



Churches  
Together in  
Westminster

Churches Working Together  
in Central London

# Resources for Prisons Week

8th - 15th October 2017



# The Prisons Week Prayer

Lord, you offer freedom to all people. We pray for those in prison. Break the bonds of fear and isolation that exist. Support with your love prisoners and their families and friends, prison staff and all who care. Heal those who have been wounded by the actions of others, especially the victims of crime. Help us to forgive one another, to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly together with Christ in his strength and in his Spirit, now and every day.

**Amen**

## Prisons Week

For forty years Prisons Week has prepared prayer literature to enable the Christian community to pray for the needs of all those affected by prisons. Please pray each day during Prisons Week, but also ask yourself whether there is one thing that you as an individual, or as a church, can do to help any of those people that you are praying for.

For more information and for prayers for Prison Week please visit

[www.prisonsw.org](http://www.prisonsw.org)

*On the cover:*

*Towards Dartmoor, HM Prison Channings Woods*

**Watercolour and Gouache**

**2017**

# Foreword

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There is much to celebrate in the work of the Churches Together in Westminster initiative for Prisons Week, for this example of outreach is a clear response to the words of Christ: “I was in prison and you visited me.” (Mt. 26:36).

Our prison system is living with some definite challenges, not least of which is the current staffing level in many places. This can impact on inmates’ access to courses, association time and opportunities for prayer and the various study programmes run by chaplaincies. It is very evident that the work done by chaplains has a significant effect on the well-being of prisoners, who welcome the chance to pray, study the Scriptures and deepen the understanding of their faith. Such opportunities are often ‘game-changers’ for inmates and this impact on their lives will have positive effects when the time comes for them to leave prison.

All who are committed to visiting prisoners, supporting chaplaincy and prisoners’ families play a significant role in the journey of rehabilitation and are people of encounter with the person of Christ as well as the wider community.

All that can be done in church communities to inform and educate about the life and work of prisons and the wider justice system will facilitate a place of welcome for those who leave prison. It is encouraging to find all that is being done to bring about developments in this regard and I am delighted to be able to endorse all that is being achieved.

## **Richard Moth**

Roman Catholic Bishop for Prisons  
Author of *Faith Inside: A Guide for Catholics in Prison*

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The brief case studies interspersed throughout this booklet are the personal observations of volunteers based on their conversations with prisoners.

# Churches Together in Westminster - Prisons Mission & Prisons Week

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Prisons week has been marked each Autumn since 1975. An increasing number of churches, of many different denominations and traditions, have used this date to focus prayerful attention on everything around the prison system: prison inmates and their families, prison officers and the multi-faith chaplaincy teams, the criminal justice system and victims of crime.

The UK prison population is huge and three of London's giant Victorian prisons are the biggest in Europe, each holding about 1,600 men in cramped conditions. Education and mental health services are inadequate and many inmates live miserable and angry lives with little hope of an independent, crime free future. Members of the multi-faith Prison Chaplaincy Teams work under intense pressure and have responsibility for not only prisoners, but also their families and prison officers.

Churches Together in Westminster (CTiW) launched its Prisons Mission in January 2014. Many lessons have been learned but the objectives have remained unchanged.

- To provide support and assistance identified and needed by the multi-faith Chaplaincy Teams
- For participants to practise their Christian ministry with a vulnerable and neglected section of our society.
- For the congregations of the engaged churches to become better informed about prisoners, their families, prison staff, victims of crime and issues concerning the prison system.

The churches put forward a group of potential participants to undertake outreach work at a prison. With appropriate introduction, training and support, each participant works with members of the multi-faith Chaplaincy Team, mentoring inmates before and after discharge, assisting with Bible studies classes, attending and assisting worship in the chapel and other duties which aim to aid the rehabilitation and resettlement of inmates in the outside world.

One of the central roles of every participant is to report back to their church's management and congregation about their learning

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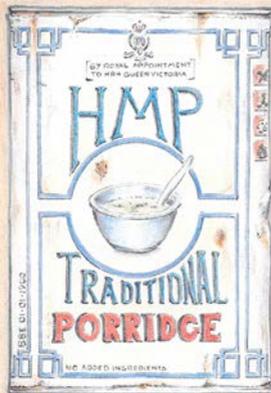
and activities at prison. The experience of this modest, but valued, form of Christian ministry has been used to compile this booklet to help churches devise effective forms of worship, activities and discussions. The aim is to ensure that while 94,800 men, women and children are detained behind British prison walls, they must not be "out of sight and out of mind". The CTiW

Executive Committee is keen to know how member churches have marked Prisons Week this year. Please do send a brief note about how this was addressed in your church, with any suggestions for 2018.

