

Dr Rachel Atkinson

"I'm Rachel and I am a Lay Leader at St. Marks, Coventry. I am involved in almost every aspect of church life and leadership, including pastoral work, Alpha, connect groups, preaching, and strategic development. Also, I am Principal of St. Marks Academy, which, as well as training young lay leaders for St. Marks and our church plants, is the training provider for Coventry Diocese's mission apprentice scheme. I am very grateful to be elected to General Synod; my heart, and life-long prayer, both for myself and for the Church, is to more closely reflect Jesus, who was full of both 'grace and truth' (John 1:14)."

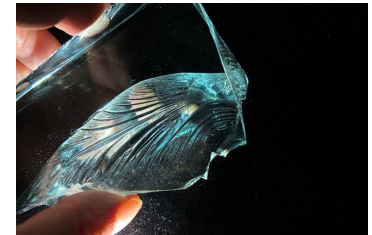


Prayer Diary

November 2021

Broken Angel

I'm often asked to write the prayer diary for November - it's a significant month for us, as year by year we mark the Coventry Blitz of November 1940. This year, in our City of Culture programme, we are marking it with the Broken Angel installation into the Cathedral's West Screen window.



You may remember that in January 2020, one of John Hutton's angel's was smashed to pieces by vandals breaking in at the dead of night. Although their hooded images were caught on CCTV, we never identified the culprits. We were just left with the shattered glass, and the haunting echo of the sound of it ringing round the empty building recorded by the security systems.

Our first reaction was to catch, shame, punish the perpetrators. On reflection, we drew deeply on the Cathedral's own history, of responding with creativity, hope and imagination to our loss. Our whole building is an expression of identification with Jesus' crucifixion, in the ruins, and resurrection, in the glories of the new Cathedral - which we would never have enjoyed, had it not been for the dreadful events of November 1940.

So, we invited three artists to respond to the opportunity of the empty window in a way that did not disguise what we had lost, but made the most of the creative opportunity revealed and released in our space. Rather like the 'fourth plinth' in Trafalgar Square, we are welcoming something new, and fresh. The first will be Anne Petters, a Dresden born glass and light artist (see coventry2021.co.uk/what-s-on/broken-angel/)

Creative responses to destruction and loss are never easy. We can get caught, trapped in our pain. But the truth of our faith is that the deepest loss can issue, with God's grace, into the greatest gift of new life. Without God, it's impossible to imagine how this could be true - but with God, all things are possible, and we can see Christ's resurrection mirrored in our own time. What losses can you bring to God this November, and discover new life, new possibility, new hope

**John Witcombe
Dean of Coventry**



Gill Frigerio

"I am Gill Frigerio and I am part of All Saint's Emscote in Warwick. I am involved in justice and peace work in my church and am a spiritual companion in the diocese, as well as helping to organise ongoing training for the spiritual companions network. I stood for General Synod because I wanted to ensure there were candidates who were committed to full inclusion of all people in all roles and levels in the church. I was part of a national network of such candidates and am delighted that there was such support for inclusion from electors. I am looking forward to working across synod to see how we can explore consensus and possible ways forward."

Sam Margrave

"I've served for ten years as a General Synod member working to be a strong voice, fighting for Parish Resources, the Poor, and Growth; guided by Isaiah 1:17 "Learn todo right, seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow".

My focus over the next five years is to be a strong voice working to ensure we have representation from every corner of our community. I will deliver on the promises set out in my election address to end national waste, secure more Parish resources, and to Evangelise England."



Bishop Christopher honoured by Germany's Federal President

On 1 October, the German Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Andreas Michaelis, presented the Bishop of Coventry, The Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth, with the Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, conferred upon him by Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier.



Coventry has become a symbol of peace and reconciliation between Germany and the United Kingdom after the Second World War. The city was bombed by the German Luftwaffe during the war. In November 1940, the city centre was largely destroyed, including St. Michael's Cathedral. Since the end of the war, Coventry city and its cathedral have done much to promote not only reconciliation between Germans and Britons, but also peace around the world.

During the award ceremony, Ambassador Michaelis thanked Bishop Christopher for his tireless efforts in the name of reconciliation between Germany and the United Kingdom. He said:

"You are an outstanding bridge-builder, an ardent champion of reconciliation and peace, and a staunch and inspirational campaigner against prejudice and injustice. This accolade represents one of the highest distinctions the Federal Republic of Germany can confer upon individuals. You have nurtured the spiritual legacy of reconciliation through your very close ties with Germany as well as your inspiring dedication to Coventry's twinnings with Kiel and Dresden and to the Community of the Cross of Nails."

