



Hands together



WORLD WEEKEND
OF PRAYER
FOR CHILDREN AT RISK

6-7 JUNE 2020

Prayer Resource

God says: “See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands”
(Isaiah 49: 16)

This is God’s promise that He will never, ever forget us. Your name is like a divine tattoo in a place where you are always protected – God’s palm.

What an encouragement this is for all those children whose pain and abuse breaks our hearts.

Jesus’ hands are loving hands. Let us be imitators of His palms. Let us make our hands His hands. And let’s bring our hands together and build networks of prayer.

How many hands can we bring together for the World Weekend of Prayer on 6-7 June, and in preparation before then?

How many hands can we get to pray for the power of Jesus to work through our joint actions?

In this prayer resource:

- Bible verses
- Answered prayer from Viva testimonies round the world
- Examples of stories about hands in the New Testament
- Activity ideas
- Prayer points

Hands linked together: Jesus heals the paralysed

The story of Jesus forgiving and healing a paralysed man is found in Matthew 9: 1-8, Mark 2: 1-12 and Luke 5: 17-26.

We learn from the story:

- The paralysed man needed **help** – he could not get to Jesus on his own. Was he a willing participant?
- He and his friends had **faith** that Jesus will help.
- The men carrying him had to **work together** and agree on the programme of action.
- One friend had an idea to go up on the roof, but did the others think it was a waste of time? Are we prepared to **change our plan of action**?
- As they worked as a team, were the friends **guided by the Holy Spirit**? A common, obvious and pain-filled need united their actions. Is this how we feel about the vulnerable young people in our cities?
- When he “saw their faith” (Mark 2: 5), Jesus witnessed a **team working together** with a **common, agreed plan of action!**

Also consider:

- What were the teachers of the law thinking? Do we meet **scepticism** amongst authorities, officials and leaders? What is the impact of that?
- What was **the outcome** of all the men working together? “He got up, took his mat and walked out!” A miracle. A life completely restored!
- Who were amazed? Everyone! When we pray together, work as a network, embrace amazing outcomes, the whole city wakes up and notices. **“We have never seen anything like this!”**

Hands for storytelling

Testimony

In Calabozo, **Venezuela** the network carried out a prayer activity in an area with a high number of orphaned children, forming a human cross with the young people, and praying for them.

“They said that they were feeling tired, and spoke of their needs, from things that would seem basic to us, but for them are not. The greatest testimony is that each of them prayed.”



Story: The parable of The Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37)

Jesus is a great storyteller. His parables hit home with a vibrant message. Surely he used his hands expressively to illustrate the dramatic events of this parable. Here he tells the story of a man who fell into the hands of bandits. Injured, robbed and stripped of his clothes he lies at the road side. A priest and a Levite walk by on the other side, deliberately avoiding interaction. Yet a Samaritan (despised by Jews) helps the robbed man (intimated to be a Jew) even taking him to a nearby inn and paying for his lodging until he recovers.

Application

A teacher of the law wants to know what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus counters by asking him what does the law say. He correctly answers about loving God and your neighbour. Yet, Jesus challenges him as to what this really means – theory into practice! Bad hands like those of the robber abound in our cities to the tragic detriment of our children. Let's make sure our prejudices, our pre-occupations do not impede putting our hands together for actions of love.

Activity

Use some card such as old packaging. Cut out shape of small people. Children or teenagers to colour them in as the different characters of the good Samaritan story. Tie to fingers of each hand (elastic band or string) and get young people to take it in turns to tell the story.

Prayer focus

LORD, every child and young person is made in your image. You love them Jesus for you stretched out your hands and died for each one. Whatever their condition, whatever their current mind-set and attitudes of aggression, LORD help me strip away any of my prejudices that are impeding my putting hands together to give practical help.

