Dear Prayer Partners,

This year Torch’s annual Day of Prayer falls on Wednesday 1st June.

From its outset Torch has been built on a foundation and this is a major opportunity to reinforce that foundation.

This is Torch’s Year of Reaching Out, supported by our scripture text for the year ...

"Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes." (Isaiah 54:2)

Our vision is to see the “tent” that is Torch extended to cover more people living with sight loss through more of their journey, extending across the UK and, through our international links and partnerships, around the world.

With two bases in Britain and one in Malawi, and now three people working out of their homes in different parts of the UK our “reach” is wide and widening. There’s much happening but there’s much more to do.

Please pray for the appointment and resourcing of more outworkers to bring Torch to more communities across the UK and pray for those who are already established and are working hard to make the contacts and build the relationships that will connect Torch with blind and partially sighted people where they live and to people struggling with their loss of sight at their times of greatest need.

In this context, Our Journeying With Christian befriending initiative is gradually gaining momentum with three schemes established and three or four on the way. To date Journeying With schemes have served and are serving 34 people on their sight loss journeys. Of course national coverage is a long way off so the launch in January of Journeying With By Phone which can serve people anywhere in the UK is an exciting development. A second group of JWBP volunteers are now in training.

Our local Groups need our prayers too, and our volunteer team of Regional Coordinators too. Over recent years the number of traditional Torch Fellowship Groups has been in steady decline. To some extent this has been offset by the opening of new types of local Group - mainly Torch Book Groups - and again the telephone has come to our aid and extended our reach with start up and growth of TorchTalk groups.

The Bedouin tent which this year’s scripture brings to my mind is a place of hospitality. Hospitality is a hallmark of Torch Fellowship Groups - a warm welcome and fellowship over food. Extending our tent surely means extending that hospitality to more blind and partially sighted people with more local Groups, that they might know the love of Jesus and the power of his gospel to transform lives.

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Christian resources and activities for blind and partially sighted people worldwide

**Chief Executive:** Dr. Gordon Temple. Council of Reference: The Rt. Rev’d. Richard Atkinson OBE, Rev’d. Dr. Steve Brady, Rev’d. Dr. David Coffey OBE, Rev’d. Malcolm Duncan, Jonathan Lamb, Rev’d. Roy Searle, Dr. Elaine Storkey, Rev’d. Dr. Derek Tidball.

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Hospitality is at the heart of everything that happens at the Torch Holiday & Retreat Centre. Here we see the impact of the gospel close up, transforming lives practically, emotionally and spiritually. With the Centre beautifully improved and extended we want to offer a “home from home” welcome to more and more. To do that we need to strengthen the staff team, praying that God will send the people of his choosing.

Then there is Torch’s ongoing commitment to give access to Christian reading by transcribing, producing and distributing books, magazines and other Christian resources in braille, large print and audio.

The long heralded change over to automated text transcription for large print and braille is largely achieved and we are developing the capability to do more production and transcription on demand - with the dream of giving blind and partially sighted readers the Christian resources they need, when they need them.

It’s been exciting to see accessible edition of Christian books produced by Torch added to the Eden online Christian bookstore alongside the print titles (see www.eden.co.uk) and to see readers select new titles from Torch’s Reading for All magazine.

Reaching out in our International work has included sending MegaVoice audio Bibles to Moldova, taking advantage of MegaVoice’s new and timely dual-language technology to provide both Romania and Russian in the same package - exactly what my trip to that country with blind pastor Tibor Miklos had shown us was needed.

From Torch Trust Malawi’s operation in Blantyre, 100 sets of braille New Testaments in Bemba (14 volumes each) have just been sent to Zambia to replenish stocks from a earlier production that are now exhausted. And braille books retired from the Torch Library in the UK have just arrived in Nigeria to boost the library operated by Andrew Gani for blind people there.

