



World Day of Prayer

Prepared by the WDP Committee of England, Wales and Northern Ireland

March 4, 2022

“I Know the Plans I Have for You”

Songs and Copyright Notice

1. WORSHIP SERVICE SONGS

WELCOME AND GREETING

Song 1: of PRAISE – Please, select a familiar song.

READING

Song 2: ‘For surely I know the plans’. Words and music by Lucy Hole, composed especially for the 2022 WDP EWNI program, ©WDPIC. Used with permission.

VOICES OF WOMEN

Song 3: ‘Longing for light, we wait in darkness.’ Words and music by Bernadette Farrell. © 1993, 2000, Bernadette Farrell, Published by OCP. All rights reserved.

The song is published in several hymnals, included its Spanish version. Click here to see the list: https://hymnary.org/text/longing_for_light_we_wait_in_darkness#instances

To ask permission to reproduce the song in your program, visit OCP site (available in English and Spanish): <https://www.ocp.org/en-us/>

STORIES OF HOPE

Instrumental song – ‘For surely I know the plans’, Words and music by Lucy Hole, composed especially for the 2022 WDP EWNI program, ©WDPIC. Used with permission.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Song 4: of THANKSGIVING. Please, select a familiar song.

REFLECTION /RESPONSIVE ACTION

Song 5: ‘For surely I know the plans’. Words and music by Lucy Hole, composed especially for the 2022 WDP EWNI program, ©WDPIC. Used with permission.

OFFERING

Song 6: ‘Make me a channel of your peace’. Words attributed to St. Francis of Assisi. Music by Martin Neary, Sebastian Temple. © 1967, 2003, OCP. The song is published in several hymnals, included its Spanish version. Click here to see the list:

https://hymnary.org/text/make_me_a_channel_of_your_peace#instances

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Song 7: ‘The day thou gavest, Lord, has ended’. By John Ellerton, 1870, tune by Rev Clement C Scholefield. Public domain. The song is published in several hymnals. Click here to see the list.

https://hymnary.org/text/the_day_thou_gavest_lord_is_ended#instances

2. CHILDREN’S AND YOUTH PROGRAM SONG

Song: ‘God has a Plan for Me’ by Martha Bolton and Bob Singleton. CCLI#5623161
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program, visit:

<https://www.godskidsworship.com/p-360-god-has-a-plan-for-me-jer-2911-gods-kids-worship-band.aspx>

Song: ‘He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands’. Anonymous. The song is published in
several hymnals. Click here to see the list.

https://hymnary.org/text/hes_got_the_whole_world_in_his_hands#instances

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BIBLE STUDY PREPARATION



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March 4, 2022

“I Know the Plans I Have for You”

Bible Study - Jeremiah 29:1-14

PREPARATION

The Bible Study is designed to be a creative group conversation. Read the section **CREATIVE WAYS OF READING, LISTENING AND REFLECTING** to choose the group exercise to be used and prepare beforehand the materials, for example: puppets, scenery, background music, Biblical map and current global map, photos of situation that can be perceived as experiences of exile.

Read the section **A WORD ON GOD OUR MOTHER AND OUR FATHER** in the Worship Service to be aware of the context for the opening prayer.

OPENING PRAYER

God, our Mother and our Father, we come to you today to study your true word. We declare we are open to hear from you and to accept your good plans for our lives. We love you and thank you for your Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

SETTING THE SCENE

The seventh century BC was a period of great turmoil for Israel, Judah and the surrounding nations. The brutal Assyrian Empire, which had brought the kingdom of Israel to its knees, was failing. In its place, the powerful Babylonians were gaining influence. It was into this very unstable world that Jeremiah was born, around 650BC. His prophetic calling came around 627BC. God had chosen him while he was still in the womb and he was to be appointed as a prophet to the nations. Young Jeremiah felt ill-equipped for so great a task, but God touched his lips and assured him of his powerful presence (Jeremiah 1:4-10). His ministry proved to be very demanding and required great courage. It involved imprisonment and hardship. The Bible passage chosen for our World Day of Prayer service shows the fierce opposition that Jeremiah had to face.