**John Plummer**

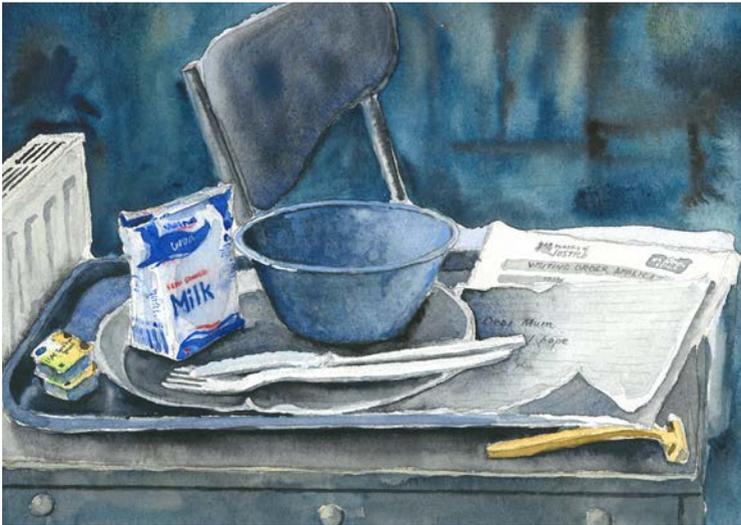
CTiW Prisons Mission Coordinator  
johnplummer.audax@gmail.com

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*Food for Thought, HM Prison Dartmoor*

**Drawing  
2017**



*Letter to my Mother, HM Prison Channings Woods*  
**Watercolour and Gouache**  
**2017**

# Prisons Week worship

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## Hymns

*The Spirit lives to set us free* – Damian Lundy  
*Lord the light of Your love is shining (Shine Jesus, shine)* – Graham Kendrick  
*Longing for light, we wait in darkness* – Bernadette Farrell  
*Amazing grace* – John Newton  
*The light of Christ has come in to the world* – Donald Fishell  
*Come to set us free* – Bernadette Farrell  
*And can it be* – Charles Wesley  
*God is working his purpose out* – A.C. Ainger  
*Hail to the Lords anointed* – James Montgomery  
*Hark the glad sound* – Philip Doddridge  
*Jesus shall reign* – Isaac Watts  
*Just as I am* – Charlotte Elliott  
*O for a thousand tongues to sing* – Charles Wesley  
*Songs of praise the angels sing* – James Montgomery  
*Wait for the Lord* – Jacques Berthier, Taize Community  
*Jesus remember me* – as above  
*The Lord is my light* – as above

## Scripture references/readings

**Malachi 4:1-3** (or 3:19-20 depending on the translation) The Day of the Lord is coming  
**Isaiah 55:6-9** God's offer of mercy  
**Psalms 26 (27)** The Lord is my light & my salvation  
**Psalms 102 (103)** The Lord is compassion & love  
**Romans 8:31-39** Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ  
**James 1:2-4** Faith and endurance  
**Matthew 7:7-11** Ask, seek, knock  
**Luke 18:1-8** Never become discouraged – the parable of the persistent widow  
**Jeremiah 29:10-14** I will bring you back from exile  
**Luke: 7:36-50** Be generous with forgiveness  
**Ephesians 2:1-10** By God's grace are we made alive in Christ  
**Ephesians 4:1-6** Live a life worthy of the calling you have received

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## Sermons

A selections of suggestions and outlines for sermons are available on the CTiW website.

## Prayer

Everyone needs a few words of encouragement. We grow stronger, we see things more clearly, and we achieve more. Justice surely hopes that there will be a sense of healing, a chance to see things differently, and a new future for all those affected by crime and imprisonment. To achieve this we need each other, and in particular we need each other's words of encouragement. This Prisons Week let us pray for all those affected by prison, that we may build a sense of hope in each other that life will in some measure be restored. Restored, accepted, free. No one left behind.

"So speak encouraging words to one another. Build up hope so you'll all be together in this, no one left out, no one left behind." 1 Thessalonians 5 v11

Father of mercy,  
the secrets of all hearts are known to you alone.

You know who is just and you forgive the unjust.

Hear our prayers for those in prison,  
Give them patience and hope in their sufferings, and bring them home again soon.

(Roman Missal)

### Prayers of Intercession

We pray for those who are in prison. May the light of Christ offer them hope and give them the strength to deal with the situation they are in. May the promise of God's love and mercy encourage them to turn from a way of darkness to a path of light and life.

Lord in your mercy... **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who have been the victims of crime: those who have had their lives changed forever; those who now live in fear because of the actions of others. May their hearts and minds be open to the healing power of God and allow the grace of the Holy Spirit to restore their trust and confidence.

Lord in your mercy... **hear our prayer.**



Jimmy was on his first custodial sentence. He told me: "I have never had so many people nearby. I hear some of them every minute of every day and night and see some of them every day, but I have never been so lonely".

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We pray for those who work in prisons. May the light of Christ guide all that they do, may they show compassion and understanding to all whom they encounter and be granted the grace and strength to continue their vital work.

Lord in your mercy... **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the families of those in prison and the families of those who are the victims of crime. May the reconciling power of God's love bring healing and wholeness to their lives. May the wider community offer support and acceptance to counter feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Lord in your mercy... **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who wish to change the direction of their life and those who struggle to break free from the grip of addiction. May they be open to the saving grace of God's love and recognise that the path of light offers hope and renewal.

Lord in your mercy... **hear our prayer.**

Prayers...

