

# Prayer Diary

January 2017

*'And the glory of the Lord shone around them and they were terrified.' (Lk 2.9)*



The season of Epiphany invites us to witness and to respond to the *glory* of God. The shepherds, surrounded by the light of the glory of God, are surrounded by the song of the angels giving glory to God: *'Glory to God in the highest...'*. When the Magi eventually are led to the Christ child, God's glory is made manifest to them. In Epiphany too we celebrate the shining out (epiphany) of the glory of God, the Holy Trinity as Jesus is baptised by his cousin John in the Jordan. In Epiphany also we are reminded of what St John the Evangelist describes as the first of the signs by which Jesus revealed his glory at the wedding at Cana, water into wine.

Just as when Moses encounters the light and fire of the glory of God in the burning bush at Sinai, just as Peter, James and John are overwhelmed by the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ on the mountain, the uncreated glory of God is revealed through Christ and His creation. The revelation of the glory of God is not so much the revealing of something new as the 'unveiling' of what already is.

So this month we might wish to pray especially that our eyes and the eyes of our hearts (Eph.1.18) be opened to the glory of God. We might pray that we know with St Paul that *'It is God who said "Let light shine out of darkness" who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.'* 2 Cor.4.6.

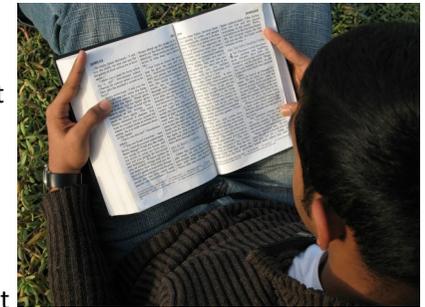
We respond to the *glory of God* by giving *glory to God*. Every time we do this, we join with the whole company of heaven. Ignatius of Antioch, shortly before his martyrdom, wrote *'we must meet more often to give glory to God.'*

*Glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth...*

+ John

## Open the Book

Have you ever thought that children in schools might be missing out on what the Bible has to show them? They could go through their entire school life without ever learning about Adam and Eve, Noah, David, Jonah or even the life of Jesus and the stories of the New Testament.



**"OPEN THE BOOK"** offers a programme of themed and dramatised Bible stories to local primary or infant schools. Each session is around 10 minutes long and fits comfortably into the school's regular assembly slot. Our team of volunteer storytellers use drama, mime, props, costume - even the children and staff themselves - to present Bible stories in ways that are lively, engaging, informative and great fun for everyone involved! We never have any shortage of volunteers to get involved!

Currently we visit two schools in Nuneaton – All Saints Church of England Primary School and Nursery, and Chilvers Coton Infant School. There is a real contrast with one being a church school and the other having children who are mainly Muslim, however, we are welcomed and valued in both schools!

Our team is a "gang of five" but there is always space and need for new recruits. We tell the Bible stories during the assembly on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons each week.

We began in 2013 with a Saturday making props and then we delivered two stories as a pilot project to see how it would work. It was such a success that we soon registered as an official "Open the Book" team which gives us access to all sorts of resources and advice on making props.

The children love it. The staff love it. The team love it. We have even had Ofsted inspectors' approval, so God must be blessing this project! We have built up great relationships with the schools, staff and pupils alike, and it is not uncommon to be greeted in the supermarket by children recognising us from Open the Book. Both schools now visit the church regularly for their own special services.

Why not get a team together from your local churches? You will not regret it!

For more information visit [www.openthebook.net](http://www.openthebook.net)

*Rev'd Frank Seldon*

# Cycle of Prayer - January 2017

With a focus on parishes and schools in Nuneaton Deanery

**Sun 1**

Naming and Circumcision of Jesus

Hartshill & Galley Common. Clergy: Heather Barnes. Readers: Nick Miles, Sally Young, Hilary Cryer. We thank God for the links we have with all our local schools and for the opportunities we have to work with our young people. Please pray for us as we seek to develop this work and as we look at new ways we can serve and engage with the local community.

