

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES - meeting social, spiritual and practical needs of those we serve is once again a point of focus for our prayers in September. "Helping and serving lies at the heart of our diocesan purpose to "transform communities". The need is greater than ever, since the health of local communities has been weakened by the pandemic – and is further threatened by the cost of living crisis. Churches, schools, chaplaincies and the cathedral are serving their local communities in a wide variety of imaginative ways – some of which are being supported by Diocesan Mission Fund grants. In partnership with Together for Change, the diocese is also supporting projects in the most deprived parishes. For example: Saints Nuneaton; our Rural Life Officers; youth work initiatives; support for poorer communities with food and fuel poverty; and support for refugees.

Saints Nuneaton / Together For Change

A word from Jet Jones – Director of Regeneration and Community Transformation for the Diocese of Coventry and CEO of Together for Change (TfC):

"I have always loved the passage of scripture in Isaiah 61 v 4 that says, 'They will rebuild the ancient ruins; they will restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations'. This passage speaks of the Israelites, inspired by God to rebuild their homes, after they were taken into captivity and suffered the devastation of war.

Today, many Christians around the globe are inspired to renew and rebuild their communities, as families and businesses still struggle with the cost-of-living crisis, seeking help to renew and rebuild their lives.

While undergoing the building project at Saints Central this year, I have been reflecting on this passage of scripture and have realised the impact that 'rebuilding an ancient ruin' has had on the local community. It has inspired fresh hope, big dreams and creating new opportunities for people to see beyond a broken past into a hopeful future. In March 2025 we were pleased to launch the new 'George Muller Hall' as phase 2 of Saints was successfully completed and a new space for young people, community groups and businesses has emerged in a town that is struggling.

Beyond the restoration of a heritage building, we have seen lives restored and renewed as we have supported our churches and communities, raised funds and provided advice, while enabling grass-roots initiatives to flourish.'

This past year, TfC have witnessed God's provision to support our often overlooked and forgotten communities in our Diocese.

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+ We give thanks for our STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, FUNDERS AND PARTNERS AT SAINTS CENTRAL. All of whom have enabled the continuation and expansion of the activities we have been able to provide to support the needs of our local community (5th).

+ We give thanks for our PARTNERSHIP WITH NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL, MAYWAY CONSTRUCTION AND HEART OF ENGLAND COMMUNITY FOUNDATION which supported the major regeneration project in the upstairs hall of Saints Central. The completion of this project has paved the way to expand our range of activities we can provide, partnerships we can build and events we can host to transform our local community (12th).

+ We give thanks for our PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DIOCESE OF COVENTRY, which has enabled TfC to continue to partner with, equip and empower our churches to deliver community transformation in our most deprived parishes (19th).

+ Looking ahead, TFC are seeking to break new ground TO BRING JESUS' LIGHT INTO MORE FORGOTTEN COMMUNITIES in our Diocese (26th). In particular we pray for:

- The regeneration of St Mary and St John Camp Hill.
- The launch of Saints Bell Green in Riley Square.
- The launch of Saints Bar Pool in Nuneaton.
- The fundraising efforts for Saints Phase 3 (which includes the installation of a lift and heating in our upstairs hall at Saints Central).

+ We pray for A STRENGTHENING AND EQUIPPING OF OUR TfC TEAM. In particular, we pray for our new members of staff (20th):

- Chloe Scanlan – Project Manager for Camp Hill and Saints Bell Green.
- Greg Cooper – Saints Central Centre Manager.
- Charlotte Prior – TFC Fundraiser.
- Hannah Stevens – Saints Bar Pool Centre Manager.

+ We pray for our CEO JET JONES as she just completed the first year of her ordination training in Pioneer Ministry (13th).