The book of Jeremiah was written around the time of the Judean exile in Babylon (modern-day Iraq). Judah had been conquered and their holy city of Jerusalem lay in ruins. Their temple - the place they believed God to reside - had been destroyed. An elite community of the people of Judah - the king and queen mother, the leaders, nobility and craftsmen - had been carried off into exile. Their future looked bleak. Psalm 137 shows their desperate homesickness and longing to return eventually to Jerusalem. Without their temple, they could not offer sacrifices – a practice which was an integral part of their faith.

READ Jeremiah 29:1-14

CREATIVE WAYS OF READING, LISTENING AND REFLECTING

- Read the passage from Jeremiah aloud twice or even three times, very slowly. After each reading, silently reflect upon the verses and spend a few minutes listening to God. In this way, you will allow the Word of God to flow into your heart and mind.

- Dramatise the reading, maybe by using puppets and basic scenery and playing background music.
- Look at a map of the geographical area of Babylon and Jerusalem in biblical times and in the 21st century. Identify the journey taken by the exiles. Draw a map to represent your life journey and trace God's plans throughout. Share your hopes for your own life and that of your church and community.
- Look at photos representing forms of exile. Try to imagine what it feels like to be exiled from the community, if you were for example a refugee, a prisoner, an elderly, an unemployed, a lonely or a homeless person. Choose one situation that may resonate with you and say why.

Our chosen passage is part of a letter that contains God's message to Jeremiah for the exiles. Jeremiah exhorted the exiles to build houses, plant gardens, have a family and seek the welfare of the city, where God had sent them to live. God also alerted them not to listen to false prophets and diviners who were promising that they would soon be returning home. God's message was clear: pray on behalf of the city that you live in, seek their welfare and you will find your welfare. Jeremiah urged them to accept their current situation, and be prepared to settle down.

Questions for you to think about and share:

- How do you think the exiles reacted to the news that they must be prepared to settle in a foreign land? What would your reaction have been?
- What were the conditions they had to follow before they could return home? How would you have felt after hearing about God's plans?

After the exhortation, a promise! I know the plans I have for you. God had not forgotten his promise to bring the people back to their own land, but it would be 70 years before this would be accomplished. Seven years would have seemed a long time to most, but 70? The exiles' dreams must have been shattered with the reading of this letter. Many would have felt without hope. After so many years, it would be the next generation going home to Judah!

Hope and a future

God's words *did* contain hope. For their part, the people of Judah had to rebuild their relationship with God that had been broken through sin and disobedience to his commandments. When they searched for God earnestly through prayer and worship, they would find him. He also wanted them to build a relationship with the local inhabitants. They would achieve this in community and through prayerful action. Their time of waiting in Babylon would be difficult and frustrating, however, when this time was over their future would be restored and their families could return to their homeland, as God had promised.

Hope for today's world

Across today's world, millions of people are in exile, having left their countries because of war, persecution, fear and hunger. Others are on a dangerous and difficult journey to what they hope will be a place of safety. For so many there is little possibility that they will be able to return home in the near future.

Questions for you to think about and share

- Is it possible for someone to feel that they are in a kind of exile, even if they are safe in their own country?
- How do we pray with those experiencing exile and maybe help them? How can we bring hope to people in situations from which they feel there is no way out?

PRAYERFUL ACTION

Jeremiah's letter exposed the political and social tensions of his time, but also a promise to guide them to their future: I know the plans I have for you. We need to work towards a society where there is justice for all, especially for those who are the most vulnerable. Across the world we need to work together to address the big problems we face, such as global warming, poverty, diseases, forced migration, refugee crisis or lack of love with whom we disagree. We believe that God has plans for each of us, plans for good and not for harm. It is our turn to put in actions our hope for the future. God is always with us, even when it may be difficult to understand.

Listen to a story of prayerful action. The full version of the story is in the Children's and Youth Programme.

I am Grace. I'm 24. My hope is...that all those who seek safety in the UK are welcomed, embraced, and given the support they need. When the news in the UK began to fill with stories of people crossing the Mediterranean in dinghies and risking their lives to reach Europe, I couldn't ignore it. My heart broke that people had been forced to flee their homes and were risking their lives to reach our continent.

