

## Paraguay Prayer Calendar March & April 2010

### Week Mon 1 – Sun 7 Mar Thanking God for unsung heroes

*My dear friends, we always have good reason to thank God for you, because your faith in God and your love for each other keep growing all the time. 2 Thessalonians 1:3*

As Paraguay remembers National Heroes Day, let's take time this week to pray those who have been unsung heroes in communities around the world, remembering those:

- who bring relief when disasters strike, especially those who are working tirelessly in favour of the earthquake victims in Chile and Haiti
- those whose generosity in giving the gift of their time, energy, talents, wisdom or resources is enabling Gods mission to transform lives in Paraguay
- who choose to be part of God's team and the good things that He has planned for Paraguay
- whose acts of kindness have touched our lives this week

**Pastor Luis Echeverria** asks us to give thanks for new folk who are responding to God's call to serve.

**Caroline Gilmour White** encourages us to give thanks for the generous provision of resources for sewing workshops and for gifts to help stock the Diocesan Library.

**St Andrews School** give thanks that the new school year has started well with the children glad to be back in classes. The opening service in the Cathedral was enjoyed by pupils, parents and staff.

Along with **Charlie, David & Raquel** we thank God for all the good things that happened at the Provincial youth camp and the positive impact on the **Anglican youth of the Province of the Southern Cone**. Thank you Father God for all who worked so hard and contributed to make this a special time for the participants.

We give thanks for **church leaders and pastors in Paraguay** as they meet together on the 4th – 6<sup>th</sup> March, thanking God for their ministries and praying that they will be equipped for the task of mission.

Lord Jesus, it's amazing how you bring together, in unity of purpose, unsung heroes of different ages, from distinct cultures and backgrounds to take part in the life and mission of our communities so that your love is able to transform people in different places. Thank you for choosing us to be part of your mission. Amen.

Lucy to Linus: *You think being average is enough, don't you? Well it isn't!*  
*What shape would the world be in today if everyone settled for being average?* Charles Schulz

Take a few moments to thank God for those people who have influenced your life for good by their choice to be more than just average. Ask God to help you as you live this week and to give you opportunities to be an unsung hero.

### Week Mon 8 – Sun 14 Mar Facing Change – Honesty and Humility

*Giving an honest answer is a sign of true friendship.* Proverbs 24:26

Søren Kierkegaard noted '*Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards*'. We pray for ourselves and all who are facing and implementing changes, remembering that the process needs to start with honesty.

**St Andrews School:** we pray for

- fruitful meetings with parents leading to good relationships and a clear understanding of expectations
- new pupils both in preschool and further up the school
- new staff members
- the implementation of new technologies such as Smart boards
- 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade camps to be fruitful times, enlarging pupil perspectives and outlooks, offering opportunities for community service
- Nelson Aguilera's input into staff training

Robert McCheyne, a 19<sup>th</sup> century pastor, encouraged his congregation to complete the phrase... 'The greatest need of my church is...' Lord God we pray that our churches will be filled with humble servants like McCheyne, whose personal answer was 'The greatest need of my church is my personal holiness.'

**The Redeemer Church** in Zeballos Cue, ask us to pray as some church leaders have moved out of the area due to housing needs. Pray that the church may adapt to these changes, and members be flexible and willing to face challenges with honesty and humility.

We pray for **Rev Ronald & Nicky Irene**, Natasha, Tamara & Daniel, as they adjust to their new life in Asuncion and ministry opportunities.

We pray for **Rev Cefe & Ana Romero** and their family as Cefe retires after 25 years of ministry in Roque Alonso. We thank God for this family's ministry and for the new opportunities that lie ahead in retirement.

We pray for those who have been part of the church here in Paraguay and are now adapting to a new life and different cultures. We remember **Patrick & Rosie Butler** and family in Guilford, **Claire Holmes** now living in Lurgan and on deputation in Northern Ireland, and **Wendy Power** now nursing in Cambodia as a CMS SALT partner with VSO, and **Elaine Black** back in the UK, asking that each one would be given honesty, humility and strength to face the challenges of adaptation. Amen.

