

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, and getting bigger! We have a lot of clergy posts, although currently many of these are vacant posts. Please pray for these churches and the faithful congregations who continue to use their gifts to bring the Good News of Jesus to their communities.

The Deanery has 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 1.9 full-time posts by other Deaneries in the Diocese, for which we are extremely grateful. Many of our churches have been giving sacrificially to ensure that we can continue to provide ministry to our growing communities. Nuneaton Deanery is also one of the poorer areas of the diocese, as confirmed in recent research by Church Urban Fund.

Our churches have also been busy working with our ecumenical partners to help transform our communities. An example of this is 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 1st December to 28th February. We provide a hot meal and overnight accommodation for up to 12 homeless people every night. Sadly, the need for this provision continues to grow.

Life is hard for many people but there are also lots of times of joy. We are looking forward to celebrating the visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury later this year, as we welcome him back to Nuneaton, where he was a Curate.

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

Happy New Year!



Revd Frank Seldon
Area Dean



Prayer Diary

January 2018

The Diocese of Coventry is 100 this year!



It's a New Year - the Centenary year for the Diocese, and the Cathedral. We started our preparations several years ago, with conversations in Diocesan and Deanery Synods and Chapters. We discovered that the Diocese wants to grow as a place for Reconciliation, Renewal and Generous Relationships.

Each of us is invited to be know that for ourselves. So our prayer mediation this month is to encourage us to seek God's Holy Spirit to make Reconciliation, Renewal and Generous Relationships a reality in our own lives. When we pray that God will make a difference in the world or the church we are asking him to help us be that difference - it's no good to ask God to change everyone else and leave us untouched!

To be reconciled is to have the barriers of the past between us and others, and us and God, broken down and for a new, shared future to emerge. To be renewed is to know the power of God's love coursing through our lives, waking us up to the wonders of all that Jesus has done for us and all creation. To be in generous relationships speaks for itself - we know what it means, but it needs practice.

This Centenary year we will have lots of opportunities to gather together and grow those relationships, especially when Archbishop Justin comes to visit us in May (2nd-5th). On Saturday May 5th we will have a massive Diocese Celebration for all ages and all parishes in the Cathedral, with contemporary music, dance and even a Lego Cathedral to inspire you to play your part in building the Diocese designed by God.

There's so much to thank God and pray for in this Centenary year - let's get started straight away!

John Witcombe
Dean of Coventry

Thoughts of a new(ish) Lay Chair



Being relatively new to being a Lay Chair to a deanery, I thought it would be interesting to use this article to help me gather my thoughts on being appointed to the post.

My first reaction, which kicked in just seconds after being nominated and voted in, was that I have some very big boots to fill, and that I hoped I could do half as good a job as the departing Lay Chair, Peter Rogers has done. I am particularly aware that Peter was, and still is, one of my strongest supporters and has been keen for me to take a more active role in the diocese for a while. Pete-thank you for your support and confidence.

Next comes the enjoyment when I encounter the looks of astonishment on the faces of old friends and acquaintances when you answer their question, 'so, what are you up to nowadays.' Surprise, shock and laughter are all reactions I have experienced since I took up the post. My favourite response however, was the high pitch that accompanied the 'You!', from someone I used to worship with when he knew me as a teenager. Priceless!

I do feel honoured to help represent the deanery whenever a new member of the clergy team joins. I have been to three different churches so far, each was different, and each enriching in their own way.

One slight downside is that I can be seen, by some, as a representative of the diocese. Especially if there is a grievance and the main cause of it or the reason for it has not been fixed. Sadly, when I explain that whatever the problem is, it is not my doing, and that I don't even understand it or have no influence to overcome it, the response has been one of, 'well what use are you then.' Nuneaton folk do like to call it as they see it. But then, as a proud member of that group I do very much the same.

I think this last point underlines the problem; most parishioners have little or no understanding of what the role entails. Frank, our Area Dean, Kerry, our Area Secretary and the other members of our Standing Committee have all been invaluable in helping me settle into the position. There is a lot of love, respect and a shared vision there, and with their help, I hope I can grow into the role, and to borrow a phrase from my old profession-make sure my time in post adds value to it.

David Spiers
Lay Chair

Camp Hill celebrates 50 years

On the 10th September 1967, the Right Reverend Cuthbert Bardsley came to Camp Hill to consecrate and dedicate the newly built Parish Church of St Mary & St John. Thirteen years previous, the newly-priested Dennis Sneath began a mission project to the growing estate, which was being built to house miners, quarry workers, and others for the local industries.



