

Why Caia Friars?

As part of Jesus teaching, he gave us a prayer which includes the petition to God:

'Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven'

Over the centuries and across the world Christians having offered this prayer have felt led to develop the life and mission of the church in many different ways as have seemed appropriate to the local & immediate situation. So in the 19th century the Salvation Army was formed, in the 20th century Christian Aid, Cafod and Tear Fund, and in the 21st century modern day Food Banks.

In Wrexham, Caia Park Community Council represents about a quarter of Wrexham Town's population, that part of the town community which is located to the east of the town centre. It covers 5 Council wards from Smithfield nearest the town centre to Wynnstay and Cartrefle in the north and Queensway and Whitegate wards in the south all located between the Holt Road (north) and Hightown Road (south).

Community here expresses itself in many and varied ways with 3 primary schools on the Park, 2 secondary schools nearby, The Caia Park Partnership at 'The Hub', Play schemes, Senior Citizens Homes, Sports Clubs, businesses and retail outlets

The church is present in the community also. The Anglican Church of St. Mark and the Roman Catholic Church of St. Annes are located on Caia Park and in Smithfield is the Assemblies of God Congregation meeting at Rock Chapel. Close by this chapel is the community building owned by the Anglican Church and known as St. Peter's Hall. Also working in this community is the Church Army who with Christians from other churches have established the Tin Can Youth Drop in centre near Rhosnesni School.

Caia Friars represents a fresh expression of a community of prayer and service, part of the community of Caia Park, and named after a very, very old Christian calling, the Friars who worked in local communities.

Who were the original Friars?

The great orders of friars were first founded in the 12th and thirteenth centuries. A traditional friar is a brother member of one of the mendicant orders. These are primarily, certain Christian religious orders that have adopted a lifestyle of poverty, traveling, and living in urban areas for purposes of preaching, evangelization, and ministry, especially to the disadvantaged. They rejected the previously established monastic model. By contrast, the mendicants avoided owning property, did not work at a trade, and embraced a poor, often itinerant lifestyle. They depended for their survival on the goodwill of the people to whom they preached. Eventually they did establish houses and would travel from one to another house.

The historic orders of Friars would have officers like abbots, priors, guardians and wardens who would ensure discipline, order and management of the community.

As the historic Friars took vows of poverty, they would often live in friaries, so management tasks would include preparing food, accommodation & many other day to day issues which are unlikely to arise in our Caia Friars community.

According to the local Wrexham historian, Alister Williams, Wrexham never had a Friary, but there were friaries in Chester, and the Church of St. Francis, opposite the Grosvenor Museum in Chester remains a Friary within the city.

So the original orders of friars still exist, but have evolved forms of ministry as they have seen appropriate in the situations they serve in today. Overleaf there is a description of the characteristics of what is often termed the 'new friars', though all orders of friars were 'new' at some time in history.

New Friars

Modern communities of friars, as described in the book 'New Friars' share several things in common with the historic order of friars, but there are a number of significant differences.

1. The modern movement is not predominantly a Catholic movement. It is, however, theologically broad enough for Catholics & Protestants to serve together.
2. The modern movement is not just for today's movement includes females & families.
3. The modern movement is vocationally diverse. The sort of transformation new friars seek in the communities they serve requires them to enfold into their communities, diverse professional, artisan and servant roles.
4. The new friar communities have not taken vows of celibacy

New Friars are often:

1. Incarnational: Many new friars seek to *bethe* gospel by becoming part of the communities they seek to serve.
2. Devotional: Many new friars are organized around a set of spiritual commitments to govern their walk with Jesus, with one another, and with the communities of broken souls where poverty exists.
3. Communal: Many new friars hold in common things they once had held privately
4. Missional: Many new friars have something of the spirit of earlier communities whenever they were mission-driven.
5. Marginal: Many new friars are often on the fringe of the mainstream church seeking to be among people who exist on the edge of society (examples being sex workers, street kids, those simply trapped in poverty and/or denied opportunity).

Reference: Bessenecker, Scott. "The New Friars". InterVarsity Press, 2006; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Friars

For those who would like to read more, here are two web links.

The first is a 'new friars' group based around an initiative in Chester known as the Light Project. It's called St Peters Friars, and you can learn more at <https://www.stpetersfriars.net/>

The second is a blog written about a group of Franciscan Friars in America. These are traditional friars i.e. part of a Catholic Order of Franciscans, but this blog describes their looking forward. <https://blog.franciscanmedia.org/sam/friars-of-the-future>

Our Daily Prayer

Caia Friar's

Daily Office

'You show me the path of life.

In your presence is fullness of joy;

in your right hand are pleasures for evermore.'

Psalm 16.11

Spend a few moments reflecting on these words

- What do they mean for you today?
- Use your imagination to wonder what they could mean for everyone living on Caia Park?
- Pray for one or more individual from Caia today that they may know joy and the Lord's good pleasure.
- Pray through some or all of the topics for prayer this week.

As you say the Lord's prayer, may each line be prayed over the situations faced by Caia this week.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

- Take a few more moments of stillness asking God to guide you in your ministry to Caia; that he will lead you to the right people, fruitful conversations and practical support. Then finish with the Caia Prayer.

Introduction

The place of prayer in the community of Friars

Following the example of Jesus, prayer has an important part to play within the community of Friars.

The Friars commit to pray daily for the community of Caia Park and our life together here.

