



Prayer Diary

May 2016

Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Jeshanah, and named it Ebenezer; for he said, "Thus far the Lord has helped us." 1 Samuel 7 v 12



There is a mountain in North Wales which I used to climb regularly as a teenager. It is one of those frustrating mountains that has several steep sections of climb which emerge onto plateaus. And just when you think you must surely be near the top, another steep climb presents itself. The most helpful thing to do was to look back to see what you have achieved already and from it to gain strength to go on to the next challenge.

It is easy to get caught up in the activity of life, the endless demands of to-do lists, e-mails, voicemails and the cycle of meetings. To become daunted by the climb ahead. To doubt that you have all the resources you need for the journey. This is when we need to stop even though it feels dangerous to do so, to reflect on the journey so far, to remember the many times when God has been utterly faithful even in the darkest and toughest of circumstances. To recall the times when the wind blew so hard that we thought all was lost - but God was there.

The journey of the people of Israel was never straight forward. The earlier verses in the passage from 1 Samuel show that there was a need to own up to their failure – to look reality squarely in the face. But, despite their failure and waywardness, the Lord helped them. And Samuel marked that truth with his stone.

Is it time, to take stock? To reflect on what has been, both good and bad? To notice, looking back, the ways in which the Lord has been present with us? To be thankful and, perhaps, repentant?

And is there a way in which we can mark this point along the way? And to say, with Samuel, that we know with certainty that thus far the Lord has helped us.

Simon Lloyd

Focus on Rugby Deanery

I don't think many people know this but if you turn a map of Rugby Deanery on its side it looks like a heart. But is the church like a heart? Do we love our area and bring it life?

The top chambers (the atria) are doing what they are designed for. They are filling up! They are filling with new housing and people as Houlton (the name for the new community on the old Mast site) is built and new opportunities as the new mission work in Long Lawford begins. You can read more in this Prayer Diary.

And what about the lower chambers (the ventricles)? Are we acting like the pumps in our physical bodies that send out nutrient rich blood? Well yes and no.

The Anglican churches in Rugby are all part of Rugby Revive which does so much to support Christian ministers in Rugby and to serve to people of all ages. They work through the local churches and ministries such as Rugby Youth For Christ, Christians Against Poverty, Hope 4, Healing on the Streets and Street Pastors and organise one off ventures like the week of mission leading up to the Queen's 90th birthday next month.

Although there has been a rural aspect to Rugby Revive it's never been really successful as the rural churches tend to work more closely within benefices. And work they do. For example the Draycote benefice is having a long interregnum but they are growing. Celebrate @ 4 – a café style worship service for all ages one Saturday each month - is attracting non churched people and some Christians who live locally but choose to worship elsewhere on Sunday. And it's not just in that benefice that growth is happening. The rest of the prayer diary will hint of some other stories from around our deanery.

But it can be hard. Some churches struggle with lack of money, lack of interest from their local community, odd parish boundaries and tired church members. Perhaps your church is a bit like that sometimes. If it is you'll understand why we need you to pray for us.



Helen Simmonds
Deanery Lay Chair

Cycle of Prayer - May 2016

With a focus on parishes and schools in Rugby Deanery

Sun 1

Philip and James, Apostles

We pray for the Coventry Pilgrimage, which will take place from the 5th to the 15th of May. People have been invited to walk church to church along the Coventry Way, or join a Bishop to walk in the north, south, east or west of the diocese. It will be a week of prayer with a Bible focus - seeking afresh the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in our world.

Mon 2

Dunchurch with Thurlaston. Clergy: Vacancy. Reader: Kevin Downham. Please pray for guidance as we look to find a new incumbent with the vision and energy to lead both congregations in the service of the Lord and His people. In the meantime, pray for those in leadership positions within the churches. *Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, Teacher of the Faith, 373

Tue 3

Harris CofE Academy, Rugby. Headteacher: Michael Stoppard. We pray for God's blessing on the pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community. We pray for Bishop Christopher as he chairs a meeting of the Faith and Order Commission of the Church of England today.

Wed 4

The Revel Primary School, Rugby. Headteacher: Mr A Edwards. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community. We pray for the Diocesan Audit Committee which meets today. *English Saints and Martyrs of the Reformation Era

Thu 5

Ascension Day

Provost Williams Primary School, Ryton-on-Dunsmore. Headteacher: Jason Henderson. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community. On Ascension Day 1866 the order of Readers was re-inaugurated and today is the 150th Anniversary. We thank God for the ministry of all our Readers.

Fri 6

Bilton Junior School. Interim Headteacher: Alex Norton. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community. We pray today for all those attending the annual diocesan Reader Conference; that it will be a time of fellowship and encouragement. We also pray for Bishop John as he presides at the Eucharist during the conference.

Sat 7

Rugby St Peter and St John. Clergy: Sheila Bridge. We thank God for the £40,000 raised by the congregation towards the reopening of the main church door and for several very positive community events. We pray for success as we seek the remaining funding needed and for the remaining obstacles to be resolved, allowing us to serve better our community.

