



St. Mary's
Warwick's Church of Treasures

December 2018

Prayer Diary

Thank you for supporting the people of St Mary's, its parish and the wider community through prayer. Do use these prayers as you wish. There are extra copies and large-print versions at the back of church, and on the newsletters area of St Mary's Church website. **Links** in the online edition provide further material that may be of use or interest. If you can't access the internet and would like particular information, contact Kirsteen Robson. Thanks to all who suggested or wrote prayers for this month's diary. Please share ideas for January's (kirsteenr@gmail.com or 07799 682872), by 11th December if possible.

Sat 1

As the **Big Knitted Christmas Tree** at All Saints' is unveiled, we give thanks for the fun enjoyed and the friendships formed in knitting it together, and especially for a sense of connection experienced by those who are lonely or housebound. Thank you too for the stories shared and symbolised by each piece of knitting. Bless all attending the Community Carols as they celebrate this widened sense of community and belonging.

Sun 2

**First Sunday
of Advent**

At the start of a new church year, we ask you to guard, guide, sustain and inspire us on our journey, and help us encourage all we meet on the way. Bless all taking part in today's Advent services, as we reflect on the need and longing for Christ's light in the world. We give thanks for 50 years of **Christingle** in England and pray for the work of **The Children's Society**.

Mon 3

Lord, we pray for the **UN Climate Change Conference** in Poland, that self-interest may be set aside for the greater good.

Tue 4

We pray for all who will take part in or listen to concerts in church this month that they may be blessed through being part of a wider shared experience. We pray for Sing it Loud (1st), King's High (4th), Christmas Truce (6th), Mark Swinton (7th), St Mary's Scholars (8th), Sirinu (11th), Mayor's Carol Concert (15th), Warwick School (17th), Da Capo (18th), Armonico Consort (20th), Oliver Hancock (21st), St James's Singers (22nd).

Wed 5

As the Advent Posada figures are welcomed into homes around the parish and beyond, we pray that they may be a symbol of welcoming the Lord Jesus into our hearts. And as they take part in everyday activities, and are shared with others, so may we become more conscious of involving Jesus in every aspect of our lives, and sharing our faith with others all year round.

Thu 6

We give thanks for all Warwick's churches and ask you to bless their ministry to the needs of our townfolk. Draw us into deeper communion with you and with each other, that our witness may be strengthened and your name glorified.

Fri 7

On **International Civil Aviation Day** we give thanks for all who make global air transport possible, reflecting on how our lives would be changed without it. We pray that nations will continue to work together peacefully to ensure that all countries have access to aviation that is as secure, sustainable and safe as possible. Locally we pray for staff at Coventry Airport.

Sat 8

We pray for the staff and ministry of **Leamington Christian Resource Centre**. Bless them as they seek to support local Christians in their faith journey and to serve as a stepping stone between the High Street and the church.

Sun 9

**Second Sunday
of Advent**

We pray for Luna as she is baptised in your name today. Bless and strengthen her parents and godparents as they bring her up, that as Luna grows in faith, she may brightly reflect the light of your glory in the dark places of this world. As the Poppies and Trees are taken down this week, and the simplicity of our naked stone is revealed once more, remind us that you come to all people just as they are, and love them.

Mon 10

With the clergy and congregation of **All Saints'**, we pray for the children and staff of Emscote's schools as they prepare to retell the Christmas story through words, music and drama. We ask too for your blessing on Little Saints, their Monday Church for babies to pre-schoolers, as they freshly enter into the awe and wonder of the Christmas season. Bless all who will come and see the BIG TREE over the Christmas period.

Tue 11

We pray for our church musicians, giving thanks for all they do. Strengthen and sustain them at this busy time as they share your story in services, concerts and carolling, and keep its meaning always fresh and alive to them, however familiar some of the words may become. Bless all who give their time and skills all year round to support them behind the scenes.

Wed 12

Lord Jesus, as pupils and staff assemble for their annual carol services and hear again the story of your birth, we pray that they will receive with open minds and hearts the message that you are God With Us. We remember Warwick Prep (12th), King's High (19th), Warwick School (19th) and Myton (21st).

Thu 13

All-knowing and all-powerful God, guide our prayers for the needs of all who live and work in Harris Road, Broxell Close, Haywood Road, Wedgnock Lane, Banner Hill and Rouncil Lane.

Fri 14

**John of the
Cross**

As the advertisers' message can tempt us to measure love in pounds, help us reflect on the priceless gift you freely offer to all, and what we can give of ourselves to others for free. *Love is the measure by which we shall be judged. (John of the Cross)*

Sat 15

We pray for retail staff. Keep them strong in body and mind as they work hard to serve their Christmas customers. And we think of those who worked in big stores that closed this year.

