

Lichfield Diocese Prayer Diary: Issue 89

discipleship
vocation
evangelism

Our prayers take forwards the 'SHAPING FOR MISSION' Deanery focus. As 'People of Hope' we remain mindful of the implications of Covid-19, both locally and globally.

Sunday 12th December:

We pray for Oswestry Deanery, for Rural Dean, Revd Paul Darlington, Assistant, Harvey Gibbons and Lay Chair, Jacqui Clarke; giving thanks for the energy and commitment of the outgoing Shaping for Mission team, a helpful recent deanery synod, and the new Implementation team now leading this initiative. Pray for a growing sense of cooperation and for a desire to engage with new ideas and opportunities as we continue to RENEW our dependence on God, RELEASE the whole people of God for the whole mission of God, and REANIMATE the church to enable it to become younger and more diverse in Oswestry deanery.

Monday 13th: (*Lucy, Martyr at Syracuse, 304*)

We give thanks for the work of Matt Barkley, until recently the Pioneer Youth Minister for Oswestry Rural Youth Church (ORYC). We pray for all the churches, young people and families that ORYC have worked alongside since their launch in 2018; that the seeds that have been planted may germinate and grow and receive the care they need to flourish. Pray also for Matt in his continuing work with children and young people, and as he discerns God's plans for the next steps of his journey of faith and service.

Tuesday 14th: (*John of the Cross, Poet, Teacher of the Faith, 1591*)

We pray for Trysull Deanery, for Rural Dean Revd Julia Cody, Assistant, Revd Richard Reeve and Lay Chair, Richard Pithers; giving thanks for the Shaping for Mission team - for their commitment, wisdom, determination and zeal to work collaboratively throughout the process, and for their willingness to form a Mission Team. We pray for the wardens and congregations of Pattingham, Himley and Swindon in the Smestow Vale Team, currently in vacancy, and for those assisting these parishes at this time.

Wednesday 15th:

We pray for Tutbury Deanery, for Rural Dean, Revd Michael Freeman, and Lay Chair, Douglas Brown; giving thanks for those who serve as leaders in the deanery. Pray for those parishes in interregna: St Modwen, St Aidan and St Paul who have been in vacancy for some time; and for Hanbury, Newborough and Rangemore, in vacancy since the sad death of their vicar. Pray also for opportunities across the deanery for Christmas Mission to those who do not normally come to church or who haven't been coming because of COVID.

Thursday 16th:

We pray for the members of the Bishop's Staff Meeting as they meet today, giving thanks for their dedicated leadership and generous encouragement. Pray for wisdom as they discern God's will for the future mission of our Diocese and seek to guide and support our parishes, benefices and deaneries as they move forward with initiatives born of the Shaping for Mission process.

Pray also for *Cathedral Illuminated 2021* – opening today – and for all who will enter the Cathedral to visit the Crib and experience the re-telling of the Christmas story.

Friday 17th: (*Eglantyne Jebb, Social Reformer, Founder of 'Save the Children', 1928*)

We pray for schools across the diocese, giving thanks for the opportunities the Advent season has provided for sharing the Christmas message with pupils and their families, despite the restrictions imposed by Covid. As many schools break up today, we pray for God's protection for all children over the next two weeks, and that all vulnerable families will find the support they need. Pray for a time of rest for all school staff, that they will return refreshed and equipped for the challenges of a new term, able to identify and meet the varied needs of their pupils.

Saturday 18th:

Lord of the Universe,

We ask your blessing and protection on our brothers and sisters in South Africa, in particular our friends in Matlosane. As your light shines on each nation as the Earth turns, so the Commonwealth Games Baton takes a message of peace and friendship on its world-wide journey. As it visits South Africa this week we pray for your love and support to the people as the Omicron variant is added to their struggles. May the power of your redeeming spirit sweep through the country and restore the people.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

For further resources for praying for the worldwide church see the Anglican Cycle of prayer: <https://bit.ly/3anQUWG>