



PRAYING

TOGETHER

FOR LONDON

AUG – OCT 2021



PRAYING FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND SCHOOLS

BEFORE THE DAYS OF TROUBLE COME

There is a scene from the film *Blood Diamond* which repeatedly came to mind in speaking with CYS (children, youth and schools) missionaries for this edition of *Together*. During Sierra Leone's civil war, one of the main characters, Vandy, sees his son, Dia, abducted and forced to become a child soldier. Later in the film, Vandy encounters his son, barely recognisable after years of indoctrination and abuse, and holding a gun to his father's head. Dia looks to his son and petitions him with tears in his eyes,

"You are Dia Vandy. You are a good boy. You love soccer and school. Your mother loves you so much. She waits by the fire making palm oil stew. I know they made you do bad things, but you are not a bad boy. I am your father who loves you, and you will come home with me and be my son again"

This first came to mind when speaking with missionary Marina Russell, who we'll be praying for at the beginning of September. When meeting with churches, she will sometimes pin photos of babies on the wall, and then pin photos of them as teenagers. It's a reminder that no matter how much trouble they may have got into, they are still the same vulnerable child in need of love.

We'll be praying the in coming weeks for the abundant opportunities to share the gospel with younger children to be seized by churches — that children would 'remember their creator in the days of their youth, before the days of trouble come' (Ecl 12:5). But we'll also be praying that for those who have gone astray, the power of the gospel would draw them home to their Father who loves them. Thank you for joining us in prayer. We serve a faithful and powerful God!

MEET THE MISSIONARIES YOU'RE PRAYING FOR

You'll notice that on a number of the following pages there are invitations to meet with missionaries via Zoom or over the phone to pray with them and for them.

We would love for you to join us at these very special events. They have proven to be a huge blessing for all involved.

It's a great chance to get to know the missionary better, ask them questions about their work and to pray alongside other supporters of the mission.

See more details on the next page.

Another great way of getting to know missionaries is to sign up to receive their monthly prayer letters. Just email us at prayer@lcm.org.uk, and let us know which missionary you'd like to hear from.

We hope to see you soon.

In Christ,
James Hutchinson

WEEKLY PRAYER UPDATE

You can sign up to receive our additional weekly Prayer Update via email from our website www.lcm.org.uk/pray

If you don't already receive *Together* regularly and would like to, please contact us at the details below.

London City Mission
175 Tower Bridge Road
London SE1 2AH

T 020 7407 7585
E PRAYER@LCM.ORG.UK
W WWW.LCM.ORG.UK
f LONDONCM
Twitter LONDONCM

EDITOR

James Hutchinson

FRONT COVER PHOTO

Young people enjoying the RiSE Linkups summer camp.

DESIGN Sparks Studio
PRINT Christian Publicity Organisation

People's names which appear with a * in this prayer guide have been changed.

LARGE PRINT

A large print version of this prayer guide is available – please contact us at head office if you would like a copy.

PRAY WITH LONDON CITY MISSIONARIES!

► London City Mission is connecting missionaries and supporters in online prayer.

The meetings, hosted via Zoom (also accessible over the phone), will be a chance to meet and chat with some of the missionaries you're praying for.

MARLENE BOTHA
TUESDAY 17 AUGUST – 6PM

**ADAM BOYCE AND THE LINK-UPS
SUMMER CAMP**
TUESDAY 24 AUGUST – 6PM

MARÍNA RUSSELL
TUESDAY 7 SEPTEMBER – 6PM

**ADAM BOYCE AND THE BEXLEY
CLOCKTOWER PROJECT**
TUESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER – 6PM

EMMANUEL CHANDA
TUESDAY 21 SEPTEMBER – 6PM

JASON O'SHEA
TUESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER – 6PM

MARIJE NASTU
TUESDAY 12 OCTOBER – 6PM

LAURAH GORDON
TUESDAY 19 OCTOBER – 6PM

BRANDON THESEE
TUESDAY 26 OCTOBER – 6PM

**TO REGISTER TO JOIN ONE OR
MORE OF THESE MEETINGS
ONLINE, GO TO [LCM.ORG.UK](https://lcm.org.uk)
PRAYONLINE**



JOINING BY PHONE

If you'd prefer to join these sessions over the phone, use the following phone number when the meeting begins: **0203 901 7895**

Enter the following code when prompted: **896 9296 2720**

PRAYING ACROSS LONDON

We know that across England, young people are less likely than adults to know a Christian. This is certainly our experience across London. This urgent spiritual need is interwoven with physical need. Many children had traumatic experiences at home during lockdown – bereavement or some form of violence at home – as well as missing out on school. Join us in praying this week that God would raise up Christians across the city to come alongside children and families – and share the hope of Jesus.