### **For our communities**

Those who can make a difference, join together. Link your arms you people, link your hearts; stand in the light and find strength. Often it is hard to believe that we can make a difference, but as drips of water wear away stones, as waves change coastlines, as seeds become grain and fruits, so we have God's grace and strength when we join hearts, minds and hands, and work together, standing in His light and doing His will to build community. We are designed to live and grow together in order to flourish, to tend and restore to wholeness those who are the victims of others, and to welcome back those who have been outcast and punished and need support to build new lives.

*Loving God, you call us into fellowship with you and with one another. Shine your light into our lives and our communities, fill us with your love and send your Holy Spirit so that we may be tireless in working to build up our communities into places of safety and creativity. By ourselves we may be weak, but in your light and with*

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*the Spirit's power we can have faith and hope that the future can be different, lives transformed and your will be done. Hear our prayer for the sake of Jesus our Lord.*

Amen.

### **For families**

Those who are hurting, lift your heads, stand in the light and find healing. It is hard to be the parent, friend or partner of someone convicted of serious wrongdoing, caught up in darkness and pain that are not of your making, to be held responsible for the actions of others, over whose misdeeds you have no control. How might we have failed them? How can we help them to grow and to make amends? It is hard too, to walk alongside loved ones who have been the victims of others, those who are in desperate need of healing and wholeness. Confronted in so many different ways by the pain of evil and the desire for light and healing, we need God's grace and strength to make the first move, to lift our heads and see the light, the hope for the future.

*O God, your hands are strong to save us and swift to bless. Bring wholeness and healing to the families of all victims and perpetrators of crime. Give to*

*them the gifts of grace and strength that they might stand in your light and row towards a better future; support their loved ones and show the fruits of repentance in changed lives, lived for your glory and the good of others. Lord, in your name we pray.*

Amen.

### **For those who work in the criminal justice system**

Those carrying heavy burdens of responsibility, lay them down awhile, stand in the light and find rest and peace. Those of us who daily have difficult and life-changing decisions and judgements to make can be overwhelmed by the weight they carry and by the anxiety of making mistakes. Take courage from the example of Jesus who trusted in God to hold Him still, through arrest and injustice, to death and Resurrection. Stand firm in the knowledge that He brings light out of darkness and He will lead us into that Light.

*Loving God, whose will for your people is to bring justice and mercy to all the earth, be present with all who work in the criminal justice system. Enlighten their understanding and inform their judgements. Give to them the grace of*



Derek is prescribed methadone, an opiate substitute for heroin. He turned to heroin when his first daughter died. He has recently had the anniversary of the death of his second daughter. He has a few weeks to go of a sentence for a theft offence. His mood is low.

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*discernment, that they may seek your will in all things and work always for the common good. Keep them firm in their commitment to exercise authority and responsibility impartially, in the knowledge that all power comes from you and that you will provide the strength needed for the journey onwards. Shine your light into all the difficult situations that they face and the judgements that they make, that justice and mercy might truly reign in all the earth. In Jesus' name.*

Amen.

### **For victims of prisoners**

Those living with loss, in pain and fear, take a deep breath, look up and out, stand in the light and find courage. Do not be afraid. Jesus said, "I am with you always to the end of time". Seek healing for the past, invite Him into your present and future, and take hold of his promise to accompany you on your journey into survival.

*Lord Jesus, you gathered around you friends and disciples and empowered them with the Holy Spirit to face ridicule and disbelief, danger and death, yet still to persevere. We pray for the victims of crime, for all who have suffered loss, pain or injustice. Fill them with that same Spirit to confront the challenges in their*

*lives, to witness to your healing power with strength and confidence. Build up their trust in you so that they can manage their fears and, relying on your grace and strength, continue their journey onward into the Light. In your name.*

Amen.

### **For prisoners**

Those laid low, rise up, stand in the light and find your feet. It is so hard to get up when we feel we have dropped off not just God's radar, but everyone else's as well. It is hard to have faith when so many things seem to have gone wrong, when we are stuck in shame and paralysed by fear of the future. This is not all that there is; the light of God's presence shines in the darkest place and is not and cannot be overcome.

*Loving Lord you always come to meet us wherever we are. Give to all those serving sentences in our prisons the strength to lift first their eyes and then their hearts to recognise your light. Raise them up to stand in your presence and serve you, set them free from the power of darkness, make them ready to start again and learn to walk in your Light. In Jesus' name.*

Amen.

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## **For those who work in prisons**

Those who are busy and weighed down with responsibility, stop, stand in the light and find strength and rest. For all who work in prisons, and care for those who are imprisoned, it is very easy to get sucked down into the suffering and needs of others, to be so committed to ensuring that others have the tools they need to change and turn their lives around that they forget their own needs. In times of stress and pressure, of financial constraint and shortage of resources, prison staff want to make a difference but need to remember to take care of themselves, of one another and to offer support and affirmation.

*Lord, you said 'come to me all who labour and are heavy laden', you said 'cast your burdens on me and I will give you rest'. Give to all who work in prisons and carry the needs and burdens of others, the grace, strength and courage to continue, and the rest they need for renewal and recreation. In Jesus' name.*

Amen.

