

**Our prayers this week and next are for the varied roles and ministries across the Diocese.**

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December: (Christmas Eve) We pray today for the Diocesan Racial Justice and Inclusion Task Group:**

Heavenly Father, we remember those disadvantaged due to discrimination in our world. As we celebrate the joy of the birth of Jesus this Christmas, may they experience the beauty of the presence of God in their lives. May they be filled with the happiness and light of Christ this Christmas and after.

Help us share our joys with others and proclaim your salvation through our actions and lives as we await your second coming in glory. We remember many who are unhappy due to racial injustice. Come, Lord Jesus, end sin, suffering, death, injustice, and all of its ways worldwide. Come and rule and reign; assert your final justice.

We pray for all involved in the work of Racial Justice, especially RJITG in our diocese. Please give a fresh vision to discern ways to bring freedom to the oppressed & marginalised; wisdom as they seek to see an end to injustices in our world; the power of the Holy Spirit as they plan activities in the new year, to the glory of your name, Amen

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup>: (Christmas Day) We pray today for Pioneering and Fresh Expressions:**

Thank you for the pioneers who gathered to celebrate our Saviour's birth: the shepherds who listened to God's invitation through the angels and witnessed a miracle; Mary and Joseph who offered obedient service in their willingness to nurture and love your Son; and the wise men who risked following a star to explore discipleship. Restore and refresh us over this Christmas season and gift us with the creative energy to build new communities of faith, hope and peace across Lichfield Diocese in 2024. Amen.

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup>: (Stephen, Deacon, First Martyr) We pray today for the work and mission of the Cathedral:**

Give thanks for the thousands of people visiting Lichfield Cathedral during the Christmas period for services and events; pray they would discover something of God's great love for them. Pray for wisdom & discernment in the appointment of the next Dean of Lichfield, and for all involved in the appointments process. Give thanks for the dedication & commitment of the staff and volunteers, musicians and clergy team, pray that the central Spire, once restoration is completed in the Spring, will continue to be a beacon of hope which draws people in.

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup>: (John, Apostle and Evangelist) We pray today for United Society Partners in the Gospel (USPG):**

Give thanks for the worldwide work of USPG, strengthening Christian communities as they bring new life & hope to those around them. Pray for USPG's work led by Davidson Solanki, supporting local churches working with Human Trafficking (Northern India) and with the Diocese of Jerusalem in healing care through the Al-Ahli Hospital in Northern Gaza. Pray that all involved may have patience & strength to listen and share, the gift of discernment, the courage to act with generosity, so that all may be done to the glory of God and the increase of his Kingdom of Love.

**Thursday 28<sup>th</sup>: (The Holy Innocents) Archbishop Hosam Naoum of Jerusalem has offered the following prayer:**

O God of all justice and peace, we cry out to you in the midst of the pain and trauma of violence and fear which prevails in the Holy Land. Be with those who need you in these days of suffering; we pray for people of all faiths - Jews, Muslims and Christians and for all people of the land. While we pray to you, O Lord, for an end to violence and the establishment of peace, we also call to you to bring justice and equity to the peoples. Guide us into your kingdom where all people are treated with dignity and honour as your children. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

**Friday 29<sup>th</sup>: (Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1170) Pray today for the Secretariat & Property team**

Give thanks for the very generous grant received from the national church enabling us to recruit a Church Buildings Support Officer, and substantial additional resources to provide churches with minor repairs support. Pray that as a team we can work to maximise the benefits to our churches; for the work of Dan Munday in the Bishop's office, who as a temp has done exceptional work on administrative follow up to the safeguarding PCR; for our property team as they handle winter reactive maintenance issues, pray for wisdom as we consider a further asset's review.

Give thanks for our recent Synod meeting and the welcome afforded by Staffordshire University. We give thanks that we were able to put forward a break-even budget and ask for prayers for all those responsible for delivering it. We pray too for wisdom and clarity in setting out focused strategic direction and completing our vexatious complaints policy. We pray for the establishment of a productive partnership with the Diocese of Hyderabad.

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup>: We pray today for the Diocesan Communications Team:**

Give thanks for the privilege to have good news to share – the gospel, and news of parishes, schools, chaplaincies & fresh expressions; for local, regional & national colleagues, Bishop's Staff, and all those we encounter in our work. Pray for boldness & relevance as we communicate outside the diocese with media & social media; patience and wisdom to keep clear our vision, strategy and priorities as we navigate the sensitivities of politics, personalities and practicalities of the work. Pray for Pete and his family in his ongoing treatment for bowel cancer.

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