

Lichfield Diocese Prayer Diary: Issue 231 and Day of Prayer 25/26 September 2024

These resources have been compiled for use during the 24hr Day of Prayer though can still be used on a daily basis. The prayers form a "novena" (nine days of prayer) based on the nine goals of our bold and exciting Diocesan *Shaping for Mission Strategic Framework for 2024-2030*. All our planning and discernment must be shaped by scripture, prayer and a willingness to be guided by the Holy Spirit.

Sun 22nd September:

Generous God,
have provided for your people in every generation.
In our faithlessness you remained steadfast.
In our obsession with scarcity, you provided abundance.
In our anxiety you offered us freedom from fear.
In our despair you gave us hope.
We receive your gifts, believe your promises
and trust you for the future.
May we cease trying to fix the church
and join with you in loving your world.
May we hear your call to fullness of life
and share it with others.
May we be shaped by the Good News of Jesus,
the light of the world
And may we seek your kingdom as People of Hope. Amen.

Shaping for Mission Prayer

Shaping for Mission Goal: GROWING THE WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY

"In your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an account of the hope that is in you." 1 Peter 3.15.

The current worshipping congregation in this Diocese of 34,000 represents 0.9% of the population of the Diocese. We pray that this number might double by 2030. We pray for a growing confidence as individuals and churches in living and sharing the gospel story.

Monday 23rd:

Shaping for Mission Goal: 200 NEW WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES:

"So those who welcomed his message were baptised, and that day about three thousand persons were added. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." Acts 2.41-42.

We pray for one to two new fresh expressions to come from each Deanery each year up to 2030. We pray for new worshipping communities in which the word of God is preached and the sacraments are celebrated.

Tuesday 24th:

Shaping for Mission Goal: NEW VOCATIONS, ORDAINED AND LAY

"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine." Isaiah 42.1.

We pray for an increased culture of vocations leading to at least a trebling of numbers of people in licensed ministries (ordained and lay) over the next six years. We pray that we might build one another up and encourage vocations in all aspects of ministry, licensed or otherwise.

Wednesday 25th: (Day of Prayer)

Shaping for Mission Goal: ENGAGING WITH OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

"But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare." Jeremiah 29.7.

We pray for a deeper desire in our parishes to serve the local population beyond the church walls. Recognising that our communities vary and change over time, we pray that we will be creative and reflective in our engagement.

Shaping for Mission Goal: CONNECTED TO EVERY PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL

"You are the salt of the earth;You are the light of the world" Matthew 5.12-14.

There are 450,000 school age children in our Diocese, 45,000 of which attend a Church of England school. We pray for our church schools and pray for a connection with the huge number of community schools as well.

Thursday 26th: (Day of Prayer)

Shaping for Mission Goal: GROWING YOUNG LEADERS

"Let no one despise your youth but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity." 1 Timothy 4.12.

Over the next six years, we are praying that no fewer than 30 young people per year aged between 18 and 30 who are called to leadership will be supported through a high-quality development programme offered by the Diocese.

Shaping for Mission Goal: REFLECTING THE AGE PROFILE OF OUR COMMUNITIES

"Then afterwards I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions." Joel 2.28.

We pray that the age profile of each worshipping community will reflect the age profile of the community which it serves. Most of our church communities have very few people under the age of forty. Where this is the case, we pray for creative outreach opportunities to reach the missing generations.

Friday 27th:

Shaping for Mission Goal: REFLECTING THE DIVERSITY OF THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE

"For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him." Romans 10.12.

In many of our churches the whole gospel is not reaching the whole community. We pray that we might identify the voices and groups in our local community not currently represented in church and reach out to them in love and service.

Saturday 28th:

Shaping for Mission Goal: EVERYONE VISIBLE IN THE LIFE OF OUR DIOCESE

"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit." 1 Corinthians 12.12.

We pray for all our representative structures, that they may set policies, find ways of working and develop cultures which attract new members, support them to flourish in their roles, and so reflect the diverse communities we serve.