We pray for **Teo Rivas** and assistant **Donald Brooks** working together in the Diocesan Administration, for wisdom in the setting of priorities.

We pray for **Sharon McCririe, Hector & Delia** seeking God's direction for La Puerta project, in the wake of PUAFE's sudden withdrawal from the project, praying that they all will remain close to the Lord. During this process of unexpected change Sharon hopes that 'We will increase what we were doing in the shanty town and maybe use the facilities in the meantime for retreats for the addicts there who are not making it remaining in the environment. Only God knows what surprises he has prepared for us to show his care and love.'

*Christ was truly God. But he did not try to remain equal with God. Instead he gave up everything and became a slave, when he became like one of us. Christ was humble. He obeyed God and even died on a cross.*  
Philippians 2:6 - 8

### **Week Mon15 – Sun 21 Mar Lent – time for reflection (from Stop & Stare, Nick Fawcett)**

Proverbs 30:1 *Someone cries out to God, 'I am completely worn out! How can I last?'*

We pray for church leaders in Paraguay and our churches remembering that many times leadership can become a heavy burden, asking God to enable leaders to take time for rest and reflection during Lent, enabling them to gain God's perspective.

We thank God for the David Powell's recently published book on 100 years of Anglicanism in the Paraguayan Chaco. Please pray for the **book launch** at St Andrews Cathedral on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March at 8pm. Please pray that this book will offer opportunities to inform, educate and reflect.

We lift before the throne of grace bishops **Peter Bartlett & Andres Rodríguez**; pastors **Agustin Maidana, Cefe Romero, Ed Brice, Elvio Cabañas, Juan Sosa, Lucio Romero, Luis Echeverría, Mario Caballero, Robert Fernández & Teodoro Campestequi**; deacons **Agripino Cerro, Ronald Irene, Mario Recalde Niño Pepe Aguero & Romualdo Rojas**, pastoral worker **Donald Brooks**, lay leaders, church council members and all of God's people.

Lord, we come with our faults, weaknesses and lack of faith, seeking your mercy and your renewing touch. Speak to us. Meet with us. Lord we come together, looking for guidance, nurture and inspiration, seeking above all a deeper faith and a fuller knowledge of you. Speak to us. Meet with us. Amen.

We pray for families facing health challenges, especially **Agustin & Teresa Maidana's** family and **Rachel Rudman's** family. Grant that those who carry the burden of caring for the sick will be draw near to Jesus and place their burdens in his care, finding rest for their souls. Amen.

As we pray for others and ourselves we are encouraged by Jesus: *If you are tired from carrying heavy burdens, come to me and I will give you rest. Take the yoke I give you. Put it on your shoulders and learn from me. I am gentle and humble, and you will find rest. This yoke is easy to bear, and this burden is light.* Matthew 11:28-30. We pray that we and our church leaders and members will put your advice into practice and let go of worries. Amen.

## **Week Mon 22 –28 Mar Prayer for the Chaco**

This week we unite our prayers for the communities in the Chaco:

### **El Estribo**

- giving thanks for the preparation of the tajamar (lagoon) which is now the only **source of water** for the 2 communities of Karandá and January 20<sup>th</sup>, as the water cistern is now empty
- praying for Pastor **Lucio Romero & Esteban Galeano** (Chris Hawksbee's co worker) as they negotiate with the community leaders to set aside land to dedicate to **cattle production**, probably in family units, to generate an alternative income to the fragile agricultural model
- praying for the clergy, **Lucio & Mario** as they attend to the spiritual needs of the church.

### **La Patria**

- giving thanks for **faithful groups of Christians**
- praying for clergy **Robert, Niño Pepe, Agripino & Mario** that they may be faithful pastors and teachers of Christ's flock and promoters of unity.