My God is a God of justice and this was a serious and harmful injustice that was happening on my doorstep. In September 2017, I moved to Calais to volunteer with the Refugee Community Kitchen. I ended up staying for 6 months, working as a driver and distribution lead. God gave me an amazing support network – both in Calais and from home. I think people found hope in friendship.

- Grace's #WDP hope is for refugees. What's your WDP hope?
- Grace was passionate about restoring worth to refugees and her passion led her to serve in a practical way. What steps can you take this week which will help transform an injustice?
- We want to create a movement of passionate hope-bringers across the world. Share an issue that you're passionate about by writing it on a piece of paper, sharing it with the group, and then uploading it on social media using #WDP hope.

May we be inspired by this reading from Jeremiah to trust that ultimately God will bring a perfect plan to fruition in our lives. We pray that God, our Mother and our Father, will use us to help others when life seems too great a struggle.

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Youth & Children Resource



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“I Know the Plans I Have for You”

Children’s and Youth Programme

PREPARATION

This programme is designed for children ages 5 to 12, and youths ages 13 to 18. There are several activities for each group, please read the full programme to plan accordingly. Also, please note that some of the activities may require preparation.

It is recommended that the Leaders for the Children’s and Youth Programmes familiarise themselves with the Bible Study and Country Background beforehand.

THEME: “I Know the Plans I Have for You”, based on Jeremiah 29:1-14 (New Century Bible), which for the Children’s and Youth programme carries the message that God is always with them, and God gives us hope at all times:

- when we are happy or sad or in between
- when bad things happen to us
- in times of change, disappointments and loss
- at times of joy and celebration

Children’s Programme for Ages 5 – 12

For the Leader: *Talk to the children about how we find out about what has happened during the day. Ask them for suggestions (ex: radio, newspapers, television, friends, school, etc.). Maybe have one or two newspapers to look at.*

All these things tell us what happened yesterday or what happened last week. The Bible has stories that happened in the past. Our story today is based on what the prophet Jeremiah told the people of Judah after they had to leave their land. They were sad and the job of the prophet was to keep the hope for the future, a future that is for God to give them.

‘I have good plans for you, not plans to hurt you. I will give you hope and a good future....And I will bring you back from your captivity.... And I will bring you back to this place. (Jeremiah 29:11-14).

We trust that God has plans for all of us and we know that we should hope for a good future.

Encourage the children to talk about what they would hope to do, where they would hope to go, what they think God may have planned for them.

Use the Postcard template for them to draw or write **‘My hopes are....’**.

Song: ‘God has a Plan for Me’ by Martha Bolton and Bob Singleton. CCLI#5623161,
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or **‘He’s got the Whole World in His Hands’**

Leader: There are some times when we have to do things we don’t want to do, or go places that we don’t want to go and say goodbye to friends. These could be times when we are sad and unhappy. This is the story of a young girl who has come to England from a long way away.

Anisa's story: (**Important note:** *This could be dramatized or mimed as it is read, but this is at the discretion of the leader who should be sensitive to the children's individual situations.*)

Leader: Have you ever been somewhere where you didn't know many people? What did that feel like? Sometimes people have to leave their homes to go somewhere for safety. They may become refugees like Anisa. This is her story:

Anisa: *'My name is Anisa. I am 5 years old and I live in England now, but I came from Iran. My mummy, daddy and me came here in the back of a very large truck. We had to hide behind lots of big crates and be very quiet. We had to leave our country because there were people there who seemed very angry at us and made us feel frightened. Even mummy and daddy were scared and said we would have to leave home and go away. I cried and didn't want to go, but mummy told me that God would help us and keep us safe.'*

Leader: What thing would **you** miss more than anything else if you had to leave your home?

Anisa: *'The journey was so long and we were very tired and uncomfortable. There was another family with us too, and we were often sick. We were hungry and thirsty. I tried not to cry, but I missed my own home and my doll that I loved very much. It was dark and very cold when we climbed out of the truck. We only had the clothes we were wearing. My daddy carried me across a field and along a road. I know that mummy was very frightened and I was too. I don't remember where we fell asleep the first night here. Everything seems very muddled now.'*

Leader: What do you think it would feel like not to have a home or friends? How important is it to have a friend? How can **you** be a good friend to someone – maybe someone new to your school?