SUN DAGENHAM
 “Every day I see family problems in Dagenham,” says missionary Brandon Thesee. “A lot of broken homes, absent fathers and single parents overwhelmed.” This is especially the case on the Beckontree estate, the largest of its kind in Europe. Pray for Brandon and the Dagenham Youth Forum which he started to help churches across the area work together more effectively for the gospel.



MON CROYDON
 Croydon has more children than anywhere else in London. This is why pastor Joseph Bediako from Beulah church, who LCM are helping to reach local schools with the gospel, describes Croydon as the gateway to London. The church is in Thornton Heath, where parents from the leafier southern areas like Purley are hesitant to let their children visit schoolfriends who live there. Pray for the church’s vision for every schoolchild to hear the gospel regularly.

TUE HACKNEY
 Margaret* is typical of many people Hackney-based

missionary Marina Russell met in the past year. She lost her job during the first lockdown, and was just scraping by when one of her children broke the computer they were using for schoolwork. In Hackney, 28% of families earn less than £13,750 a year. Pray for Marina as she shares the hope of Jesus alongside churches with families in desperation.

WED SOUTHWARK
 The Old Kent Road is lined with primary schools. There are as many, if not more churches, especially from diaspora congregations. Pray that across Southwark, the rich gospel opportunities witnessed by departing missionary Ania Canon, would be grasped by churches across the borough. Pray that the relationships Ania built with the likes of Ilderton Primary, near Millwall’s football stadium, continue with local churches.

THU LAMBETH
 In the past year, the South Bank has been a hotspot for youth violence. Further south in Brixton, is the home of UK *drill* music, which has strong connections with gang culture. Pray that LCM

missionaries such as Emmanuel Chanda could speak relevantly and lovingly about Jesus, alongside churches to young people tempted by the empty promises of gang membership.

FRI BEXLEY
 The centre of Bexley town is a thoroughfare for teenagers travelling to and from schools across the borough. They gather en masse under the town’s clocktower each afternoon, causing complaints of anti-social behaviour. They are also at risk here from grooming by gangs. LCM are helping churches across the borough to build connections with these children. Pray that in the love shown by churches, children would glimpse the love of Christ.

SAT TOWER HAMLETS
 The borough has the highest child poverty rate in London, at 58%. Missionary, Marlene Botha sees the reality of this each day. In the shadow of Canary Wharf, local children gravitate to St John’s Park to spend the day, with not much to do. For a long time, Marlene has been running summer clubs for the children – a chance they wouldn’t otherwise get to hear the gospel. Pray for her as she encourages churches to replicate these clubs over the summer.

A SUMMER HARVEST

Summer is the perfect time to connect with children, says missionary Marlene Botha, who is based in Tower Hamlets.

"All the kids from the local estate go to the park. If the summer holidays are long and your mum's too overwhelmed to keep tabs on you, you get bored of playing video games, so you go and play football or you vandalise something. You just do something because you're bored."

"We get to know all the naughty little ones!" Marlene adds.

It's here, in the park, that she has hosted kids' summer clubs for more than 15 years. Hundreds of children, who would never otherwise have heard the gospel, have encountered Jesus.

And this is just the start of building a longer-term connection with children and their families.

"After the summer, when the weather turns, you invite them to your midweek kids' club. This club can't be on Sundays; they play football on Sundays, they have lie-ins or they go shopping," said Marlene.

"Then when Christmas comes round, you involve them in the nativity play. Their parents, who never go to the church, come along to watch them perform."

Marlene's dream is for the outreach she has been running to be replicated by churches across London.

"I have all of the gear, ready to go – the gazebo, the bunting, the slush puppy machine, the arts materials. Churches just need to show up with their volunteers."

SUN Marlene has given the holiday club gear to a local Anglican church which plans to run a children's club over the summer. Please pray that other churches would do the same.

MON More than half of Marlene's community on the Isle of Dogs are Bengali, and she has been working with Birmingham City Mission to plan a kids' club for this group. Pray the club comes to fruition.

TUE Scratched onto Marlene's kitchen table are the names of many guests who have eaten there over the years. Pray each person would put their trust in the Lord and come to faith.

WED "People aren't going to show up in church on Sunday unless they have a personal relationship or friendship, or know a familiar face," says Marlene. Pray that churches across London would partner with LCM to meet people where they are.

THU Marlene came to London 23 years ago, on holiday from South Africa – but the Lord had plans for her to stay. Pray

for Marlene's family in South Africa, especially with the recent loss of her father, and for her brother who had been caring for him and their mother.