These pages of the website explain a little more about the subject of prayer. It covers:

- Some thoughts which we hope might help each of us in Christian prayer
- The ways you can ask the community of Friars to pray about life on Caia Park and individuals who live here
- A little more information about how the friars fulfil their commitment to pray daily for the community of Caia Park

The Guardian newspaper reported in 2018 that more than half the population of the United Kingdom prayed from time to time. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/14/half-of-non-believers-pray-says-poll>.

According to the poll family tops the list of subjects of prayers at 71%, followed by thanking God (42%), praying for healing (40%) and for friends (40%). Way down on the list comes global issues such as poverty or disasters, at 24%.

There appears to be a trend to call on God while engaged in activities such as cooking or exercising, according to the poll. Although a third pray before going to sleep or on waking, others combine prayer with daily activities. One in five pray while doing household chores or cooking, 15% pray while travelling, and 12% pray during exercise or other leisure pursuits.

The Bible tells us of Jesus going into the hills to pray and when the disciples asked him how to pray, he encouraged them to go into a private place, close the door and be quiet. He gave them a pattern for their prayers, and we call that pattern 'The Lord's Prayer or the 'Our Father' prayer.

Today, unlike Jesus day, we have all sorts of gadgets available to us from note books to photo albums to mobile phones and computers. All these items help us to write lists or gather pieces of text, to collect photos of loved ones or to access the current news and topics which are wonderful or disturbing. Of course we can still find as Jesus did a quiet place, be it in a park or in a room, though perhaps there are more distractions these days.

So there are some modern things to help us with prayer and some things we have to overcome if we want to pray in our 21st century world.

In the next section of this page are some thoughts about Christian prayer which we hope will help you whether you are one of the 50% who do pray or are one of the 50% who the poll suggested don't (so far) pray

Christian Prayer

Jesus teaching for his followers is recorded in the Bible in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 6. Here in verses 9 to 13 we read:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our [daily](#) bread;

and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

How can we use this prayer? Well as we have mentioned on the earlier page, people pray in all sorts of places and at all sorts of times, and that's fine. The Bible encourages us to pray and it suggests God wants to hear from us rather than requiring us to be in a particular place.

But when we can be in a quiet place, perhaps with a note book, some pictures or with some notes, here are some thoughts on how we can use the Lord's prayer to help us pray.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Jesus teaches we should address God as 'Our Father', reminding us that praying to God is like an intimate conversation between a parent and a child.

We don't use the word hallowed very much today, but the word means Jesus is asking us to pray that God's name will be known as Holy, respected, honoured, and not to be used lightly.

One way we can honour God is to thank him for the blessings of this life that we recognise.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Jesus uses the word Kingdom to summarise how God wants life on earth to be. Jesus teaches a lot about what God's Kingdom is like and it's all recorded in the first 4 books of the second part of the Bible, the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. So Jesus is encouraging us to pray for life on earth to be ordered according to God's will i.e. like heaven on earth. So let's pray to God for a better world, and read about how Jesus says that can be in the stories he told. Here are some good passages to read: Matthew Chapters 5 to 7, Luke Chapter 10 verses 25-37 and Luke Chapter 15.

Give us this day our [daily](#) bread;

Notice here that this is not just a prayer for our own daily bread, but a prayer for daily bread for everyone, i.e. that all have sufficient. I guess we can think of lots of ways in which this challenges us to address hunger and

thirst both locally and across the world, and God wants us to pray to Him about making progress towards a world without hunger and one where everyone has access to clean water .

and forgive us our trespasses,

Here is another old word, to trespass, which is normally used today about going on to land we aren't supposed to go. When we do we are trespassing. What Jesus is teaching us here is to ask God's forgiveness when we have gone off the straight and narrow path, asking God's forgiveness when we have done wrong, whether it be in big ways, or in the smaller day to day things like being selfish in our home or family life.

as we forgive those who trespass against us;

Again this old word 'trespass, in one of the most challenging of the prayers Jesus asks us to use.

He's saying as we ask God to forgive our sins (trespasses), we must ask God to help us to forgive others who sin (trespass) against us. We all can recollect when we have found that very difficult, so that's why Jesus includes it in this prayer. We need to ask God for his help – every day, if that is we want to live life without holding grudges and retaining bitterness in our hearts.

and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

We all know temptations are all around us. There always have been. There are industries set up to lead us into temptation, and we all know how difficult it is to resist. Jesus knew the difficulties we face, as the Bible tells us how he was tempted by the devil in the wilderness. So Jesus encourages us to pray that we may not be led into temptation, and we may be delivered from evil.

Sometimes it is helpful to have some written prayers to both use, and also learn the language of prayer. We've already used the Lord's prayer in this way. E mail us via our Contact page if you would like some such written prayers to use.

How the Friars fulfil their commitment to prayer

The Friars are committed to daily prayer for the life of the Caia Park Community.

As in any community there is much to be thankful for, much to be concerned about. There are people who need a helping hand, situations where blockages need to be removed before progress can be made. The Friars will pray for people and situations like these.

The Friars have a prayer they use every day. It's called the Friar's daily office. It ends with this prayer, mindful that it is thought the word Caia related to a field or meadow:

The Caia Prayer

Loving Heavenly Father, your word reminds us that the pastures of the wilderness shall overflow. We pray your blessing on Caia Park. May each street be watered with your love and every house become a home for Christ. Let there be an end to dependence on what does not satisfy, so that the fruit of your Spirit can bring wholeness to the community. Though Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

Every week the prayers include in their daily prayer a series of subjects and situations in their prayer, These will change from week to week ensuring that during the year every institution and life on every street on the Park will be prayed for.

Finally, if the Friars receive requests for prayer related to the Caia Park community, the community of Friars undertake to respond to the requests by praying for the subjects and situations for which prayer has been requested.