



St. Mary's
Warwick's Church of Treasures

February 2020

Prayer Diary

*Thank you for supporting the people of this church and wider community through prayer, and thank you to all who have contributed ideas this month. Please use the Prayer Diary as you find most helpful. If you would like to share a prayer with someone who might be encouraged or comforted by it, you will find extra copies at the back of church as well as online on St Mary's Church website (www.stmaryswarwick.org.uk). If you'd like to receive the diary by email, please contact Kirsteen Robson (see below). The digital edition also has **links** to related material. Everyone is invited to share suggestions for March's diary (by 15th Feb please) with Kirsteen prayerdiary@stmaryswarwick.org.uk or 07799 682872.*

Sat 1

○ Lord, who alone knows the future, we pray for all who are more than usually aware of uncertainty at this time... Help them to entrust their cares to you and, thus liberated, to seek and find you in the gift of the present. We pray for Alycia, whose portfolio and other Curacy assessment documents are being considered over the coming weeks, and we give thanks for her inspiring, compassionate and vivacious ministry. Strengthen, guide and reassure her as she begins the process of discerning and hearing your voice for what is next for her, Mark and Miles.

Sun 2

**Presentation
of Christ in
the Temple
(Candlemas)**

Lord Jesus, today we gaze with Simeon and Anna on your infant form; we see their faces soften with a lifetime's relief, then shine with joy as they recognise in you the bringer of light and salvation for all people, for all time... for us, now. We worship and adore you. And you came as one of us, flesh and blood, like us in every respect. You called us brothers and sisters, suffered for us, died, rose, and dealt with our sin. We offer our thanks and praise.

Mon 3

As the Church's celebrations end and Ordinary Time begins, we offer you our own ordinary time, and pray for a greater awareness of your presence in the rhythms of our everyday life. Reminding us that Jesus performed great miracles with the familiar food of bread and fish, help us slow down to notice and appreciate the wonder of what is easy for us to take for granted.

Tue 4

We remember with thanks all who help to keep St Mary's up, open, and active in your ministry, and especially at this time we pray for all involved in the appointment process for an Operations Manager and a Development Officer. Direct the discussions and decisions. We pray too for inspiration and guidance as we search for creative ideas for recruiting new volunteers for the church shop and the guiding team.

Wed 5

Remembering with joy and thanksgiving the enthusiasm of the whole audience who signed as the children from Ridgeway School sang at the Christmas Tree Festival, we celebrate **Sign2Sing Week** and ask you to bless all who are taking part. We pray for the work of the deaf health charity **SignHealth**, that provides health and wellbeing services in sign language for deaf people, and we pray for increased awareness of the challenges deaf people encounter in a sound-filled world.

Thu 6

On **Time to Talk Day** we pray for courage both to talk more openly about mental health, and to listen more supportively.

Fri 7

We pray for people experiencing the fear, isolation and hopelessness of homelessness. May they receive support and opportunities to feel better about themselves, be more active in the community and get back into work. We give thanks for all **Helping Hands** does to offer just that, and pray that tonight's **#BigSleepout2020** will increase awareness of challenges faced by local people sleeping on the streets, and raise funds to help.

Sat 8

We pray for all taking part or coming to the Joseph Sing-along, touring the South Warwickshire Methodist Circuit this spring, and especially for today's performance at Warwick Methodist Church. As Joseph's story is brought to life, may it bring people pleasure and a chance to reflect on covenant and forgiveness.

Sun 9

**Third Sunday
before Lent**

Merciful God, we pray that aid will come to the 8 million Syrian children who are in danger: children who have lost their homes, schools and even families; who face unspeakable violence, a lack of access to food, healthcare and clean water, and an increased risk of disease. Empower all who are working to relieve their suffering. May today's Outward Giving collection for the **UNICEF Syrian Appeal** help bring them your light and hope.

Mon 10

O Lord, who turns and listens with loving patience to all who bring their burdens to you, we pray for members of St Mary's pastoral team and study group completing the 'Learning to Listen' course tonight. Give them courage and opportunities to put their skills into practice and so to bless others with the gift of attentive listening. May they help St Mary's serve the community as a listening church, with open doors and willing ears.

Tue 11

God of love, we pray for the Methodist Church as it continues **prayerful discussion** of proposals in the report '**God in love unites us**', concerning the development and application of their understanding of your grace in all relationships, and sexual relationships in particular. Guide them by your wisdom and a desire to help others know you and flourish in your love.

Wed 12

As tomorrow's 75th anniversary of the start of the bombing of Dresden approaches, we pray for all who are working for reconciliation. Lord, heal the wounds of history, and bring your peace to those who can't forget the horrors of war.