FRI Pray for children who came to the COVID-secure Easter Egg hunt Marlene ran in her estate, and particularly the child who thanked Marlene for telling her about Jesus.

SAT "I'm not good with waiting!" said Marlene, who says many churches are pausing activities until 2022. Pray that, where possible, God would prompt churches to see the immediate opportunities for sharing the gospel.



**PRAY WITH MARLENE
THIS TUESDAY, 6PM
[LCM.ORG.UK/PRAYONLINE](https://lcm.org.uk/prayonline)**

MARLENE BOTHA

LINK UPS

Three weeks ago, over thirty teenagers will have returned home after a week unlike any other – transported from

central London, to rural Norfolk with everything from zip-lining through a muddy forest to composing their own music.

In between activities, there is lots of time for just hanging out and building friendships. It's in these settings that missionary Adam Boyce, who leads the *RiSE Linkups* camp, sees real spiritual work happening in the hearts of young people, as they think over what they've heard in the daily bible teachings and devotionals and what it means for them.

Join us in praying for seven of the young people we spoke to before they set off, that the work of the Holy Spirit will continue as they settle back into life at home. Each of them was asked how we can pray for them – let's pray also that God would be drawing them to himself in the midst of their challenges.

PRAY WITH ADAM AND HEAR HOW LINKUPS WENT THIS TUESDAY, 6PM
LCM.ORG.UK/PRAYONLINE



SUN DENIM, 16

"I love watching Anime, spending time with my family and friends. Not knowing what I want to do in the future is my biggest worry. I am looking forward to reuniting with my friends and the activities at *the Linkup*. Please pray I could find an apprenticeship for September and for my future."



MON KEZIAH, 14

"I love dancing – that's what gives me most joy. The thing that causes me most stress is my family. I'm really looking forward to spending time out of London at *the Linkup*. Please pray for my transition to my new school."



TUE KIAS, 17

"Listening to music and playing basketball gives me most joy. Becoming an adult and the responsibility that comes with it is my

biggest stress. I'm really looking forward to seeing everyone from *the Linkup* and being an assistant leader. Please pray I pass my driving test by the end of summer, getting into the Uni I want and passing my course with a distinction."



WED JAYDEN, 18

"I love seeing my personal health improve through the training I do. My increased workload at work and trying to juggle that with my coursework is my biggest stress. I am most looking forward to being around friends again at *the Linkup* and being an assistant leader for the first time."



THU ARRIËLLE, 17

"What gives me most joy is reading comics and seeing those around me happy. I worry most about my future as well as my family's mental health. I'm excited about seeing people I have not seen in a while at *the Linkup*, being away from home and learning more about my faith. Please pray for strength for me and my family as we continue to grieve the loss of my grandfather."



FRI SHAYE, 17

"I love hanging out with my friends and going out. I get most stressed about preparing for university and finding a job. I'm looking forward to catching up with everyone and connecting with God at *Link-Ups*. Please pray I'd pass my exams and for my future."



SAT DANIELLA, 17

"I love being with my close friends, doing my friends hair and nails. I get most stressed about family problems and schoolwork. I'm looking forward to a chance to come closer to God at *the Linkup*, especially as I've drifted away recently. Please pray that things get better at home, and that I take the right direction in my life."

“THESE STORIES ARE TRUE”

In 1999, Ania Cannon moved to London to volunteer with LCM from Poland, where she had been a school teacher. “I didn’t want to have anything to do with education, but God’s got a sense of humour.”

Ania was struck by a unique opportunity, which prompted her take on the role as a schools-based missionary.

“In the UK there are open doors in schools for all children and young people to explore Christianity today.”

After cutting her teeth in Morden alongside Peter Kendrick, Ania moved to Bermondsey where she would spend 15 years witnessing to children about Jesus.

“There is hunger among young people to hear who they are in Christ,” says Ania. “One of the images that will stick with me is a Muslim girl who would wait outside the lunchtime Bible club asking if she could come in, but was unable to because her parents wouldn’t give permission.”

Ania has seen the power of the Holy Spirit at work. She once had a call from a head teacher concerned by children saying, “The stories Ania is telling us are the true stories!”

“As far as I know I hadn’t said these stories from the Bible are true, and other ones are false. This was evidently the conclusion that the children had drawn themselves.”

Join us in praying for Ania as she leaves the mission and starts her next adventure, and that God would work powerfully in schools in Southwark.

SUN Please pray that across London and the UK, school doors would continue to be open for freely sharing the good news of Jesus!

MON Five years after working with a local school, Ania wrote to the headteacher after being prompted by a dream. The school responded within two weeks, saying how much they missed the Christian input. Pray that schools across London would realise the need for Christian involvement.

