



# Weekly Prayer Calendar

For use during the 100 Days of Prayer

Travelling Well Together – Sustaining Ministry

## Introduction

Each of us will be able to testify to the significance and power of prayer in our lives. Prayer is where we give thanks to God. It's where we give voice to issues of identity and purpose - our very vocation. It's where we name our greatest fears and hopes. It's where we seek God's wisdom and ask for God's help. All of this nurtures our life of faith, discipleship and service. Prayer is a space of discernment, where we ask who God is calling us to be. But we know, too, the significance and power of prayer in our corporate life as church. There is a long history of Christians praying together, and we are surrounded by smaller and greater communities of prayer within our own parishes and worshipping communities.

Praying, of course, is nothing new. We are already praying people, praying churches. Prayer doesn't just deepen our connection to and relationship with God, prayer deepens all of our relationships and connections. We know that prayer changes us and that it prepares us for ongoing change. Through prayer, our eyes are opened and new horizons are glimpsed.

The 100 Days of Prayer is a particular invitation to pray together across and within our diocese with shared intention and focus. Together, we can give thanks for what God has given. Together we name the reality of our present challenges honestly before God, as so many have done before us. Together, we give voice to our hope for a future held in God's care and purpose. Together, we open ourselves to listen to God and to God's wisdom through the power of the Holy Spirit as we seek God's calling for us as a diocese. After this



100 Days of Prayer we move, as a diocese, to 100 Days of Listening. Please do look out for resources for that as we would love to hear from you.

For each week of the 100 Days of Prayer there is a theme to frame our prayers and some prompts to focus our prayers. To these, you will be able to add your own prompts based on your context, your churches, your challenges and your hopes.

If you would like to join an online Prayer Group, there will be a group from St Alban the Martyr, Westcliff-on-Sea, Praying the Rosary for Lent as part of the 100 Days of Prayer for Chelmsford Diocese. This will be online on Mondays at 6pm from 23rd February. If you'd like to join this group, please contact Fr Neil Dalley before 23rd February ([fr.neil.dalley@icloud.com](mailto:fr.neil.dalley@icloud.com) or call 01702 472611). If you have never used a rosary before this is a good opportunity to learn how it works.

### **Share your prayers with others**

If you would like to share your own prayer with others during the 100 Days of Prayer, you can do so [by clicking here](#). We hope to share some of the your prayers with people across the diocese using our diocesan communications.



**Week beginning Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February**  
**Theme for the week: our readiness for change**

Change is normal. Living as a disciple of Jesus means experiencing change every day of our lives. Growing older means we change outwardly, yet following Jesus means we also change inwardly as we follow him and as the Holy Spirit transforms us to be more like Jesus. Recognising that change in who we are as we follow Jesus is an important encouragement in our journey of discipleship and our ability to embrace change. Change is a normal and an expected part of our shared life across our diocese. Together we face significant challenges. How can we be an enduring missional presence in Essex and East London in our times and within our context? What changes will this require of us and how will we ready ourselves for these changes?

*So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal. (2 Corinthians 4: 16-18)*

As we enter Lent and begin our 100 Days of Prayer, we give thanks...

- that in and through Christ we can be changed
- for the changes that God in Christ has brought into our lives and into the life of our churches and communities

We pray that...

- we would be open to change in our personal lives and in our corporate life as God's church in our parishes and diocese
- we would be open to who God is calling us to be and what God is calling us to do

Creator God, you love all that you have made.

Your gift of life is visible all around.

We ask that, by your Spirit,  
you would comfort the afflicted,  
and unsettle the comfortable.

Inspire us to be the change  
we want to see in the world.

We ask this through Jesus Christ,  
our friend and brother. Amen. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Collect for Ash Wednesday taken from [Jeremy M S Clines: eco-liturgy and earlier thoughts: Ash Wednesday Collection \(Redub\)](#)



**Week beginning Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February**  
**Theme for the week: our readiness for change**

Sometimes it is hard to see the change in front of us. Taking time to see the change in front of us and around us, helps us accept that change is happening and enables us to pray and seek how God is calling us to change as people and communities. Sometimes this is hard. On the Road to Emmaus the two disciples didn't recognise the risen Jesus walking and talking with them, yet Jesus was interested in them and their experience.

