

Lichfield Diocese Prayer Diary: Issue 297

We pray for the implementation of our diocesan strategy 'Seeking the Kingdom', within the context of the varied roles and ministries across the Diocese. As 'People of Hope,' we remember those impacted by natural disasters; those in Ukraine suffering grievously and we pray for the people & leaders of Russia; and for a lasting peace for the people of Palestine, Israel and the wider Middle East.

discipleship
vocation
evangelism

Sunday 28th December: *(The Holy Innocents)*

The first of a number of prayers for the next fortnight written by and for Alstonefield Deanery;

Lord, today we pray for the whole Alstonefield Deanery Mission Area Team, its Ministry Team, priests, readers and locally commissioned lay ministers, and all the parish teams involved in supporting the ministry and mission of 18 churches, in the beautiful, rural area of the Southern Peak District. We pray that, by working together as one team they can bring the wisdom, the love of Christ and the individual strengths of each small village into one mutually beneficial shared missionary endeavour, keeping the light of Christ alive and flourishing in the tiny and isolated villages, hamlets and farms of the area.

Monday 29th: *(Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1170)*

Lord, we pray today for the Longnor Family Group of Churches, St Bartholomew Longnor, St Paul Newtown, St Paul Quarndon, and St Luke Sheen, as they continue their ministry whilst in vacancy, working courageously to sustain the vision of the late Father John, to maintain their ministry to the people of their villages, to the tourists who spend so much time in the area and to each other in their still raw grief and loss. May your hand uphold them in their work.

Tuesday 30th:

Lord, we pray for the other family group of churches in vacancy in the Mission Area Team, the Waterfall Family Group, who have had over 12 months without a priest and whose spirits remain strong despite the challenges they have faced. We pray for St Mary Calton, St Mary and St Lawrence Cauldon, All Saints Grindon and St James and St Bartholomew Waterfall. We give thanks for their efforts, and pray that a new priest will feel called to minister with them in the New Year.

Wednesday 31st: *(John Wyclif, Reformer, 1384)*

As the year comes to an end, we lift before you all the various gatherings taking place around the diocese and beyond, and for a safe and positive experience for everyone involved. We pray especially for St John's Walsall Wood's evening with Jo Enright, and that those people who come to see her may receive a warm welcome and want to again visit St John's for other things.

Thursday 1st: *(The Naming and Circumcision of Jesus)*

A prayer for the New Year from the Church of England; God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose years never fail and whose mercies are new each returning day: let the radiance of your Spirit renew our lives, warming our hearts and giving light to our minds; that we may pass the coming year in joyful obedience and firm faith; through him who is the beginning and the end, your Son, Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Friday 2nd: *(Basil the Great and Gregory of Nazianzus, Bishops, Teachers of the Faith, 379 and 389.*

Seraphim, Monk of Sarov, Spiritual Guide, 1833. Vedanayagam Samuel Azariah, Bishop in South India, Evangelist, 1945)

Today 'Stats Shepherds' all over the diocese should have received an email asking them to report back on how many people are attending our churches by various measures. Lord, we thank you for all those faithful people ploughing through what can be a difficult task. We pray too for wisdom in discerning the picture the Stats for Mission present, and for a renewed heart and vision to see more people coming to our churches that need to be counted. We pray for the encouragement of upwards-tilting graphs as more people come to know you.

Saturday 3rd:

We return to our prayers for Alstonefield Deanery; Lord we ask for your blessing on the fourth Family Group of Churches in the Deanery Mission Area Team as they prepare for a vacancy in April. As enthusiastic supporters of the Deanery approach the churches are buoyed up and sustained by the support of colleagues across the Deanery. We pray for St Leonard Ipstones, St Luke Onecote, St Bartholomew Butterton, St Lawrence Warslow and St John the Baptist Elkstones. We give thanks for the way Warslow and Elkstones are integrating into the new family group and embracing the vision of God in Community and Community in Church that has underpinned the ministry and mission of the Family Group over the past few years.

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