Sun 16

**Third Sunday
of Advent**

May we rejoice in you, O Lord, always! May we rejoice in you! Make us gentle, we pray, and may that gentleness be known to everyone without show or effort. Teach us not to worry about anything, but to bring our requests to you in prayer with thanks. Guard our hearts and minds with your peace, in Christ Jesus.

Mon 17

As the monthly Prayer Diary continues into its third year, we thank you for this tool to help us pray together in our Monday-to-Saturday lives. We pray for everyone who uses it, that you will nourish their spirit in their prayer time. We give thanks and pray for the opportunities you offer through it to bring you into everyday conversations, and for the relationships formed and strengthened. Thank you that you hear all prayers. Please guide and sustain all who share and write them.

Tue 18

We bring before you those in prison who are missing their loved ones. Comfort them and their families. Bless the Prison Fellowship's **Angel Tree Project**, supported nationally by the **Mothers' Union**, which sends cards to prisoners and gives them the opportunity to send a gift to their children.

Wed 19

We pray for all who are under financial strain, that you will give them hope and release them from their burden. Bless the work of **Christians Against Poverty**, and locally we pray for staff and clients at the CAP Debt Centre at **St Mary's Leamington**, which helps people find a route out of debt to financial freedom.

Thu 20

With the **CMM Sisters** in Tanzania we give thanks for the newly purchased ambulance at their Health Station in Sayuni. Thank you that it has already carried several patients to the nearest open hospital for life-saving treatment, among them a three-year-old boy with cerebral malaria. We pray that in the rainy seasons, the shorter of which has now begun, many young children may be spared from this great danger to their health.

Fri 21

We pray that many people will hear anew, or for the first time, the message of **#Follow the Star**: *Come, just as you are, to take the life-changing Christmas journey. Wherever you are this Christmas, you are invited to follow the star and be with Jesus. You are welcome. You are deeply known and truly loved.*

Sat 22

As the holiday season starts for many, we pray for people who will be working this Christmastide: our emergency, healthcare and prison services, as well as all who work to maintain power, water, transport, and other services on which we depend and which we may sometimes take for granted. We remember all who work in the leisure industry, for whom our rest is their toil. We give thanks, Lord, and ask you to bless them all.

Sun 23

**Fourth Sunday
of Advent**

Remembering Mary and Joseph's arduous trek to Bethlehem, we lift before you anyone we know who is on a difficult journey of any kind at the moment. God of hope, healing and wholeness, guide our prayers as we entrust them to you.

Mon 24

Christmas Eve

As we anticipate with awe and wonder the coming of our Lord, we pray for those who are alone, in crisis or sick, and for whom the celebrations of Christmas will not be a happy time. May your love overwhelm them on this very special night and bring the peace of the Holy Christ Child upon them. We pray for all who come to the Crib Service and Midnight Mass, that with Mary, Joseph and the animals they may welcome Jesus, and with the shepherds and the angels they may worship him.

Tue 25

Christmas Day

Thank you, God, for the precious gift of your son, Jesus Christ. As we celebrate his holy birth on this Christmas morn, help us to become more like him in our daily lives. May the True Light shine upon us and our loved ones today and every day, and may the peace of our Lord be in our hearts as we celebrate Christmas in our homes and across the world.

Wed 26

**Stephen,
Deacon
and Martyr**

On this Feast of St Stephen, we join our prayers with those of the **Guild of St Stephen**, a worldwide society of altar servers, giving thanks for all who minister in this role. Strengthen them by your grace to serve with reverence, diligence, humility and understanding, following the example of their patron, St Stephen. We pray for more people to join the serving team at St Mary's.

Thu 27

**John, Apostle
and Evangelist**

Word of God, we thank you for inspiring the writings of the apostle John. Just as many servicemen in the First World War found sustenance when they read their pocket John's Gospel, so may we, on whatever manner of service you call us into, find in those words peace when we are afraid, strength when we are under pressure and comfort, even in the face of death.

Fri 28

Holy Innocents

As we remember the slaughter of the young children in Bethlehem by Herod's order, we ask you to bless all who, in this season of joy, are mourning the death of someone dear to them, especially a child. Through their pain, may they take comfort from the knowledge that their loved ones are now at peace in your blissful presence.

Sat 29

We thank you for the recent wedding in Canada of Oliver and Rachel. As their marriage is blessed in church this afternoon we pray that their life together may be creative, supportive and harmonious and that, planted in and nourished by your eternal love, they may face their future with confidence and joy.

Sun 30

**First Sunday
of Christmas**

In the midwinter darkness we lift our eyes to the starry skies: *Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights! Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host! Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars! Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven. (Ps. 148)*

Mon 31

Lord of the years, as we reflect on events of 2018, we bring to you our responses to them, remembering that all are part of life's tapestry and none are too much for you to hear. As we place the coming year into your hands, bless us in your service.