



Let's pray:

June 2023

How can we pray well as we head into this new month?



The first words written in the book of John feel different to the other three gospels. John begins at the beginning. He uses abstract, almost poetic language, echoing the first words in Genesis.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

In this opening passage we're introduced to a powerful creator; our awe-inspiring, wonderful, maker-of-all God. Yet in the words that follow, we're reminded that our God didn't stay far away from us, but came to earth as a human, drawing close to and building relationships with others.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

I love how it's put in The Message version. It says The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighbourhood.

At Home for Good, we're striving to reach every corner of the UK with our vision of a home for every child who needs one. It's our honour and delight to work right across the UK; from the top of Scotland to the South coast of England; from Northern Ireland across the sea to Wales and then all the way East. Often what that work looks like is stepping into a town, city or village – a neighbourhood – and getting to know the people there. We meet with foster carers, adoptive parents, supported lodgings hosts, church leaders and their congregations, social workers and their teams, all of whom long to see better for the children and young people in their own community. We go and we meet and we build those relationships because we truly believe that this is what Jesus longs to see too.



I wonder what it would look like for Jesus to 'move into' your neighbourhood?



Where would he go; where would he spend his time? In what corners or spaces might you find him?

Who would he meet? Who would he seek out? Who would he speak to, and what conversations would he have?

What would Jesus love about your neighbourhood? What would make him smile?

What are the things in your local community that would stir compassion in Jesus?

What impact would his presence have on the people who live in your neighbourhood?

I wonder what his presence there might mean for children, teenagers and families there?

We invite you to ponder these questions this month, as we pray together for children and young people right across the UK who are in or who have been in care. Let's imagine prayerfully how we, as Jesus' friends and followers, can reflect some of his presence and love in our own neighbourhoods.

Points for Prayer



We would love for you to join us this month in praying for children, young people, families and church communities in every corner of the United Kingdom. Take some time to pray for each of the following areas, and especially for the children and young people in care in these places:

England: Recent figures show 82,170 children in the care system in England, an increase of 2% from 2021 and an all-time high. Children in care are predominantly older, with 39% of children in care aged 10-15 years and 25% aged 16 or older. During 2021/22, 10% of children in care experienced high levels of instability.[1]

Scotland: There are over 10,000 children in care in Scotland.[2] Around 43% of these children live with a foster family[3], and latest figures showed that there were around 3,415 approved foster care households in Scotland.[4] 42% of children in care in Scotland live with kinship carers.[5] (Please note: A child who is 'looked after' in Scotland includes all children looked after by a local authority, including some who remain living at home with their parents. Scotland is unique in this compared to the other UK nations. For the purposes of comparison with other UK nations, 'children in care' in this section refers to children who are looked after away from their home or parents, unless otherwise specified.)

Northern Ireland: Latest figures show 3,624 children in care in Northern Ireland – this is the highest number on record since the introduction of the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995. This number has risen by 37% in the last ten years. In Northern Ireland, 41% of children in care are aged 12 or older. 83% of children in care in Northern Ireland live with a foster family.[6]

Wales: There are around 7,000 children in care in Wales, a number that has decreased in recent years. 1,691 children came into care in 2021/22. Around 23% of children in care are ages 5-9 years, 39% are ages 10-15 years and 17% are aged 16 or older. For the first time since 2014-15, more children left care than started to be looked after during 2021/22.[7]

Each of these children and young people are precious, unique individuals. Each of them, and every parent, carer and professional involved in their lives, are seen, loved and surrounded by the presence of Jesus.

1 Department for Education. 2022. Children looked after in England including adoptions. [Available online.](#)

2 Scottish Government. 2022. Children's Social Work Statistics Scotland, 2020-21. [Available online.](#)

3 Ibid.

4 The Fostering Network. 2023. Fostering Statistics. [Available online.](#)

5 Scottish Government. 2022. Children's Social Work Statistics Scotland, 2020-21. [Available online.](#)

6 Department of Health. 2022. Children's social care statistics for Northern Ireland 2021/22. [Available online.](#)

7 Welsh Government. 2022. Children looked after by local authorities April 2021 to March 2022. [Available online.](#)



Reflective prayer idea

Take a walk through your own neighbourhood this month. You might want to do this alone, or bring along your family, friends or church small group. Use these questions to guide some reflection before praying for your community.

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