TUE One day Ania was on the bus and a young girl said to her mum, “Look, that’s Ania, the lady from the Bible.” Pray that Christians like Ania would increasingly be a presence in the whole community through school work.

WED Pray that schools Ania worked with in north Southwark would continue to be open to the gospel. Pray that churches would step in to continue relationships, with the help of LCM.

THU Ania often took school children to Webber Street Day Centre for homeless people,

where they met staff and asked why they do what they do. Pray that more children would get to hear about Jesus through these trips.

FRI After more than 20 years at the mission, Ania felt God’s calling to move on. Pray for her as she discerns God’s will for her next steps. “I’m starting by concentrating on who I am in Christ and what character God is shaping in me rather than what I do.”

SAT Ania has been volunteering in a special needs school in Brixton. “I love sharing God’s heart for these children. Please pray that I would know God’s calling, if he would have me here longer term.”



ANIA CANNON

BREAKING BARRIERS

“I have a heart for the ‘undesirables,’” says LCM missionary *Marína Russel*, referring to teenagers often written off by society that she has come to know in Lewisham and more recently in Hackney.

Marína is working with churches to try and break down some of the misconceptions around teenagers, especially those involved with gangs. One of her activities is to pin up photos of babies on the wall, and then photos of them as teenagers.

“What I’m trying to do is remind people that these are children born in God’s image – and the behaviour we see is the fruits of something that has gone badly wrong. We want to deal with the roots of these children.”

But where to even start?

“Say hello to them,” says Marína. “They might ignore you or give you a strange look. But the next time they might offer a hello in return. Really, it’s about taking the first steps to be present in young people’s lives. Over time, the barriers will start to come down.”

Junior*, who Marína has known since he was a baby, is a case in point – involved in anti-social behaviour and on the fringes of gangs.

“He messaged me the other day and said, ‘How are you Auntie?’ And I know that means he really wants to talk and share what’s on his mind. There is a vulnerable side to all these kids, which God sees, and with perseverance and love, we can too.”

SUN

“God has placed these people in your life because he loves you,” Marína tells Junior after he rebels against his mum.

Pray for protection for Junior as he faces the allure of belonging to a gang.

MON

Marína took Junior to the *Linkups* summer camp with some trepidation last year. But he thrived there, asking questions of Christian leaders about things he was going through. Pray that this year, the Holy Spirit would break through in Junior’s heart.

TUE

“Sitting down in a church service after a full week at school isn’t always the best way for these young people to engage,” says Marína. Pray for Marína and her team as they help churches find ways to connect with teenagers and present the gospel in a relevant way.

WED

“Please pray for me to be faithful to the work and to have a deeper relationship with God”, asks Marína.

THU

Anthony* recently became a Christian. He has been let down by men in his life before, including his dad.

Pray that in time, the right older male Christian would emerge to disciple Anthony.

FRI

Please pray for young people who have recently received their A-level and GCSE results. Pray that Marína and her team have opportunities to show these teenagers where to find their true identity.

SAT

Have you been challenged this week to see young people differently? Pray for young people you encounter, and ask God to show you and your church how to love them.



**PRAY WITH MARINA
THIS TUESDAY, 6PM
LCM.ORG.UK/PRAYONLINE**

MARÍNA RUSSEL

THE CLOCKTOWER PROJECT

From around two-thirty in the afternoon, the centre of Bexley transforms from a quiet suburban town to a hive of activity as hundreds of secondary school children congregate around the Clocktower.

“There are community safety issues”, says Bola Ojo who leads one of the churches that make up Transform Bexley Borough (TBB).

“It’s not just about fights breaking out, but young teenagers are susceptible to the influence of gangs”.

“Many of our young people are vulnerable and need a listening ear, so as TBB we stepped out to connect with them.”

Bola and the team contacted churches in the area and asked them to join The Clocktower Project. A team of volunteer youth workers was assembled, trained and with support from London City Mission, have been preparing to go out onto the streets to talk with, and hopefully befriend, young people.

“We need to first listen, love and support them – hearing their needs, whether it’s as simple as a game of football or counselling for issues they’re facing, and connecting them with the right services. We know that over time, God will provide opportunities to share the hope that we have in Jesus.”

The significance of the project goes beyond Bexley, explains missionary Adam Boyce, who has been leading the effort to equip the team.

“The idea is that if we get this right in Bexley, we can replicate this to other areas of London.”

SUN Pray that God would equip churches this week, as they go into Bexley, alongside LCM to start conversations with teenagers. Pray that God will already be at work in the hearts of the children.

MON “The team have been under attack – some have had to drop out for personal reasons,” says Bola. Pray for protection for the project team and that God would raise up more church youth workers to join them.