In response, Bishop Christopher said:

"It is a very great joy for me to receive this honour from the Federal Republic of Germany. I receive it with thanksgiving for the part that the people of Coventry have played – through the work of the Cathedral, the City Council and a host of other institutional and personal relationships – in the long road to lasting reconciliation between nations that once fought each other in two world wars. I have had the pleasure of meeting a number of Presidents of Germany over my years as Bishop of Coventry and I have a particular respect for President Steinmeier, and I am also grateful for the kindness, hospitality and support of Ambassador Michaelis. I look forward to working for the deepening of relationships between the UK and Germany through Coventry Cathedral, and the International Community of the Cross of Nails."

New members elected to General Synod

On the 14th October 2021, three clergy and three laity from the Diocese of Coventry were elected to serve on General Synod from 2021 - 2026. The General Synod considers and approves legislation affecting the whole of the Church of England, formulates new forms of worship, debates matters of national and international importance, and approves the annual budget for the work of the Church at national level.

The new members of General Synod are:

The Revd Stella Bailey

"Having lived and worshipped in the diocese since I was a teenager, I am now the Vicar of St Nicholas Church Kenilworth. I believe deeply in our interconnectedness and collegial nature so have been involved in various structures and ministries across the diocese since ordination and currently hold the responsibility of Area Dean for Kenilworth and Chair of the DAC. I have a passion for mission and seeking ways to widen our circle to allow the grace of God to flow."



The Revd Jonathan Jee

"I am 58, married to Juliet with 5 adult children and 3 grandchildren (and a 4th on the way). I have been the vicar of St. Paul's in Leamington for 21 years, which (on most days) I think is the best job in the Church of England! I am excited about the way the CofE is taking mission seriously, and releasing resources to reach new people in new places in new ways. I am looking forward to playing my part in those decisions, alongside doing whatever I can to help parish churches to grow healthily."

The Revd Kate Massey

"I have been a Vicar in Nuneaton deanery for almost 7 years, and Dean of Women's Ministry for 6. During my curacy, I served at four very different churches in Coventry diocese: a civic church, a daughter church seeking new vision, a rural church in extended vacancy and a growing suburban church with church plant. My ministerial experience, as well as my own faith journey, mean that I have a deep love for the breadth of the Church of England."



Wed 24 We thank God for all healthcare staff who work in our local communities, our GP and dental surgeries and clinics, our community hospitals and those who work in the field of mental healthcare. We pray for strength for them this winter.

Thu 25 Newbold and Tredington Primary School. Headteacher: Sam Welsby. We thank God for this school community and pray for God's blessing on the pupils, teachers, staff and governors.
We pray for the Glebe Committee which meets this afternoon.
*Catherine of Alexandria, Martyr, 4th century

Fri 26 Today is 'Buy Nothing Day', an alternative to Black Friday. Buy Nothing Day aims to raise awareness of the environmental impact of consumerism. Today you need do just one thing: buy nothing! Please pray for this initiative.

Sat 27 Today we pray for Together for Change, a joint venture between the Diocese of Coventry and the Church Urban Fund. We pray for the charity's work in setting up social enterprises and local projects that will support sustainable community transformation and tackle poverty in Coventry and Warwickshire.

Sun 28 Shipston, Tidmington, Honington & Idlicote. Clergy: Sarah Edmonds, Hannah Gregory, Jill Tucker, Mike Harris, Nicholas Morgan. Reader: Alison Tomkinson. We give thanks for the growth of relationships, new ways of worship and for links with the community, especially the Food Bank. Please pray for our work with young families as it restarts, and for our growing links with vulnerable adults in Shipston.

First Sunday of Advent

Mon 29 We pray for all who work at the Diocesan Office under the leadership of the Diocesan Secretary, Ruth Marlow. We pray for God's guidance as they seek to serve and equip the whole of the Diocese of Coventry.
*Day of Intercession and Thanksgiving for the Missionary Work of the Church

Tue 30 On St Andrew's Day we pray for all those who, like Andrew, seek to be the fishers of men. We pray for missionary societies and all who respond to serve the church worldwide.

Andrew the Apostle

Cycle of Prayer - November 2021

With a focus on parishes and schools in Shipston Deanery

Mon 1 Brailes & Sutton, with Tysoe, Oxhill & Whatcote. Clergy: George Heighton, Heather Parbury, Jill Tucker, George Warner. Reader: Jennie Rake. We give thanks for our local Farming Communities and pray for all those who produce our food and care for our environment. We pray for direction for our Worship Review which is being carried out across our churches.

All Saints' Day

Tue 2 Brailes Primary School. Headteacher: Heather Childs. We thank God for this school community and pray for God's blessing on the pupils, teachers, staff and governors.
*Commemoration of the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day)

Wed 3 We thank God for all those who serve as clergy in the diocese. We pray for strength and energy, especially during this busy term.
*Richard Hooker, Priest, Anglican Apologist, Teacher of the Faith, 1600
*Martin of Porres, Friar, 1639

Thu 4 Tysoe Primary School. Headteacher: Paige Neale. We thank God for this school community and pray for God's blessing on the pupils, teachers, staff and governors.
We pray for the Bishop's Core Staff Team which meets today.

