Sierra Leone, and for the country manager, Jeanne Kamara. And pray for SABI, a four-year programme funded by UK aid and being delivered by a consortium of international and Sierra Leonean partners, led by Christian Aid.

Pray that SABI will strengthen community-led accountability, increasing awareness of, and demand for, the delivery of basic services – including health, education, social protection, water and energy – in every district of the country.

*Three in one, God,
may your wisdom
love and peace be with
the Christian Aid team and partners
in Sierra Leone this week.
Amen.*



Week beginning 18 June

Father's Day

Read: Genesis 18:1-15 and 21:1-7

Melita Sadera lives in Sitoka, a Maasai village in Narok County, Kenya. Melita attends the Fathers' Forum, set up by the Transmara Rural Development Programme one of the development arms of the Anglican Church of Kenya.

Give thanks and pray for the Fathers' Forum, that it will educate fathers to support mothers to deliver their babies in hospital rather than at home, where complications can lead to the death of the mother and/or the baby.

Pray for all those who will join the Christian Aid North East England team on the Bede's Way Sponsored Walk and pilgrimage on 24th June.

*Father God,
Thank you for reminding us
through Abraham and Sarah
that nothing is too
wonderful for you.
We pray for fathers
across the world this week.
Grant them the courage
and wisdom they
need to be fully
present parents.
Amen.*



Week beginning 25 June

Cast out

Read: Genesis 21:8-21

Give thanks and pray for the work of the Poorest Areas Civil Society programme (PACS), which is operating in seven of the poorest states in India. Pray that they will help socially excluded people to access their rights. Pray for Christian Aid as it seeks to lead the consortium of agencies that makes up PACS, and for Anand Kumar, its director.

Pray for all who are victims of torture and trafficking on 26 June, the International Day in Support of Victims

Week beginning 2 July

I belong

Read: Matthew 10:40-42

Pray for the Speak Up week of action from the 1-9 July. Pray for meaningful and effective conversations between campaigners and politicians.

Give thanks for the International Day of Cooperatives on 4 July and for the difference cooperatives have made to the lives of thousands across the world.

Gertrude, from Burundi, (pictured right) explains the difference cooperatives have made to her life: 'Before joining the co-op I felt alone. I could encounter a problem, like my

of Torture and the International Day against Drug Use and Illicit Trafficking.

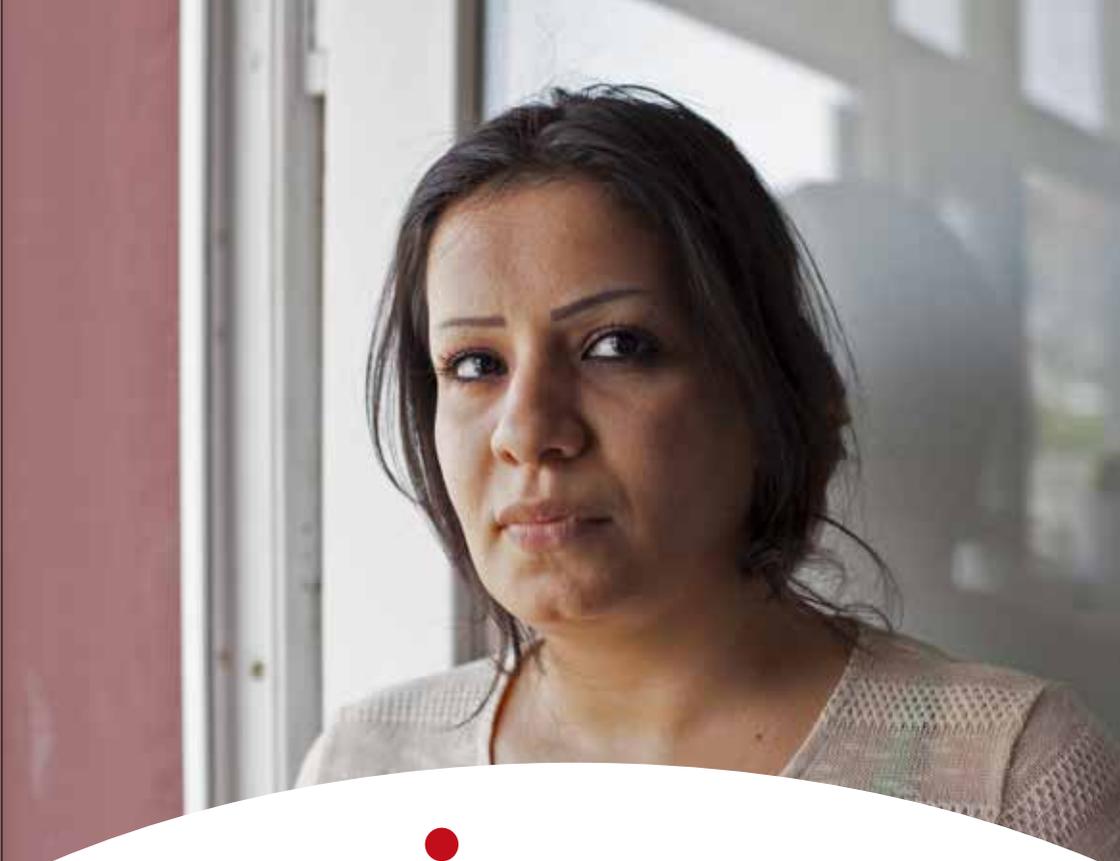
God who provided a well of water for Hagar, thank you for PACS India, help them in their work to ensure that no one is excluded from the feast of life. Amen.

child being sick, and I didn't know how to pay for their medical fees. But now, after joining the co-op, when a member falls sick or has a relative who has fallen sick, there is a way to share it with the group. So now I feel like I belong to a community.'