## **Closing Prayer**

Lord Jesus, help us to have the courage to stand in your light, the light that shatters darkness. Open our ears when we do not hear you, deepen our thinking when we do not respond to you, focus our vision when we get distracted from you, open our eyes when we do not see you. In our desire to grow in responding to the needs of those affected by prisons, grant us fruitfulness. In our desire to live as forgiven and forgiving people, grant us patience. May your Kingdom grow as Justice, righteousness and peace spread, and may others enjoy the harvest of our obedience to you. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.



Graham has a history of mental illness. He is in a cell in one of the wings that also house a couple of his male relatives. However, he still doesn't feel safe there. He has a few weeks left of his sentence. He is expecting to be transferred to mental health services once he leaves prison. His request to be transferred to the prison hospital ward has been turned down. He threatens to slash his wrists unless he's moved.

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### Prisoners' Sunday Prayer

Good and Gracious God, you offer the promise of new life:

We pray for those who feel imprisoned by fear and grief as a result of the actions of others

*Help them and heal them, we pray*

We pray for those who are imprisoned in gaol and cell as a result of their own actions

*Help them and heal them, we pray*

We pray for those who can find no other life than in the never ending imprisonment of crime

*Help them and heal them, we pray*

In your Son You show the way to new life

We pray for all who offer consolation and courage to the victims of crime

*Support and encourage them, we pray*

We pray for all who offer friendship and example to prisoners and their families

*Support and encourage them, we pray*

We pray for all who struggle to offer a better way to those trapped in cycles of violence

*Support and encourage them, we pray*

### Further prayers...

Sometimes when nobody is looking, there are tears in the night. It hurts to be here, in spite of all the bravado. Memories come of family, and of shame too of what led to this in the first place.

There are tears in prison, and threats, temptations and despair. Gracious God, we pray for prisoners, their families and their victims. We ask guidance for the governors and warders, probation officers and chaplains.

We pray for policy makers, judges and magistrates. We remember those in prison today, in the love of Christ. We ask you to remember them too.

### Brian Haymes

Baptist

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No prison cell is so isolated that it can keep the Lord out. He is there with you. He cries with you, works with you, hopes with you. His paternal and maternal love is everywhere.

### Pope Francis

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We pray for men and women leaving prison, returning to families that have grown used to their absence and into communities where they can, too easily, be drawn back into the crime network.

We pray for prisoners who have committed sexual offences and who find integration into any employment or voluntary work almost impossible and who often lead lonely lives and find little or no support in rebuilding their lives.

We pray for churches that they may be communities of welcome for ex-offenders who need help with rehabilitation, and may find the gift of hope that comes from Christ.

We do not pray from a position of strength.

We pray for the prisoner knowing that human divisions are false, that this is not the innocent praying for the guilty or the right praying for the wrong but people praying for people, the hurt remembering the hurt, the failure reaching out in love to the failure in a single community reaching out in grace.

**Reverend Neil Campbell**  
Chaplain at HMP Dumfries

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### **A Prayer for All Prisoners**

O Lord our heavenly Father, put love into our hearts for all who are in prison. Help us to remember them with prayers of compassion. Help them to know you in prayers of contrition. Look after their loved ones, especially their little ones. Show them your mercy; teach them your patience; grant them your peace. Through him who told us not to judge others and in whose sight no sinner can be justified yet all can be forgiven, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

### **Jonathan Aitken**

Author and campaigner for prison reform – former MP, former Cabinet Minister, former prisoner

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God, whose light shines in the darkest of places,

We pray for all who are imprisoned, And those who operate and oversee our prison service.

Help us to remember that every human being is made in your likeness With all the potential and possibility which that entails

Help us build a society where compassion and fairness prevail To seek justice in ways that serve the



Harry, a man in his late 40s – a prolific reoffender of mostly non-violent crime – has spent the past 20 years in and out of jail. His mother has died and his marriage has failed and he's disconnected from his sons. He's never angry, sometimes sad, often full of unconvincing plans about how to avoid reoffending next time. He knows he needs a job and a home to go straight. He was back inside in six weeks.

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good of all,  
And offers pathways of hope to those  
who are seeking to leave wrongdoing  
behind.  
Help us never to forget your invitation  
To serve all people as though we were  
serving you  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord  
Amen.

**Joint Public Issues Team** (Baptist  
Union, Methodist Church, United  
Reform Church and the Church of  
Scotland)

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The three prayers below are from  
**Prison Hope – Pray With Us**

God, you are 'our refuge and strength,  
an ever-present help in trouble' (Psalm  
46:1).

Today, I ask you to protect me from  
harmful words and actions, to make  
me strong in moments of doubt and  
temptation. Today, I ask you to help  
me be tolerant when I face difficult  
people and to trust you in tough  
situations.

In Jesus' name.  
Amen.

**Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan  
Roberts**, The Salvation Army

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Lord, we pray for those who are  
imprisoned in their hearts as well as  
their cells:  
for the abused who have themselves  
become abusers.  
for the addicted who supplied,  
for the impoverished who stole.  
We pray that prison will be an  
opportunity for them  
to heal  
to become self-reliant  
to improve their skills and  
employability.  
Amen.

