

Sleepsafe 2017-18: prayer resources



Sleepsafe is an emergency winter night shelter and support programme aiming to help guests make the transition off the street. It is run by BCARS (Bournemouth Christians alongside rough sleepers), the local network of churches dedicated to helping people “get off the street, stay off the street and find the love of Jesus”

Please join us in praying for Sleepsafe.

1. We thank God for:

- The lives that were radically changed last year!
- Over 100 volunteers who have signed up to help, including those willing to help overnight
- 9 churches willing to use their venue to host the guests
- 3 new overnight staff (and 1 back-up), skilled and passionate about serving this community
- Financial resources that continue to come in to meet the costs of the project
- A sense of unity across the churches in this outreach

2. And we are asking God for the following:

- For the guests: Successful move-on, freedom from addictions, Restored relationships; new self-confidence that they are valued in God's (and their own) eyes; a transformed life in every way (including knowing God loves them)
- For the volunteers: safety, wisdom, joy and togetherness; particularly pray that there will be enough people to fill all the slots over holiday times
- For the church venues: peace, protection, safety, opportunities to pray for the teams and the guests
 - o Mon Citygate
 - o Tues Bournemouth Community Church (Life Centre)
 - o Wed St. Michaels, Poole Hill
 - o Thurs All Saints, Southbourne (and then Boscombe Baptist from mid-January)
 - o Fri St. Swithun's
 - o Sat St. Albans, Charminster
 - o Sun Trinity Methodist, Southbourne
- And continued great relationships with statutory and voluntary sector partners, and between churches involved

3. Prayer ideas

- A. Include some specific prayers in your Sunday service (see examples below) – you could play the recent short Sleepsafe video as an intro (ask us for the memory stick with this on)
- B. Put a prayer on your news-sheet and ask everyone to pray it over their Sunday lunch each week of Sleepsafe
- C. Light a candle on each Sunday of Advent at church or at lunch at home, and pray for the Sleepsafe guests according to the 4 headings of Advent (Faithfulness / Hope / Joy / Love)
- D. Set up a prayer room for a day (we can provide some banners and leaflets) and encourage people to take 30 minute “shifts” to pray through the day
- E. Run a short session in your Sunday school about homelessness, and ask the children to write their own prayers, or design a plate or cup holder as a prayer reminder to put on their dinner table to visibly remind the family to pray for rough sleepers
- F. Prayer walk at one of the venues of Sleepsafe (clearly talk to the relevant church first if it is not your own!)

Here are some prayers that you might like to use:

God of compassion,
your love for humanity was revealed in Jesus,
whose earthly life began in the poverty of a stable
and ended in the pain and isolation of the cross:
we hold before you those who are homeless, wet, discouraged and cold.
Draw near and comfort them in spirit
and bless those who work to provide them
with shelter, food and friendship.
We ask this in Jesus' name.
Amen.

Father God, whose home has many mansions, we raise up to you all who have no home to call their own. Help them to find the strength, resilience and resources they need to meet the challenges of each day. May they find shelter, warmth and hospitality as they journey through this week.

We pray to the Lord

Lord, hear our prayer

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Lord God,
You came to give honour to the least, those forgotten, overlooked and misjudged.
You came to give first place to the last, those left behind, misunderstood and undervalued.
You came to give a warm welcome to the lost, those who are orphaned, abandoned and destitute.

Help us to be your ears to listen to their cries.
Help us to be your voice speaking out love and acceptance.
Help us to be your feet walking beside those in need.
Help us to be your hands to clothe, feed and shelter them.

You came for the least, the lost and last of this world.
Lord, hear our prayer.

Amen.

Homeless Sunday Prayer

Loving God, in your house there is room for everyone.
Help us as we strive for a world where everyone has a home that truly meets their needs.
Give us the grace to welcome strangers and refugees.
Give us the insight to see where inequality hurts.
Fill us with courage to do our part.
Save us from being overwhelmed by the scale of the housing crisis,
and show us, O Lord, where to begin.

Amen