

# Chester Diocesan News

#EverydayFaith across the Diocese of Chester | May 2021



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND  
Diocese of Chester

# Thy Kingdom Come



[A reflection from the Bishop of Chester Pg 2](#)

[Thy Kingdom Come Pg 4](#)

# Pray with us

As we approach Pentecost we are encouraged, once again, to join with millions around the world praying 'Thy Kingdom Come'... and how urgently we need to pray this.

Maybe we feel this need especially after the year we have just inhabited. Issues like isolation and loneliness have been very evident, alongside financial challenges and physical or mental health questions that have accompanied so many during lockdown. I love the way that the archbishops are encouraging us to reflect on Luke 15 and those pictures of God as a tireless and persistent searcher. We are called to think of five people to pray for in these next days, that they might come to know the love of Christ for themselves. Pray, like the shepherd searching for the lost sheep, for those who have realised during the pandemic that they might be part of Christ's flock. For people who have joined us online, that they might continue to grow in faith and fellowship. For those who have received practical help, that they might be drawn into rich fellowship that feeds the whole person in God. Pray, like the woman searching her home for a lost coin, for those already in the church but who have really struggled over the last year. Thy kingdom come!

As we pray, we also need to reflect the last year we have had in the diocese; a really good year in so many ways, but a challenging one

too. We have been confronted with our past failures in safeguarding. We have been challenged about our institutional racism. We have faced these, and so many other things whilst not being about to meet, and having constantly to reimagine how we can be church in the image of Christ. It has been an interesting time to arrive in the Diocese, not least with the loss of Bishop Keith due to his retirement in March. How do you pray 'Thy kingdom come!' when times are challenging without resorting to simplistic formulae?

I ask, because I find there is great richness here. When we get beyond the polite 'stuff' of prayer and get into the real wrangling, naming how things appear to be and holding them in the open... that's when grace gets to work and I come out changed. The Lord is far from finished with us yet, and His future unfolds as His kingdom comes and His will is done. So pray with us.

[Join us in praying online from the Chapel at Bishop's House \(Mondays at 5.30pm and Thursdays at 8am\)](#)

I am really excited about what God has for us in the coming months and years. Let's pray. Let's share the great news we have in Christ. And let's look forward in the hope of Christ!

**Mark Tanner**  
**Bishop of Chester**

"When we get beyond the polite 'stuff' of prayer and get into the real wrangling, naming how things appear to be and holding them in the open... that's when grace gets to work and I come out changed."



Bishop Mark

# THY KINGDOM COME

**T**hy Kingdom Come is a global initiative, in which Christians are called to pray from Ascension to Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus. This year it runs from Thursday 13 to Sunday 23 May.

The Diocese of Chester is encouraging everyone to participate. Whether you are new to prayer or it has been your lifelong discipline, there are resources to help you participate individually or as part of your family or church.



"I've discovered that weaving prayer into the existing rhythms of life is sometimes easier than trying to carve out special times in special places."

**Justin Welby**  
Archbishop of Canterbury



"The thing about prayer is that you don't have to be good at it, fired up for it, or go on about it... you just have to give it a go and God does the rest. Prayer makes a massive difference, and it is our privileged calling."

**Mark Tanner**  
Bishop of Chester

## What is it all about?

**T**hy Kingdom Come" is a line from the prayer which Jesus taught his followers. It is this line that give this global initiative its name. Since its start in May 2016 God has grown Thy Kingdom Come from a dream of possibility into a movement. Christians from 172 countries and over 80 different denominations and traditions have taken part.

It is hoped that everyone who takes part will:

- Deepen in their own relationship with Jesus.
- Pray for five friends or family to come to faith in Jesus.
- Pray for the empowerment of the Spirit that we would be effective in our witness.

More specifically for 2021, and considering the impact of COVID-19, the special focus this year is to pray for five people to know the love of Christ from within two groups of people, reflected in the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin.



### Lost sheep in the wilderness

This year we are asked to pray specifically for those who are far off, but, for whatever reason during the last year, have tasted what Church is like for the first time. Perhaps this is through attending an online service, or receiving a food parcel, or having asked for prayer. Let us pray that they come to know the love of God through Jesus Christ.



### Lost coin in the house

We are also asked to pray for those who are near, who are already in church, but have drifted away during the last 12 months or so, for one reason or another. These are people who are lost in the church. Let us pray that they too come to know again the love of God through Jesus Christ.

# HOW TO TAKE PART



## Sign up to the digital newsletter

Go to the [Thy Kingdom Come website](#) and scroll to the bottom of the page to the 'Sign Up' button. Enter your contact details to be added to the mailing list and receive resources and information as they become available.

## Light up your town or village in prayer

Could you encourage Christians in your area to commit to lighting up the world in prayer during these 11 days? Visit the ['Light Up the World'](#) prayer section on the Thy Kingdom Come website to find resources to help your church to take part.

## Use the resources

A selection of [new resources](#) for 2021 has been unveiled, catering for people aged 5 to 105 years old. These include:

- Prayer Journal, with accompanying bookmark
- Family prayer maps
- TKC Novena (praying the psalms each day from Ascension Day to Pentecost).
- Children's prayer book and videos
- Youth reflection videos
- Thy Kingdom Come app



The Diocese of Chester is committed to helping you participate in Thy Kingdom Come. If you are still unsure of how to get involved or don't know where to start, email Peter Froggatt, Director of Outreach on [peter.froggatt@chester.anglican.org](mailto:peter.froggatt@chester.anglican.org)

# Prayers in our diocese

In the run up to Thy Kingdom Come, we asked six individuals from around the Diocese of Chester to share with us in a short video something that they are praying for at this time. Click the links to watch the videos.



Denise Price - Birkenhead



Paul Nelson - West Kirby



John Mason - Bunbury



Lynn Cullens - Stockport



Elaine White - Liscard

# News from around the diocese

## [Anti-Racism Taskforce calls for urgent changes](#)

The Archbishops' Anti-Racism Taskforce has published its report From Lament to Action proposing a suite of changes to begin bringing about a change of culture in the life of the Church of England.



## [“Take the vaccine when offered”](#)

The Chair of the Race and Ethnicity Forum in the Diocese of Chester has voiced concern at the statistical trend indicating a lower vaccine uptake in areas of the country with a larger proportion of ethnic minority people.

## [What is the biodiversity of your churchyard?](#)

Hundreds of churches have signed up for a week-long ‘nature count’ occurring this summer, which will encourage people to record what they see within the “National Park” of churchyards we enjoy.



## [Outdoor Connections](#)

The Diocese of Chester is working with the organisation ‘Caring for God’s Acre’ to support parishes to get the most out of churchyards – to reconnect with your community and enrich the environment. Outdoor Connections starts on 04 May, but you can join later sessions.