*Now on the same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognising him. And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" (Luke 24: 13-17b)*

This week, we give thanks...

- that Jesus comes near and journeys with us through change
- that through Jesus, our eyes are opened to God's longing for change, for us and for our communities

We pray that...

- we may see the changes taking place around us
- that God would equip us so that we are ready for the changes that God is calling us into

Living God,  
your Son made himself known to his disciples  
in the breaking of bread:  
open the eyes of our faith,  
that we may see him in all his redeeming work;  
who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Common Worship Collect for Easter 3



## **Week beginning Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March**

### **Theme for the week: Church growth**

Church attendance in the Church of England has been falling for several decades. Over the same time, the population has grown. There has been some encouraging growth in attendance since the Covid-19 pandemic, however attendance has not yet returned to levels seen before the pandemic. Chelmsford diocese is not unique in this regard, and similar attendance patterns are observed across the whole Church of England.

We long for growth in our churches, in number, in spiritual commitment and in service. A recent survey by the Bible Society (The Quiet Revival<sup>3</sup>) has demonstrated significant church growth among young adults, particularly young men. We want to be churches and communities ready to welcome all who are exploring faith and church.

*<sup>46</sup> Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. (Acts 2: 46-47)*

This week, we give thanks...

- for our churches, schools and worshipping communities
- for our congregations, wherever they meet, whether in churches, schools, community centres, halls or outdoors
- for those who are new to church and who bring vitality and change

We pray that...

- our churches would grow in number, spiritual commitment and service
- we would be expectant and ready for growth

God of Mission,  
who alone brings growth to your Church,  
send your Holy Spirit to give vision to our planning,  
wisdom to our actions, joy to our worship and power to our witness.  
Help our church to grow in numbers,  
in spiritual commitment to you,  
and in service to our local community,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> [The Quiet Revival: Gen Z leads rise in church attendance](#)

<sup>4</sup> *Leading Your Church into Growth (LYCiG) prayer*



**Week beginning Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March**  
**Theme for the week: discipleship and nurture**

Discipleship is the path towards human flourishing and care for God's creation. It means learning to lead the lives we should as God's people. Growing in discipleship involves prayer, study, action and witnessing to our faith. As soon as God calls us to follow, we are also given a role in the Kingdom of God. Finding out what we are to do goes hand in hand with finding out who we are, in God's eyes, not our own.

*<sup>19</sup>'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.' (Matthew 28: 19-20)*

This week, we give thanks...

- for those people who have nurtured and discipled us on our journey of faith
- for all nurture groups, homegroups and study groups that meet in our churches and communities and support people in their discipleship
- for all schools, colleges and places of education
- for those who disciple our children and young people through Sunday School, Messy Church, Toddler Groups and Youth Groups

We pray that...

- we would grow in confidence to witness to our faith
- that each church and worshipping community would be a welcoming and nurturing place for all
- that our churches would be ready to support those who come seeking baptism and confirmation or who simply want to know more about Jesus

O God unknown,  
in our mother's womb you formed us for your glory.  
Give us a heart to long for you, grace to discern you,  
and courage to proclaim you;  
through the one whom you loved  
before the foundation of the world,  
our saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Taken from All desires known by Janet Morley



## **Week beginning Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March**

### **Theme for the week: Vocations**

Vocation is where our God-given gifts and passions meet the needs of the world. It is about who God is calling you to be and what God is calling you to do. For some, this is a specific calling to ministry. For others, it could mean serving God through faithful discipleship in everyday life. Everyone has a vocation. Our churches, schools and local communities are full of people who faithfully respond to God's call and who share in ministry alongside others. Our parishes and communities are blessed by many people serving as Churchwardens, PCC and Deanery officers, Licensed Lay Ministers, Pastoral Assistants, Spiritual Directors, Authorised Local Preachers, Funeral Ministers and School Governors. We long for all people to have the space and resources to explore their calling and find fulfilment and purpose in loving and serving God.

*<sup>2</sup> Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12: 2)*

This week, we give thanks...