### **Makxlawaya**

- praising God for the initiative of deacon **Romualdo** and a small group who want to move forward and resume **beekeeping** and so increase the income base of the community
- praying for **good community relationships** as they need signed approval in order to present the proposal request to the Government ministry
- praying for pastor **Juan** and deacon **Romualdo** in their pastoral responsibilities

### **Sombrero Piri**

- giving thanks for the new school building in Yatnata and the **community interest in their roots**
- praying for the clergy, **Elvio & Teodoro** that they will be given clear vision in their planning for the communities spiritual needs

### **Chris Hawksbee**

- thankful for the provision of **water in the Chaco** and opportunities to stimulate income generation
- praying for safety in travelling and wisdom in development meetings

### **Ed Brice**

- thanking God for the **sermon preparation** training sessions using Enxet Bibles study materials
- praying for **volunteers** to accompany the studies
- praying for clarity of purpose and the planning of the Chaco pastors & leaders **Bible study weeks**
- spiritual fruit to be in lives and ministries through their study of the **SEAN Matthew course**

### **Tim Curtis and the Enxet Translation Team**

- thanking God for this week's visit of the **United Bible Societies** team (**Tito Le Haye**, 2 Bolivians and 2 Americans) to update the Paratext software.
- praying for **Tim, Juan, Asunción & Martín** now checking the drafts of Isaiah 60 -65, Psalm 119 and 1 Kings 1
- praying for the provision of **reliable power** to run computers (due to damages caused by continued problems with power surges the translation office is now being powered by solar panels).

Please pray for **St Andrew's College Easter service** taking place in St Andrews cathedral on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March at 10:45, that the children, parents and staff will respond to Jesus' saving love and power.

## **Week Mon 29 – Sun 4 April Holy Week - Hands which bless others**

*Jesus knew that he had come from God and would go back to God. He also knew that the Father had given him complete power. So during the meal Jesus got up, removed his outer garment, and wrapped a towel around his waist. He put some water into a large bowl. Then he began washing his disciples' feet and drying them with the towel he was wearing. John 13:3*

This Holy Week we remember in prayer Anglican ministries. As you pray for you might like to pray for the individuals meeting needs that their serving will be modelled on Jesus' example and for those receiving ministry that they will come to know Jesus' saving love. And don't forget to pray for yourself as you both serve others and are ministered to by others.

**Nurse Beryl Baker** healing the sick in the Chaco

The dedicated team of **aunties** in the **Esperanza foster home**

**David Orritt & the Mission Paraguay teams** preparing to minister this summer

**Victor Santa Cruz and the staff of the Annexe School** ministering to families in the Chacarita shanty town

**Volunteers** giving of themselves, their time, energy, money and resources in favour of ministry in Paraguay.

*In the name of Christ, may your hands be blessed. May they be hands that carry out kind acts for others. May they work hard, working as for the Lord. While ever you live, may your hands bring blessings to others. May you be prospered in the labour of your hands. May the Lord bless your talents and skills and may you be happy with the work of your hands. Amen.*

**Week Mon 5 April – Sun 11 April**

**Freedom to proclaim, nurture, respond, transform and safeguard**

*God built freedom into every fibre of creation and He meant for us to all be free and whole  
But when my Lord brought freedom through the blood of His redemption  
His cross stamped 'pardoned' on my very soul  
From a hill called Calvary let freedom ring wherever hearts know pain  
Let freedom echo through the lonely, streets where prisons have no key,  
We can be free and we can sing, Let freedom ring Larnelle Harris*

Let us pray to God for **FEISA** transforming Paraguay through the training of teachers to teach and nurture young children, remembering students old and new as well as staff.

Let us pray for all Christian teachers as they teach, encourage and nurture, remembering **Alison Hawksbee & Tally** (of Asuncion Cristian Academy), **Victor Santa Cruz** and the staff of the Annex School, all St Andrews staff, including head teacher **Gwen Carlisle**, deputy head **Mags Southern**, teachers **Babs Owen, Sue Nagaitis, Nicky Irene, Caroline Brooks, Ryan Morgan, Karenina Caceres & Raquel Greco; Linn Tedman** (librarian), **Miriam Greco** (school administrator), **Regina Echeverria** (in the school bookshop) and English Language Assistant **Lara Bordeaux**.

