

May Dartford Prosper

August-September 2021

Praying for the Town, the Community and the Church

Welcome to the summer edition of 'May Dartford Prosper', continuing to pray for our town and nation particularly in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic. For more information contact lizpooley@hotmail.com

*"Do not call to mind the former things; pay no attention to the things of old.
Behold, I am about to do something new; even now it is coming. Do you not see it?"*

Our Neighbourhoods

Pray for those who live around you, (the two households either side of you and five opposite).

Please pray for each household, remembering especially:

- relationships and family life
- children and young people
- elderly people
- those at school and work and those who have no work
- physical and mental wellbeing and protection from Covid-19
- that we will have opportunities to be witnesses for Jesus by our words and actions

and that we will be a blessing to our neighbours by having:

- good relations with them
- sensitivity to their needs

Pray too for awareness of harmful activities, for example domestic abuse, gang culture, human trafficking and terrorism, and for safety on our streets.

Monday saw the lifting of remaining Covid restrictions for England and, among other things, the opening of nightclubs and large venues without social distancing. Although 36.4m people in the UK have now had both jabs, infection rates are rising steeply and Dartford currently has the highest infection rate in Kent at 595.9 cases per 100,000 head of population. (As at 21 July)

Pray

- That the infection rate in Dartford will quickly start to reduce again and that people will continue to take care in crowded settings.
- For local businesses where significant numbers of staff are staying at home, having received an alert to self-isolate. Pray that essential services will continue to operate well.
- For clinically extremely vulnerable people who, fearing exposure to the virus, feel they need to shield again. Pray especially for those for whom this causes much anxiety.
- For protection for children and all those who have not been vaccinated.
- For Darent Valley Hospital, that it will continue to cope with increased Covid cases while delivering other urgent treatment.
- For care homes in this area and for the safety of patients and staff.
- For people suffering from long Covid.
- For wisdom for the Prime Minister, Government and scientific advisers as they monitor infection rates and the effect of test and trace on the availability of workers.

Children and young people are starting their summer holidays this week after another disrupted school year. Many classes have drastically reduced in size as children have had to self-isolate following the positive test of a classmate. The BBC reported that last week almost a quarter of children in England were out of school.



Pray

- For all children and teaching staff as they start their summer holidays, for rest and relaxation after a difficult year.
- For children who have suffered from anxiety caused by the disruptions to their education and for those who have developed serious mental health issues during the pandemic.
- For young people awaiting results of important exams (10 August for A Levels and 12 August for GCSEs), and that the school-assessed grades will accurately reflect their ability.
- For the safety of all young people over the holidays. Pray for families who are struggling financially, especially when children are at home all day.

Following the lifting of restrictions which limited numbers for church services and activities such as singing, many congregations will be thinking about how they will respond to this new environment amidst rising infection rates.

Pray

- For church leaders as they decide what is safe for their own set-up. Pray especially for church members who are anxious about meeting in person again.
- Give thanks that many churches are continuing with online services on Sunday mornings in addition to opening their doors or meeting outside.
- For church leaders as they meet together monthly for prayer and fellowship. Pray especially for mutual encouragement and for

those who have found the last 17 months particularly exhausting.

- That as Christians we won't just slip back to our old way of doing things. God is doing a new thing; pray for discernment as society moves towards a post-Covid age, and that the Church will be in the vanguard of what God is doing.

Also for your prayers...

Tokyo Olympics & Paralympics 23 July- 5 Sept
Japan is the second largest people group in the world as yet unreached with the gospel. The lockdown here has changed Japanese Christians' plans for evangelism during the Games, but they are hoping to raise a million hours of prayer for Japan during this time. For more information, to register, receive prayer updates and Zoom gatherings go to <https://www.japan1million.com/>

Evergreen Care Dartford

Plans to introduce Evergreen Care in Dartford are going well and a number of volunteers have come forward as befrienders and practical helpers. Please pray for the prospering of this new work in our town and that local people will become aware of and sign up to the possibilities offered by Evergreen. <https://www.evergreencareuk.org>



A blessing for Dartford

God is our refuge and our strength, an ever-present help in trouble. (Ps46.1)

We proclaim that God is more than able to protect us, and in Him we are secure.

We declare that He is our refuge and our fortress, our God in whom we can trust (Ps 91).

In Jesus' name, we bless all the people living in Dartford to know that if they dwell in the shadow of the Most High they will be under His protection. We bless them to come running to Him and to allow Him to cover them with his feathers. We bless them to fear no evil, because He is their shield and rampart.

We pray that people in this community will know that there is no place safer than in the purposes of God, that He will command His angels to guard them in all their ways. We pray that many will turn to Him and know that he is their refuge, always wanting to help them and be there for them.

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