



*The BRF Book  
of 100 Prayers*

RESOURCING YOUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

*Martyn Payne*

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of 100 Prayers*



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## The BRF Centenary Prayer

Gracious God,  
We rejoice in this centenary year  
that you have grown BRF  
from a local network of Bible readers  
into a worldwide family of ministries.  
Thank you for your faithfulness  
in nurturing small beginnings  
into surprising blessings.  
We rejoice that, from the youngest to the oldest,  
so many have encountered your word  
and grown as disciples of Christ.  
Keep us humble in your service,  
ambitious for your glory  
and open to new opportunities.  
For your name's sake  
Amen

# Introduction

**I cling to you; your right hand upholds me.**

PSALM 63:8

One hundred years ago the western world was emerging from a pandemic known as Spanish flu. It has been estimated that up to 50 million people died; in fact, it's often forgotten that this represents many more deaths than occurred throughout the whole of the 1914–18 war, which had only come to an end four years previously. Almost everyone in the UK at that time could name a family member who had been killed in conflict or as a result of the contagion. And it was at such a time as this that the Bible Reading Fellowship was born in a church in Brixton in south London, attracting people to join Bible study and prayer groups supported by published daily notes. It was in such groups that people began to find faith and hope again in the God of peace who sent Jesus Christ to break down the dividing walls of hostility between us, offering to all a life beyond death that starts here and now.

That post-war and post-pandemic year of 1922 was a moment of opportunity that God used a century ago to give birth to an organisation that is still with us today. And one hundred years later, BRF is once again



being used by God, in the wake of our own global pandemic, to resource and encourage churches and individuals ‘to get a move on’ spiritually – to borrow the words of BRF’s founding father, Revd Leslie Mannerling. The call to study the Bible as God’s word and to deepen our life of prayer has never been more urgent now, as it was then.

Almost all the prayers collected in this book were written during the Covid-19 pandemic. They were inspired as a response to a crisis in a time of need, and indeed prayer often works like this. Of course, as Christians we know that regular times of prayer, whether extemporaneous or liturgical, are vital for healthy Christian discipleship. However, the truth is that we often forget to pray until a crisis comes and we are brought to our knees. While God does not cause the pain and the sadness that are part and parcel of life, he can use them to wake us up to what matters and bring us home to a safe place of love and grace.

The prayers in this book are a selection from a larger number that were posted on social media or published in the four-monthly BRF Prayer Diaries between March 2020 and the end of 2021 – throughout those Covid months whose long shadow is still with us. Although they come from that moment in time, they have also proved to be a prophetic and timeless source of comfort and inspiration to those who have used them. The positive feedback to these prayers has

encouraged us to make them available in this centenary collection.

The book opens with a new prayer written for the BRF centenary. In a few short, memorable phrases, it offers us words to express our thankfulness and wonder at the way in which the Lord has used BRF to grow God's kingdom, both in this country and overseas, since 1922. BRF's publications, Bible reading notes and online resources, along with new ministries that encourage God's work among children, families, the elderly and those who are hearing the gospel for the first time, are all referenced in this prayer of celebration and praise.

For convenience of use, the one hundred new prayers that follow are divided into five sections, offering individuals and churches words to use in prayer:

- to help us come close to God
- to call out to God when we face the challenges of our Christian pilgrimage
- to praise God at festival times and on special occasions
- to support mission and ministry across the generations
- to use as we open up God's word and apply its truths to particular issues facing us today.

It is our hope that these prayers will be widely used, in both private and public worship. And finally, conscious that we often need encouragement to pray, we have included a selection of original thoughts on prayer throughout the book along with quotations from other Living Faith resources.

Prayer has always been at the heart of the movement of God's Spirit that has sustained the work of BRF over the past hundred years. None of our ministries, whether Anna Chaplaincy, Living Faith, Messy Church or Parenting for Faith, would be possible without the faithful support of those who pray for and with us. And so in recent years, we have nurtured a growing re-emphasis on this ministry of prayer. With this in mind, we hope that this collection will both enrich your own prayer life and help you to pray with us for all that God has in store for BRF in the future. And, adapting words from the centenary prayer, we pray that the prayers will encourage you 'to be ambitious for God's glory'.

*Martyn Payne*



## *Approaching God*

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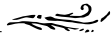
Prayers of preparation  
and thanksgiving

Come near to God and he will come near to you.

JAMES 4:8

1.

Thank you, Lord, for the gift of another day  
in which you call us:  
to bless our neighbour,  
to welcome the stranger,  
to pray for our enemies,  
to look after your world,  
to share the good news of your love,  
and to become more like Jesus,  
through the power of your Holy Spirit in us.  
Amen



## 2.

Thank you for welcoming us  
into your kingdom through the cross of Christ:  
a kingdom where  
the unforgivable are forgiven,  
the undeserving rewarded,  
the unlovable loved,  
the wayward rescued,  
the poor are rich,  
the last are first  
and the least are honoured,  
because in each one of these  
we can meet with you, Christ Jesus.  
Amen



*Christian prayer is... a face-to-face, heart-to-heart,  
Spirit-to-spirit connection with him who is the first and  
the last, the beginning and the end, the king of kings,  
and the lover of your soul.*

LYNDALL BYWATER

*Prayer isn't a silver bullet to solve our problems, nor a  
magic wand to make everything turn out well. It is our  
lifeline to God so that whatever happens we and God  
are in it together.*

MARTYN PAYNE

## Harvest

### 41.

Hope-giving God,  
thank you for creating a world full of seeds  
that testify to your loving investment  
in the land and in our lives.  
Just as you rejoice to see those seeds bear fruit,  
we come to you at this festival time  
with the fruit of praise and thanksgiving  
for your goodness and faithful love.  
Amen



*In prayer we bow before:  
The love that can't stop loving.  
The gift that can't stop giving.  
The light that can't stop enlightening.  
The blessing that can't stop blessing.  
We kneel before our God who never changes.*

MARTYN PAYNE

*I am pleased that you teach sacred theology to the  
brothers, providing that... you do not extinguish the  
spirit of prayer and devotion during study of this kind.*

ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

## 42.

Lord, as tenants of your kingdom,  
you have committed to us  
the harvesting of our fields and of our faith.  
Forgive us for the failed harvests that are our  
responsibility,  
and help us to respond better to your cultivation  
and care  
by bringing forth the fruits of faith, hope and love,  
that alone can transform this world and bring joy  
in heaven.  
Amen



*As we turn in prayer to God, the great Creator, we become vessels of creative energy and desire. We long to give expression to the gift we have received, and as we do so, the act of creation becomes a prayer in itself.*

DANIEL WOLPERT







*Enabling all ages to grow in faith*



Anna Chaplaincy  
Living Faith  
Messy Church  
Parenting for Faith

## 100 years of BRF

2022 is BRF's 100th anniversary! Look out for details of our special new centenary resources, a beautiful centenary rose and an online thanksgiving service that we hope you'll attend. This centenary year we're focusing on sharing the story of BRF, the story of the Bible – and we hope you'll share your stories of faith with us too.

Find out more at [brf.org.uk/centenary](https://brf.org.uk/centenary).

To find out more about our work, visit  
[brf.org.uk](https://brf.org.uk)



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