**Primavera Quantrill**,  
**Programme Director**, SPCK  
Prison Fiction Project

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Heavenly Father, you are a faithful and loving God. You are always present and ever consistent. Just as a father has compassion for his children, so you Lord, have compassion for those whom you have made. We pray for those who have or have had an absent father due to imprisonment or neglect. Thank you that you are the father to the fatherless and defender of those who are vulnerable and broken. May you be their peace, encouragement, unconditional love, direction, nurture and ultimate hope. In Jesus' name.

**Tim Rosier, Reflex**

working with juvenile, young and young adult offenders serving a custodial sentence

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*65% of boys who have a father in prison will go on to offend*

*76% of young offenders grew up in a fatherless home*



*Spider Cell, HM Prison Wandsworth*  
**Painting**  
**2017**



*Inside Time, HM Prison Gartree*  
**Mixed Media**  
**2017**

# Prison facts and figures

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There are presently 94,800 men, women and children remanded or serving custodial sentences in British prisons, of whom 89,928 are male, 3,800 are female and 882 are under the age of 18. The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) manage 136 prisons and young offenders institutions and a further six are run by private sector companies under contract with the government.

The prison population in England and Wales has increased by 90% since 1990. 146 per 100,000 of the general population are in prison here, in comparison with 101 in France, 78 in Germany and 71 in the Netherlands. The UK has the highest prison population in Western Europe per head of population and inmates serve longer sentences, but there is no indication that crime is more frequent or serious.

The cost of each prison place is £35,000 rising to £200,000 for some children. 46% of adults are reconvicted for offences within a year of discharge from prison and this rises to 60% for those sentenced to less than twelve months in custody. The National Audit Office estimates that reoffending by recent ex-prisoners costs the economy between £9.5 and £13 billion annually.

*The number of children in custody has reduced by 71% since 2010, as a result of measures introduced by the police, courts, the Youth Justice Board and many campaigning voluntary organisations. But 38% of the children in custody have previously been fostered or in care and three quarters have an absent father.*

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There are 7,372 inmates serving 'life sentences' and 4,113 serving indefinite sentences for public protection (IPPs). These prisoners do not know their potential dates for discharge from custody, which often depends on access to particular courses and behavioural management.

Foreign nationals comprise nearly 10% of the UK prison population and this has changed little since 2007. Another 10% are ex-military service men. The fastest growing section of the population is men aged over 60 - in 2002 there were 2,012 and by 2017 this had risen to 4,582. Of these 42 were over 80. At the other end of the age profile, the number of children in custody has fallen by 71% since 2010 to 882, but 33 of these are under aged 14.

The number of 'operational prison staff' have been reduced by 30% from 33,962 in 2010 to 23,746 in 2016 as a result of government austerity measures. The number of inmates increased in this time by around 1,600. 'Front line' prison officer numbers have been cut by some 2,500 but NOMS has commenced a recruitment drive to replace some of these.

*Prisons have become more violent places. During 2016 there were 25,000 assaults on prisoners by prisoners, a 68% increase since 2006. There were also 2430 assaults on staff. Incidents of self-harm have increased by 61% to 38,000 in the same period and there were 345 deaths in custody.*

# Prayers by Bonhoeffer

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Pastor of the German Lutheran Church in London from 1932 to 1935, Dietrich Bonhoeffer was an opponent of Hitler and executed in a Nazi concentration camp in 1945.

## **Evening Prayer for Fellow Prisoners**

O Lord my God, thank you  
for bringing this day to a close;  
Thank you for giving me rest  
in body and soul.  
Your hand has been over me and has  
guarded and preserved me.  
Forgive my lack of faith  
and any wrong that I have done  
today,  
and help me to forgive all who have  
wronged me.  
Let me sleep in peace under your  
protection,  
and keep me from all temptations of  
darkness.  
Into your hands I commend my loved  
ones  
and all who dwell in this house;  
I commend to you my body and soul.  
O God, your holy name be praised.

**Amen**

## **Prayer in Time of Distress**

O Lord God,  
great distress has come upon me;  
and I do not know what to do.  
O God, be gracious to me and help  
me.  
Give me strength to bear what you  
send,  
and do not let fear rule over me;  
Take a father's care of those I love,  
My wife and children.  
O merciful God,  
forgive me all the sins that I have  
committed  
against you and against my fellow  
men.  
I trust in your grace  
and commit my life wholly into your  
hands.  
Do with me according to your will  
and as is best for me.  
Whether I live or die, I am with you,  
and you, my God, are with me.  
Lord, I wait for your salvation  
and for your kingdom.

**Amen**

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### **Morning Prayer**

O God, early in the morning I cry to you.

Help me to pray,  
and to concentrate my thoughts on you:

I cannot do this alone.

In me there is darkness,

But with you there is light;

I am lonely,

but with you there is help;

I am restless,

but with you there is peace.

In me there is bitterness,

But with you there is patience;

I do not understand your ways,

But you know the way for me...

Restore me to liberty,

And enable me so to live now

that I may answer before you and before me.

Lord, whatever this day may bring,  
your name be praised.