Initially, the church met in the builders' hut, and then a hall was built to serve as a community space and a church; in the years that followed, funds were raised to build a new church for the new parish. Bricks were 'sold' for 6d about the estate after Mass each Sunday and further gifts from local businesses and individuals meant that, by 1967 Camp Hill had its own church - built by the people of the parish, for the people of the parish. 50 years later we gathered to celebrate half a century of faithful witness here on Camp Hill.

The celebrations began with the Angelus being sung at midday, before the Right Reverend Jonathan Goodall, the Bishop of Ebbsfleet, alongside twenty concelebrating priests and the Archdeacon Missioner, offered Mass for more than 150 people, including many local residents, a good number of visitors, the Mayor and Mayoress of Nuneaton and Bedworth, and Marcus Jones MP. At the same time, thanks to volunteers from the parishes of All Saints, Chilvers Coton and St Paul, Stockingford we were able to offer our first ever Messy Church in the community centre over the road, at which around a dozen or more children enjoyed crafts and celebration. Mass and Messy Church ended about the same time and all gathered then in the newly decorated Church Hall for lunch before the celebrations came to a close at 3.30pm with the Litany of the Sacred Heart and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Across the afternoon we are confident that some 200 people participated and it was a great way to give thanks for our fifty years but, more still, to reconnect and engage with the community for whom our church was built. We thank, sincerely, the parishes of Chilvers Coton and Stockingford and all who attended and also the Diocesan Mission Fund who helped us to put the event on and who have offered further support as we try and develop Messy Church, which we hope to run again.

Revd Thomas Wintle
*Curate at St Mary & St John,
Camp Hill*

Wed 24

Mancetter. Clergy: Interregnum. Please pray for St Peters at this time of interregnum. May we unite and move forward as we seek a new minister. We ask God's blessing on our PCC and churchwardens at this time, and give thanks for the visiting clergy who are assisting with services.
*Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva, Teacher of the Faith, 1622

Thu 25

The Conversion
of Paul

Camp Hill. Clergy: Thomas Wintle. We pray with thanks for the success of the 50th Anniversary Celebrations and for continued growth in faith and number. We pray for the Bishop's Core and Extended Staff teams which meet today.

Fri 26

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, Martin Hammond and their teams.
*Timothy and Titus, Companions of Paul

Sat 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.

Sun 28

Fourth Sunday
of Epiphany

We give thanks for the work Bishop Christopher and Bishop John do around the diocese. We pray today for Bishop John who will be leading a confirmation service in Bishop's Tachbrook. Also, we pray for Bishop Christopher who will be leading a breakfast service at Flecknoe.
*Thomas Aquinas, Priest, Philosopher, Teacher of the Faith, 1274

Mon 29

Nuneaton, Weddington and Caldecote. Clergy: Kelly Betteridge. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community. We pray for Sarah Hills, Coventry Cathedral's Canon for Reconciliation Ministry, as she travels to Cuba to visit Community of the Cross of Nails partners.

Tue 30

St Michael's Primary School. Headteacher: Chris Errington.
St Nicolas Academy. Headteacher: Sally Saunders. We pray for God's blessing upon all the children, teachers, staff, governors.
We pray for the Glebe Committee which meets this afternoon.
*Charles, King and Martyr, 1649

Wed 31

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.
*John Bosco, Priest, Founder of the Salesian Teaching Order, 1888

Cycle of Prayer - January 2018

With a focus on parishes and schools in Nuneaton Deanery

Mon 1

Naming and
Circumcision of
Jesus

As we enter into 2018, the centenary year of the Diocese of Coventry, we celebrate the life of our diocese. We give thanks for the Lord's faithfulness over the last one hundred years, for the disciples gathered and the communities transformed by reconciling love. We pray that we will be filled afresh with the Holy Spirit this new year.

Tue 2

Nuneaton, St Mary. Clergy: Mark Liddell. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.
*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

Wed 3

Exhall. Clergy: Andrew Gandon, Stephen Carter. We give thanks for a great start in recent months made by Jen, our new Families' and Children's Worker. Pray with us for new ideas being trialled as we move into 2018, but also for the challenges of serving others in the church family who struggle with advancing age and infirmity.

Thu 4

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.

