

GREENHOUSE

Gareth Fitzpatrick

What happens when we set aside time in our diaries to stop and intentionally seek God's guidance?

It seems like an obvious place to start but how do we rush off with our own plans without taking the time to listen to what God is doing and explore where he is already at work?

In October 2022 a small groups of people from churches across the diocese gathered together for a learning community called 'Greenhouse'. Greenhouse is a national Church of England initiative designed to help small groups explore how they can start and grow new worshipping communities that engage with people on the margins of church.

We gather four times over a two year period and make space to pause, explore and reflect through a simple framework.

Firstly we take stock of where we are by asking, **'what is?'**

What is working, what isn't? What barriers are we facing, where are we seeing favour? How are we currently feeling? Where has God been at work, what stories have we to share from the last 6 months?



Secondly we take time to dream about **'what could be?'**

In a climate of 'church decline' it can be easy to start from a place of deficit and focus on what we don't have. What could be is a time to

remember that we partner with a God 'who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine [Eph 3:20]. 'What could be?' is a time to dream big and to picture the kingdom of God practically at work in our communities.

Finally the **'what will be'** time of our gathering seeks to hold groups accountable by putting in tangeable action points that will be done over the next six months. It can be easy in the busyness of church life to get distracted. 'What will be', helps us stay focused and do the things we plan to do.

Since starting our first Greenhouse in Whitnash back in October 2022, Alcester Mission Hub have started a Rural Greenhouse and we are planning to start others across the diocese in the coming months.

MYRIAD, WHICH WILL START IN THE AUTUMN OF 2024

Neil Masih

Our aim is to support the planting of thousands of new, predominantly lay-led churches throughout the Church of England and church in England in the next ten years, partnering with other church networks to inspire similar movement and witness the re-evangelisation of our nation.

We are for everyday people and leaders who are pursuing the mission of God and seeking to plant churches in their context. We want to resource training and support, bring together the learning from different networks and act as a catalyst and thought partner for dioceses and national church leaders to inspire change within the Church. **We request for Gods guidance as we aim to encourage participants for the Myriad Pathway due to be rolled out at St. Pauls Leamington in October this year. We pray for those who are leading or facilitating this pathway both locally and nationally. May we encourage each other to plant new seeds of the Christian faith to see your church flourish by encouraging lay led evangelism to reach out into our parish communities.**

Prayer moves us closer not only to God, but to one another. It connects us with those whom we otherwise cannot see. Prayer breaks down division, in prayer we take each other's hands and find our safe stronghold.

Archbishop Justin Welby



THY KINGDOM COME

9-19 MAY 2024

Join the global wave of prayer calling all Christians to pray between Ascension and Pentecost for more people to come to know the love and peace of Jesus Christ.

Since it began in May 2016, God has grown TKC from a dream of possibility into a movement which unites more than a million Christians in prayer, in nearly 90% of countries worldwide, across 85 different denominations and traditions

[Thy Kingdom Come | The Church of England](#)

[Thy Kingdom Come | Global](#)

Evangelism is joining in the work of God to bring redemption to this world. It's proclaiming the revolution of love that has rescued God's world from darkness to light.

[Evangelism and witness | The Archbishop of Canterbury](#)



NEW WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES

May 2024

Church: C = Clergy; R = Reader; Schools - All listed schools are CofE schools - H = Headteacher; EH = Executive Headteacher Chaplaincy CH chaplain

THY KINGDOM COME (9-19 May 2024)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			Alcester Deanery 1 AD – Kate Mier. <u>Open day for four clergy posts</u>	2 One week to Ascension Day & Thy Kingdom Come	3 for Barry Dugmore, Archdeacon Missioner	4 Heart of England Benefice C – <i>Interregnum</i>
6 th SUNDAY OF EASTER 5 Bidford-on-Avon Primary H – Andy Simms	6 Salford Priors Primary H -- Paula Dhugga	7 Temple Grafton Primary H – Tara Yorke	8 Dunnington Primary H – Fiona Templeton	9 ASCENSION DAY <u>Bishop’s Strategy Integration Group & Core Staff Team (full day)</u>	10 for Jenny Irvine, Director of New Worshipping Communities	11 Churches of Arden C – <i>interregnum</i> <u>Rural Greenhouse meets</u>
7 th SUNDAY OF EASTER 12 Alcester Minster/ Mission Hub C – Katie Cross	13 Coughton Primary EH – Adam Walsh H – Alex Kolb	14 Alcester St Nicholas Primary EH – Adam Walsh; H – Laura Newell	15 <u>Net Zero Steering Group</u>	16 Wootton Wawen Primary EH Sally Morris; H – Jessica Jones <u>Diocesan Finance Group</u>	17 Greenhouse groups in the Diocese, including the Rural Greenhouse	18 Beaudesert with Henley-in-Arden & Ullenmhall C – <i>Interregnum</i>
PENTECOST 19 Henley-in-Arden Primary EH – Adam Walsh; H – Kate Adcock	20 Arden Valley – C – <i>Interregnum</i>	21 Clergy Safeguarding Day Wootton Wawen Primary EH – Sally Morris;	22 <u>Together for Change; Deanery Share Mtg</u>	23 Bishop’s Core Staff Team mini-meeting; Glebe Committee	24 for Myriad training preparations	25 Arden Marches Benefice C – Kate Mier
TRINITY SUNDAY 26 Mappleborough Green Primary H – Alex Finch	27 Studley St Mary Primary H – Rebecca Gordon	28 <u>Cathedral Chapter</u>	29 Wilmcote with Billesley C – <i>Interregnum</i>	30 Wilmcote CofE Primary EH – Sarah Plaskitt; H – Anita Twyman	31 potential for more new worshipping communities	

