



February 2018

Prayer Diary

*Thank you for picking up February's prayer diary – a daily starting point to help support the people of this church, parish and wider community through prayer. Feel free to use prayers as you feel moved to, maybe just using the theme or an idea if the words don't feel right. You might consider praying for opportunities to share a prayer with another, or asking someone if there is anything they would like us to pray for. Extra copies are available at the back of church, and from the newsletters section of St Mary's Church website. For computer users, the online edition has **links** leading to further material that may be of use and interest. Please share any ideas or requests for next month's prayers with Kirsteen Robson (kirsteenr@gmail.com or 07799 682872).*

Thu 1

Lord of tenderness and compassion, we pray for all who give and receive health and social care, that empathy, patience and respectful communication may be at the heart of all exchanges. As we go about our daily tasks, grant us that extra moment to see each situation from another's point of view, to remember that they are your precious children and to respond with love. May 2018's **Dignity Action Day** play its part in inspiring caring communities where compassion is key.

Fri 2

The Presentation of
Jesus in the Temple
(**Candlemas**)

With Simeon and Anna, we praise and thank you for keeping your promise to send Jesus for all people, to open the door on our darkness and by the light of his teaching and example to show the way to live as your people. Give us courage to face the challenges that following Jesus brings: choices that must be made, truths voiced, comfort zones redrawn and barriers broken.

Sat 3

We praise you for your work through the **Transforming Communities Together Warwick** team, for the relationships so far formed and the projects and initiatives underway. We pray especially for more local secondary schools to open their doors to the **Higher Tour** youth mission, later this month.

Sun 4

Second Sunday
before Lent

Please bless the organisers and visitors at the Snowdrop Weekend at Hill Close Gardens. May the flowers, clothed in dazzling white, speak to them of the turning of the seasons, hope and new life, and may this arouse awareness of a deeper longing for simplified lives in a world that knows your peace.

Mon 5

At the start of **Sexual Abuse & Sexual Violence Awareness Week**, we pray for all who have experienced sexual abuse, that they will receive the support they need and know your healing and deep comfort. May increased awareness that #ITSNOTOK help prevent sexual suffering being perpetuated.

Tue 6

We give thanks for the internet and celebrate it as its best – as a means to create, connect, share and respect. Please bless all **Safer Internet Day** events to promote the safe and positive use of digital technology, that young people, parents, carers, teachers, social workers, law enforcement, companies and policymakers may work together to create a better internet.

Wed 7

Today we thank you for the BBC Daily Service, which last month celebrated 90 years of broadcasting. Thank you for the persistence of Kathleen Cordeux who suggested it, and the support of all who have kept it on air since. We pray it will long continue to link listeners, especially those who struggle to attend services in person, both to each other and to you. We also pray for tonight's meeting of the St Mary's Hall Trust.

Thu 8

We praise you for your unfolding vision for **Helping Hands Community Project**, for the positive response of volunteers and businesses, for the lives changed and for the powerful witness to your redeeming love. Please bless The Gateway Café on Smith Street, reopening today in partnership with Castle Hill Baptist Church. May it be a meeting place where people come for food and are nourished by so much more.

Fri 9

We bring before you all people suffering from depression. May they feel the warmth of your loving arms around them in their darkness, and know they can trust you. Please lead them through the grey light into a new dawn, where they can look back on the sands they've crossed and see the single set of footprints where you kept your promise and carried them.

Sat 10

Thank you for seven years of **Healing On The Streets** in Warwick and we ask you to call new volunteers for training, to serve you in prayer as channels of your healing power.

Sun 11

**The Sunday
Next before
Lent**

We give thanks for all you have worked through Pastor Peter Burns during his ministry at **Castle Hill Baptist Church** and ask you to bless him and Sue as he takes up his new post in Nailsea. We pray that his successor at Castle Hill will soon be appointed, that the church will continue to flourish, and that the pastoral link with Coten End School will be maintained.

Mon 12

God of love, we pray for all people who find the approach of Valentine's Day an unwelcome reminder of a loved one lost or a fulfilling relationship not yet found. Comfort them, encourage them, and reassure them that your love for them is stronger than death, and will not fail anyone who trusts in you.

Tue 13

Shrove Tuesday

On this day of thanksgiving and cleansing, we ask you to guide us as we prayerfully consider the resources you have granted us and the way we use them. As we reflect on our time, gifts, money and possessions, show us any leaven you would have us sweep out, that we may live more fully for you and in you.