TUE “We have a heart for the intergenerational community,” says Bola. Pray that through the project, bridges could be built between young and older people in Bexley.

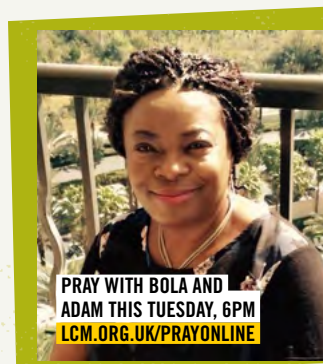
WED Pray that, supported by LCM, strong partnerships with local services could be built, giving young people positive alternative activities, such as *Kick*, a Christian charity that gets children involved in sport.

THU A police officer in Bexley had said previously to Bola, “Where is the church?” in light of the problems. “Here

we are”, is how Bola is looking forward to responding. Pray for continued favour with the police and local council.

FRI “I know my child is getting in trouble, but they’re not in far enough to attract support”, is what Bola hears from mothers in Bexley. Pray that churches could intervene early in children’s lives before they get involved in serious crime.

SAT Pray for LCM missionaries as they build up the churches of Bexley for outreach to young people. Please pray for more of this across London, so that thousands would hear and respond to the good news of Jesus!



BOLA OJO

ANOTHER WORLD, ANOTHER LANGUAGE

On one side of Lewisham high street is a huge, intimidating man, muscles bulging out of his t-shirt. He's shouting abuse at the people on the other side of the road. One of them, a young, small boy, eventually steps up to confront him.

This is the scene painted by LCM missionary, and former Pioneer, Emmanuel Chanda as he explains the story of David and Goliath with a teenage boy he started to mentor last year.

"You've got to share the gospel with these kids in a way that they understand, and to see Jesus in the picture," said Emmanuel.

Teenagers, especially from lower-income communities, have their own culture and language which varies depending on the area of London you're in – something Emmanuel is experiencing first hand in his new role in Lambeth.

"Their jokes, their points of reference, even the way they carry themselves is different from one neighborhood to the next. It's hard to put your finger on it. When I go to south London, kids say to me "you're not from round here".

"Kids have their own culture and it's something the church needs to learn and be literate in."

But how do you do this?

"Spend time with them," says Emmanuel. "Be quick to listen and slow to speak."

These are insights Emmanuel is sharing with churches seeking to make gospel connections with young people across the borough.

SUN Give thanks for the teenage boy, Jermain*, who Emmanuel has been mentoring. Jermain recently asked for his own Bible. Pray that input from Emmanuel would lead Jermain to commit his life to the Lord.

MON "A lot of boys like Jermain get written off," says Emmanuel. But after mentoring, Jermain did excellently in his GCSEs and is now preparing to go to university. Pray that God would lift up more young Christians like Emmanuel to come alongside teenagers.

TUE "I really want to come alongside and love the churches in Lambeth." Pray that Emmanuel's desire would be realised and that God would open doors for new, fruitful relationships with churches in the area.

WED "Every culture has a value system – and these young people value respect, or 'making it'." Pray that, through the work of churches, young people would see where true value lies and that prevailing culture would be challenged.

THU "Life has taught these young people not to be young. It's squeezed out their childhood." Pray for teenagers in Lambeth, that they would be protected from negative pressures, especially on social media.

FRI Pray for Emmanuel's walk with God as he continues his new role as a missionary. "I don't want to be a missionary and not grow in my one-to-one relationship with Jesus," he says.

SAT Pray for Emmanuel as he adapts to the new culture in south London and that by investing time with young people, he would come to understand them and speak into their lives.



**PRAY WITH EMMANUEL
THIS TUESDAY, 6PM
LCM.ORG.UK/PRAYONLINE**

EMMANUEL CHANDA

OPERATION FORGIVENESS

If you have read about LCM missionary Jason O'Shea, you will likely have heard about Operation Forgiveness.

It's a project born out of tragedy. Zac, the younger brother of Jason's wife Tayo, was stabbed to death in 2010. In the years that followed, Tayo and her mother toured prisons to raise awareness of the impact of violent crime. They heard a recurring reflection from prisoners:

"If only someone had told me when I was in school about the ripple effects of my crime, I wouldn't be here now."

So, this sparked the idea behind Operation Forgiveness – going into schools and telling the story of Zac – and putting forgiveness at the centre of it all.

Why forgiveness?

"Because a lack of forgiveness is so often the fuel behind the crime we see every day among young people in London", says Jason. "And when you talk about forgiveness, it's natural to talk about Jesus."

This is especially the case for Zac's mother, Sarah, who describes to the children how she was able to forgive.