Bible verse

‘Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?’ The expert in the law replied, ‘The one who had mercy on him.’ (Luke 10: 36-37)

Hands of the servant

Testimony

The impact of the 2019 World Weekend of Prayer on churches was also seen in Bangalore, **India**. Pastor Stanley who attended their event said it was an “eye-opener of how they shouldn’t be counting children as small but see them as children of God and raise them up with the hope that they can do mighty things for the Lord”. Two other Pastors, Pastor Santha Kumar and Pastor Swaroop, said after the event that they would streamline their work with children and take seriously initiatives to stand up against issues concerning children, starting with the children in their congregations.



Story: Jesus washes his disciples' feet (John 13: 1-15)

Jesus has the special Passover meal with his disciples in the upper room: the Last Supper. In the middle of the meal, Jesus gets up wraps a towel around himself, takes a water basin and with his hands and a cloth begins to wash each of the disciples feet, including those of Judas Iscariot who was about to betray him. Simon objects when Jesus comes to him. Jesus, having gently rebuked him, Simon says, “Then, Lord, not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!” Jesus explains that they will understand his actions later. “I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master...”

Application

The Gospel writer, John, introduces the account of feet washing this way, “Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end,” (John 13: 1b). In situations of oppression and abuse towards children and young people in so many of our communities, it is a real challenge to turn this round to actions of love and service, even to those who have betrayed us. Jesus gives us the model to follow.

Activity

Organise for a group of children or young people to wash each other’s feet. To share out the task, some could get the water, another to fetch the soap and towel, then some to wash and some to dry the feet. As a takeaway you can cut out some feet shapes from card and write on each pair a verse and a message about serving others.

Prayer focus

Jesus, you have given us such a powerful example of being a servant; that you as Lord and Master should wash your disciples’ feet. You call us to do likewise. But you know how hard I find this to put it into practice, especially engaging in acts of service for those who have betrayed me. Please, Holy Spirit, come, dwell within me and supply me with the servant heart that you want me to have.

Bible verse

[Jesus] “Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.” (Philippians 2: 6,7)

Go to www.worldweekendofprayer.com to download resources for WWP 2020.

Join our Facebook page at facebook.com/WWPrayer

Please pray for:

Connecting: that we bring hands together through a greater number of churches and organisations with the goal of changing children's lives and their situation.

Capacity building: that we open our hands to receive training in areas such as child protection and financial transparency so as to raise the quality standard of our response to children's needs.

Collective action: that we join our hands together facilitating and managing united action for children on a scale that multiplies the impact.

City influence: that our networked hands are seen and recognised as a credible and influential actor, and partner at city, and even national, level by administrative authorities, schools, other NGOs and government.

Join us in this prayer

LORD Jesus: you stretched out your hands and died for me on the Cross. You suffered for my salvation.

Yet your hands, Jesus, also brought healing, blessed children, washed the disciple's feet, wrote in the sand, proved your resurrection to Thomas, glorified God in Ascension. Yes, and most especially, came together in prayer.

So, Jesus, work deeper into my life to show me how I might **use my hands more effectively** to serve the needs of children and young people. These young lives deserve better.

Lift my enthusiasm, fill me with hope, encourage me with testimonies. Deepen my commitment.

Help me to **join my hands with others and become networked** more tightly for a common goal.

To the glory of your name, Jesus.

Amen.

What could you do next?

Hands together to pray Commit all these things to prayer, not just for this event but throughout the year. Perhaps you could hold regular prayer events, every one, two, three or six months?

Use your hands Ask the LORD at the beginning of each day how you might use your hands for the glory of His name. Where and how does He want you to intervene for children and young people today?

Link your hands Look for opportunities to link hands with other churches, other individuals to be a positive influence in your community. For example, could you encourage children, helping them to grow in their faith by offering a regular sport activity?

Open your hands, give generously Reflect God's goodness to you by making a gift towards work with children where you live, or to the work of an international charity for vulnerable children, such as Viva. Open your hands to give what you can in money, your time or your resources.

The World Weekend of Prayer campaign is a global initiative held over the first weekend of June every year, uniting hundreds of thousands of adults and children globally. It is organised by Viva, a charity that inspires lasting change in children's lives through the power of collective action in 38 community networks worldwide.

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viva
together for children