Sun 8

Seventh Sunday of Easter

We pray for the Remember Our Child service - an annual service for bereaved parents and their families - which takes place today at Coventry Cathedral. We pray that all those who attend would know God's presence and comfort as they remember the children they have lost. *Julian of Norwich, Spiritual Writer, c.1417

Mon 9

Clifton-Upon-Dunsmore Primary School. Head of School: Mrs L Bernard. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community. We pray for all those taking SATs (Standard Assessment Tests) in primary schools across the diocese this week.

Tue 10

Knightlow Primary School. Headteacher: Jill Vavasour. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community. We pray for Archdeacon Morris, Bishop Jonathan (of Ebbsfleet) and parish reps as they interview for a new incumbent at St Luke's, Holbrooks today. We pray for the Diocesan Board of Education which meets this evening.

Wed 11

May the blessing of God be upon our farms and on all the cereal crops of our countryside. May they receive rain to swell the grain and sun to ripen it. We pray that the harvest be safely gathered in and stored, and may we see ourselves as harvesters for eternal life - "For look! The fields are already ripe for harvest". Amen.

Thu 12

Bilton. Clergy: Tim Cockell, Joy Sharpe. Reader: Glenn Lowde. We pray for God's blessing on this parish. We thank God for the faith sharing course and all it brought us last autumn. Please pray for us as we respond to our second survey results and focus on our passionate spirituality. We pray for the Diocesan Mission Fund Committee which meets today.

Fri 13

Dunchurch Boughton Junior School. Headteacher: Andy Wardle. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community. We pray today for Lizzie McWhirter (RE, Spirituality and Schools Officer) who will be leading a Pentecost Day at St Nicholas Primary School, Alcester today.

Sat 14

Matthias the Apostle

Clifton-on-Dunsmore, Newton and Brownsover. Clergy: Tim Davis, Malcolm Garratt Readers: Peter Kent, Catherine Hammond. We pray for God's blessing on these parishes. We thank God for our growing relationships in the wider community especially in schools. Please pray for the benefice as Diane Bussey leaves and pursues a new and exciting ministry elsewhere.

Sun 15

Pentecost (Whit Sunday)

Leam Valley Benefice. Clergy: Jane Close. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community. We pray for the Pentecost Beacon event at Coventry Cathedral today, which is the culmination of the Coventry Pilgrimage. In addition, the event will include Baptisms and Confirmations.

Mon 16 Wolston St Margaret's Primary School. Headteacher: Julia McLeod. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school. We pray for the Bishop's Council which meets this evening.
*Caroline Chisholm, Social Reformer, 1877

Tue 17 Leamington Hastings CofE Academy. Headteacher: Rose Plumbley. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community. We pray for Tree, a meal and discussion group at the Bardsley Youth Project, and for Bishop Christopher as he joins them today. We pray for the Glebe Committee which meets this afternoon.

Wed 18 Newbold-on-Avon with Long Lawford. Clergy: Paul Wilkinson. We thank God for the development of our monthly Family Praise service during the last year. We pray for God's blessing on plans to renew our mission in Long Lawford. We pray for Bishop John as he hosts a visit of French Pastors, who are coming to the diocese to learn more about Fresh Expressions of church.

Thu 19 St Matthew's Bloxam Primary School, Rugby. Headteacher: Sukie Owers. We pray for God's blessing on the pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community. We pray for the Bishop's Core Staff Team who meet today.
*Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, Restorer of Monastic Life, 988

Fri 20 Draycote Group. Clergy: Vacancy. Reader: Kevin Downham. We give thanks for the new Saturday afternoon worship service called "Celebrate@4". We give thanks for the community that has built up. We pray too for God's help during the interregnum and that the right candidate would be found soon.
*Alcuin of York, Deacon, Abbot of Tours, 804

Sat 21 Wolston and Church Lawford. Clergy: Kevin Flanagan, Paul Simmonds, Laurence Wickens. Readers: Jayne Flanagan, David Gadsby, Jayne Hayward, Helen Simmonds and Isobel Wickens. We pray for Kevin's sabbatical, for 'Who Let the Dad's Out' and our young people taking exams. We also pray for those involved in building projects in both churches.
*Helena, Protector of the Holy Places, 330

Sun 22 St Andrew's Benn Primary School, Rugby. Headteacher: Abi Huggins. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community. We pray for Bishop Christopher and all those being Confirmed at St Michael's, Stoke this morning, and for the Coventry City Praise service this evening.
Trinity Sunday

Mon 23 The Revel Group. Clergy: Jonathan Fox. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community. We pray for the residential meeting of the House of Bishops at Bishopthorpe, York, which begins today. We also pray for all those who complete the Funeral Ministry course today.

