



“
**By the seventh day God
had finished the work
he had been doing;
so on the seventh day
he rested from all his work.**
”

Genesis 2:2

Down-time is never wasted time.

By the time this prayer update is published and people read it.... I'll be on holiday. It will be my first proper break since I joined the Derbyshire Rural Chaplaincy in January. I had a short break after Easter but I was moving house which was most certainly *not* a holiday!

Now, I wouldn't say I feel guilty about having a couple of weeks off, but having spent the last 6 months getting to know the farming community in Derbyshire, I'm so very aware of the relentless nature of being a farmer and the limited opportunities to have time off away from the farm. You can't just leave livestock to fend for themselves, dairy cows can't milk themselves or hold onto their milk for a week – they have to be milked twice a day, every day.

As I write this, it is Farm Safety Week. Farming is one of the most dangerous occupations to be involved with and keeping yourself and others safe is so important. Injuries and fatalities have such a devastating impact on farming families. At this time of year many farmers are working very long hours to get crops and fodder harvested and stored. Those long hours can impact a person's health and their ability to stay safe. It is a challenge balancing jobs that have to be done with protecting yourself and your health. 'Down-time' can be hard to come by.



The verse above from the account of creation describes God resting after his work of creation – setting a pattern for us to follow. We all need periods of rest, some down-time in order to be refreshed, to recuperate and (for some) to focus our lives and worship on God. What that period of rest looks like will vary according to people's circumstances. The Pharisees of Jesus' time had very strict rules that had to be obeyed regarding the Sabbath (the day of rest) but Jesus pushed back against their teaching implying that the Sabbath should be a blessing to people, not a burden.

**Contact the Derbyshire Rural Chaplaincy by calling Rev Phil Michell on 07710 088972
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I know some Christian farmers who only do what is absolutely necessary on the farm on a Sunday in order to keep it as a special day for the Lord. For others, their 'Sabbath' is a bit more of a moveable feast.

For our farmers – let us hope and pray that in amongst the busyness of life on the farm, they may find some space to pause, to be refreshed, to stay safe and maybe even to spend some time focussing on the Lord who gave his life for us that we might know the full extent of his love.

Down-time is never wasted time.

In our prayers this month we can give thanks for:

- 🍏 A wonderful 'Evening on the Farm' event at the end June.
- 🍏 Harvests being brought in.
- 🍏 The support that farmers receive from the DRC and other organisations.
- 🍏 The gift of 'down-time' when we can be refreshed.
- 🍏 God's love for us which is constant and never has a 'down-time.'

We can pray for the following people and situations:

- 🍏 For our farmers, that they would stay safe and find time for rest and to be refreshed
- 🍏 For fair prices for the food our farmers produce.
- 🍏 For farmers who are struggling to make ends meet.
- 🍏 For wisdom for those farmers having to make decisions about the future of their farm.
- 🍏 For those who have recently been bereaved in our farming community and our ongoing support as chaplains with those families.
- 🍏 For our Harvest Supper at the end of September that it might be a wonderful time of celebration together.



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Offering Spiritual and Pastoral Support to the Agricultural and Rural Community