

Wylye and Till Valley

Please Pray for Homeless Sunday



What is Homeless Sunday?

The purpose of Homeless Sunday is threefold:

- showing our concern for individuals affected by homelessness,
- challenging the conditions that create it, and,
- celebrating work that tackles the problem

Homeless Sunday brings together thousands of churches. It has the support of all the main denominations and is celebrated in a wide range of congregations. Homeless Sunday is a chance for Churches and Christian groups from across the country join together to pray, reflect and plan practical action on homelessness, but also for a united Christian voice to offer solidarity and be a prophetic voice for change.

An idea of what is expected of us as Christians can be found in

Isaiah 58: 6-12

*Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you,
the glory of the LORD shall be your rearguard.
Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.*

*If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.
The LORD will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.
Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.*

Matthew 25: 31- 46.

'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was

sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” Then he will say to those at his left hand, “You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.” Then they also will answer, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?” Then he will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.” And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’

It is not a complicated message, but it is a challenge that is as difficult to meet now as it was when Christ spoke these words for the first time. However, the message is very clear. Our actions will determine the outcome of our encounter with God on the Last Day. Can we afford to turn the stranger away from our door? Can we ignore the plight of homeless people? Should we be complicit in allowing people to live in overcrowded, insanitary, dangerous places?

Please Pray for Homeless People

Hear our prayer today for all women and men, boys and girls who are homeless this day.
For those sleeping under bridges, on park benches, in doorways or bus stations.
For those who can only find shelter for the night but must wander in the daytime.
For families broken because they could not afford to pay the rent.
For those who have no relatives or friends who can take them in.
For those who have no place to keep possessions that remind them who they are.
For those who are afraid and hopeless.
For those who have been betrayed by our social safety net.
For all these people, we pray that you will provide shelter, security and hope.
We pray for those of us with warm houses and comfortable beds
that we not be lulled into complacency and forgetfulness.
Jesus, help us to see your face in the eyes of every homeless person we meet
so that we may be empowered through word and deed,
and through the political means we have,
to bring justice and peace to those who are homeless. Amen.

Father God,
we lift before you all who are living in fear of losing their homes because of redundancy,
debt or broken relationships.
We know that you are our real shelter.
Help people to know the safety and peace of dwelling in you, even amidst desperate
circumstances.
But Lord, because of your great mercy,
we ask that you would keep these people physically safe.
We long for you to move circumstances that they might keep their homes, but if this does not
happen, we ask that you would protect them, find them,
and bring them safe to a new home.
Amen.

We give thanks that you meet our daily needs of food, shelter, companionship.
We pray for those who go hungry and without a home.
We will not abandon our neighbours who struggle.
We will not revile them. We will not blame people for their poverty.
We stand alongside them.
We know that you are with us, as we give, as we act and as we pray for justice.
Amen

We pray for hope that those suffering from the effects of sleeping rough, of living in crowded, dangerous and dirty conditions, and those parents, children and old people living under the daily stresses and deprivations caused by our housing crisis, can be offered release, found decent places to live and be given the security and safety that comes with a real home.

We hope that those involved in policies that perpetuate these problems, those who profit from the provision of shamefully poor and unsafe homes and those who refuse to acknowledge that the problems exist, will open their eyes and begin to change their ways for the good.

We pray for the Light of Christ to shine in the hearts of all who sell the idea of and have bought into the demonising and dismissing of some of the poorest and most vulnerable members of our society. Let Christ's light open their eyes and give them new sight.

For Christ's light to shine in the hearts of everyone who spent last night sleeping on the street, those who stayed awake fearing that this would soon be their fate, all those who slept in cold, damp rooms with no heating, those who lay afraid of their neighbours and those who had done without a meal to feed and clothe their children. Give them strength and the knowledge that they can put their trust in God and that soon their lives will change for the better.

We pray for solidarity for this community worshiping together today, that we may find the strength and will to stand alongside our neighbours in their need, listen to their stories, offer them dignity and love and journey with them towards the hope and light we all need.

For us all as children of God to share that solidarity in our community, so we can help those close to the edge before they have lost all hope, before they have lost their home and before they become the new targets for the cynics and victims of the demoralising process suffered by all who lose their homes.

We pray for change For change in how we treat those who are marginalised, change in how we plan and provide housing, change in the quality and cost of housing that all of our society needs and change in the vision and understanding of those involved in every aspect of the industry that builds, manages and sells housing in our land.

Lord in your mercy
Hear our prayer

Who are Alabaré?

We are a charity that supports vulnerable, homeless and marginalised people. We help them transform their lives, providing accommodation and helping them gain the skills, confidence and opportunities to live a fulfilled life.

<https://www.alabare.co.uk/contact>

Our reception team are available from 9am to 5pm on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday and from 9am to 1pm on Tuesday and Friday - call us on 01722 322882