Fri 5

Wolvey with Copston Magna and Withybrook. Clergy: Jonny Vaughan. Readers: David Hopkins, Yvonne Pitt, Ken Sleeman. We thank God for a new chapter in our church life, with Jonny and his family coming in June. Please pray for our outreach to children, through Messy Church, now in its second year, and a recently started Sunday School.

Sat 6

The Epiphany

Atherstone. Clergy: Michael Brandsma. Reader: John Stock. We thank God for the successful community projects started during the last year and the release of finances during 2017 which have enabled us to complete much needed repair work to the building. Please pray for effectiveness in mission, evangelism through opportunity to serve the community in 2018.

Sun 7

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 8

Attleborough. Clergy: Alison Evans. Readers: Maggi Savin-Baden, Eddie Brown. Please pray with us that God would lead many to come to know Jesus and become His disciples. We give thanks for the Parent and Toddler group which meets weekly and pray that the relationships built there would bear fruit for the Kingdom.

Tue 9

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 Bishop's Core Staff Team on the first day of their residential meeting at Launde Abbey.

Wed 10

St. Paul's, Stockingford. Clergy: Kate Massey, John Law, Don Jones. Readers: Emma Kennedy, Colin Udall, Chris Jones. We thank God for opportunities to work with local schools and young families. We pray for opportunities to work with residents of the Grove Farm estate in our parish.
*William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1645

Thu 11

We pray for encouragement for all those who work in the cathedral and diocesan offices, and give thanks for all their work and ministry.
*Mary Slessor, Missionary in West Africa, 1915

Fri 12

St, Laurence with St. John's Ansley and St Wilfrid's with St. Michael's Arley. Reader: Gwyneth Hickman. Please pray that our continuing interregnum will come to an end soon and that God will send the right person to lead us.
*Aelred of Hexham, Abbot of Rievaulx, 1167
*Benedict Biscop, Abbot of Wearmouth, Scholar, 689

Sat 13

Horeston Grange LEP. Clergy: Interregnum. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.
*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

Sun 14

Second Sunday
of Epiphany

Today Bishop Christopher will be leading a confirmation service at Holy Trinity Coventry. We pray for the candidates being confirmed. Please pray that their faith will be broadened and deepened as they go out in the power of the Spirit.

Mon 15

St Paul's Primary School. Headteacher: Carl Thornton. We pray for God's blessing upon all the children, parents, teachers, staff and governors. We pray for the Diocesan Business Committee which meets this morning.

Tue 16

Bedworth Team. Clergy: Interregnum. We are very thankful for the continued support from a number of clergy during this time of interregnum. Many in the congregation have also taken on additional tasks to support the ministry here and again we are extremely thankful. With this in mind we would value your continued prayers over the appointment of a new Rector at All Saints.

Wed 17

Chilvers Coton with Astley. Clergy: Frank Seldon, Jonathan Fryer, Steve Medley, Rupert Allen. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.
*Antony of Egypt, Hermit, Abbot, 356
*Charles Gore, Bishop, Founder of the Community of the Resurrection, 1932

Thu 18

Bulkington. Clergy: Liz Jones. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community. We pray for the Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches (DAC).
*Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Fri 19

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.
*Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester, 1095

Sat 20

We thank you for the work of the Farming Community Network, a Christian organisation that supports farmers during difficult times. We ask you to bless the ecumenical Plough Service, which takes place tomorrow at Coventry Cathedral.
*Richard Rolle of Hampole, Spiritual Writer, 1349

Sun 21

Third Sunday of
Epiphany

Today we pray for Bishop John who will be speaking to the regional meeting of High Sheriffs. Wolvey Primary School. Headteacher: Tana Wood. We pray for God's blessing upon all the children, parents, teachers, staff and governors.
*Agnes, Child Martyr at Rome, 304

Mon 22

Fillongley and Corley. Clergy: Ian Kennedy. We thank God for our successful Christmas Tree Festival, Carol Services, and for Bournebrook CofE Primary School being judged Outstanding in our recent SIAMS inspection. We pray for our continued outreach to our communities as we step into the New Year.
*Vincent of Saragossa, Deacon, first Martyr of Spain, 304

Tue 23

This week is Cervical Cancer Prevention Week. Every day in the UK nine women are diagnosed with cervical cancer, yet 75% of cervical cancers can be prevented by cervical screening. We pray that this week more women can learn about how they can reduce the risk of cervical cancer.