Thu 13

On World Radio Day we turn our thoughts and thanks to the pleasure, inspiration and information the radio brings into people's lives. In particular we thank you for all who support hospital radio, offering cheer, diversion and encouragement to patients and staff. We pray that Radio Warnefords **appeal** for new volunteers will bring forward people with skills to share.

Fri 14

Valentine

Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, doesn't have a swelled head, doesn't force itself on others, isn't always 'me first', doesn't fly off the handle, doesn't keep score of the sins of others, doesn't revel when others grovel, takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, puts up with anything, trusts you always, always looks for the best, never looks back, but keeps going to the end. (MSG) Lord, please help us to live your love.

Sat 15

God of every aspect of our lives, help us to hear clearly what you are asking of us each day, whatever situation we find ourselves in. You are the God who calls us to stay where we are or to move at your bidding: to seek and speak courageously, sharing your love, defending the vulnerable and bringing dignity to those who have no voice. Help us to sense your presence, in perseverance and in hope, in those everyday places which can be continuously renewed by your grace. Amen. (C of E)

Sun 16

Second Sunday
before Lent

As we say the Lord's Prayer today – deliver us from evil – help us reflect on the evil we can see around us... Open our eyes to that which works insidiously from within... We thank you that through Jesus' sacrifice the victory is assured... Pull us spiritually from all evil that seeks to prevent us sharing in his triumph.

Mon 17

Father, when we perform or receive a random act of kindness today, remind us that we are all kin in you, and not by chance!

Tue 18

Lord of Creation, thank you for the animals you have put into our care, and in particular for the joy that pets can bring. We pray for animals who are ill-treated, that help may be at hand.

Wed 19

God of healing, we thank you for all who work for the South Warwickshire Foundation Trust, and pray for its **Sprinkle Some Magic** campaign to raise funds for specialist hospital equipment.

Thu 20

Loving God, always close to us, be very present in lives shattered by crime, and with those searching for a freedom unjustly taken away. May your Spirit of comfort and healing find ways of breaking through walls of mistrust, fear and injustice, working through all who build us up with love and care, taking one step at a time on the path to freedom. Loving God, set us free. Amen.

Fri 21

Lord of seed, growth and harvest, we give thanks for 70 years of ground-breaking research at the Warwick Crop Centre in Wellesbourne. Bless their ongoing work to make agriculture and horticulture sustainable, and food production secure.

Sat 22

We pray for the people who live and work in Church Street, Puckering's Lane, The Holloway, Bowling Green Street, High Street, Leicester Place, Castle Lane and Castle Street: bless each as they need, and draw them ever closer to your way, truth and light.

Sun 23

**Transfiguration
Sunday**

Lord Jesus, as we commemorate the revelation of your glory to the disciples on the mountain-top, we ask that all people may glimpse your radiance or feel the warmth of your presence. We pray for those who do not yet know you or recognise you in their lives, and those who believe, but fear you to be far away.

Mon 24

Merciful Father, whose son showed us how to bring justice to those who are poor and oppressed, as **Fairtrade Fortnight** begins we pray that the Fairtrade message will spread further, wider and deeper. Give people ears to hear and hearts to respond, that our plenty is not paid for by others' poverty.

Tue 25

Shrove Tuesday

We give thanks for the commitment, enthusiasm and talents of members of the Scouts and Guides in the Warwickshire Gang Show at the Spa Centre this week. Bless all involved as they work together to entertain others and raise funds for **Special Effect**. We pray for the work of this charity, using a range of modified technology to enable people with severe disabilities to play video games to the best of their abilities with family and friends, with profoundly positive effects on their quality of life.

Wed 26

Ash Wednesday

Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return. (Genesis 3.19)
Almighty God, we are dust... grey, lifeless, fallen. Have mercy on us. Creator Father, we are *your* dust... made fearfully, wonderfully, in love, and raised by your Spirit's breath to dance and sparkle in the radiant beams of the Son's light. Accept our thanks and praise!

Thu 27

Lord, we pray for people who are putting off an important task, waiting for the time to be 'just right'. Give them faith to start where they stand, and work with whatever tools they may have at their command, trusting you to give them better ones if and when they are needed. *(George Herbert, adapted)*

Fri 28

We give thanks for the **CMM Sisters** in Tanzania and Zambia and pray with them that other women will sense the stirrings of a vocation to come forward and join them in your work. Nourish and sustain all members of the Community, that they may draw from you the strength and steadfastness to overcome the challenges they face day to day. Thank you for the funds to buy a threshing machine, raised with enthusiasm and love by the Warwick Schools community. May it serve them long and reliably.

Sat 29

On this leap day, we offer thanks with all who are celebrating birthdays or anniversaries of happy occasions, and lift up in our prayers those for whom the day brings a store of more painful memories. We pray for anyone planning to propose this year, and for all couples making decisions that will affect their future.