

Mental Health and Coronavirus



For a long time, the mental health of our nation has been under pressure, with many people seeking support and a safe place to talk. Adding coronavirus into this already pressured situation means that many more people are feeling anxious, low in mood or unable to enjoy life in the same way. Since the beginning of the church, people of Christian faith have provided support to those who are struggling with difficult emotions, and now we are needed more than ever. The 18th –24th May was Mental Health Awareness Week, and the theme was kindness, something we can all show, and which can make a huge difference in the lives of people who are mentally and emotionally vulnerable due to this pandemic.

A new telephone support line, the 'Coventry Churches Info Line' started on Thursday 21st May. This line is open each Tuesday between 10 am and 12 noon, and each Thursday between 2 pm and 4 pm. There is a 24-hour answerphone which will be responded to during session times only. The volunteers who run it are people with lived experience of mental ill health, and those who are trained in signposting, listening and guidance. It is a place to get information on mental health services throughout the city, find a listening ear and a reminder of God's presence in the brokenness of the current circumstances. There is a Punjabi speaker available.

Along with this, the Reverend Ali Hogger, Vicar of St Paul's Foleshill has begun to make online versions of sessions of The Life Course, a Christian mental wellbeing resource she has been running for many years. These are available at on the St. Paul's website and can be used either as an individual or a group.

At St Andrew's Eastern Green, they are running the Tastelife course, designed to help people with eating disorders. To find out more and to register an interest contact the vicar, the Reverend Greg Smith, at gregsmith31760@tiscali.co.uk.



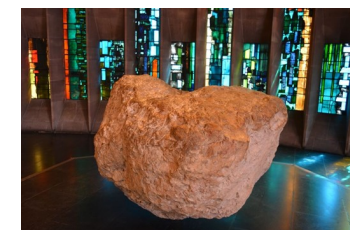
Prayer Diary

June 2020

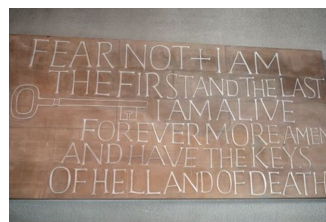
Telling new stories

The world looks very different today. It's June, and the sun may be shining, but our lives are shaped by all that has been happening to us and our world.

I wonder how you have been telling the story? Can you see how it's changed over these past days and weeks? The last Sunday to see worship in the Cathedral was, of all days, Mothering Sunday - the day when historically the mother church of the Diocese celebrates all that the Diocese is, and we gives thanks for our churches, our church families, and our human families. Yet even on that day, we were streaming worship from an empty Cathedral - we thought for the first time, but it turned out to be for the only time, as we were soon to be barred from our buildings altogether.



This has been a comprehensive re-boot of the world, and the church. We are often wanting to 'get back to basics' in our everyday lives. Some things have carried on, which is great - and one is piece of work we had started before we knew what Covid 19 meant, and it included a request that the Diocese could use the Cathedral font! What on earth, our business manager wondered, did the Diocese want with a massive boulder?



It turned out it wasn't *that* font, but rather the type face we use, based on Ralph Beyer's tablets of the word, communicating the biblical truths of our faith. Yet between them, the font, that great, solid lump of rock from a hillside above Bethlehem, in which we mark the start of adult or infant lives as baptised children of God, and the words on the Cathedral walls which remind us that God holds all we are and

will be, we find the security for navigating these strange new lands, and allowing our lives to be re-shaped by the God who was born in history as one of us and walks with us and all his children each step of this extraordinary and unfamiliar journey. May God reveal to us new truths as we live and tell new stories of love and life through these strangest of days.

Very Revd John Witcombe
Dean of Coventry

Open Heaven



Open Heaven is an initiative in the city of Coventry, uniting churches from every denomination, network and stream, to prayer-walk every street during the month of June 2020.

The initiative follows many years of prayer-walking in Coventry by many, and over 12 months of prayer and conversation among

a number of church leaders who have sensed God prompting them to launch Open Heaven as the next step of united prayer. The initiative builds upon the existing work of unity among the churches of the city, exemplified by prayer gatherings such as City Praise and Prayer, and a significant number of inter-church compassion and outreach projects that serve the city.

The Open Heaven app is available to download. On the app you will be able to select streets to pray for and mark when you have prayed for them. The plan is that every street in Coventry will be prayed for by the end of June.

Bishop Christopher says:

“Open Heaven sounded like a great initiative when it was first planned. Little did we know then what Coventry, the country and the world would be going through now. So I’m so grateful that the Lord of the Church laid it on people’s hearts some months ago to pray for every street in our city because now, with every household struggling with the effects of Coronavirus in some way, the urgent call on every disciple of Christ in Coventry is to pray for our city, that heaven will be open and God’s kingdom come to every person.”