Sarah said, "Jesus gave his life, he went to the cross, he went to his death for me. He gave his life as a ransom – who am I to be struggling with unforgiveness?"

"It's a powerful session," says Jason. "We can speak to a couple of thousand children in a year. But by equipping churches with all the materials, the sky is the limit!"

SUN Join us in giving thanks for the way God has used Sarah and Tayo's testimonies to speak powerfully about forgiveness. Pray that thousands of children would hear this message in the year ahead.

MON During lockdown, Jason and his team created Operation Forgiveness videos, replicating some of the content from in-person sessions. Pray schools would use these videos, and that they would speak powerfully to staff and children.

TUE "I really want to see every person at LCM inspired by the potential of Operation Forgiveness," says Jason. Pray this would happen, and pray for opportunities to replicate the programme.

WED "Doing this work is spiritual warfare," says Jason, as he reflects on the resistance he faces, including abuse on social media. Pray for protection for him and his family as he boldly shines the light of Jesus.

THU Pray for continual provision for Jason and his family; pray he will keep trusting in the Lord.

FRI Jason blows into a balloon to illustrate unforgiveness to children, each breath representing a negative feeling before the balloon eventually bursts. Pray the Holy Spirit would cause young people to forgive instead of taking vengeance.

SAT "A lack of forgiveness immobilises Christians, and it's a trap we can all fall into." Has the Lord put on your heart someone you need to forgive? If so, bring it before the one who knows what it is to truly forgive.



**PRAY WITH JASON
THIS TUESDAY, 6PM
LCM.ORG.UK/PRAYONLINE**

JASON O'SHEA

UNITED IN MISSION

“Youth crime is the church’s problem to deal with,” says Gareth Jones who oversees LCM’s ministry to children, youth and schools.

Last year London recorded the highest rate of knife crime in the country. More young people in London have been killed through gang-related violence this year than the total in 2020.

A quick search on Google gives an idea of the extent of the problem. At the time of writing, a 17-year-old boy has been arrested on suspicion of attempted murder in Brixton, an 18-year-old was stabbed to death in north London and a 17-year-old boy attacked and stabbed with foot-long knives in broad daylight in Hyde Park – all in the past week.

“So much of this goes under the radar, but our missionaries see the day-to-day impact of it”, says Gareth. “Churches don’t always feel confident, but they have a huge potential to offer hope to young people, and we want to enable them to do that.”

Part of the challenge is that the good work by churches is done in isolation. That was the reason for *Synergy* – a London-wide collaboration of churches and Christian organisations including London City Mission and *Churches Together* – established last year.

“It brings together churches from many backgrounds and enables them to share ideas and work together. Youth violence isn’t limited to parish boundaries,” says Gareth, who is one of *Synergy*’s board members.

SUN Pray that in God’s mercy, children across London would be protected from knife crime and its tragic consequences, and that the attacks would reduce across the city.

MON Please pray for the work of *Synergy*, as it takes steps to bring churches together to share the gospel with young people more effectively.

TUE Pray for wisdom for Gareth as he leads his team of missionaries across London. Pray he would be able to do this in a Christ-like, effective manner.

WED Pray especially for the schools team, which Gareth oversees, as they seek to recruit two new missionaries. Pray for wisdom and godly discernment in this process.

THU One of the key challenges for Gareth and his team is to take all London City Mission’s experience and knowledge of gospel ministry with children and young people – and share it with churches. Pray that this could be done effectively, so churches would be excited to partner with LCM.

FRI Gareth and his team are in talks with churches in Hounslow, where Christians would like to share the gospel in local secondary schools. Pray for Gareth and his team, especially as they seek to give a Christian perspective on gender and sexuality, which is a topic many students are grappling with.

SAT “Please pray for my family” asks Gareth, “for my wife Helen who is a GP in east London, for my son in university and my four daughters at home that they will know God’s wisdom and strength.”



GARETH JONES

TELLING OF THE GLORIOUS DEEDS OF THE LORD

“Tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.”

These words from Psalm 78 have special significance for Marije Natsu, as she builds on the work of other missionaries to share the gospel with a new generation of schoolchildren.

Marije was posted to Morden when she joined the Mission four years ago – where retired missionary Peter Kendrick had established a Christian Resource Centre for schools.

“The schools had come to love and appreciate Peter so much over the years. When I took over, they were more than happy to welcome me in,” says Marije.

In the years that followed, alongside other missionaries including Rosemary Haslam, Marije continued the work which Peter had started.

“Rosemary would spend night and day thinking of ideas to engage the children with the gospel,” says Marije.