- for the call that God has placed upon each of us: who God calls us to be and what God calls us to do
- all of those who serve in a variety of lay ministries across our diocese
- our Diocesan Vocations Team and our area vocations advisors

We pray that...

- we may encourage others to explore their calling
- our churches and worshipping communities would be spaces and places where all people can respond to God's call on their lives
- more people would be called into all forms of lay ministry across our diocese

Almighty and everlasting God,  
by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church  
is governed and sanctified:  
hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people,  
that in their vocation and ministry  
they may serve you in holiness and truth  
to the glory of your name;  
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *Common Worship Collect for Embertide*





## **Week beginning Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March**

### **Theme for the week: Vocations**

Our parishes and worshipping communities are faithfully sustained by their clergy, whether they are retired, self-supporting, house for duty, ministers in secular employment or full-time stipendiary clergy. Stipendiary ministry remains the cornerstone of the Church of England, used to measure current and future resource needs. The cost of ministry is directly related to the parish share request with built in support for parishes in areas of deprivation.

Under the national Renewal and Reform programme which started in 2015 the goal was to have created a stable pool of about 7600 full-time clergy by 2035. In September 2024, the Church Times reported that the number of stipendiary clergy in the Church of England will fall to 5400 in 2033, a 40% reduction since the year 2000. The number of people going forward to train for ordained ministry has fallen by 38% since 2020. As we look to sustaining ministry in our diocese and the availability of stipendiary clergy, new models of ministry need to be explored in our different parish communities.

*16 You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last... (John 15: 16)*

This week, we give thanks...

- for our clergy: retired, self-supporting, working in secular employment or in stipendiary roles
- our Diocesan Vocations Team and our area ordination advisors
- our ordinands and all of those in the discernment process

We pray that...

- more people would be called to serve as deacons and priests
- we would be open to reimagining our models of ministry across our diocese

Almighty God, the giver of all good gifts,  
by your Holy Spirit you have appointed  
various orders of ministry in the Church:  
look with mercy on your servants  
called to be deacons and priests;  
maintain them in truth and renew them in holiness,  
that by word and good example they may faithfully serve you  
to the glory of your name and the benefit of your Church;  
through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> *Common Worship Collect for Embertide*





## **Week beginning Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April**

### **Theme for the week: Wellbeing and sustaining healthy rhythms**

Wellbeing is about human flourishing and functioning well. One of the seven shared Diocesan Values articulated in Travelling Well Together is “sustaining healthy rhythms”. We are invited to live life in all its fulness. This requires us to take personal responsibility, making time for leisure, recreation, prayer and service. It also requires us to support one another, sometimes carrying those who are struggling most. We also recognise that there are particular pressures facing those who serve in leadership roles in our churches, lay and ordained.

- 1 *As the deer longs for the water brooks, ♦ so longs my soul for you, O God.*
- 2 *My soul is athirst for God, even for the living God; ♦  
when shall I come before the presence of God?*
- 3 *My tears have been my bread day and night, ♦  
while all day long they say to me, ‘Where is now your God?’*
- 4 *Now when I think on these things, I pour out my soul: ♦  
how I went with the multitude and led the procession to the house of God,*
- 5 *With the voice of praise and thanksgiving, ♦ among those who kept holy day.*
- 6 *Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul, ♦ and why are you so disquieted within me?*
- 7 *O put your trust in God; ♦ for I will yet give him thanks,  
who is the help of my countenance, and my God. (Psalm 42)*

This week, we give thanks...

- for those who support us and enable us to flourish in our lives and ministries
- for all that brings us joy, all that energises us, all that inspires us
- for those people whose ministry is to support and enable others to flourish in their lives and ministries

We pray that...

- we would be wise in the decisions we make that impact our own wellbeing
- our churches and worshipping communities would be places of mutual support and healing, witnessing to Christ’s healing presence in the world

Come, creator Spirit, source of life;  
sustain us when our hearts are heavy  
and our wells have run dry,  
for you are the Father’s gift,  
with him who is our living water,  
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *Common Worship Collect for Psalm 42*



**Week beginning Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April**

**Theme for the week: Wellbeing and sustaining healthy rhythms**

Leading in Christian ministry can be deeply rewarding and joyful; it can also at times be costly and demanding for ministers and their families. Physical, financial, emotional and spiritual health, together with personal and professional relationships, within the wider context of vocation, all contribute to an overall sense of wellbeing for clergy and licensed lay ministers. Ordained and licensed ministry is inextricably interwoven with other aspects of life and with other people's lives. Ministers are often sustained by a very strong sense of personal calling, but the work can be lonely, and some ministers feel isolated in their ministry or in their personal lives.