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." - **Romans 15:13**

"For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" – **Galatians 5:14**
 "Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward them for what they have done." – **Proverbs 19:17**




DIOCESE^{OF}
COVENTRY

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

September 2025

AD = Area Dean; C = Clergy; IR = Interregnum; LC = Lay Chair; H = Headteacher; EH = Executive Head; Schools included are all Church of England schools. Other schools may be mentioned.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES (see page 1)	COVENTRY EAST DEANERY 1 AD Claire McArthur; LC Jonathan Ashton	2 Coventry All Saints C – Pam Howell	3 <u>DAC</u> (buildings)	4,4 All Saints CofE Primary School H – Cara Page	5 SAINTS CENTRAL – STAFF & VOLUNTEERS	6 St Mark – Conventional District C – Phil Atkinson
13th AFTER TRINITY 7 St Mary, Walsgrave-on- Sowe C – Tom Cook	8 Walsgrave CofE Academy H – Damien Sowerby	9 Stoke, St Michael C – Claire McArthur	10 Chaplaincy Teams, UHCW NHS Trust and Coventry University (Ann Richards)	11 St Peter, Hillfields C – Matt Spina	12 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SAINTS IN NUNEATON & BEDWORTH	13 TOGETHER FOR CHANGE CEO JET JONES
14th AFTER TRINITY 14 St John the Divine Willenhall C – Matthew Bull	15 Stretton CofE Academy H – Roberta Mainwaring	16 St Bartholomew, Binley C – Jon Taylor; Binley Woods LEP	17 St Bartholomew's CofE Academy EH – Hannah Carvell	18 <u>Bishop's Senior Staff</u>	19 TfC PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DIOCESE OF COVENTRY	20 THE TfC TEAM – NEW MEMBERS, CHLOE, GREG, CHARLOTTE & HANNAH
15th AFTER TRINITY 21 St Catherine, Stoke Aldermoor / New Century Park C – Linda Fletcher	22 St Chad, Wood End C – Vacancy	23 St Phillip's, Potters Green C - vacancy	24 St James, Whitley C – Vacancy	25 <u>Diocesan Environment</u> <u>Group</u>	26 NEW INITIATIVES AT CAMP HILL AND BELL GREEN	27 RURAL LIFE OFFICERS, YOUTH WORK INITIATIVES, FUEL POVERTY, SUPPORTING REFUGEES
16th AFTER TRINITY 28 St Alban, Stoke Heath C – Vacancy	29 St Mary Magdalene w Church of the Risen Christ, Wyken C – Phil Atkinson	30 Holy Cross C - Liz Harris (associate)	COVENTRY EAST DEANERY <u>Clergy with PTO</u> – Lesley Johnson, Paul Lowe, Laurence Wickens	<p><i>.... fresh hope, big dreams and creating new opportunities for people to see beyond a broken past into a hopeful future</i></p> 		

PRAYER DIARY

READING A COMMUNITY

If you truly want to experience the life, vitality, and character of a community, don't focus on its private spaces; begin with its public ones. Ask two simple questions:

1. Are there physical spaces where people naturally and casually cross paths?
2. In these spaces, how do people treat each other? Everyday interactions (smiles, greetings, shared laughter, or the lack of them) reveal a lot about a community's soul.

Adapted from Brad Brisco

Coming up – the **Themes** for the final three months of 2025 are Loving One Another/Racial Justice (October), and Growing Faith/Young People (November), and a seasonal focus for Advent/Christmas (December). Do consider sending me your prayer suggestions, and any other jottings.

BEING HEALTHY CHURCH

A 'tov' church (see page 4) nurtures empathy, grace, prioritizes people over institutions, emphasizes truth-telling, seeks justice, values service and fosters Christlikeness.

Scott McKnight & Laura Barringer
A Church Called tov; Forming a Goodness Culture (2020, Tynedale)

SPECIFIC DAYS IN SEPTEMBER 2025

Pray for +Sophie as she spends time with Deanaries and the Cathedral this Autumn.