Tue 24 St Oswald's CofE Academy, Rugby. Headteacher: Hillary Lorimer. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community. We pray for the Investment Sub-Committee which meets today.
*John and Charles Wesley, Evangelists, Hymn Writers, 1791 and 1788

Wed 25 We pray for the interviews at Bishop's House today for the sponsored candidates at theological college, who are due to be ordained next year. We pray for the Diocesan Finance Group which meets this morning.
*The Venerable Bede, Monk at Jarrow, Scholar, Historian, 735
*Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, 709

Thu 26 We pray for Bishop Christopher today as he preaches at the 350th Anniversary Thanksgiving service of the St Thomas Rich's School, Gloucester.
*Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, 605
*John Calvin, Reformer, 1564
*Philip Neri, Founder of the Oratorians, Spiritual Guide, 1595
Corpus Christi

Fri 27 Hillmorton. Clergy: Margaret Simmons, Steve Gold, Lindsay Hughes, Ted Lyons. We love our community, thanking God for continuing signs of growth, and our connections with young families through Messy Church, Toddler group and Baptism ministry. Please pray for our candidates being confirmed on May 15th and for our hope to recruit a children and families worker.

Sat 28 m2o Rugby. Clergy: Hannah and Olly Mears. Curates: Charles and Emma Higgins. Readers: Mervyn Hill, David Long, John Martin-Jones, Mairi Mowbray, Ian Nott. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.
*Lanfranc, Prior of Le Bec, Archbishop of Canterbury, Scholar, 1089

Sun 29 Rugby St George. Clergy: Hilary Iredale. Readers: Carol Davies, Mike Iredale. Youth worker: Alan Stevens. We thank God for new members, continued good school links and a growing awareness of God among us. Please pray for us as we seek to grow in worship and passionate spirituality; and for minimum disruption as new lighting, sound and vision are installed.
First Sunday after Trinity

Mon 30 Bagington, Bubbenhall and Ryton-on-Dunsmore. Clergy: David Wintle. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.
*Josephine Butler, Social Reformer, 1906
*Joan of Arc, Visionary, 1431
*Apolo Kivebulaya, Priest, Evangelist in Central Africa, 1933

Tue 31 Rugby St Andrew. Clergy: Imogen Nay and all the retired clergy, Readers and our new Children and Family Worker, Wendy Coleman. We thank God for the new children worshipping with us as well as the general increase in peace and unity in the church. Please pray for further growth in our spirit, in our knowledge of God and in our commitment to work with the poor.
The Visit of Mary to Elizabeth

A New Adventure

In recent years the village of Long Lawford, on the outskirts of Rugby, has grown rapidly and will continue to do so. My husband, Stuart, and I have felt a growing sense of God's calling to the village to help develop a missional church which begins within the community itself; in small groups rather than beginning with the church, recognising that if we do mission then we get church, not other way round.

So in May 2016 we are starting this new adventure, and we are very excited to be working alongside the existing Anglican congregation at St John's and the Methodist church in the village, building on the excellent things that are already happening. Seeking where God is already at work, and seeing where He leads us. The model of church, that we feel this initiative will be based on, is groups in the community, with a focus on building relationships with each other and with Jesus, through Worship, bible and action which will enable us to grow as disciples and each group will become Church; which then join together to celebrate all that God is doing.

Author and Pastor Mike Breen says "If we make disciples we will always get church, try to build a church and we will rarely get disciples". So, small groups will be the key to discipling; encouraging a worshipping heart and being missional community, and we would like to work with those we know who already live in the community to open their homes for small groups; whilst continuing to build upon existing church, like the Messy church at Methodist church, enabling people to become disciples of Jesus in their context.

We value your prayers for Long Lawford and this new adventure, that God will be seen and known across the area.

Revd Diane Bussey



Diane & Stuart Bussey

New Beginnings

Work has finally started on the development of 'Houlton', the new extension to Rugby; featuring 6200 new homes, 4 new schools and extensive commercial, retail, employment & community facilities. The church in Rugby is working to be right at the centre of this new place, aiming to build community from day 1.

After investing in building relationships with the developer and local agencies for the last few years we are seeing early fruit in terms of opportunities to have a prominent role in the community as soon as residents start to arrive.

We have the chance to work with the developers on setting up and operating the first community space right at the heart of the first phase of the development and next to the marketing suite and café – enabling us to missionally serve the new community even before the first house is occupied. Later in the year we are hoping to be one of the very first families living on site, with a vicarage as one of the first few houses built, so that we can welcome each new resident to the development. Additionally, it has been recently announced that the first primary school, opening in September 2017, will be a Church of England school, so we look forward to working closely with the Diocesan Board of Education and the leadership of the school as it is appointed. There are also lots of exciting opportunities for us to be deeply involved in the longer-term thinking & planning of community and social development in Houlton.

To support all this we are gathering a group of people who will form the initial missional and worshipping community in Houlton. This will be ecumenical from the outset; with the Methodist church having appointed a new deacon to work with us, and with significant interest from Rugby Revive, the 'churches together' organisation in Rugby.

Please pray for us! This is going to be an exciting time, as we try to keep our eyes focussed on what God is up to in this new place and join in.



Revd Steve Gold (right)