So there’s a lot of “reaching out” going on, taking the word of God and the love of Christ to many, home and abroad. But at the end of the day it’s not what we do that counts, but what God chooses to do through us. For us, it is to be faithful in prayer, in our activity and in our words that Torch in its diverse programmes and projects might be the channel through whom God is pleased to work.

This is why I now appeal for you to join your prayers with ours - to pray with us on our Day of Prayer and to pray with us daily, guided by our quarterly Prayer Diary (sent out with Torch News and which you can find on the home page of the Torch website) and to pray for our team of staff and volunteers using the Daily Prayer Guide accessed via the “Support Torch” tab.

There’s much for which we are thankful to God: look out for my article in the next Torch News. But it’s what, and where, and who we are not yet reaching that burdens me. There is so much more to do. And we need from God’s good hand the resources to do it: the staff, the volunteers and the funds.

As Jesus taught us to pray ...

“Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven”

Your prayers mean a lot to us and a chorus of prayer for Torch and for people with sight loss on 1st June will surely raise God’s power at work in us to rise to the challenge.

Yours in our Lord’s service,

Gordon Temple
Day of Prayer 2016 - Prayer Topics

Focus: Enlarging the Torch Tent

Prayers for the Resource area of work include:
Resources (inc, publications, transcription, production, logistics & dispatch); Communications (inc. Reflections Radio Show, Torch News, Social Media, Brochures & Leaflets); Client Services (inc. Phone & Email, Library Admin, TorchTalk Admin, Journeying With Admin & I.T. (inc. Computer and phone systems); Human Resources and Infrastructure (inc. Staffing, Volunteers, Systems and Finances)

Give Thanks for:
- Praise God for the increase in subscriptions to Premier Christianity magazine in audio, since we made it available monthly.
- Give thanks for new machinery for the production of large print magazines
- Give thanks for the people we come in to contact with whether Reflections interviewees, Journey - our thought for the week, contributors or because of Torch News. In them we constantly find a wealth of inspiring stories and brilliant examples of God's love and hospitality.
- Give thanks for our contact with the Christian Helplines Association and the resources it can provide.
- Praise God for the provision of new IT back-up systems.
- New staff members coming to us bringing fresh insights and gifts.

Please pray for:
- Pray that more people on the sight-loss journey would become aware of our accessible resources
- Pray for more staff and volunteers for Logistics and Dispatch areas.
- Pray that we are inspired in the creation of new brochures which will attract more new people to Torch
- Pray that more people will feel they can contact us to ask for prayer and friendly Christian support.
- Pray for the provision of New Storage Servers and the updating of accessible software for the IT department.
- Pray for the financial provision which enables our strategic plans to be implemented in a timely and effective manner.
Prayers for the Presence & International areas of work include:

Journeying With; Regional; Holidays; International

Give Thanks for:

- Praise God for those volunteers who are newly trained to offer support to people over the telephone. God is already blessing those relationships.
- We thank God for all the new Christians who made a commitment through Torch Fellowship Groups.
- Give thanks for our beautifully extended and refurbished Holiday and Retreat Centre where the expression of Christian hospitality takes place.
- Give praise for the continued blessing of the 35 small libraries in various countries. The latest one being set up at a Bible training centre in Zambia.

Please pray for:

- Pray that churches will become increasingly aware of the need to be fully inclusive of people with disabilities, so that more people can participate fully, not just receive ministry.
- Pray that churches will increasingly be excited about the missional opportunity that the Journeying With scheme can provide.
- Pray for the encouragement of Regional Coordinators, and regeneration of the Torch Fellowship Groups leadership team’s with a real heart vision to seek out more blind and partially sighted people.
- Please pray that our Moving Forward breaks at Torch HRC become more well-known and that all our Holidays will be fully booked.
- Pray that Torch will reach more blind and partially sighted people in Malawi and further, with accessible Christian resources and fellowship.
- Pray for the appointment and resourcing of a lead person for our Presence work together with more outworkers to bring Torch to more communities across the UK.
- Pray for more people to experience the gospel close up through our holidays and events at our Holiday and Retreat Centre.