**Mon 2**

Wolvey Primary School. Headteacher: Tana Wood. We pray for God's blessing upon all the children, parents, teachers, staff and governors.  
\*Basil the Great and Gregory of Nazianzus, Bishops, Teachers of the Faith  
\*Seraphim, Monk of Sarov, Spiritual Guide, 1833  
\*Vedanayagam Samuel Azariah, Bishop in South India, Evangelist, 1945

**Tue 3**

Atherstone. Clergy: Michael Brandsma. Readers: John Stock, Susan Smith. We thank God for the provision of people, furniture and finances over the past 12 months and for the continuing interaction between civic authorities, community and congregation. Please pray for God's blessing upon the church members and local community, especially the schools.

**Wed 4**

Horeston Grange LEP. Clergy: Vacancy. We thank God for our Prayer Shawl ministry. May it enjoy continued success helping both recipients and knitters. We also give thanks for the successful relaunch of Fun Club. Please pray for our church in this time of interregnum. Help us to grow and attract young people to safeguard the witness and survival of the church.

**Thu 5**

Nuneaton, St Mary & Camp Hill. Clergy: Mark Liddell. Tom Wintle, Brian Regan. Reader: Helen Allred. We thank God for blessing our work in the local schools and we ask that you support, through your prayers, our mission to share the Gospel and build community in the parishes of St Mary the Virgin, Nuneaton and St Mary and St John, Camp Hill.

**Fri 6**

The Epiphany

Exhall. Clergy: Andrew Gandon, Rick White. Readers: Hilary Cryer, John Owen, Jane Smith, Chris Wilson. We pray for Bill Walton who is now in training at Queen's Birmingham. After a good Away Day recently, pray with us for the appointment of a Children and Families worker.

**Sat 7**

Bedworth Team. Clergy: Martin Hammond. We would value prayers for the appointment of a new Rector. We give thanks for our latest family fun day which had a range of events including a talented ukulele band. All money raised went to support our local mission and our mission partner, TABS International Kenya.

**Sun 8**

First Sunday of Epiphany

As we celebrate "Plough Sunday" on the first Sunday of Epiphany, we pray for all farmers and all those who look after God's creation. We particularly pray that the crops planted will yield a good harvest and provide enough food for all.

**Mon 9**

St. Paul's, Stockingford. Clergy: Kate Massey, John Law, Don Jones. Readers: Emma Kennedy, Colin Udall, Chris Jones. We thank God for many blessings over the past year. We pray for God's guidance as we continue to build relationships with our community.

**Tue 10**

All Saints Primary School and Nursery. Headteacher: Sally Kaminski-Gaze. Abbey Infants School. Headteacher: Sharon Thorpe. We pray for God's blessing upon all the children, teachers, staff and governors. We pray for the Diocesan Business Committee which meets this morning.  
\*William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1645

**Wed 11**

Today we pray for the Reverend Graeme Anderson as he is instituted by Bishop Christopher as Vicar of Holy Trinity, Coventry. We also pray for Bishop John who is meeting with the Fosse Deanery Chapter and making visits in the deanery.  
\*Mary Slessor, Missionary in West Africa, 1915

**Thu 12**

We pray for encouragement for all those who work in the cathedral and diocesan offices, and give thanks for all their work and ministry. We pray for the Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches (DAC).  
\*Aelred of Hexham, Abbot of Rievaulx, 1167  
\*Benedict Biscop, Abbot of Wearmouth, Scholar, 689

**Fri 13**

St Paul's Primary School. Headteacher: Carl Thornton. We pray for God's blessing upon all the children, parents, teachers, staff and governors.  
\*Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, Teacher of the Faith, 367  
\*Kentigern (Mungo), Missionary Bishop in Strathclyde and Cumbria, 603  
\*George Fox, Founder of the Society of Friends (the Quakers), 1691

**Sat 14**

We thank God for the work of The Farming Community Network, a Christian organisation that supports farmers during difficult times. We pray for the FCN Warwickshire Plough Service being held today at Coleshill Parish Church.

**Sun 15**

Second Sunday of Epiphany

Today Bishop Christopher will be presenting awards at the Bishop's Certificate in Discipleship and Mission graduation ceremony at St Nicholas Church, Kenilworth. We give thanks for all those who write, organise and run BCDM modules. We pray for the candidates being confirmed by Bishop John in Wolvey.