PRAYER DIARY

Prayer

*All-embracing God,
Empower us with your love
Enrich us with your grace
Strengthen and protect us.*

Alice Walker

Coming up – the Themes for the next three months are Growing Leaders (June) Healthy Churches (July), and Parish Support/Ordinations (August).

WHAT IS A NEW WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY?

New - The aim of the New Worshipping Community is to reach people who are currently not attending church and to make new Christian disciples.

Worshipping – The purpose of the community is the worship of Jesus Christ and to help people grow in the maturity of their faith. This can be seen through its practices which will have multiple of the hallmarks of

worship from: prayer, scripture, praise, sacrament, and acts of service

Community – Meets together in person or online regularly (i.e. at least once a month), and is connected with the wider Church through the parish church, deanery or diocese.

from discussions among a group of bishops who are champions for the mixed ecology.

SPECIFIC DAYS – MAY 2024

1 - Alcester Deanery –From a very recent advert (12 April) for four different benefice posts, “The Deanery of Alcester is at a unique moment in its shared life and purpose. With four benefices vacant we believe that this is a Kairos moment when God is inviting us to think differently about how parish ministry is exercised. We seek four ordained Rural Pioneers, each of whom will lead the parish mission and ministry in their own benefice, as well as contributing missional specialisms to the who deanery.” Open Day for the four posts, 1 May.

AD Kate Mier. Deanery Lay Chair – Sue Jacques

2 – Heart of England Benefice - *Interregnum, seeking a Rector to minister among six congregations, four church schools, with interviews scheduled for 24/25 June.* We give thanks for a new messy church thriving in one of our churches, we are thankful to have so many lay and ordained leaders. We thank God for Judith who has just retired as a Reader and for Allan recently licensed as one. We pray for the appointment of a new Rector. **NWCs:** The Heart of England Benefice offers Muddy Church, Messy Church and Breathing Space - all monthly NWC pray for these and the new Explore course being run now for the third time. **Assoc C** – Sheila Bridge; **R** – Allan Stevens

11 – Churches of Arden – *Interregnum, seeking a Priest in Charge among four churches, with interviews scheduled for 25/26 June.* **Aston Cantlow, Claverdon with Preston Bagot with Wootton Wawen**–Assoc Minister, James Holden; **R (PTO)** – Norrie Moore

12– Alcester Minster & Rural Mission Hub – For Alcester Minster benefice (*also see right*). We give thanks to God for growth in our churches, new people coming and faith deepening. Please pray for Julie Lindsay as she prepares for her ordination to the priesthood at the end of June. **Assoc C** – Daniel Corlett, Steve Kelly; **Clergy with PTO**, Gill Laughlin, Julian Davey, Stave Tash, David Hall; Julie Lindsey PP – Nick Payne, Stuart Tilsley, Jane Cornwall, Andrew Deeks, Emma Berry, Tricia Berry; and for Jen Hopkins, children and families worker for Alcester.

18 – Beaudesert, with Henley-in-Arden and Ullenhall - *interregnum, seeking a Rector to minister among the people of a market town and village;* **R (PTO)** – Malcolm Aldridge, Judith Cox

20 - Arden Valley – *interregnum, seeking a Rector to minister among five village communities, with interviews scheduled for 18/19 June.* We give thanks for our Open the Book team, Rise and Shine family service and new Messy Church services and pray for strengthening links with all the children and young families in our benefice. For our older friends and neighbours, we give thanks for those in good health and pray for all operations and treatments to take place as planned. We give thanks for all the visiting clergy supporting us during this interregnum Retired Clergy (PTO) – Richard Livingston; **R (PTO)** – Joan Wilkinson

25 – Arden Marches Benefice – *Retired Clergy with PTO* - Judy Stote; **R (PTO)** – Alan Greathead, Joan Lock Pat Wheeler; **R** – Joy Holland.

29 – Wilmcote with Billesley –*interregnum, seeking an Associate Priest as Minister in Charge.*

Assoc = Associate PP Permission to preach; PTO = Permission to Officiate; C = Clergy; R = Reader

More from Alcester Minster Rural Mission Hub, for your prayers

We are a multi-parish rural benefice of eight churches, exploring new ways of being and doing church. We work with other similar churches and benefices, their ministers and lay leaders, to learn together and to grow New Worshipping Communities (NWCs), to reach people who don't yet know Jesus.

Among the support we can offer other churches are:

Greenhouse Rural – a 2-year programme for small teams that want to explore something new that in time will become a NWC.