Pray for peace in South Sudan on the anniversary of its independence on 9 July.

Welcoming God, may we never miss the opportunity to give a cup of cold water to your thirsty ones. Amen.





Week beginning 9 July

Living with injustice

**Read: Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49
and 58-67**

This is Wasna, mother of four sons in Iraq. When she was in her early twenties her family arranged her marriage, and after three years her husband started beating her. Her youngest son died in an accident and she was unjustly blamed for his death. Her family have threatened to kill her.

Pray for Wasna and women like her. Pray for Christian Aid partner Asuda, which provides these women with legal and psychological support.

Pray for the 'Loving One Another' biblical discussion toolkit. Pray that it will help the Scottish Episcopal church to facilitate helpful and necessary conversations about gender-based violence across Scotland.

*Loving God,
we pray for all who live in fear
in their own homes.
We pray for Asuda and other
Christian Aid partners
who help women find safety
and peace.
Amen.*

Week beginning 16 July

Burst into song

Read: Isaiah 55:10-13

Tuesday 18 July is Nelson Mandela Day. Give thanks for Mandela's inspirational legacy. Pray for South Africa today and the challenges of inequality that it still faces.

Pray for the Christian Aid South Africa country manager, Julie Meighan, and for Gerhard Buttner who is covering her maternity leave. Pray for effective joint work with ACT Alliance partners in South Africa, that together we can address challenges of evictions, inadequate shelter and housing, lack of clean water, sanitation or electricity, and land grabbing.

Pray for Christian Aid partner Benchmarks Foundation as it seeks to hold businesses to account for their corporate social responsibility to local communities. For example, they are raising awareness of the health risks presented by the large, unprotected mine dumps near Soweto, Johannesburg, such as the one pictured below.

*May we burst into song
with the mountains and hills,
into a protest song
for peace and prosperity
for all in South Africa.
Amen.*



Week beginning 23 July

Good soil

Read: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Give thanks for all who choose to give to Christian Aid through the In Their Lifetime (ITL) initiative, enabling us to pioneer new approaches to fight poverty and to scale up the solutions that work best.

Give thanks for the help given to organic farmers in India through ITL, linking them with consumers and creating regional hubs for them to distribute their vegetables. Pray for partner SAAL, which is providing a demonstration farm so that farmers can see the increase in yield and soil health before they take the risk of converting to organic practices.



*Farmer God,
cultivate good soil in our hearts,
remove any stones and weeds
so your word might flourish
in and through our lives.
Amen.*

Week beginning 30 July

The kingdom of heaven is like...

Read: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

The kingdom of heaven is like pennies and pounds being put into Christian Aid Week envelopes and added together, helping hundreds of thousands of people improve their lives.

The kingdom of heaven is like a campaign postcard being posted to 10 Downing Street and followed by hundreds and thousands more, drawing political attention and making change happen.

The kingdom of heaven is like a prayer diary being opened and a prayer being uttered, joining with hundreds of others and being heard by the one who delights to hear and to answer.

*Spirit of the living God
bless all who give, act and pray with
Christian Aid.
Give us all a glimpse of what
the kingdom of heaven is like
to encourage and sustain us.
Amen.*

When I needed a neighbour, were you there?

When I needed a neighbour, were you there, were you there, When I needed a neighbour, were you there?

Chorus:

And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, Were you there?

I was hungry and thirsty, were you there, were you there?

I was hungry and thirsty were you there?

I was cold, I was naked, were you there, were you there....

When I needed a shelter, were you there, were you there....

When I needed a healer, were you there, were you there....

Wherever you travel, I'll be there, I'll be there...

And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, I'll be there.

Written by Sydney Carter (1915-2004) for Christian Aid and widely circulated for Christian Aid Week 1965.

'When I needed a neighbour, were you there?'

This song has been included in more than 40 collections of hymns and worship songs. Carter called it a song, not a hymn, written for Christians and non-Christians alike, despite its strong Biblical basis. We have been using it

this year to help guide the Christian Aid Lent journey, taking a verse each week to help us reflect, pray and respond to the work of Christian Aid partners and campaigns. Carter encouraged singers to make up

further verses to the song. Perhaps you could add a verse in response to the stories you have read in this diary? **Send your suggestions to wyoung@christian-aid.org**

Cover photos: [Main] Four-year-old twins Isua and Yakubu, from Nigeria, both recovering from malaria, kicking a ball around. [Top right] Michael from South Sudan is thankful for the support from Christian Aid's partner. He explains: 'The fighting [in South Sudan] affected us badly because I am old and blind, and it was also hard for the women and the children. We raced into the swamp to escape. You find us alive today because of the help we have received from the NGOs.'

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