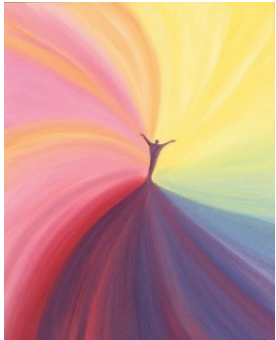




Prayer Diary

September 2016

Praise and Thanksgiving



The Westminster Catechism proclaims that 'Humanity's chief aim is to worship God and enjoy him for ever.' Whenever we gather around the Lord's Table, we remind ourselves that it is indeed right, our duty and our joy at all times and in all places to give God thanks and praise. St Paul bids his readers, that includes each of us, to give thanks *in* everything (1 *Thess.* 5:18) and also to give thanks *for* all things (Eph. 5:20).

There is a danger that, as materially comfortable Christians in the West, we have become 'consumers' in our approach to God and to worship. So we praise God when we feel like it, or we praise God

only when we have a particular thing to thank him for. This 'God on *my* terms' approach (as distinct from 'me on God's terms') keeps us earthbound. Paul, writing from prison, invites his readers to 'Rejoice in the Lord always'. Paul and Silas in the stocks in Philippi (*Acts* 16:25-34), smarting from the wounds of their flogging, sing praises to God.

When we praise God, the 'ecology' within us changes, God changes us. So to the degree that we are changed, the circumstances around us are changed because we are part of those circumstances or that environment.

This praise of God, *whatever* the circumstances around us, is counter-intuitive. It doesn't make sense to the world. But to praise God, to thank God, grows God's life and God's love in us. Father Benson SSJE, founder of the Cowley Fathers, wrote: 'We do not praise God because he has caused us to triumph, but because to praise God *is* to triumph.'

Praise is an act of obedience and an act of faith. The author of Hebrews writes, 'Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise - the fruit of lips that can confess his name' (13:15). So let us pray for both the desire and the discipline to praise and thank God 'seven whole days, not one in seven'. (*Herbert*)

'Every day I will bless you and praise you more for ever and ever.'
Ps. 145:1

+ John

Focus on Coventry South Deanery

Coventry South Deanery covers the south and west of the city framed by Eastern Green and Allesley Park in the north and Cheylesmore and Styvechale in the east. The eleven parishes that make up the deanery have significant economic disparities: according to the Church Urban Fund, several parishes (Westwood, Finham and Eastern Green) are among the wealthiest in the country, while others (Canley and Tile Hill) are among the most deprived.

The proportion of parishioners from an ethnic minority is smaller than the other Coventry deaneries but has been growing over recent years. This provides a particular opportunity to help build a sense of community that is inclusive of newer arrivals.

There are a large proportion of adults in their 20s and 30s within the deanery, both students and 'native Coventrians' that provide a clear area of focus for the churches. We are fortunate to have two of the Acceler8 workers based in the deanery: Jonny Dant at St James, Styvechale and Gareth Irvine at Westwood. Several of the parishes focus heavily on encouraging young adults in their congregations to take responsibility in a variety of leadership positions.

The Deanery Synod and clergy chapter continue to meet together with the synod and clergy of Kenilworth Deanery. Sharing stories of successes and challenges is a very important way of encouraging each other and helping the spread of good ideas. Most parishes are engaged with building up their Eight Essential Qualities. The diversity of the churches is demonstrated by notable differences in strengths and weaknesses that the questionnaires reveal from one church to another.

Some of our churches are entering significant periods of change and we ask for your prayers for health, generosity, a growth of loving relationships and the wisdom to identify the opportunities for active mission throughout the deanery.



Mark Perryman
Deanery Lay Chair

Cycle of Prayer - September 2016

With a focus on parishes and schools in Coventry South Deanery

Thu 1 At the start of a new academic year, we pray for all those going back to school or starting at new schools. We pray for pupils, teachers, headteachers, governors and clergy that they all may know Christ's presence with them, ahead of them and alongside them in their new surroundings.
*Giles of Provence, Hermit, c.710

Fri 2 Canley. Clergy: Chris and Angela Howarth. We thank God for the growth in young people & new families attending church. Please pray for helpers for our outreach work during the week. Unusually our congregation is relatively young with most emerging leaders in full time employment.
*The Martyrs of Papua New Guinea, 1901 and 1942

Sat 3 We thank God for the ministry of Readers in the diocese. We pray for the licensing and re-licensing of a number of Readers by Bishop John at a special service at Coventry Cathedral today.
*Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome, Teacher of the Faith, 604

Sun 4 We pray for Linda Wainscot and all those who work with her at the Diocesan Board of Education. We give thanks to God for all that they do supporting, managing, caring for and inspiring schools in the diocese.
*Birinus, Bishop of Dorchester (Oxon), Apostle of Wessex, 650
Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

Mon 5 Eastern Green. Clergy: Greg Smith. Readers: Sue Masters, Lesley Lee. We thank God for increased engagement with our local community through The Church Together in Tile Hill and Eastern Green Village Hall. We pray for the future of our church plant which currently meets at Woodlands School. We pray for continued growth and the right long term venue.