Let us pray to God for those who are **studying** will be transformed and respond to God's call on their lives, remembering: **Donald Brooks, Feliciano Ortega, Luis Echeverria & Ronald Irene** in their theological studies.

Let us pray to God for the **Diocesan Library** that those assimilating Christian reading materials will be transformed.

Let us pray to God for **EJE Youth Encounter** that young people continue to be transformed by new life in Jesus.

Let us pray for **Bishop Peter & Sally Bartlett** as they help others to find spiritual freedom and to mature in Christ through the **Growing in Maturity** Course.

*Stand fast therefore in the liberty with which Christ has made us free,  
and do not again be held with the yoke of bondage. Galatians 5:1*

**Week Mon 12 – Sun 18 April City churches – a new way of being**

*Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall sprout; shall you not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, rivers in the desert. Isaiah 43:18-19*

**St Andrews Cathedral & Chapel:** We continue to pray for **Bishop Peter & Sally Bartlett, Rev Agustín & Teresa Maidana, Rev Ronald & Nicky Irene** and pastoral worker **Donald Brooks** as they minister in these congregations and work together as a team. We thank God for the gifts that he has given to church members and pray that these gifts will benefit other congregations in Asuncion and Paraguay. We thank God for all who visit these 3 congregations and pray that they will be integrated into the community of faith.

Please pray for **Bishop Andres & Estela Lopez** in Concepcion, in their leadership of the church in Concepcion, especially the overseeing of the Children's clubs. We pray for new members to be added to the church leadership team.

Please pray for **Ed & Marie Brice** in their leadership in **St Matthews, Rio Verde**, pastoring and teaching Indian and non Indian adults and children in the Chaco region

- that they will be granted wisdom, vision and flexibility and all that they need for leadership as the Kingdom of God advances in the Chaco
- Sunday school workshops
- Marie's literacy class Rio Verde

Please pray for **St John's, Roque Alonso** and the satellite congregations of **Mirador** and **King of Kings, Remansito**, as **Pastor Ceferino** retires. We continue to pray for the church council for unity and wisdom as they plan and mature in leadership, remembering **Alberto, Lida, Priscilla, Rene, Luis, Javier & Luis Robles**.

We thank God for the church council of **Emanuel Church** and pastoral worker **Donald Brooks** as they work together for the benefit of this congregation. We pray for spiritual growth to enable growth in numbers, and that the members will grow in commitment and desire to work together for the church. We thank God for **Cristina, Sarah & Tim** working with the Sunday school that more children would be added to the lively group that already attend.

We pray for the **youth of the city churches** in Asuncion and Greater Asuncion that **opportunities for fellowship** across the city will be increased. We pray for David, Raquel and Charlie and the Paraguayan representatives at the Provincial camp, that they would be given wisdom in their planning for this. Amen

Pastor **Luis & Regina Echeverria** and **The Redeemer Church** in Zeballos Cue ask us to pray for:

- spiritual strength as the battle they face is intense
- church council members to assume more responsibility
- the Saturday morning children's feeding programme that God will continue to provide the resources and personnel to run this ministry
- PEPE preschool as teacher Gloria has her new baby

We pray for discernment for all church leaders enabling them to see the new things that God is doing and wisdom to enable them respond.

*In the book of life, the answers aren't in the back. Charlie Brown*

## **Week Fri 19 – Thurs 25 Feb Prayer for the Church – from the Apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians Relationships – from Ephesians 5: 22 – 6:9 (The Message)**

We pray for **Miriam & Miguel Greco** and all the leaders of **EMA** (Anglican Marriage Encounter) preparing for May 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> Marriage Encounter Weekend. We pray that many couples will be able to attend the invitation / motivation meetings on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> April and sign up to attend the weekend.

*Out of respect for Christ, be courteously reverent to one another. Ephesians 5: 21*

Lord, thank you for the diversity of your church in Paraguay. Help the church to treasure those who are distinct. May we be open to meeting and sharing with all in our communities of faith. We pray that during this time of Lent we may become more open. May we also be kind members of the People of God. Amen.