**Mon 16** As Bishop John visits HMP Onley today to meet the recently appointed Governor, Darren Hughes, and the Managing Chaplain, the Revd David Spademan, we pray for peace, patience and wisdom for all those involved in prison ministry.

**Tue 17** We pray for the Bishop's Core Staff Team on the first day of their residential meeting at Launde Abbey.  
We pray for the Diocesan Mission Fund Committee which meets today.  
\*Antony of Egypt, Hermit, Abbot, 356  
\*Charles Gore, Bishop, Founder of the Community of the Resurrection, 1932

**Wed 18** Bulkington. Clergy: Vacancy. Reader: Ken Sleeman. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.  
We thank God for the work and ministry of Fresh Expressions of church. We pray for new and creative ways of worshipping God to be found and formed.  
\*Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

**Thu 19** Fillongley and Corley. Clergy: Ian Kennedy. We thank God for our growing Sunday School at Corley, and again for our successful Christmas Tree Festival at Fillongley. We pray for new leaders for our Youth Group and for our continued outreach to our communities.  
\*Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester, 1095

**Fri 20** We thank God for the George Eliot Hospital and the Mary Ann Evans Hospice. We pray for all staff and volunteers, and especially the Chaplains: Ricarda Witcombe, Gill Hancock and teams.  
\*Richard Rolle of Hampole, Spiritual Writer, 1349

**Sat 21** Nuneaton, Weddington and Caldecote. Clergy: Kelly Betteridge, Martin Butt. Readers: John Hitchcock, Sally Hince, Marie Paterson, Terry Lenton. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.  
\*Agnes, Child Martyr at Rome, 304

**Sun 22** St Michael's Primary School. Headteacher: Chris Errington.  
St Nicolas Academy. Headteacher: Tracey McGevver. We pray for God's blessing upon all the children, teachers, staff, governors.  
\*Vincent of Saragossa, Deacon, first Martyr of Spain, 304

Third Sunday of Epiphany

**Mon 23** Wolvey with Copston Magna and Withybrook. Readers: David Hopkins, Yvonne Pitt, Ken Sleeman. We thank God for the applicant for our Vicar's post and pray that he will be suitable and will bring new vision to our parishes. We thank God for all those who have kept our services going during interregnum. Please pray that the interregnum will soon end.

**Tue 24** Mancetter. Clergy: Anthony Tooby. Reader: Brenda Moss. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community. We pray for our community as we fight against the building of a chicken broiler plant not far from the church and community.  
\*Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva, Teacher of the Faith, 1622

**Wed 25** Chilvers Coton with Astley. Clergy: Frank Seldon, Jonathan Fryer, Steven Medley. Ordinand: Rupert Allen. Reader: Peter Wrigley. We thank God for our vibrant and growing Messy Church, and the Open the Book project in two local schools. Please pray for our Winter Night Shelter, plans for a Mission Week in September & grant funding for urgent repairs at Astley.

The Conversion of Paul

**Thu 26** Bournebrook Primary School. Headteacher: Alison Patchett.  
Queen's Academy. Headteacher: Hannah Carvell. We pray for God's blessing upon all the children, parents, teachers, staff and governors.  
We pray for the Bishop's Core and Extended Staff teams which meet today.  
\*Timothy and Titus, Companions of Paul

**Fri 27** Today is Holocaust Memorial Day. A day to remember the millions of people killed in the Holocaust, Nazi Persecution and in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. We pray for God to defend and protect all those who fall victim to the forces of evil and to give us the courage to stand against hatred and oppression.

**Sat 28** St James' Academy. Headteacher: Michelle Cuskelly.  
The Canons Primary School. Headteacher: Michaela Fallon. We pray for God's blessing upon all the children, parents, teachers, staff and governors.  
\*Thomas Aquinas, Priest, Philosopher, Teacher of the Faith, 1274

**Sun 29** Attleborough. Reader: Maggi Savin-Baden. We give thanks to God for providing us with opportunities for the church family to serve God during the interregnum. We ask for prayers during the process as we seek to appoint a new vicar.