Tue 6 We thank God for those who are called to be ordained ministers in our churches. We pray today for an informal gathering and Evening Prayer at Bishop's House for those preparing to commence their courses of training at theological colleges.
*Allen Gardiner, Founder of the South American Mission Society

Wed 7 We pray for clergy and church leaders who are unwell. We remember especially those who cannot work and minister while they recover or receive treatment. We pray for sensitivity and understanding in churches and congregations, and for unity in working together.

Thu 8 We thank God for our Archdeacons and pray for God's blessing on them, their work and ministry, and their families.
We pray for the Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches (DAC).
*The Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Fri 9 We pray for the ministry and mission of the Cathedral: for new connections with university students as they arrive in Coventry, for the new Pilgrim course starting later this month and for the new interns as they begin their life and work in the Cathedral community.
*Charles Fuge Lowder, Priest, 1880

Sat 10 St James Styvechale. Clergy: Josh Maynard, Carol Newborn and Peter Watkins. Readers: Barbara Carr. We are thankful for the way in which God is giving us a fresh sense of vision and the life and growth that this is bringing. Please pray for our nurture of new believers, our upcoming Alpha course and God's provision for all that is needed as we move forward.

Sun 11 Westwood. Clergy: David Hammond, Chris & Angela Howarth. We thank God for a good (if difficult) joining of two congregations. Please pray for ongoing reorganisation and reorientation around mission and also for many who are sick with long term illness and especially Angela Howarth who is in and out of hospital fighting cancer.
Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

Mon 12 We give thanks to God for all those who serve the Church of England and the wider Anglican Communion as bishops. We pray for Bishops Christopher and John, for their ministry, positions of responsibility, their times of rest and their families. We pray for them both as they attend the College of Bishops' meeting in Oxford this week.

Tue 13 Finham St Martin. Clergy: Jeremy Hyde. Readers: Andrew Barclay, Margaret Hyde. We thank God for the way in which our youth have continued to grow in their faith. Please pray for our Alpha course starting on September 28th. We pray for the Glebe Committee which meets this afternoon.
*John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, Teacher of the Faith, 407

Wed 14 September is World Alzheimer's Month. We pray for all those affected by Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. We give thanks for the progress made in treatments and care, and we pray for greater understanding of the disease.
Holy Cross Day
We pray for the Diocesan Finance Group which meets this morning.

Thu 15 Creator God we give you thanks for all of our farmers as they harvest the crops that feed us. We thank you for the skills of those who will be bringing the harvest in, and we ask that the weather be favourable. We pray that the harvest is bountiful enough to share with all those who are in need.
*Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, Martyr, 258

Fri 16

St John's Primary School. Headteacher: Gary Watson. We thank God for this school community and pray for blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors as they begin a new term together.

*Ninian, Bishop of Galloway, Apostle of the Picts, c.432

*Edward Bouverie Pusey, Priest, Tractarian, 1882

Sat 17

St Andrew's Infant School. Headteacher: Allison Underhill. We thank God for this school community and pray for blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors as they begin a new term together.

*Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen, Visionary, 1179

Sun 18

Seventeenth
Sunday after
Trinity

Fletchamstead. Clergy: Stephen Burch, Anne Richards, Jonathan Hill. Readers: William Arden, Helen Kearney, Tim Day-Pollard, Ann Lancaster. We thank God for growth in young adults and new Life groups. Pray for the new mission activities, 'who let the Dads out' and Afternoon Church both aimed at fringe members.

Mon 19

Leigh Primary School. Headteacher: Debbie Middleton. We thank God for this school community and pray for blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors as they begin a new term together.

We pray for the Diocesan Business Committee which meets this morning.

*Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury, 690

Tue 20

We pray for Bishop Christopher who is chairing the meeting of the Church of England's Faith and Order Commission for the next three days.

We pray for the Diocesan Mission Fund Committee which meets today.

*John Coleridge Patteson and his Companions, Martyrs, 1871

Wed 21

Matthew,
Apostle and
Evangelist

Today marks the International Day of Peace - an annual event designed to bring peace to every individual across the globe. It is also designed to be a day of ceasefire. We pray for God's help in our own lives to cease fighting, stop arguing and make peace with others. We pray for God's dynamic intervention of peace into the most troubled places of conflict.

Thu 22

Today we pray for Buff Forbes Stone as she is licensed by Bishop John as Minister in Charge of St Catherine's Church, Stoke Aldermoor.

We pray for the Parsonages Committee which meets this afternoon.

Fri 23

Cheylesmore. Clergy: Arthur Woo. Readers: John Scattergood, Margaret East, Tony Price. We thank God for our recent prayer retreat at Redhill, and for our recently launched lunch club. Please pray for our Making Disciples. We're thinking through Richard Foster's book on spiritual disciplines and pondering how we might be more disciplined ourselves.

Sat 24

Earlsdon. Clergy: Tulo Raistrick. We thank God for a number of new people who have begun to regularly attend our services in the last year. Please pray for deeper relationships within the church, both with one another and with God, and that more people will join home groups.