One of these ideas transports children from South London to Narnia (or at least a recreation of it). Children travel through the wardrobe to the beaver’s house, Aslan’s tent and C.S. Lewis’ study – learning about the gospel at each stage.

Marije is now taking the ideas and experiences she learned from Rosemary (who retired this year), as well as those of her own, to equip churches across London to bring the gospel to life in new and imaginative ways for children.

SUN

“After parents and the home, schools have the largest influence on children.” Pray that children will learn about the good news at school. Ask the Holy Spirit to open hearts and minds, so children understand and accept what they hear.

MON

Thank God that doors are open for Christian input in schools in the UK. Pray for the Education Secretary and their department, to have insight and wisdom as they make decisions.

TUE

Pray for Marije’s team as they recruit two new missionaries this summer. Pray for unity and effectiveness as they help churches connect with schools across London.

WED

It is not just children that hear lessons about Christianity. Pray the gospel would be a transforming message for adults present in the classroom as well.

THU

Thank God for many years of schools’ ministry in Morden, in and through the Schools’ Christian Resource Centre.

Pray for schools where Marije previously worked, that they will keep receiving Christian input from local churches. This is especially important with the presence of the local Ahmadiyya Mosque and international headquarters.

FRI

Pray for children starting secondary school in the past month, who Marije is concerned for. These children have missed many experiences in the past year that would prepare them for the next step.

SAT

Marije recalls a boy with special needs who played with clay to keep him engaged during her lesson about the nativity. At the end, the boy presented Marije with ‘the star of Jesus’. Pray the seeds planted would take hold in children’s hearts.



**PRAY WITH MARIJE
THIS TUESDAY, 6PM
LCM.ORG.UK/PRAYONLINE**

MARIJE NATSU

AN OPEN DOOR TO SCHOOLS

Children at a primary school in south London had a choice of lunchtime clubs to attend. Alongside chess, arts and crafts and coding, the list also had another option: Bible Club.

“We were always oversubscribed,” says LCM missionary Lurah Gordon who visited each Friday to lead the half-hour sessions, involving Bible teaching and related games and crafts.

“It’s not just Christian children who came along,” says Lurah. “It’s Muslims, as well as kids with no experience of church at all. And it’s really clear that children didn’t come just to pass the time, but to really engage with what we discussed.”

After a lesson which Lurah gave about prayer one day, a Muslim girl asked her, “Is it only Christians who can speak to God? Do you think I could speak to God?”

Lurah’s new role is to help churches take advantage of these gospel opportunities in schools across Croydon.

“A lot of people don’t realise that teachers are looking for churches to engage with,” said Lurah.

Schools are required by law to focus more on Christianity in RE lessons than other religions. And to bring in an actual Christian, who the children can see and question, is a more effective way of explaining Christianity which is often misrepresented.

“If we help churches across Croydon get involved with schools, just think how many more children might get to hear what Christianity is really about!”

SUN Please pray for Lurah as she works alongside local churches to run a lunchtime club in a South Norwood primary school, and assemblies in a Thornton Heath primary school.

MON Please pray for schools which Lurah worked with in Southwark. Pray that, as Lurah moves to her new role in Croydon, local churches would continue the work she started.

TUE Pray for the Muslim girl who asked Lurah whether she was able to pray to God. Pray the seed of the gospel that has been planted would grow.

WED Are there schools in your local area that come to mind during your prayers this week? Pray for those schools, and for opportunities for you and your church to engage with them to talk about Jesus.

THU “Any Christian can go into a school to share their faith. By virtue of being a Christian, you’re already an expert!” says Lurah. Pray that more Christians in Croydon and across London would be emboldened to do this.

FRI Give thanks for Beulah church in Croydon, which Lurah and her team have been supporting. The church has a vision to share the gospel in every school in Croydon.

SAT Please pray for Lurah as she adapts to her new role of equipping churches for schools’ ministry – for humility and wisdom as she comes alongside congregations. Pray also for her move to a new home as part of her transition.



LAURAH GORDON

PRAYING FOR GOD'S PROTECTION

Missionary Brandon Thesee sees a repeating cycle on the Beckontree estate in Dagenham.

“The mum gets overwhelmed by caring for multiple children without any support, she becomes overwhelmed by mental health issues. The teenager steps in to help, and then becomes overwhelmed and the cycle repeats.”

Brandon knew Connie* since she was a baby. Her mum brought her along to the parents and toddler group.

“Connie was so gifted. Even at two years old she was reading me a book! But she’s had a really tough time. Her mum has had children from several partners, and Connie’s brother is often very aggressive. Perhaps because of how capable Connie is, she kind of became a ‘mini-mum’, stepping in to take care of the family when her own mum became overwhelmed.”