Wed 14

Ash Wednesday

St Valentine

As the Lenten journey begins, we pray for all embarking on a Lenten discipline, whether giving something up or taking on a new challenge. Bless these endeavours, granting opportunities for self-examination, repentance, sacrifice and service, and as the 40 days go by, please draw each of us spiritually closer to you, and prepare us to be the church you want us to be.

Thu 15

We give thanks that you equip each person to serve you in a unique way within the body of Christ and pray for the removal of any obstacles that we or others place in the way. In particular, we bring before you those attending the 'Is God calling you?' session at St Mark's tonight, that they may start to explore with others what it means to be your called people and what a direct calling from you to ministry might look like.

Fri 16

Lord, we pray that the sale of the town-centre site of King's High School will put the land and buildings to the use that will best shape the community of Warwick to your pattern.

Sat 17

Loving God, source of all that is good, please bless all who perform or receive a random act of kindness today, both through the deed itself and by the recognition of a need to be part of a community woven to each other and to you by bonds of love. In tasting may they see your goodness.

Sun 18

**The First Sunday
of Lent**

We give thanks for the **Lent Address series**, starting at Evensong tonight, and for the opportunity to be challenged and inspired as we consider how we understand and read the Bible. Open the minds and hearts of all who hear or read the addresses. *Show us your ways, O Lord, teach us your paths; guide us in your truth and teach us, for you are God our Saviour.*

Mon 19

We pray with compassion for parents hearing news that their unborn child has a life-changing or life-limiting condition. Comfort them as they grieve the happy-ever-after they had hoped for, guide them as they are presented with difficult decisions about their baby's future and uphold them as they live with the choices they make. Reveal yourself to them and to the babies as a God of healing and of infinite love.

Tue 20

'God of hope, teach us to be good neighbours, to build community, make connections, develop networks and include the other. We remember those who struggle for inclusion and long for acceptance and affirmation. Teach us to be gentle with one another, to press on recognising our brothers and sisters in all their diversity as fellow members of your family, made in your image and worthy of all reverence and respect.'

Wed 21

Today we remember all who live and work in Castle Street, Castle Lane, Back Street, Jury Street, The Butts and Priory Road. We pray for the safety of the workers installing road improvements as well as the inhabitants, pedestrians and road-users as traffic management measures are implemented.

Thu 22

We think of members of the **World Association of Girl Guiding & Girl Scouting**, who are today reflecting on the personal and wider impact of their actions. As they work to develop communication, collaboration, commitment, citizenship, character and creativity, we pray you'll motivate them to make a positive change in the community and the wider world.

Fri 23

We give thanks for the work of the **CMM Sisters** in Tanzania as they follow Jesus's example of concern for the welfare of widows and orphans. We pray that the Sisters continue to have sufficient rains for a harvest that is good enough to enable them to support the clergy widows (as well as orphans), who with no pension must depend entirely on the charity of others.

Sat 24

It's Real Bread Week, celebrating 'bread that is nothing fancy and has nothing to hide ... that is better for us, better for communities and better for the planet'. As we're encouraged to support local Real Bread bakeries and to make our own bread, we give thanks for Jesus, the Real Bread of Life who, free from the taint of sin, sustains his people and is saviour of the world. Father in heaven, give us this day our daily Bread!

Sun 25

**The Second
Sunday of Lent**

Lord, forgive us for times when we allow fear of embarrassment or saying the wrong thing to stop us speaking out in your name or sharing our faith. Help us trust that you'll prompt us when to speak and when to be silent, and guide our words or actions, that we may play our full part in proclaiming you, and be welcomed by the Son of Man, when he comes into your glory.

Mon 26

As **Fairtrade Fortnight** begins we pray: 'Lord, just as Ruth did not seek charity but the right to harvest, we do not seek charity for our sisters and brothers who grow the world's food, stitch the world's clothes, mine the world's metals and yet remain poor. We ask you for the justice of Boaz in food and farming, in trade and finance, in human rights, in government and law, for women and men, for the natural world and for children yet to be born. Help us live out justice with joy. Write fairness on our hearts, that all may see a fairer world.'

Tue 27

We pray for the students (and teachers) at Aylesford School, as they receive their **Higher Tour** visit today. Touch their hearts as they hear your message, and carry them in from the open sea of unknowing on a wave that will sweep them across any barriers of peer pressure that would prevent their response, into calmer waters in the harbour of your love.

Wed 28

We lift up in prayer today the people struggling as a result of the closure of vital support services. Bring to them individuals or organisations who will recognise their need and continue the work that values and empowers them. We pray especially for B, I, R and D, who are known and so precious to you.