Sun 25

Eighteenth
Sunday after
Trinity

Westwood Academy. Headteacher: Jane Benton. We thank God for this Cross of Nails school community and pray for blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors as they begin a new term together.

*Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester, Spiritual Writer, 1626

*Sergei of Radonezh, Russian Monastic Reformer, Teacher of the Faith, 1392

Mon 26

During British Food Fortnight, we give thanks for the growers and producers of food in this country. We thank God for the care that goes in to making food safe for us to eat. We remember those around the world who do not have enough food.

*Wilson Carlile, Founder of the Church Army, 1942

Tue 27

We pray for Bishop John as he attends the annual meeting of the International Commission for Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue this week. We give thanks for his membership in this important ecumenical relationship.

*Vincent de Paul, Founder of the Congregation of the Mission, 1660

Wed 28

Coventry St Mary Magdalen. Clergy: John Green, Dwayne Engh. We pray for God's blessing on the mission and ministry of this parish, giving thanks for the volunteer work placement programme and Vicky, the project coordinator. Please pray for an increase in discipleship, and a sense of 'ownership' as we enter an interregnum.

Thu 29

Michael and All
Angels

Allesley Park and Whoberley. Clergy: Andy, Pam, John with Nic, our Reader. We give thanks for our children and families workers, Marvin and Amy and pray for their on-going financial support. Please pray for the prospect of the church embarking on a building project in the forthcoming months and the finance needed. We remember Andy our vicar, on sabbatical until October.

Fri 30

Tile Hill. Clergy: Nick Leggett. We pray for God's blessing on the mission and ministry of this parish and all who live, work and worship in the local community.

*Jerome, Translator of the Scriptures, Teacher of the Faith, 420

Mission Week at St Oswald's, Tile Hill



Our Mission Week was preceded by a lot of planning and the expenditure of a lot of shoe leather, as leaflets were delivered to nearly 4,000 households.

During the course of the week we celebrated the Mass every day (twice on Tuesday) with a variety of intentions including a Healing Mass and a Requiem Mass and introduced one brand new preacher. Daily Office services were scattered throughout the week with four different members of the church leading, along with two Ignatian meditation services. In addition we threw in a Children's Church event and a Pentecostal-style service, along with a Parish Lunch and a Full English breakfast after Saturday morning's Mass (free food always being popular).

The highlight of the week was the 48 hour vigil. The Sacrament was placed on the Low Altar on Wednesday morning and members of the church were in constant attendance, praying and reading, until Friday – an unfamiliar experience for many.

We had hoped that the week would give a wider exposure of the church to the local community, and indeed we saw some new faces, a few of whom are now regulars. However, the greatest growth has not been in numbers, but in the spiritual lives of existing members of the congregation – not least those who lead the prayer services. Many had never attended Daily Offices before, with Compline especially being a new experience, and others found the Healing and Requiem Masses particularly moving.

As a result of the week we are now expanding our range of services with lay led Daily Offices being added to the schedule along with occasional Stations of the Cross and a monthly Healing Mass.



Duane Harwood
Churchwarden/PCC Secretary
St Oswald's, Tile Hill

BCDM Modules empower everyday Christians

The first year of Coventry Diocese's new lay training programme, the Bishop's Certificate in Discipleship and Mission (BCDM), has been a great success. Over 150 participants have taken part in at least one of numerous interactive modules that have been held in various parishes across the diocese. Headed up by Katherine Walakira, the Diocesan Discipleship and Mission Development Adviser, and supported by an enthusiastic team of ordained and lay people, this year's BCDM modules have included; The Bible in Five Acts, Understanding the Bible – Renewing Your Life and Jesus and the Gospels.

Prior to the formation of the BCDM, lay training in the diocese was largely aimed at those wishing to be trained for an accredited position in the Church, such as an authorised lay minister or Reader. The Diocesan Training Partnership became aware that this left out the majority of the congregation and raised the question, "how does God call the whole of His Church?" As a result, BCDM was formed to equip and empower everyday Christians to recognise their call to be missionary disciples in their daily lives.

Developing healthy churches through the 8 Essential Qualities defined by Natural Church Development is the core strategy of the diocese. The BCDM responds to the results of the Healthy Churches survey by helping churches to grow by addressing the weakest essential quality. This year's theme has been Passionate Spirituality - the quality in which the diocese scored lowest overall. This year's modules were designed to help Christians be bolder in their faith, experience the transforming influence of faith in all areas of their lives and use the Bible as a powerful guide for everyday decisions.

Over the course of this year the BCDM has attracted a wide range of participants from diverse backgrounds and varying experiences of church and life. Nearly a quarter of the participants were in the diocese's focus age group of 20s -30s. The diversity in participants allowed for knowledge and insights to be shared and friendships to develop, leading many to choose to register on further modules.

As the BCDM moves into its second year, new modules are in development and the BCDM team is always on the lookout for different parishes to host modules. If your parish is interested in hosting a module or would like more information about BCDM, please follow www.dioceseofcoventry.org/BCDM or contact Katherine Walakira at Katherine.Walakira@CovCofE.org.