Ideas Exchange – a termly workshop for anyone with an idea to try out or a problem to solve in their church using the experience in the room.

Prayer Network – for isolated rural clergy to meet, share and pray together.

Equipping and training events – one-day conferences bringing people together round a particular interest (Outdoor Church – 29 June 2024; Visitor Experience 23 November 2024)

Please pray for:

Our New Worshipping Communities that they will continue to reach people who do not yet know Jesus.

People in rural churches exploring mission opportunities and trying new things.

The appointment of ministers to four vacancies in Alcester Deanery, who will bring vision and skills to enable growth in the rural church.

www.ruralmissionhub.org

Thy Kingdom Come Resources

James Henney

Live Streaming Event for Young People

On Pentecost Sunday, 'Thy Kingdom Come' will be live streaming a prayer event for Young People. The plan is for churches across the country to hold their own gatherings for young people on that evening. As part of your gathering, you are invited to join a short live stream which will culminate with everyone involved praying the Lord's Prayer together, across the nation, with one voice, for one purpose; to see God's Kingdom Come.

TKC Prayer Event Details

If you would like to gather your Youth together with others for a deanery wide event then please contact me at james.henney@coventry.anglican.org

I am the Diocese of Coventry's Growing Faith Enabler, and I would love to work with you, and if possible connect you with others so that together we can support our young people in their journey of faith.

[Thy Kingdom Come events and other resources](#)

PRAYER JOTTINGS – MAY 2024

- *Extracts from the pair of Chris Webb and Mark Oakley books on spiritual life will continue in the June edition.*
- *This month we reflect with Jonny Baker, who wrote in April 2024,*

But a life of pioneering mission is fueled by prayer. We draw on the riches of others to inspire our prayer – the world church, our own traditions, religious communities. And we write and create our own to express our particular longings. We depend on God. We grieve for what is broken. We hope for what can be. *Jonny Baker*

When I reflected on the wonderful gift that pioneers bring I wrote that up as True North with nine facets. One of them is prayer and the words above are what I wrote at that time which I still like. I am not sure what constitutes prayer for you but for me it is a whole mix of things. I am a spontaneous rather than routine person so I like to mix things up. I like variety. Part of that mix is certainly using art, images, music and so on to reflect, as well as contemplative practices, written prayers, liturgy and having informal conversation with God, walking, silence, retreat. Maybe it is the state of the world at the moment, maybe it is that I have become more aware of privilege and whiteness, maybe it's the experience of how broken Britain seems, but I especially appreciate what I would call **PRAYING FROM THE EDGES**, or praying from below. I realise that the language of centre and edges is not straightforward: who gets to decide what is centre and what is edge? But hopefully it will do for now. It fits well with how we are trying to reflect on what we are about at CMS (*Church Mission Society*).

The best possible way to do that is to be with people when they pray and feel the longings of those prayers. There are plenty of communities in the UK to be with who are at the edge in that way. Reading the Magnificat with cleaners from Clean For Good has lingered in my imagination for a few months now since I was with them in December for evening prayer for example. Somehow the words carried a different meaning or resonance when prayed with them [.....]

Probably the first window that opened that up to me was praying with women or through women's eyes. I remember for example Hannah Ward and Jennifer Wild's Human Rites which was a huge collection and had prayers for example for the first menstruation of a girl. Another collection I loved and still turn to is The New Women Included which is a collection from the Community of St Hilda. This was founded in 1987 by women exasperated by the sexism in the church. One of the things they used to do before the ordination of women in the Church of England was to invite ordained women from other places in the world who could lead.

I have enthused about Claudio Carvalhaes' project Liturgies From Below before – that is the most amazing collection of prayers from various places round the world. They are full of thanks, rage, lament, longing, despair, defiance – quite extraordinary really. Reimagining worship has some in the resources section [.....]

As for many others, Gaza and the West Bank has been on my mind and in my prayers longing for an end to the violence, brutality and genocide. Amos Trust's collections Words of Hope and Seeds of Hope are really well put together and are a mix of quotes, prayers, poems arranged into themes like protest, home, hope. Both books then have some liturgies called words of hope that draw things together. The sources are many and varied but Amos Trust has stood in solidarity with Palestinians for many years so there are some prayers for peace and justice that connect well particularly with that context [.....] **I would love to know what praying from the edges looks like for you. Are there prayers, liturgies, art, music or whatever you use? Do let me know.**

Excerpts from the original blog @ [Jonny Baker - Praying from the Edges](#)

New worshipping communities are starting to spring up across the Diocese both in schools, and around school communities, as children and their parents gather to worship and explore faith together. We are praying for more connections, leading to trusting collaborative relationships between churches and their local schools, and for more clergy and lay leaders to catch the vision for what is possible. We are praying for the fledgling communities to grow in strength, depth and number.

James Henney

Alcester Minster Rural Mission Hub Logo (l)



(r) St Nick's at Nine, Alcester, a New Worshipping Community for families

- Each month **we focus on a different Deanery; this month it is Alcester.** For June it will be Fosse Deanery, Coventry South Deanery in July, and the Shipston Deanery in August. I look forward to receiving updates from area deans and clergy, and anyone else with specific prayer requests.

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