The population in our diocese has increased over the past ten years, but over this same time, the number of clergy posts has reduced from 300 to 235. By 2025, each clergy post in our diocese was serving a smaller congregation (an average of 108 adults) but a larger average population (13,964). Whilst we are moving away from "one vicar, one parish" and multi-parish benefices are more common, we need to actively explore new models of ministry that are sustainable and that enable the flourishing of all God's people.

<sup>28</sup> 'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' (Matthew 11: 28-30)

This week, we give thanks...

- for spiritual directors, pastoral supervisors, counsellors, prayer partners, coaches and mentors who support our lay and ordained leaders
- the Clergy Support Trust, the Charity for Licensed Ministers in the Diocese of Chelmsford (LMDC) and other charities that support clergy and licensed ministers in particular need
- for our Deanery Wellbeing champions and our Diocesan Wellbeing Steering Group

We pray that...

- all our clergy and licensed lay ministers would receive the support that they need to enable them in their ministries
- we would be bold and imaginative in our exploration of new models of ministry that will enable all God's people to flourish

Creator and lover of our souls:  
teach us to release our burdens and accept your love.  
May your love be the deepest reality of our lives,  
and may we offer real love to others. Amen.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Taken from Daily Prayer for All Seasons, introduced by John Pritchard



## Week beginning Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April

### Theme for the week: church buildings and the importance of place

In Chelmsford Diocese we are blessed with nearly six hundred church buildings. Many are an important part of our heritage and have been at the heart of the communities we serve for hundreds of years. Our buildings are associated with precious personal and corporate memories, such as family weddings or funerals, significant community milestones etc. Most importantly they are sacred places of worship, mission and ministry. Caring for church buildings is a great challenge for clergy, churchwardens and PCCs and responsibility for them can sometimes feel more like a burden than a blessing. It can be a challenging and often costly and complex ministry.

*24 'Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. <sup>25</sup>The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. <sup>26</sup>And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. <sup>27</sup>The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!' (Matthew 7 v24-27)*

This week, we give thanks...

- for our local church buildings in our context and for all that they mean to us and to our communities
- for those who take care of our church buildings, our churchwardens, our PCC members and our clergy
- for our DAC and Church Buildings Team, for their wisdom, experience and support

We pray that...

- we would be wise stewards of all that God has given us and good custodians of our buildings
- that we would find practical and metaphorical ways to fling wide our doors to welcome all
- that our buildings would tell the story always of our true foundation in Jesus Christ

O heavenly architect,  
we pray for your unmeasured blessing  
upon our churches and sacred spaces.  
As they have given shape to prayer through many generations  
may they speak to us and all people  
as they seek to follow you afresh  
and as we seek to travel well together with Jesus and with each other  
Amen. <sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Chris Burke, based on Hebrews 11:10



**Week beginning Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April**  
**Theme for the week: PCCs and governance**

Every member of a PCC is a trustee of the charity of the PCC; this comes with governance responsibilities as well as regulations and requirements. It is a significant calling, and many serve in this way throughout our diocese. The PCC is responsible for the governance of the church and makes decisions that will both impact generations to come and decisions that are about the day to day running of the church. Creative meetings where mission and ministry needs are held in balance with the demands of the maintenance of the building, finance, and safeguarding are sometimes tricky to navigate. PCCs are for the governance of one parish and in multi-parish benefices this creates a lot of meetings. In one part of our diocese this means 15 PCCs in one benefice; and in another 7 churches have joined together and have one PCC with sub-committees for building needs. Part of our challenge is how to effectively and safely govern our churches without over burdening incumbents and church officers and wardens. The passage below reminds us of Paul encouraging the church in Colossae – may his words encourage us to be wise, understanding and to bear fruit for God.