1 – Coventry East Deanery Area Dean, Claire McArthur; Lay Chair, Jonathan Ashton
2 – Coventry All Saints – C Beks Rothnie, Growing Faith Families Worker Rachel Johnston We give thanks for great engagement with families over the summer with our Muddy Church, Brunch Club, Day-Trip, and Youth Group trip to Umberslade Adventure Park. We pray for ministry with our schools, increasing numbers of children, young people and families (30K Project), completion of refurbishment works at St Margaret's, and funding for Dry Rot works at St Anne's. Other school links - Bluecoat CoE Secondary (for Headteacher Lisa Henden), Gosford Park Primary School (for Headteacher recruitment), along with All Saints (see 4th)
4 – All Saints Church of England Primary School
6 – St Mark, Conventional District – C – Rachel King; St Mark's Academy - Jonny Davies
7 – St Mary, Walsgrave-on-Sowe – R Lorraine Baker, Ste Baker, R(PTO) Anthony Thistlewood We thank God for faithful volunteers and great links with Walsgrave CoE Academy. Please pray in building connections with families and young people.
8 – Walsgrave Church of England Academy
9 – Stoke St Michael Church – C- Lou Peet R(PTO) Ann Brown R – Chris Dronfield, Sue Morris, Suzanne Sapiano Pray for our local schools: Our local schools - Stoke Primary, Ravensdale, Pattison and Stoke Park Secondary School. Our local neighbourhood projects - our community garden, **Destination Ball Hill and Stoke Alliance projects.**
10 – University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust; Coventry University chaplaincy team at Walsgrave Hospital, incl Liz Jones [Spiritual Care - University Hospitals Coventry & Warwickshire \(uhcw.nhs.uk\)](#) Ann Richards, chaplain
11 - St Peter, Hillfields – R John McCoach
14 – St John the Divine, Willenhall C – Matthew Bull
15 – Stretton Church of England Academy
16 – St Bartholomew, Binley/Binley Woods LEP – C James Bremner, C (Assoc) Richard Bromley PTF Lynn Moakes, R(PTO) Greg Sampson
17 – St Bartholomew's Church of England Academy
21 – St Catherine, Stoke Aldermoor & New Century Park C (Assoc) Julie Watkins-Wollner
22 – St Chad, Wood End Interregnum -
23 - St Phillip's, Potter's Green Interregnum – from churchwarden Jonathan Ashton, please pray for "St Philips and St Chad's as we venture forth together in our quest to find a new vicar."
24 – St James, Whitley Interregnum –
28 - St Alban, Stoke Heath Interregnum – C Jacque Ayton
29 –St Mary Magdalene & Church of the Risen Christ, Wyken –C Sam Millward, R(PTO) Margaret Robinson We give thanks for our new Summer Milkshake Mondays. We invited many primary and pre-primary children into church, offering a free safe space to play and enjoy crafts and lunch together. We thank God for all of our volunteers, who serve across our services and ministries. Many of whom have done so with great commitment for many years. We continue to pray for the four people, (3 children and one adult) baptised on 14th September. Two of these children call Messy Church their church and are looking forward to their baptism service. Please pray that their relationships with Jesus continue to flourish.
30 Holy Cross – Caludon - C (Associate) Liz Harris We are thankful for those who work so hard to organise activities for community and/or church groups, and for those who quietly get on and do those important jobs around the church which makes so much difference to everyone who uses our church building. Please pray for our new initiative to support elderly and vulnerable people in the local community who need support to access IT for essential services.

C = Clergy R = Reader PTF Permission to take funerals H = Headteacher

DESTINATION BALL HILL



They started in 2022, aiming to regenerate Ball Hill and build a sense of pride and community through collaboration, sharing, listening.

At their beginning they set some goals and interests that began shaping their purpose:

- making the area a cleaner, easier space to use, including a monthly litter pick
- engaging with business leaders and

landlords to link in the business community

- representing issues from the community to local officials

- agreeing good projects to improve the area, such as green spaces, transport plans, and pollution monitoring



- building a creative group to add a visible energy and output to our efforts, and give the area a creative identity

They collaborated with University of Warwick on a citizens' science project to present the results of air pollution monitoring in the Ball Hill area;

They have already developed active partnerships with the council.

[Destination Ball Hill](#)

STOKE COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

Stoke Community Alliance is a collaborative organisation between local partners in the Stoke, Coventry area. They are working together to build a stronger, more connected Stoke, in Coventry. They are united by a shared mission: to ensure every child, young person, and family in Stoke has the support, opportunities, and environment they need to thrive.

[Stoke Community Alliance](#)

① *When I'm concerned about our world¹, how do I pray?*

- As you read the newspaper or hear the daily news on radio or television, does any particular item leap out to you?
- Perhaps the situation seems simply too big to handle, too remote, too desperate? Yet your heart registers its concern.
- Try focusing on one real human aspect of the matter, one person's face you have seen on your TV screen, one personal detail, one family in trouble, one city dealing with devastation.
- Take those images, and your own feelings about them, into the consciousness of God's presence, which is at the heart of prayer.
- As you draw closer to God, you carry those people and situations to God with you. You are making an invisible lifeline across the world and you may never know the effects.
- *Stop to think:* Is there any practical help you can give to bring a little humanity into the situation you are praying for?

