

# CRAMOND KIRK



## OCTOBER PRAYER DIARY

Jesus said to them; “Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

*Matthew 11 : 28 - 30*  
*from “The Message” translation*

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*Prayer topics are arranged over seven days which you may find helpful.*

### **Sunday**

Pray for Tom, Colin & Louise & for their pastoral role in the life of the congregation & also for their work in the community. Pray for Louise as she leaves us at the end of October. Pray that she may find a suitable appointment for ministry. Pray for Russell & Margaret as they continue with their many public engagements.

### **Monday**

Pray for a resolution to the conflict in Syria, particularly for humanitarian aid to reach the city of Aleppo. Pray for those families who have been bereaved in recent atrocities & for medical personnel attempting to cope with mass casualties.

### **Tuesday**

Pray for the ministry of the choir & for Alistair as he leads them. Pray for Italian earthquake survivors that they may be in sheltered accommodation before cold weather comes.

### **Wednesday**

*(from the Christian Aid Website)*

Pray for our Zimbabwean partners Open Schools Worldwide & Christian Care, which are working together to help children excluded from school to gain an education. Pray for volunteers, in partnership with local child protection committees, delivering learning materials using a ‘School-in-a-Bag’. Pray that these packages, which contain teachers’ guides, audio materials & teaching equipment, children’s workbooks & lap-desks, will transform the lives of those they reach. Ask God to bless the training, support & quality control of volunteers.

## **Thursday**

*(from The Church of Scotland website)*

UK Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson has been urged to take action to try & stop Christians in Pakistan being kidnapped & forced to convert to Islam. Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland Right Rev Dr Russell Barr said the practice was a crime but not one that was properly investigated to bring the perpetrators to justice. He said the growing threat to the safety & security of non-Muslims in Pakistan was making the lives of minorities increasingly difficult & called on the Foreign Secretary to raise the issue with the country's government as a matter of urgency. Pray for the Church in Pakistan as it faces up to this threat.

## **Friday**

Pray for the work of Fresh Start - food from the Harvest Thanksgiving Service on 2 October will be given to the ministry of Fresh Start. Pray for The Scottish Churches Housing Action group which is hosting a conference on 7 October; this year's theme is "Homelessness in Scotland : the challenges of uncertainty" & the guest speakers will be the Rt Revd Dr Russell Barr & Kevin Stewart MSP.

## **Saturday**

*(from the Christian Aid website)*

On World Food Day, 16 October, pray for the people of Haiti, where a third year of drought has driven people deeper into poverty & hunger & doubled the number of people who do not have a secure supply of food. Pray for our partner MISSEH (the Social Mission of Haitian Churches), seeking to provide cash & staple food items to 500 vulnerable households alongside seeds & agricultural tools to 700 families.

## **REFLECTION**

Jesus further invites the weary: "Take my yoke upon you & learn from me; for I am gentle & humble in heart & you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy & my burden is light" (*Matthew 11 : 29 - 30*). The yoke was a familiar symbol of burden bearing, oppression & subjugation. Yokes were laid on the necks & shoulders of oxen & also on prisoners of war & slaves. What is the yoke Jesus offers? We might infer that it is his teaching, his way of discipleship, which is not burdensome but life-giving. He invites the weary to learn from him, for he is not a tyrant who lords it over his disciples, but is "gentle & humble in heart." His yoke is easy (*chrestos*, better translated "good" or "kind") & his burden is light. To take his yoke upon oneself is to be yoked to the one in whom God's kingdom of justice, mercy & compassion is breaking into this world & to find the rest for which the soul longs....

It is not that Jesus invites us to a life of ease. Following him will be full of risks & challenges as he has made abundantly clear. He calls us to a life of humble service but it is a life of freedom & joy instead of slavery. It is life yoked to Jesus under God's gracious & merciful reign, free from the burden of sin & the need to prove oneself, free to rest deeply & securely in God's grace.

*(Prof Elisabeth Johnson: Lutheran Institute of Theology, Cameroon)*

*([https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=970](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=970))*

*If you have a prayer request or a favourite prayer which you would care to share in a future Prayer Diary, please e-mail [cramond.kirk@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:cramond.kirk@blueyonder.co.uk)*