*For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup>so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. <sup>11</sup>May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully <sup>12</sup>giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. <sup>13</sup>He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup>in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (Colossians 1: 9-13)*

This week, we give thanks...

- for all who serve on our PCCs
- for wardens, treasurers, secretaries safeguarding officers and synod reps
- for wise decisions, good systems and processes
- for church administration and administrators

We pray that...

- we would use our time and talents wisely and carefully, paying attention to decisions and seeking God's insight and God's grace in all that we are called to do
- our PCCs would be spirit filled and courageous in action
- that all who are called to serve do so with purpose and generosity

Heavenly Father, we thank you for all who serve on our PCCs, synods and committees.  
Grant them the spirit of wisdom, counsel, and fortitude.  
Lord, inspire their decision-making, that everything they do



may reflect your holy will, aiming for the spiritual transformation of our parishes.  
Fill them with the grace to love you and their neighbours,  
the unity to work as one body, and the courage to face challenges with confidence in you.  
Protect them in their service, and may their efforts bring glory to your name  
and growth to your Church. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



## **Week beginning Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April**

### **Theme for the week: Stewardship – time, talents and gifts**

Stewardship - the looking after what God has given us - covers our money, our gifts and skills and our time. All precious resources that need insight and wisdom to manage well. How we use our gifts and skills needs discernment and courage as we may step out in a new ministry or new direction. Allowing others to see and benefit from what God has given us can feel daunting but ultimately life giving. Our talents are given to us for God's purposes. Our time is sometimes described as our most precious resource. How we use our time for work, rest, leisure and volunteering need careful judgement and discernment. Being good stewards of all that God has given is nuanced and contextual work, it changes as the seasons of life change and needs wisdom and wise counsel. This is true for every level of our life, our domestic lives, our church life and our life as a diocese.

*<sup>4</sup> Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; <sup>5</sup> and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; <sup>6</sup> and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. <sup>7</sup> To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Corinthians 12: 4-7)*

This week, we give thanks...

- for all the many and varied gifts God has given his people: gifts of financial management, gifts of care and nurture, gifts of creativity and service, gifts of administration, cleaning and music, gifts of evangelism, hospitality and preaching
- for all the benefits we enjoy because of the gift and generosity of others
- for the time we do have, for moments to pause and wonder, for time to rest and restore ourselves, and for time to be purposeful

We pray that...

- God will give us the resources needed for the ministry to which we are called... the people, the time and the money
- God may help us to use them wisely and well, to be good stewards and build the Kingdom.

Lord, teach me to be generous.

Teach me to serve you as you deserve;

to give and not to count the cost,

to fight and not to heed the wounds,

to toil and not to seek for rest,

to labour and not to ask for reward,

save that of knowing that I do your will.

Amen.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> *St Ignatius of Loyola*



**Week beginning Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May**  
**Theme for the week: Stewardship and finance**

Finances - both the raising of them and the management of them - demands careful consideration. Whether we have too much or not enough or somewhere in between we are called to be wise stewards. Maintaining the outlook and perspective of 'money as our servant and not our master' needs thoughtfulness and courage at every level of church life. Deciding on what we spend, save and give is a real responsibility and one that is shared across our PCCs and committees.

We are in a season of financial leanness and the challenge to balance books is a demanding one within our homes, our PCCs and within the diocese. Chelmsford diocese has had an ongoing financial deficit over several years. This is because of the shortfall in parish share contributions. It means that the cost of parish clergy, ordinands and curates, and diocesan services cannot be fully met from the income available. Our parish share contributions currently only meet 82% of the amount requested.

We are reliant on the good management of resources and the generosity of all those who give from their own funds. Jesus had a lot to say about money, which always lead to teaching to be generous in heart and spirit.

*He looked up and saw rich people putting their gifts into the treasury; <sup>2</sup>he also saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. <sup>3</sup>He said, 'Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them; <sup>4</sup>for all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on.'* (Luke 21: 1-4)

This week, we give thanks...

- for God's of generosity and abundance to us
- for all who give financially to the church and for all who manage our finances
- for parish treasurers and gift aid officers, for the DBF and parish giving advisors

We pray that...