*Wives understand and support your husbands in ways that show your support for Christ. The husband provides leadership to his wife the way Christ does to his church, not by domineering but by cherishing. So just as the church submits to Christ as he exercises such leadership, wives should likewise submit to their husbands. Ephesians 5: 22 – 24*

Christ, you are the head of the church. Thank you that you exercise authority with gentleness. Teach your Church in Paraguay to learn from you, so that authority is exercised in a way that is respectful and kind. We ask these things so that your Church will be built and made stronger. Amen.

*Husbands, go all out in love for your wives, exactly as Christ did for the church – a love marked by giving, not getting. Christ's love makes the church whole. Christ's words evoke her beauty. Everything he says and does is designed to bring the best out of her, dressing her in dazzling white silk, radiant with holiness. And that is how husbands ought to love their wives. They're really doing themselves a favour- since they're already 'one' in marriage. Ephesians 5: 25 – 28*

Christ, thank you that your love is making the Church whole. We pray that your disciples in Paraguay will continue to learn to love fellow pilgrims. Help us to bring out the best in others. Amen.

*No one abuses his own body, does he? No, he feeds and pampers it. That's how Christ treats us, the church, since we are part of his body. And this is why a man leaves father and mother and cherishes his wife. No longer two, they become 'one flesh. This is a huge mystery, and I don't pretend to understand it all. What is clearest to me is the way that Christ treats the church. And it provides a good picture of how each husband is to treat his wife, loving himself in loving her, and how each wife is to honour her husband.' Eph 5: 29 – 33*  
Christ, you delight to give good things and to your Church. Today, please show me a practical way in which I can make someone else in the church feel special. Teach me more about honouring fellow pilgrims. Amen.

*'Children do what your parents tell you. This is only right. 'Honour your father and your mother' is the first commandment that has a promise attached to it, namely, 'so that you will live well and have a long life'. Fathers, don't exasperate your children by coming down hard on them. Take them by the hand and lead them in the way of the Master.' Ephesians 6: 1 – 3*

Father, thank you for your patience with us, your children. Thank you that you don't come down hard on us, you delight in encouraging us. Help church members in Paraguay to encourage others. Grant insight into the situations of others. Today please help us to choose to use words that build other up. Amen.

*'Servants, respectfully obey your earthly master but always with an eye to obeying the real master, Christ. Don't just do what you have to do to get by, but work heartily as Christ's servants doing what God wants you to do. And work with a smile on your face, always keeping in mind that no matter who happens to be giving the orders, you're really serving God. Good work will get you good pay for the Master, regardless of whether you are slave or free. Masters it's the same with you. No abuse, please, and no threats. You and your servants are both under the same Master in heaven. He makes no distinction between you and them.' Eph 6: 5 – 9*  
Master, sometimes it sounds strange to call you Master, but yet that is what you are, and I am the servant. Often I don't act like a servant. Today help me to do all the tasks that need to be done with a smile on my face and a humble attitude. Fill your church with women and men who will delight in being true servants. Amen

### **Week Mon 26 – Fri 30 April Greeting others with kindness**

Rabbinic tradition places importance on how we greet one another. Rabbi Yishmael encouraged his disciples to '*Receive every human being with gladness*'.

Studying the Gospels we discover many occasions when Jesus initiates conversations which bring dignity to others: *Jesus saw the woman and said, 'Don't worry! You are now well because of your faith'*. Matt 9:22

As St Paul finishes his letter to the Roman Christians he reminds them of the importance of welcoming newcomers, asking them to: *Welcome Phoebe in a way that is proper for someone who has faith in the Lord and is one of God's own people. Help her in any way you can. After all, she has proved to be a respected leader for many others, including me.* Romans 16:2

In your prayers this week please pray that our churches will become more welcoming communities. As you go about your daily life take time to be aware of the people who are present in your life those who and cross your paths this week and take the opportunity to greet them in a way which reflects Jesus' love for them, remembering St Paul's words: *I pray that our Lord Jesus will be kind to you.* Romans 16:20

Thank you for praying for the Anglican Church in Paraguay,

+Peter & Sally Bartlett,  
on behalf of the Anglican Church of Paraguay

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