**Amen**

*It is estimated that 20-30% of prisoners have a learning disability to an extent which causes difficulties in comprehending the criminal justice system, reading prison information or understanding instructions given by prison officers. Consequently, they are more likely to break prison rules, be subject to controls and restraints and three times more likely to spend time in segregation.*

# Reflections by William Noblett

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Former Chaplain General &  
Archdeacon of HM Prisons

## **On Admission to Prison**

Crucified God,  
you know what it is to be mocked,  
to be stripped and vulnerable.  
Be with those who  
enter prison for the first time today.  
Be present in their vulnerability  
and in those who have care of them.  
In this vulnerability may they  
know their worth in your eyes.  
In their anxiety and uncertainty  
may they know that your Son has  
shared their experience and  
transformed it.

## **On Separation**

God of love,  
the pain of separation  
often overwhelms  
and is destructive.  
We hold in your presence  
all who are separated  
in mind or body from  
those whom they love,  
and especially the 'innocent victims'  
of imprisonment, the families,  
friends and relatives of prisoners.  
We acknowledge before you  
the importance of relationships,  
with one another,  
and with you.  
Enable us to pursue them,  
for their good,  
and in response  
to your pursuit of us.

## **Sentenced Inmates**

God, whose face  
is that of love,  
be with those  
who have recently  
been sentenced.  
In their uncertainty  
and in their despair,  
be present.  
Enable their release  
from darkness,  
and through reconciliation and hope,  
enable them to seek  
new life and restoration  
in you.  
We pray for those  
involved in the media,  
for their responsibility  
in reporting news;  
that they may do so  
having regard for the value  
of each person.

## **On Betrayal**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
in your betrayal  
you knew pain.  
In our betrayal of others  
we ignore the pain  
we cause.  
Help us attend to your story,  
that through it we may  
connect it with our own,  
that through it we may begin  
the process of healing  
that leads to reconciliation.



Tracey left prison after completing a six month sentence. She had no home, so the prison gave her a sleeping bag with her £47 discharge grant. Where next?

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### **On Vulnerability**

Loving God,  
we come to you  
just as we are,  
vulnerable and afraid.  
We reach out to you  
In trust and faith,  
praying that in you  
we will find peace,  
acceptance and encouragement,  
through Jesus the Lord.  
Lord, in your Son  
we see the cost of being vulnerable  
to the expectations of others,  
of being open to their pain  
and vulnerability.  
As we encounter  
those whose lives are broken,  
help us confront our brokenness  
to commend it to your  
healing and transforming power.

### **On Prison Visitors**

God, who in Christ  
called others to ministry,  
we give you thanks  
for the life, witness,  
and ministry  
of all who volunteer.  
We give thanks that they  
commit themselves  
to love, which transforms,  
to forgiveness, which heals,  
to respect, which encourages,  
to hope, which is grounded in you.

*Lord, make us instruments of your peace.  
Where there is hatred, give us your love.  
Where there is injury, pardon.  
Where there is doubt, faith.  
Where there is despair, hope.  
Where there is sadness, joy.  
Where there is darkness, light.  
For in giving we receive,  
in pardoning we are pardoned,  
and in dying we are born into eternal life.*

# Mental health in prisons

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For some people who have been exposed to chaotic lives, insecurity and abuse, often since childhood, a period in custody can provide an environment of order and stability. They will have the assurance of a bed to sleep in, food at meal times and maybe safety from violence. While this group have certainly not chosen to be in prison, with the care and attention of mental health professionals, empathetic chaplains and sensitive, well trained prison officers, they can begin the process of recovery and preparation for independent lives outside.

Unfortunately, prisons are often hostile, unsettling and dangerous places - causing considerable distress and further damage to very vulnerable people.

10% of men and 30% of women have had previous psychiatric admissions before entering prison. A similar proportion has received treatment for a mental health problem in the year before custody. 25% of women

and 15% of men in prisons report symptoms indicative of psychosis, while the proportion among the general population is 4%. Personality disorders are particularly prevalent among prison inmates (62% of male and 57% of female sentenced offenders). The Ministry of Justice acknowledges that 49% of women and 23% of male prisoners suffer from anxiety and depression. 49% of women prisoners report having attempted suicide at some point in their lives (against 6% of the general population).

Self-inflicted deaths in custody have risen to 105 in 2016, double the number five years previously. This represents 120 suicides per 100,000 prisoners, while the rate for the general population is ten.

The Prisons and Probation Service Ombudsman reports that one in five prisoners diagnosed as having a mental health condition receive no attention from mental health professionals while in custody.



Finna Ayres  
**Pen and watercolour**  
**2017**

During a three hour wait for the release of a befriended prisoner, Finna Ayres made this sketch of HMP Wandsworth. “The ghostly figure in the gateway represents all the prisoners who came out before - most of whom wanted a cigarette or a light.”



# A prison quiz

This quiz is devised as an aid for use with discussion groups and for those who want to understand a little more about life behind prison walls. The questions and answers and facts and figures have been compiled by volunteers who work in prisons.