If you are not based in Coventry, please pray for this initiative and perhaps consider prayer walking in your local area!

Find out more about Open Heaven on their website, www.openheavencoventry.org

Hope Hub at St Laurence’s Church

On Wednesday 29th April, the Hope Hub opened at St Laurence’s Church. Following extensive listening and conversations with various partners, plus help from funders & supporters volunteering their time; the team at St Laurence’s Church have worked together to create an emergency hub based at the Church Hall to support those in need of extra help during COVID-19 in the Longford ward, which includes the communities of Alderman’s Green, Bell Green, Courthouse Green & Longford.



The offer is focused around 3 core needs they have identified: Emergency Food Parcels, Emotional Support & Safe Place. They are approved to issue foodbank e-vouchers to those who qualify and fulfil delivery of emergency parcels through a simple, referral-to-doorstep contactless delivery system.

The Revd Gareth Irvine, Vicar of St Laurence’s Church says:

“We’ve been so encouraged by the response already from our community to come together during this unprecedented and unsettling period of lockdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

In the history of pandemics, the church has often stepped up to support and care for those most affected through showing mercy, compassion and generosity in people’s time of need. We are overwhelmed and humbled by the support we have already received from our partners Coventry Food Bank & Coventry City Council; together with generous funding from Godiva Lions, Severn Trent & the Heart of England Community Resilience Fund. We have already sourced well over £6000 worth of resources – which is quite amazing!

If you or someone you know needs help right now – please don’t wait, please reach out – your community stands ready to help.”

You can read more about how the team are working and make direct referrals or requests for individuals or families at their dedicated Hope Hub website: stlaurences.org/hopehub or by telephoning 02476 668231.

Wed 24

The Birth of
John the
Baptist

June is SANDS awareness month. The stillbirth and neonatal death charity (SANDS) wants to offer care not only for people who have lost babies after they were born, but for women who have miscarried too. We pray for God's comfort and hope for all families who are affected by the loss of a baby. We pray for the Parsonages Committee which meets this afternoon.

Thu 25

Ferncumbe Primary School, Hatton. Headteacher: Sally Morris. We pray for God's blessing on this school community and we give thanks for all the pupils, teachers, staff, parents and governors.

Fri 26

We thank God for those who write songs and hymns for us to use in worship. We praise God for the wide variety of music available to us and for the songs and hymns that have helped us in our faith journey. We pray that God would stir us in musical worship and bless all those who lead, sing and play instruments.

Sat 27

We pray for Richard Cooke, DDO and Principal of the Diocesan Training Partnership and for all members of the DTP team. We pray for the Deanery Representatives at the Support Fund Meeting today. *Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, Teacher of the Faith, 444

Sun 28

Third Sunday
after Trinity

We pray for all the young people in the Cathedral community, particularly the choristers, as they work hard at school as well as maintaining their faithful commitment to helping lead worship. *Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, Teacher of the Faith, c.200

Mon 29

Peter and Paul,
Apostles

Kenilworth St Nicholas and St Barnabas. Clergy: Stella Bailey, Alison Baxter, Richard Moore. Readers: Heather Alford, Karen Mottram, Margret Bull. Children and Families worker: Kate Ayling. We pray for all those we are engaging with via our online worship and community activities. Especially those who have returned to our community or just started.

Tue 30

All Saints Leek Wootton. Clergy: Jim Perryman, Andrew Haines. Readers: Audrey Rowberry, Nigel Stallard. We give thanks for the strong community spirit within the parish, and that the church is at the heart; thanks too that the worshipping life has flourished through livestream services. Pray that we will not lose what we've gained, when we gain what we've lost!

Cycle of Prayer - June 2020

With a focus on parishes and schools in Kenilworth Deanery

Mon 1

Stoneleigh and Ashow. Clergy: Vacancy. Reader: Audrey Rowberry. We thank God for Revd Nikki Moon and her much valued ministry with us. Please pray for our Churchwardens during the parish vacancy and the possible prolonged interregnum period we may face. *Justin, Martyr at Rome, c.165

Tue 2

June is Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Awareness Month. Six people per day are diagnosed with MND in the UK. MND is a fatal disease that attacks the nerves that control movement so muscles no longer work. We pray for all those who suffer with MND and pray that a cure can be found.