Anisa: *'We have lived in different places until we got to this town. Now we have a rented flat and I go to primary school. This is where I met Susan. I was learning English and we could talk. She became my friend. She knew that I was feeling sad and scared. I was always feeling cold and hungry. Susan told her grandma about me. Her grandma went to her church and they contacted another church where many Iranians met together. They came and brought us some more clothes, bedding and some toys for me! My favourite is a baby doll with knitted clothes that Susan's grandma gave me.'*

Leader: So many small things can make a very big difference, can't they? God will always give you something to hope for and changes will happen.

Anisa: *'I am so happy to live here now. My daddy has got a job and my mummy is studying at the local college because she wants to be a nurse. Now I am glad that we came here - even though we still miss our first home and my family there. Now I know that God had a plan for us.'*

Leader: We know that there are many people from many different countries who are trying to find a new home, sometimes far away from their own country. They have to travel on long dangerous journeys and say goodbye to their families and friends. They want freedom and safety and God will give them hope for the future.

Prayer Ideas:

Use **one or more** of these ideas to share the children's prayers:

- **PRAISE:** Use a sheet or length of fabric as a 'parachute'. All the children hold an edge of the fabric and raise it together saying:
We lift our thanks to you! We thank you for.....and go round each child as they say something they are thankful for, as they lift the 'parachute' each time.

- With the children sitting around in a circle, pass a stone around. As each child holds the stone they are asked to think of something they may need to say SORRY for and ask God to forgive them.
- HOPSCOTCH PRAYERS: Draw out a grid with numbers 1 – 6 on the ground. Use a pebble or stone to throw into each number in turn. When it lands, the child must hop to each number in turn and on the number with the pebble pray for the corresponding topic:
 1. Thanks: Say thank you to God for one thing today.
 2. Sorry/Forgiveness: Is there something the child needs to say sorry to God for and ask for forgiveness? For wrong words, actions or even attitude?
 3. Please: Think of the people of England, Wales and Northern Ireland and ask God to bless them, especially the children and the young people there today.
 4. Thanks: Think of two more things to be thankful for....
 5. Please: A prayer for their own family and friends today.
 6. Hope: Think of something they would hope for in the future.

Conclude with: **Dear God, we thank you for keeping Anisa safe and giving her and her family a happy future. We pray for all the many children who have had to leave their homes and travel to new places to feel safe. Watch over them when they are sad or frightened and give them hope. We are sorry for the times when we have done things we know are wrong, the times when we have upset others by saying or doing things that are unkind. Thank you that, like a loving father and mother, you forgive us and help us to forgive others. Thank you that you give us hope for the future. Amen.**

Craft Activities:

- Colour the flags of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- Paint or decorate a stone. If the stone is large enough, then a message can be written, such as HOPE, LOVE, JOY or PEACE.
- Draw or use the large heart shape on card or paper, with a smaller heart shape in the centre. Decorate around it by gluing things on, painting/colouring patterns or thumb-printing. In the centre heart write your message, as above or GOD LOVES YOU.
- For the older children: Use the template and instructions to make a woven paper heart bag. (*A few sweets could be put inside.*)

The children might choose to give their decorated items to someone as a sign of God's love to them. God needs us to pass the messages on, as the prophets did.

Games:

Trust games: Sometimes it is hard to put our trust in God! We have to let go of our own fear and let God lead us. Have a go at any of these games:

1. Catch me! One person leans backwards, letting themselves fall, trusting that their friend will catch them. Try not to take a step backwards! (*For safety, an adult should be close at hand to respond if necessary.*)
2. Obstacle course: Set up a simple obstacle course using whatever you have on hand. It can be around, under and over furniture, people, play equipment or natural obstacles outside. In pairs, one person is blindfolded and the other has to call out directions to guide their partner around the course. Then switch over so that they each have a turn at guiding or listening and following instructions.
3. Lap sitting: All stand in a circle facing the same direction to the left or right, close together. At the count of three, all sit down on the lap of the person behind. Keep your hands free! This is possible with large groups of people, but the secret is in sitting

slowly and gently together. Don't panic! It is also important to be in a perfect circle to begin.

