

CRAMOND KIRK



MARCH PRAYER DIARY

And God spoke all these words:

“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

“You shall have no other gods before me.....

(Exodus 20 : 1 & 2)

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Topics are arranged over 7 days which you may find helpful.

Sunday

Pray for Russell & Tom & their ministry in teaching & pastoral activities. Pray that the teaching & support that they give will give strength & encouragement to them & the congregation.

Monday *(from the Bethany Christian Trust Prayer Diary)*

Pray for the young people in this Year of Young People 2018 in Scotland. Bethany has always maintained a focus on seeing how homelessness impacts young people & offering support to turn hopeless situations into hope-filled ones. Pray for the places that we meet young people in need, without a home, without a place to belong.

Tuesday *(from the CrossReach Prayer Diary)*

Simpson House improves the lives of those affected by drug use by providing counselling & recovery services to people in the community & in Edinburgh Prison. Sunflower Garden supports children affected by their parents' drug use. Pray for these ministries provided by CrossReach.

Wednesday *(from the Christian Aid website)*

Community Partnerships link churches, schools or businesses to Christian Aid projects in some of the world's poorest communities. As Ghana celebrates independence day on 6 March, give thanks for the Community Partnership with Ghana. Pray that the partnership will enable many young people to learn new skills, unlocking career & job opportunities. As we celebrate International Women's day on 8 March, pray for the Community Partnership with Honduras & El Salvador & the difference it is making to indigenous women & girls, helping them to get the reproductive & sexual healthcare they need.

Thursday

Pray for daily humanitarian access into Eastern Ghouta in Syria to be sustained & extended in order to prevent unnecessary suffering & hardship on the civilian population.

In the Christian, eastern suburbs of Damascus, shelling has also caused hardship: 'The inhabitants of the Christian suburbs in the Syrian capital express their desperation at the constant attacks upon them. According to a report sent to the pontifical foundation - Aid to the Church in Need - by Caritas International, the situation in the Syrian capital is critical, with people scarcely daring to emerge from their homes. "Since February 5 & up till now, more than 200 mortar shells have hit Damascus' eastern neighbourhoods, causing more than 28 killed & 90 injured", the Caritas report reveals.'

Pray for the appalling suffering in Syria.

Friday

Pray for Hannah Tenner, daughter of Gareth & Katherine Tenner, baptised on 24 February.

Pray for members of the congregation mourning the loss of family & friends in the recent past.

Pray also for those of our community dealing with long term health issues either as sufferers or carers.

Saturday

Pray for the success of the Jumble Sale on Saturday, 10 March. Pray also for the ministries of Fresh Start & St Columba's Hospice who will benefit from the funds raised.

REFLECTION

The Ten Commandments are not new commandments for Israel (see Exodus 16 : 22 - 30), but they are a convenient listing of already existing law for vocational purposes. Moreover, the Commandments were not thought to be transmitted in a never-to-be-changed form. They were believed to require adaptation in view of new times & places. This is shown by a comparison of the Commandments in Exodus 20 & Deuteronomy 5; the latter text contains some important new developments. For example: the wife -- on a list of property in Exodus 20:17 -- is removed from that list in Deuteronomy 5:21; wife is exchanged with house & given her own commandment, perhaps reflecting a changing role for women in that culture.

Might additional changes be made in the commandments in view of changing times & places? Such as, you shall not covet your neighbour's husband! What commandments might you add to the ten?

Before the Ten Commandments were given, the Bible talks much about law; indeed, laws are already specified in the pre-sin creation accounts (Genesis 1:28). Such commands are reflective of God's law given for the sake of the world before sin. To obey these commandments & others which follow in their train is to act as one was *created* to act. And so commandments become an integral part of the life of the community of faith before we get to Mount Sinai.

While the address of the commandments is individual, the concern is not some private welfare. The focus of the commandments is vocational, to serve the life & health of the community, to which end the individual plays an important role. The first commandment lays a claim: How you think about God will deeply affect how you think about & act toward your neighbour.

The first commandment is positively formulated in Deuteronomy 6:5, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart & with all your soul & with all your might." Notably, Jesus uses this positive formulation of the first commandment. Luther follows in this biblical trajectory by giving each commandment a positive thrust. The commandment to love one another does not set the Ten Commandments aside, however; it opens up the particularities of the Ten Commandments to limitless, on-the-move possibilities in view of new times & places.

*(T.E. Fretheim, Professor Emeritus of Old Testament,
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https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3604)

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.