Despite the pressures at home, Connie came to the youth group where she would talk to Brandon and the other leaders about God.

“If you show interest, and say ‘I’m here for you’, then young people will engage with you. And they’re open to talking about God. They might have whacky ideas, but they will listen to what you’re saying.”

Shortly after lockdown started last year, Brandon heard that Connie and her family had moved out of the area, after her mum’s partner had become threatening.

“We are praying for Connie and her family, and that the conversations about Jesus could be picked up by other Christians wherever she is.”

SUN “I wasn’t really interested in youth ministry at first, but you spend time with teenagers and he Lord grows your heart towards them”, says Brandon. Pray that God would reveal a love for young people among other Christians across London.

MON Brandon encounters many older people hardened to the gospel. “It’s so important to talk to teenagers about God now, before the days of trouble come.” Give thanks for the openness to the gospel among young people, and pray this would continue.

TUE Please pray for God’s protection on Connie, since moving away. Pray that other Christians would be able to share the gospel with her and that she would commit her life to Jesus!

WED Pray for Brandon’s colleague Chianne who has been supporting him in Dagenham. Pray she would continue to grow in her understanding and love for the area.

THU During recent lockdowns, Brandon brought church youth workers together on

Zoom. They joined from across Dagenham to encourage each other, share ideas and pray. Please pray that young people would be more effectively reached through this.

FRI “Sometimes I lack confidence but God is good, and he is opening doors for the gospel!” Pray for Brandon’s continued reliance on the Lord.

SAT Brandon and Chianne plan to help churches run a course for young people, which addresses mental health issues from a Biblical basis. Pray for a good uptake and for the Holy Spirit to be at work.



**PRAY WITH BRANDON
THIS TUESDAY, 6PM
LCM.ORG.UK/PRAYONLINE**

BRANDON THESEE

A HEART FOR CHILDREN

In 1876, a man named Joseph Wicks wrote to Charles Spurgeon, asking for help.

Wicks lived in the Beulah area of south London and had to take his children all the way to Gypsy Hill to get to church. He asked Spurgeon for help to plant a new church in Beulah, so his children didn't have to travel so far each Sunday.

Spurgeon campaigned and raised enough money to build a church and Sunday School, out of which came Beulah Baptist Church.

It's now known as Beulah Family Church, where another Joseph – Joseph Bediako – is pastor.

The church's Sunday kids' club, involving games, competitions and a gospel message, is now being replicated in schools – including Winterbourne Girls' School, mostly attended by Muslim pupils. When Joseph received a call from the school administrator on the club's first day, he feared there hadn't been sufficient interest. But instead, he was asked, "Should we put a cap on the number of children?" Ninety-five girls had turned up.

"Young people have always been in the blood of the church," says Joseph. "Now we have a vision to reach every child in Croydon with the gospel."

Missionaries including Laurah Gordon are partnering with Beulah Family Church to reach more schools, as well as working alongside other churches to do the same.

SUN Pray that other churches in the area could connect with schools in the same way as Beulah church, so every child in Croydon might hear the gospel!

MON Beulah church have been invited to host an assembly at Winterbourne Girl's school. Pray for the ongoing relationship with the school, and that girls and staff would hear the good news about Jesus and believe.

TUE London City Mission will be helping Beulah church to engage with children's Muslim families. Pray that doors would be opened for LCM and Beulah, to build friendships with these families so that Jesus can be proclaimed.

WED "Our plan is that children hear the gospel at least once every half term," says Joseph. Pray specifically for volunteers from Beulah and other churches, who could go into schools and make this a reality.

THU Beulah church is still running kids' clubs on Sundays. Thirteen parents have come to faith after building

friendships with church members when picking their children up. Pray that God would draw more parents to himself through the club.

FRI Joseph has recently moved to a nearby estate in Forestdale, where there has never been any kind of church presence. Beulah church have planted a church here, which Joseph is helping to oversee. Pray the gospel would take hold on the estate.

SAT Pray that God would embolden other church leaders with a heart for those least likely to hear the gospel. Pray that, with LCM's help, all children across London would experience the love and good news of Jesus.



JOSEPH BEDIAKO

BOOK A MISSIONARY TO SPEAK AT YOUR CHURCH



► Interested to find out what mission in London is really like?

With stories of lives changed by Jesus, along with the personal opportunities and challenges missionaries face each day, we would love to share our experiences and inspire your church.

GET IN TOUCH TODAY

LCM.ORG.UK/BOOKASPEAKER

CONTACT

London City Mission
175 Tower Bridge Road
London SE1 2AH

T [020 7407 7585](tel:02074077585)

E ENQUIRIES@LCM.ORG.UK