Wed 3

Berkswell St John the Baptist. Clergy: Mark Bratton, Lizzy Holland. Readers: Steve Bell, Richard Hollingdale. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community. *The Martyrs of Uganda, 1886 and 1978

Thu 4

Meriden and Packington, St Laurence. Clergy: Lynda Lilley. Reader: Peter Wright. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community. We pray for the Bishop's Core and Extended Staff teams which meet today. *Petroc, Abbot of Padstow, 6th century

Fri 5

Today is World Environment Day. We pray that God would help us to remember that the environment is home to all life, and that we must take up responsibility to ensure that all life is respected. *Boniface (Wynfrith) of Crediton, Bishop, Apostle of Germany, Martyr, 754

Sat 6

All Saints' Primary School, Leek Wootton. Headteacher: Andrew Morris. We pray for God's blessing on this school community and we give thanks for all the pupils, teachers, staff, parents and governors. *Ini Kopuria, Founder of the Melanesian Brotherhood, 1945

Sun 7

Trinity Sunday

We give thanks for the ministry of retired clergy and the support they provide in so many ways to the lives of our churches across the diocese. We also pray that new clergy and their families will settle in quickly and feel at home in Coventry diocese.

Mon 8 The Ferncumbe Group. Clergy: Keith Mobberley. Reader: Kemble Everitt. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community. We pray for the Diocesan Business Committee which meets this morning.
*Thomas Ken, Bishop of Bath and Wells, Nonjuror, Hymn Writer, 1711

Tue 9 We pray for the Finance and Administration department of the diocese. We pray for the Operations department of the diocese and for the DAC. We give thanks for each of these members of staff.
*Columba, Abbot of Iona, Missionary, 597
*Ephrem of Syria, Deacon, Hymn Writer, Teacher of the Faith, 373

Wed 10 Kenilworth St John. Clergy: Andrew Attwood, Lambert Maudsley, Jane Mullaney. Readers: Anthony Manning, Ken Pollard, Phil Sowards, Val Whiteman. We pray that we go much deeper in our devotion to God at this time and that we hear from God more clearly in terms of future activity and missional opportunities.

Thu 11 Berkswell Primary School. Headteacher: Tracy Drew. We pray for God's blessing on this school community and we give thanks for all the pupils, teachers, staff, parents and governors.
Corpus Christi We pray for the Diocesan Board of Education which meets today.

Fri 12 During National Carers' Week many charities work together to recognise the contribution carers make to local communities, lobby MPs and offer support and encouragement to carers. We pray for all those who give their time to care for others and ask for God's blessing on all carers.

Sat 13 Stoneleigh and Ashow. Clergy: Vacancy. Reader: Audrey Rowberry. We thank God for Revd Nikki Moon and her much valued ministry with us. Please pray for our Churchwardens during the parish vacancy and the possible prolonged interregnum period we may face.

Sun 14 Burton Green Primary School. Headteacher: Andrew Morris. We pray for God's blessing on this school community and we give thanks for all the pupils, teachers, staff, parents and governors.
First Sunday after Trinity
*Richard Baxter, Puritan Divine, 1691

Mon 15 Today is the start of Loneliness Awareness Week. The aim of this week is to create a society where loneliness is recognised openly as something likely to affect us all. Social distancing has amplified loneliness among old and young. We pray for all those who are experiencing loneliness.
*Evelyn Underhill, Spiritual Writer, 1941

Tue 16 We pray for the Diocesan Mission Fund Committee which meets today.
*Richard, Bishop of Chichester, 1253
*Joseph Butler, Bishop of Durham, Philosopher, 1752

Wed 17 Meriden Primary School. Headteacher: Lucy Anderton. We pray for God's blessing on this school community and we give thanks for all the pupils, teachers, staff, parents and governors.
*Samuel and Henrietta Barnett, Social Reformers, 1913 and 1936

Thu 18 Today we pray for Together for Change, a joint venture between the Diocese of Coventry and the Church Urban Fund. We pray for the charity's work in setting up social enterprises and local projects that will support sustainable community transformation and tackle poverty in Coventry and Warwickshire.
*Bernard Mizeki, Apostle of the MaShona, Martyr, 1896

Fri 19 We thank God for the Cathedral Chaplains and their faithful work. We pray for them as they engage with, and minister to, visitors to both the new Cathedral and the ruins of the old Cathedral.
*Sundar Singh of India, Sadhu (holy man), Evangelist, Teacher of the Faith

Sat 20 This week is Refugee Week. We pray for all those who are separated from their loved ones and homeland and those who have fled persecution and are searching for peace and security. We pray, too, for the vital work of the Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre, and that we would find ways of supporting and welcoming refugees into our communities.

Sun 21 Today is Father's Day. We give thanks for our fathers and father figures in our lives. We also pray for those who have lost their fathers or have difficult relationships with their fathers. We thank God for being our heavenly father.
Second Sunday after Trinity

Mon 22 St Nicholas' Primary School, Kenilworth. Headteacher: Sarah Rayson. We pray for God's blessing on this school community and we give thanks for all the pupils, teachers, staff, parents and governors.
*Alban, first Martyr of Britain, c.250

Tue 23 Today is International Widow's Day, a UN ratified day of action to address the poverty & injustice faced by millions of widows and their dependents. We pray for an end to the social stigmatisation and economic deprivation of widows.
*Etheldreda, Abbess of Ely, c.678