② *How might we pray in a deeper way for our communities to be healthier?* Dr Anita Phillips writes² about Life Zones – Relationship, Purpose and Legacy. *How might these zones look life for goodness and growth in communities?*

- **RELATIONSHIP:** For each member: our **relationship with oneself** – developing stronger self-awareness and self-love. In **relationships one with another** – desire to share good and bad news; feelings of being supported and loved; a willingness to ask for and be asked for help. **Relationship with God** is characterized by being childlike (1 John 3.1), knowing we are called his friends (John 15.15) and that the Holy Spirit lives in us (John 14.26). Thriving in these areas of relationship is crucial.
- **PURPOSE:** Each of us is created to live with purpose – it is a 'reason why'. **It meets a need** – so often crucial in the lives of individuals and churches; **purpose is productive** in service, not just for individuals but addressing the question: *'What is my role in the community?'* **Community relationships** are varied, and Jesus's purpose was fulfilled in community.... *'Which of my communities am I serving?'* Where is this thriving?
- **LEGACY:** Like fruit trees that take decades to be established – *'trees exemplify legacy because trees stand for generations.'* Of course, this might be financial, and sharing of resources, above all 'Legacy work is all about love, pure and unconditional – pouring love into a future that we may not be present to enjoy.' These three – relationships, purpose and legacy – grow in 'the garden' planted in the soil of our hearts; the fertility of the ground is determined by faith, hope and **love – the foundation for emotional well-being.**

¹ Margaret Silf **'On Prayer'** (2004, Lion), p. 70

² Anita Phillips **'The Garden Within'** (2023, Nelson Books), pp. 34-44

③ **CULTURE TRANSFORMATION IN YOUR CHURCH AND WIDER COMMUNITY**

'There is no such thing as a perfect church. But there are healthy churches, unwell churches, toxic churches, and dead churches. However, when you choose to do the hard work of upgrading your church's soil and eagerly partner with God to grow healthy fruit, you will experience for yourselves the joys of a tov³ church', say Scott McKnight & Laura Barringer in **'Pivot'** (Tynedale Elevate, 2023).

Character Formation – for individuals and the church are made *'the most important mission of your local church.'*

Be patient – Vision faces inevitable resistance. *'Patient transformation agents will need to become expert listeners and constant adjusters.'* To form a genuine coalition requires patient vision-casting and constant conversation, from which everyone learns and grows.

Acknowledge pain – It can be exhausting and even agonizing at times. *'Church transformation is painful. It is bittersweet. Yet it is worth it.'*

It takes courage – Some of your best friends and biggest supporters will turn on you or at least turn away from the transformation plans. *'Take courage in God's work, in the grace of God, and in the power of the Spirit to bring change. Avoid all temptations to coerce others and instead walk in the will of God and let God do the work.'*

Finally, **expect surprises!** – you have no idea what God might do through your church in your community. Planning is a great idea ... until God introduces a turn and a transformation. **Be ready to Pivot.'**

④ **'Sociability depends to a large extent on CONVERSATION It is a means of consolidation of relationship, not merely the passing of time or communication of information. This conversation implies a mutual presence or hospitality, the giving of time and space to another. In a world devoted to fake news and trivialities, the importance of serious conversation cannot be ignored. Adult dialogue is not only a means of attaining a fuller human maturity but also an essential instrument of evangelization in a pluralistic world.... The main obstacles to fruitful conversation are lack of leisure, overwork, lack of patience, excessive search for entertainment, ambition, and long-lasting animosities based on real or imagined sources of grievance.'** Michael Casey **'Coenobium: Reflections on Monastic Community'** (2021, Liturgical Press)

Each month we focus on a different Deanery; this month it is **Coventry East Deanery**. In October it will be **Coventry North Deanery** and **Kenilworth Deanery** for November, with **Nuneaton Deanery** in the final edition of 2025 (December). I look forward to receiving updates from area deans and clergy, and anyone else with specific prayer requests.



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³ **Tov** stands for 'good' in Hebrew, and a 'culture of goodness, compassion, and justice within a church, as opposed to toxic or abusive environments – it emphasizes prioritizing being "good" over other metrics like success or power.'