4. With all sitting in a circle, go round the circle fast, speaking the name of one person they want to thank God for, who has been a great support or help to them.

Finding out about England, Wales and Northern Ireland Game: Use the template to cut out and make the spinner and coloured counters, then use the spinner to move around and explore our countries! There are so many facts for you to find out as you travel! *Read out the facts that match the numbers!*

Interesting facts of England, Wales and Northern Ireland (to accompany the Game)

England, Wales and Northern Ireland are all parts of the British Isles. When Scotland and more than 6,000 islands around us are added as well, we become: 'The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland'.

1. We each have our own flag and patron saint: **St George** for **England**, **St David** for **Wales** and **St Patrick** for **Ireland**.

Government and Royalty

2. We are ruled by a democratic government with an elected **Prime Minister**, but we also have a **Queen** (or King) who is our Head of State.
3. Welcome to **London!** This is the capital city and it is where the government buildings are. These are called the **Houses of Parliament**. There is a clock tower there with a famous bell called **Big Ben**.
4. The official London home of the Queen (or King) is called **Buckingham Palace**.
5. We have many historic houses and castles. The oldest royal home is **Windsor Castle**. It was built more than 900 years ago and is the largest royal home in the world and still being lived in!
6. Do you know that when people reach their 100th birthday they get a card from the Queen (or King)?

Things to be Proud Of

7. We may be a small island - but we have a long history of inventors who have brought new knowledge to the world.
8. Our educational system: all children get a free education until they are 18. We also have fee-paying private or independent schools. We get many students coming from other countries to go to our universities. **Oxford** and **Cambridge** are England's most famous and historic universities.
9. How lucky we are to have such a temperate climate – no extremes in any way! We are proud of our lush green countryside and farm land.
10. Because we are all islands, nowhere in the country are we more than 75 miles from the sea!

Over the Irish Sea

11. Now we travel across to **Northern Ireland** - the main city here is **Belfast** and the Irish folk are here to welcome you! They are famous for their hospitality.
12. **The Giant's Causeway** is a very famous rocky area of the coast in Northern Ireland. It looks like thousands of giant steps. It is made up of thousands of hexagonal blocks of rock, formed by ancient volcanic eruptions.
13. **Loch Neagh**, in Northern Ireland, is the largest lake in the British Isles.

Back Across the Sea

14. To **Wales** – another beautiful part of our islands! All the road signs in Wales are written in two languages: Welsh and English.
15. One town in Wales has one of the longest names in the world:
Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwryndrobwilllantysiliogogoch
(*which means: Saint Mary's Church in the hollow of the white hazel near a rapid whirlpool and the Church of Saint Tysilio of the red cave.*)
16. From all parts of our countries we have many famous authors, poets, explorers and composers who are known all around the world.

More things to know

17. **Football** (or soccer) originated in England, and other sports such as **cricket, rugby and tennis** all started here. Some of our football clubs are known all over the world.
18. If you go anywhere in England, Wales or Northern Ireland you will be sure to try some favourite foods like: fish and chips, varieties of sandwiches, cheeses and cream teas!
19. There are beautiful beaches and coastlines all around us. Fishing and sailing, surfing and swimming – but be careful, the seas that surround us can be very cold!
20. **Stonehenge** is a famous prehistoric monument made up of a ring of massive standing stones. It is older than the Pyramids of Egypt and thought to have been created about 3,000 BC.
21. Believe it or not, the **postage stamp** originated here! The first stamp was issued in 1840.
22. Our **currency** of pennies and pounds is one of the oldest in the world that is still in use after 1200 years.
23. So – back to London again! London has the largest **library** in the world.
24. **London** also has one of the oldest **transport** systems in the world and one of the largest – both under-ground and above-ground.
25. **London** is a city where many people from countries all around the world come to visit. It has the highest number of **languages** spoken, by inhabitants and visitors, than in any other country – more than 300 languages.

Finish! We hope you have enjoyed your trip around England, Wales and Northern Ireland!

Resources for the activities:

- Country Flags to colour
- Postcard 'My Hope Is...'
- How to make a Woven Heart Basket
- Explore our Nations Map Game