

Be strong & courageous



May is the fifth month of the year in our Western calendar. In Britain, it marks the change from spring to summer as we look to enjoy warmer weather and longer hours of daylight with all the possibilities that brings for being outdoors, getting on with things we have previously been unable to do.

The word may (lowercase) also speaks of possibility – of what may happen next. But uncertainty and fear of the future sometimes need to be overcome. The prophet Moses, as he came to the end of his life, encouraged his protégé Joshua to be strong and courageous, to

put aside fear and apprehension, reassuring him that God would be with him wherever he went.

As New Hope staff and volunteers work with service users, they are always looking to open up new possibilities, new ways of thinking and behaving in the months and years ahead. Their message will also be to have courage, to believe that things can improve, to know that we do not walk alone.

Please pray that they will be able to give wise advice, reassurance of support and to show people that there is a positive future to look forward to.

'Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.' Joshua 1:9

Prayer points



M **Salvation Army Housing Association (SAHA) accommodations: New Hope House, Alpha Court and the Manse**

Praise God that two service users have recently been able to find a positive move on option. Pray that the management team will be able to find the right people to take up the vacant rooms.

Thank God that there is a promising move on option for another service user. Pray that the right way forward for each individual will be found.

Pray for service users struggling with diverse issues: health, emotional, addiction, legal and relational. Ask God to help them overcome such challenges.

T **Community Home**

Thank God for the positive move on of a service user who has made brilliant progress during his five month stay.

Thank God that the recent building work has enhanced the standard of accommodation and has enabled an increased 'family' atmosphere to develop.

Pray that a new resident will quickly settle into the Community Home and begin to achieve their goal of sobriety.

Pray for peace of mind for a service user recently diagnosed with a life-changing condition.

W **Haven Support Centre: Rough Sleeping Prevention Service (RSPS) Tenancy Sustainment Team (TST) including HopeHomes (HH)**

Pray for those service users who are caught up in the cycle of addiction, that they may experience God's grace and freedom. (RSPS)

Pray for wisdom and guidance for staff as we seek to find new ways to support service users with increasingly complex and challenging needs. (RSPS)

Give thanks to God for our amazing team of volunteers who provide a cooked breakfast each day. (RSPS)

Pray for protection for staff as we engage in street outreach. (RSPS)

Thank God that a previously 'difficult' service user is now engaging well. (TST)

Thank God that a service user with a chaotic lifestyle has secured financial help. (TST)
Pray a service user with severe health problems will be found appropriate support. (TST)
Praise God for the opportunity HopeHomes presents to give people an independent future. (HH)

Pray for a service user who has recently moved into our HopeHome. Pray that he will settle in well with other residents. Also pray that one more service user may be found who is suitable to take up a place. (HH)

T Sanctuary: Assessment Beds, Emergency Accommodation and Cluster Flats

Praise God for the dedication and skill of the team, as they manage sometimes challenging circumstances and individuals. Pray that they will be able to maintain a calm and welcoming atmosphere at all times.

Thank God for the positive stories of service users who have found stability and fresh encouragement during their stay. Pray that this will be maintained as they move on. Pray for staff and volunteers who may be under stress themselves, that they will receive the support and encouragement they need as they seek to support others.

F Head Office (HO) and Charity Shops [Watford (WCS) and Croxley Green (CGS)]

Thank God for the sense of team in our head office. Please pray for continued cooperation and a positive working environment to continue. (HO)

Please pray a staff member as they leave to take up new opportunities. (HO)

Pray for the shop managers as they organise and lead their teams of staff and volunteers. Ask God to guide them in their decisions. (WCS/CGS)

Thank God for the people who donate items to each shop and for the customers who purchase them. Pray that the right amount of supply and demand will be maintained. (WCS/CGS)

Thank God for the generosity of volunteers, individuals and those from local organisations, who give so much time to help. Thank Him that several more people have joined the 'bank' list, to be available when help is required. (WCS)

Thank God that builders safely rectified the roof and damaged masonry. (WCS)

Pray for volunteers, that they will enjoy well deserved time off work and will return refreshed in body and spirit. (WCS)

S **Development: Community Market Garden (CMG) and HopeCollege (HC)**

Praise God for the emergence of growth and blossom, for the vibrant colours – mirrors to the growth we see in the lives of those who come to the garden. (CMG)

Give thanks for the team of volunteers and service users and for the way they work so well together. (CMG)

Pray for God's blessing as the team prepares for their open day in early June. Ask that it will be foremost an opportunity for service users to build confidence through showcasing their achievements to members of the public. (CMG)

Pray that the team will always be open to new ways of doing things so that the garden can evolve, adapt and continue to be a responsive and enriching service for our service users. (CMG)

Thank God for organisations partnering with New Hope: for the Sprouting Out course about to begin, the opportunity to gain the SMILE Horticulture qualification and for Women's Centre courses. Thank Him for the opportunities they bring. (HC)

S **The Big Picture: Homelessness across the UK**

The number of people sleeping rough on Britain's streets has doubled since 2010. As numbers increase and available hostels and support services reduce, the visibility of homelessness continues to grow. Historic vagrancy laws and more recent Public Space Protection Orders reflect government policy which can sometimes seem to criminalise more than support.

Private landowners increasingly barricade their property or use the law to remove homeless people from their commercial premises. Local authority prosecutions sanction street drinking, sleeping in parks, begging and other behaviour.

Some will applaud a rigorous application of the law; others are seeking to resist, challenging punitive measures and voicing their indignation. Homelessness is not yet designated a crime in the UK but taking a neutral stance is hard to do. Please pray for wisdom as we grapple with these issues.

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