Fri 5 November is Men's Health Awareness Month. The aim is to raise awareness and fundraise for research into some of the biggest health issues faced by men: prostate cancer, testicular cancer and mental health and suicide prevention. We pray for men suffering with health conditions and pray this month is successful in its aims.

Sat 6 We thank God for those who serve on committees and working groups in parishes, deaneries and the diocese.
*Leonard, Hermit, 6th century
*William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury, Teacher of the Faith, 1944

Sun 7 We pray for all parishes that are currently experiencing a vacancy. We pray for the appointment processes, that the right ministers will be found to lead these parishes forward. We also pray for the new opportunities in lay ministry during the vacancy.
*Willibrord of York, Bishop, Apostle of Frisia, 739

3rd Sunday before Advent

Mon 8 Ettington Primary School. Headteacher: David Johnson. We thank God for this school community and pray for God's blessing on the pupils, teachers, staff and governors.
*The Saints and Martyrs of England

Tue 9 Stourdene Benefice. Clergy: Sharon Goble. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.
*Margery Kempe, Mystic, c.1440

Wed 10 We thank God for the buildings and spaces he has entrusted to as places of worship. We ask God to help us steward these spaces well. We pray for the Bishop's Study Day which takes place today.
*Leo the Great, Bishop of Rome, Teacher of the Faith, 461

Thu 11 "O God of truth and justice, we hold before you those men and women who have died in active service. As we honour their courage and cherish their memory, may we put our faith in your future; for you are the source of life and hope, now and for ever. Amen."
*Martin, Bishop of Tours, c.397

Fri 12 Ilmington, Tredington and neighbouring parishes. Clergy: Stephen Fletcher, Tim Seller. Reader: Ros Wakefield. We give thanks for the appointment of Richard Cooke as our new Rector. Please pray for all those who will assist in welcoming Richard amongst us

Sat 13 South Warwickshire Seven. Clergy: Ben Dyson. Reader: Clare Wells. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.
*Charles Simeon, Priest, Evangelical Divine, 1836

Sun 14 Today is World Diabetes Day, a day when millions of people around the world come together to raise awareness of diabetes and what it is like to live with the condition. We pray for everyone living with diabetes.
*Samuel Seabury, first Anglican Bishop in North America, 1796

Mon 15 This week is Anti-Bullying Week. The theme this year is 'One Kind Word'. The aim is to take a stand against bullying and raise awareness in schools, colleges and organisations. We pray for all who are being bullied, and for initiatives that aim to prevent bullying.

Tue 16 This week is Interfaith week. Interfaith week aims to build good relationships and working partnerships between people of different faiths. We pray that this week is successful in highlighting the importance of interfaith relations
*Margaret, Queen of Scotland, Philanthropist, Reformer of the Church, 1093
*Edmund Rich of Abingdon, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1240

Wed 17 We thank God for the dedication and hard work of all headteachers in our church schools, and we pray that they may know God's vision, wisdom and strength.
*Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, 1200

Thu 18 This is Alcohol Awareness Week. Issues with alcohol seem to be increasing, with more young people drinking alcohol. We pray for those whose lives are being damaged by drink, and for the impact this has on family and friends.
*Elizabeth of Hungary, Princess of Thuringia, Philanthropist, 1231

Fri 19 Today is World Toilet Day. World Toilet Day is a United Nations observance that celebrates toilets and raises awareness of the 4.2 billion people living without access to safely managed sanitation. We pray for this initiative.
*Hilda, Abbess of Whitby, 680
*Mechtild, Béguine of Magdeburg, Mystic, 1280

Sat 20 We pray for Diocesan Synod which meets today.
*Edmund, King of the East Angles, Martyr, 870
*Priscilla Lydia Sellon, a Restorer of the Religious Life, 1876

Sun 21 We praise God for Christ the King! We reflect on Isaac Watt's hymn 'When I survey the Wondrous Cross'. We pray that we might be renewed in our love to God. "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all."
Christ the King

Mon 22 We pray for those who are grieving. We remember those who feel alone and pray for God's comfort and blessing. Pray that God will give us the compassion to comfort and care for those who are in need. We pray for the Diocesan Audit Committee which meets today.
*Cecilia, Martyr at Rome, c.230

Tue 23 Ilmington Primary School. Headteacher: Rebecca Noon. We thank God for this school community and pray for God's blessing on the pupils, teachers, staff and governors.
*Clement, Bishop of Rome, Martyr, c.100