**1) The 36,440 incidents of self-harm in prison represents a rise of what over two years?**

- (a) 1/4
- (b) 1/3
- (c) 1/2

**2) What was the average number of fires in prison each month in 2015?**

- (a) 16
- (b) 60
- (c) 160

**3) The daily prison food budget per person for 2014/2015 was more or less than £2.50?**

**4) What proportion of the prison population in England and Wales is held in overcrowded accommodation?**

- (a) 1/4
- (b) 1/3
- (c) 1/2

**5) ...and what proportion of local male prisons are overcrowded today?**

- (a) 1/4
- (b) 1/3
- (c) 1/2

**6) Of the prison population of England & Wales, what proportion have children under the age of 18?**

- (a) 1/4
- (b) 1/3
- (c) 1/2

**7) What proportion of the prison population of England & Wales was taken into care as a child?**

- (a) 1/4
- (b) 1/3
- (c) 1/2

**8) Which is the fastest growing section of the prison population?**

- (a) children
- (b) women
- (c) pensioners

**9) What is the age of criminal responsibility in England and Wales?**

- (a) 21
- (b) 18
- (c) 16
- (d) 10



**10) What is the 'Discharge Grant' given to adults when leaving prison?**

- (a) £25
- (b) £47
- (c) £100

**11) What percentage of men are reconvicted within twelve months of discharge from prison?**

- (a) 15%
- (b) 45%
- (c) 90%

**12) How many male prisoners are ex-military servicemen?**

- (a) 5%
- (b) 25%
- (c) 11%

**13) How many children under 14 are presently in prison?**

- (a) 55
- (b) none
- (c) 33

**14) What is the average annual cost of each prison place?**

- (a) £10,000
- (b) £25,000
- (c) £35,000

**15) What does the National Audit Office estimate to be the annual cost of reoffending by recent ex-prisoners?**

- (a) £9.5-13 billion
- (b) £1.5-2 billion
- (c) £100-150 million

**16) How many of the 4,582 men over 60 in prisons in England and Wales are over 80?**

- (a) 21
- (b) 32
- (c) 42

**17) What percentage of women leaving prison secure employment**

- (a) 8.5%
- (b) 18.5%
- (c) 85%

**18) ...and for men?**

- (a) 2.6%
- (b) 26%
- (c) 56%

**19) What percentage of young adults (18-24) in prison are assessed as having a drug problem?**

- (a) 13%
- (b) 28%
- (c) 50%



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**20) What percentage of children serving a sentence less than 12 months are reconvicted within one year of release?**

- (a) 7%
- (b) 17%
- (c) 77%

**21) Of the prisons inspected by Ofsted, what percentage were judged as inadequate for learning and skills?**

- (a) 25%
- (b) 50%
- (c) 75%

**22) What percentage of children in custody have previously been homeless?**

- (a) 20%
- (b) 30%
- (c) 40%

**Answers:**

1c 2c 3Less-£2.02 4a 5c 6c 7a 8c 9d 10b  
11b 12c 13c 14c 15a 16c 17a 18b 19c 20c  
21c 22c

Some of the content of this quiz is taken from Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile Autumn 2016 (Prison Reform Trust):

“Facts and figures provide a better basis than opinion for policy and practice change. Drawn largely from government sources, these facts chart the extraordinary rise in prison numbers over the last twenty years, inflation in sentencing and the social and economic consequences of overuse of custody. They reveal the state of our overcrowded prisons and the state of people in them, the impact of deep budget cuts, the pace and scale of change in the justice system and the scope for community solutions to crime.”

# Churches Together in Westminster (CTiW)

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An ecumenical organisation of some eighty churches, of all denominations, in central London, affiliated to Churches Together in England.

We promote activities which bring together clergy and congregations to explore ecumenism, enjoy fellowship and learn about other Christians nearby. Typical events are conferences, Meet the Neighbours evenings in each other's places of worship and combined services for Pentecost and Advent.

The Executive Committee meets monthly to plan activities, consider issues and review the progress of projects. Areas of interest include Ecumenical Gatherings; Prisons Mission; Homeless People; Refugees; London Citizens. The AGM reports to members.

If your church would like to be connected with others, of different denominations, CTiW can facilitate this. "In Christ there is no East or West, in Him no South or North, but one great fellowship of love throughout the whole wide world" (John Oxenham 1908).

Email: [ctiw.net@gmail.com](mailto:ctiw.net@gmail.com)

# Organisations working, campaigning and providing services around prisons and the criminal justice system

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## **CARING FOR EX-OFFENDERS**

Connects a person coming out of prison with a local church community to assist resettlement  
[caringforexoffenders.org](http://caringforexoffenders.org)

## **CENTRE FOR CRIME AND JUSTICE STUDIES**

An independent charity providing information and research on the criminal justice system  
[crimeandjustice.org.uk](http://crimeandjustice.org.uk)

## **CENTRE FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE STUDIES**

Inter-disciplinary criminal justice research and publications, University of Leeds  
[law.leeds.ac.uk/research/criminal-justice-studies](http://law.leeds.ac.uk/research/criminal-justice-studies)

## **CHANGING TUNES**

Reducing reoffending through music  
[changingtunes.org.uk](http://changingtunes.org.uk)

## **CHURCHES IN COMMUNITIES**

Promoting cooperation between churches and ministries  
[cicinternational.org](http://cicinternational.org)