Fourth Sunday of Epiphany

**Mon 30** St, Laurence with St. John's Ansley and St Wilfrid's with St. Michael's Arley. Reader: Gwyneth Hickman. We ask for your prayers as we struggle to find our way forward especially at this time of interregnum. We pray for all those who are helping with our services.  
\*Charles, King and Martyr, 1649

**Tue 31** Today we pray for Bishop Christopher and Bishop John who are representing the West Midlands Bishops at a joint residential meeting with the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.  
We pray for the Glebe Committee which meets this afternoon.  
\*John Bosco, Priest, Founder of the Salesian Teaching Order, 1888

## Acceler8 in Nuneaton



I have had the privilege of working in the Acceler8 team since November 2015, initially at St. Mary's, Leamington Spa and now at St. Nicolas, Nuneaton since September this year. The role of a 20s-30s Development Leader is as diverse as the age range would suggest. We've been entrusted with freedom to fulfil our aim of making new disciples in the 20s and 30s age group and supporting the young adults within our churches.

My approach to the roles at St. Mary's and St. Nicolas has been quite different. St. Mary's has an established core of 20s and 30s and scored strongly in the Holistic Small Groups category of the NCD survey. Therefore, I focused predominantly on evangelism and encouraging young people to explore their spiritual gifts and potential.

As I came to faith at St. Mary's five years ago in my late 20s, I felt God was prompting me to move on and challenge myself in a different church context. This led me to St. Nicolas which has fewer young people, though is seeing exciting growth through Messy Church and its school links.

I immediately established a fortnightly 20s and 30s group called L.E.D. To date we have had 7 events, spiritual and social, which have been well received. We have a core of approximately 10 regulars and had around 30 people attend our most popular gathering. Due to the breadth of this age range and the busy nature of their lives, every event has been different and we vary the times and days of our meetings to accommodate as many people as possible.

My current focus is to build relationships with those already within and around St. Nicolas and help them on their faith journeys. I'm also assisting St. Nicolas in becoming more appealing to young people and have recently redesigned their website.

I love seeing Jesus radically transforming lives. I am looking forward to helping more people across Nuneaton and Bedworth deepen their relationships with Him.

You are welcome to contact me via [20s30s@stnicolaschurch.org.uk](mailto:20s30s@stnicolaschurch.org.uk).

**Mark Seabourne**  
**20s-30s Development Leader**

## Focus on Nuneaton deanery

Happy New Year from the frozen north! Nuneaton Deanery is the most northerly deanery in the Diocese. It has one of the largest populations in the Church of England and continues to grow with lots of new housing developments in various stages of building. Nuneaton itself is the largest town in Warwickshire. We have a lot of clergy posts, although currently many of these are vacant posts, mainly due to clergy retirements. It is also one of the poorer areas of Coventry and Warwickshire Diocese, as confirmed in recent Church Urban Fund research.

The Deanery Chapter has a mixture of stipendiary, self-supporting and retired clergy, from a range of traditions. We have an interesting mix of rural and suburban churches and we endeavour to support each other as much as we can. The Deanery is currently subsidised financially to the level of two full-time posts by other Deaneries in the Diocese, for which we are extremely grateful. We are however starting to take up the challenge of supporting each other financially rather than relying on help from outside.

There are good signs of growth across the Deanery, both spiritually and numerically. We were pleased to welcome the BCDM course to the north when one of the modules was hosted in Nuneaton and it was well attended. We look forward to another module in the new year. Another area of growth has been Messy Church. Churches that have been running Messy Church have been sharing their experience with other churches and now it is growing across the Deanery in both rural and suburban settings.

Our churches have also been working with our ecumenical partners to help transform our communities. An example of this is our churches providing volunteers, financial support and hosting facilities for the Nuneaton Foodbank, which distributes food to those in need every weekday. On average 260 adults and 100 children are helped every month. The churches also work together to run the Nuneaton Winter Night Shelter from 1<sup>st</sup> December to 28<sup>th</sup> February. We provide a hot meal and overnight accommodation for up to 10 homeless people every night.

Please pray for us as we try to build God's kingdom here.

Happy New Year!



**Rev'd Frank Seldon**  
**Area Dean**