- God will give us wisdom in how we use money and for the spirit of generosity as we assess what we can give of our own resources
- God will stir us up to be wise stewards and generous disciples, giving us enlarged hearts for compassion and service

Almighty God  
who alone is the creator of all things,  
and the source of all goodness,  
give us the heart of the widow who gave the mite;  
that we too may give all we have in your service  
for the glory of your son our Lord,  
Jesus Christ, who gave his all for us. Amen.





**Week beginning Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May**  
**Theme for the week: our readiness for change**

As we enter the final weeks of our 100 Days of Prayer, we approach the feasts of the Ascension and Pentecost. We journey with Jesus' disciples through some momentous changes. Having barely come to terms with Jesus' resurrected presence amongst them, he leaves them, but with the promise of God's presence in and through the coming of the Holy Spirit. Change is a normal part of human experience. In God's gift of the Holy Spirit, we encounter change, transformation and potential beyond our imagining. We face many challenges in our shared life as a diocese. God is with us in this journey as the one who can bring change, transformation and potential beyond our imagining, giving us hope for the future which God intends for us.

*While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. 'This', he said, 'is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.' So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.' (Acts 1: 4-11)*

As we approach the Ascension and Pentecost, we give thanks...

- for Jesus' resurrected presence in God's world through the Holy Spirit
- for God's desire for us to continue Jesus' ministry on earth
- for how God equips us through the gifts of the Holy Spirit

We pray that...

- we would be open to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in the life of God's church
- we would be ready for the transformation and potential that God may intend for us, our churches and our communities

Give to us, O God,  
a vision of your kingdom,  
a glimpse of your glory,  
an openness to your rule,  
and your spirit to guide us.  
Hear us, we pray, through Christ,  
the risen and ascended one. Amen.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *David Hamflett, taken from Fire and Bread: Resources for Easter Day to Trinity Sunday by Ruth Burgess*



**Week beginning Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May**  
**Theme for the week: our readiness for change**

We are now in the final week of our 100 Days of Prayer and we join with Jesus' disciples in waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. They were waiting, expectant for change yet not knowing what it would be like and what it would require of them.

We have prayed together across and within our diocese with shared intention and focus. Together, we have given thanks for what God has given. Together we have named the reality of our present challenges honestly before God. Together, we have given voice to our hope for a future held in God's care and purpose. Together, we have opened ourselves to listen to God and to God's wisdom through the power of the Holy Spirit as we have sought God's calling for us as a diocese. After this 100 Days of Prayer we move, as a diocese, to 100 Days of Listening, beginning in the Autumn. Please do look out for resources for that.

In the meantime, may we continue to pray with intention and focus for the life of our diocese. May we do so, expectant for change and – whilst we may not know what the change will be like, or what it might require of us – may we be ready to work for it, together.

*Then the disciples returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying. They were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers. (Acts 1: 12, 13a, 14)*

This week, we give thanks...

- that we can offer our prayers to God, in thanksgiving, in naming the reality of our challenges, in giving voice to our hopes
- that we enjoy the freedom of praying together, deepening our relationships and connections to God and to each other, across and within our diocese
- for the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in the life of God's church

We pray that...

- we may be expectant for change and ready to meet it as God's church
- that we would be open to what God-intended change may require of us
- that we would trust in God to guide us and challenge us in all that lies ahead of us as a diocese

Spirit of God, come to us,  
ignite in us your holy desire,  
and visit the peoples of the earth  
with faith and hope and love.  
Revive your Church so it can



serve your purposes in your world  
and share in your work to  
renew the face of the earth. Amen.<sup>13</sup>

As we wait in silence, make us ready for your coming Spirit.  
As we listen to your word, make us ready for your coming Spirit.  
As we worship you in majesty, make us ready for your coming Spirit.  
As we long for your refreshing, make us ready for your coming Spirit.  
As we long for your renewing, make us ready for your coming Spirit.  
As we long for your equipping, make us ready for your coming Spirit.  
As we long for your empowering, make us ready for your coming Spirit. Amen.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Collect for Pentecost taken from [Jeremy M S Clines: eco-liturgy and earlier thoughts: Pentecost, Additional Collect \(Redub\)](#)

<sup>14</sup> Common Worship: Times and Seasons