## **CIRCLES UK**

Builds safer communities through local volunteers working with sex offenders to minimise alienation, support reintegration and so prevent sexual reoffending  
[circles-uk-volunteering.org](http://circles-uk-volunteering.org)

## **CLEAN SHEET**

From prison to employment. A 3 step pathway. Empowering local churches  
[cleansheet.org.uk](http://cleansheet.org.uk)

## **COMMUNITY CHAPLAINCY ASSOCIATION**

Works alongside prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families mentoring within prisons and through the gate  
[communitychaplaincy.org.uk](http://communitychaplaincy.org.uk)

## **FINDING RHYTHMS**

Takes music workshops into prisons and uses music to empower prisoners to take responsibilities  
[finding-rhythms.co.uk](http://finding-rhythms.co.uk)

## **HOWARD LEAGUE FOR PENAL REFORM**

Campaigns to reduce crime and prison population, as well as extensive data collection and legal services  
[howardleague.org](http://howardleague.org)

## **LANGLEY HOUSE TRUST**

Provides resettlement services for ex-offenders  
[langleyhousetrust.org](http://langleyhousetrust.org)

## **KOESTLER TRUST**

Supports and promotes arts in prisons and runs the art award scheme for offenders and the annual art show in the South Bank  
[koestlertrust.org.uk](http://koestlertrust.org.uk)

## **PRISON FELLOWSHIP**

Seeks through prayer and practical care to help, support and develop a Christian ministry to prisoners and their families  
[prisonfellowship.org](http://prisonfellowship.org)

## **PRISONS HOPE**

Partnership of prison chaplains and organisations involved with prisoners, former prisoners and their families, providing a weekly prayer for use in churches of all denominations  
[prisonhope.org.uk](http://prisonhope.org.uk)

## **PRISON REFORM TRUST**

Authoritative source of information about prisons and penal policy as well as campaigning to improve prison standards and results  
[prisonreformtrust.org.uk](http://prisonreformtrust.org.uk)

## **SPURGEONS**

Christian charity working with children and families in and near to prisons  
[spurgeons.org](http://spurgeons.org)

## **WAY4WARD**

Providing interventions to reduce violence and offending behaviour and divert adults and young people from entering the criminal justice system  
[way4ward.org](http://way4ward.org)

## **WELCOME DIRECTORY**

To help faith communities become places where people who leave prison can find acceptance  
[welcomedirectory.org.uk](http://welcomedirectory.org.uk)

## **WORKING CHANCE**

Recruitment agency which specialises in training and assisting ex-offenders into employment  
[workingchance.org](http://workingchance.org)

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## Koestler Trust

arts by offenders ■ ■ ■

Images (except on page 25) generously supplied by the Koestler Trust.

The Koestler Trust is the UK's leading prison arts charity. We play a vital part in the rehabilitation journey offered to prisoners and ex-prisoners to transform their lives through participation in the arts. For more information visit [www.koestlertrust.org.uk](http://www.koestlertrust.org.uk) or tweet [@koestlertrust](https://twitter.com/koestlertrust)

“ Before prison I had nothing. The Koestler Trust gave me confidence and a platform to build a second chance.”

“ ...in 2015 I got to enter the Koestler Awards. It gave me something to do and something to aim for AND I won a gold award for my painting which was then sold. Your confidence is really whacked in prison and selling the painting gave me a real boost. ”

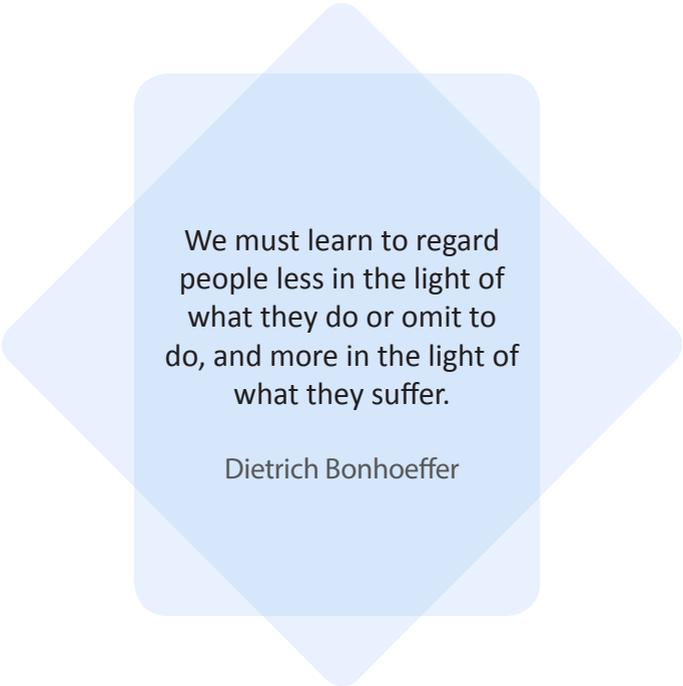
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Churches Working Together  
in Central London



We must learn to regard  
people less in the light of  
what they do or omit to  
do, and more in the light of  
what they suffer.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer