



Prayer Diary

May 2021

Election Season

May is the month for elections in the UK and this year we have more than usual.

I have had a long personal connection with this democratic process. The importance of which, and the privilege I enjoy of being able to live in a country with regular free and fair elections, was very much part of my upbringing. Whether this was through delivering elections leaflets for my father, a local councillor for over 25 years or the “rite of passage” symbolised by voting in my first General Election just two weeks after my 18th birthday, or nearly 20 years working as a local government Returning Officer and Acting Parliamentary Returning Officer.

But, despite the fundamental building blocks of a fair and just society that our election processes provide, it is not always that easy to find candidates to stand to serve on the governance bodies and committees that support our democratic institutions.

And, what is true of the nation is also true of the Church. Next month will see the deadline for the close of nominations for the next Diocesan Synod, which will serve the Church in our diocese for the next three years. Elections for Diocesan Synod in July will be followed with further nominations and elections later in the summer for Bishop’s Council.

As Christians, God calls us to serve others and through that service honour our Lord, Christ Jesus. The Easter season reminds us of that perfect service shown by Jesus through the cross, *“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as ransom for many.”* Mark 10:45

Service on Diocesan Synod, Bishop’s Council or supporting committees, may not be our first choice in Christian service. Maybe it is because this form of service has an unfair reputation for being a bit dull, bureaucratic and tedious, but Jesus never said service was easy.

Maybe it is because we are concerned that if we were to put our name forward it might be perceived by others as arrogant or showing-off, yet Matthew (5:14-15) tells us *“no one lights a lamp and puts it under a bowl; instead he puts it on a lampstand, where it gives light for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine before people, so that they may see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven.”* In Peter’s letters to the Church in Asia Minor (1Peter4:10) he urges Christians, *“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.”*

Or, maybe, we find it hard to see in ourselves the true gifts God has given us.

As we journey through this Easter season, a time of rebirth and joy in the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ, *and elections*, let us pray that God will lead us towards whatever gifts he has given us and support us in using them in the service of others, including through the Diocesan governance structures. It is also a good time to give thanks to God for those who have served us in the Church over the last triennium, to thank them for their time, their wisdom and willingness to make decisions in the furtherance of our Diocesan Mission purpose of *worshipping God, making new disciples and transforming communities*. Is God calling you to join in this work too?

“Serve the Lord with Gladness! Come into his presence with singing” Psalms 100:2

Find out more about the 2021 diocesan elections: www.coventry.anglican.org/2021-elections/

Ruth Marlow
Diocesan Secretary

Cycle of Prayer - May 2021

With a focus on parishes and schools in Rugby Deanery

Sat 1

Philip and James, Apostles

Rugby St Peter and St John. Clergy: Sheila Bridge. Raymond Brown. Reader: John Martin Jones. We thank God for sustaining us through the pandemic, for consistency of attendance online and faithfulness in giving. Please pray for us as we enter a vacancy and that we might respond creatively to the deanery reorganisation plan.

Sun 2

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Clifton-on-Dunsmore, Newton and Brownsover. Clergy: Interregnum. Reader: Catherine Hammond. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.
*Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, Teacher of the Faith, 373

Mon 3

Bilton Junior School. Headteacher: Alex Norton. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community. We pray for the chaplains serving at HMP Onley and HMP Ryehill. May the Lord bless and protect them and the prisoners they work with.

Tue 4

Dunchurch with Thurlaston. Clergy: Patricia Townshend, Rosemary Reynolds. Reader: Steve Cook. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.
*English Saints and Martyrs of the Reformation Era

Wed 5

Rugby St George. Clergy: Interregnum. Readers: Carol Davies, Mike Iredale. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and local community. This week is Deaf Awareness Week. One of the aims of this week is to promote social inclusion for deaf people. We pray that our churches are places where deaf people can feel included and welcomed.

Thu 6

Clifton-Upon-Dunsmore Primary School. Head of School: Lisa Bernard. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community. We pray for everyone currently working from home. We pray that they find a good balance between working and home life.

Fri 7

Draycote Benefice. Clergy: David Shaw. We thank God that we have been able to gather for online worship using Zoom for the past year. We give thanks for those who have put services together behind the scenes and led them. Please pray that we will be successful in finding a new incumbent soon and for our ongoing merger discussions.

Sat 8

Knightlow Primary School. Headteacher: Jill Vavasour. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community.
*Julian of Norwich, Spiritual Writer, c.1417

Sun 9

Sixth Sunday of Easter

St Gabriel's Houlton. Clergy: Steve Gold, Margaret Simmons, Lindsay Hughes, Ted Lyons. Reader: Paul Thomas. We give thanks for a continuing sense of church family in new ways throughout this dreadful pandemic in addition to increasing opportunities to engage with our community. Please pray for a return to, and growth in, our engagement with families with children.

Mon 10

Today is World Lupus Day. Lupus is a global health problem that affects people of all nationalities, races, ethnicities, genders and ages. However many people have not heard of lupus and do not know its symptoms and the impact it can have on sufferers lives. We pray that today will help raise awareness of lupus.

Tue 11

Harris CofE Academy, Rugby. Headteacher: Roberta Harrison. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community.

Wed 12

St Matthew and St Oswald, Rugby. Clergy: Alan Hulme, Jane Hulme. Readers: Mervyn Hill, David Long, Mairi Mowbray, Gordon Banks. We thank God for the healing in the fellowship and the sense of unity that has grown over the past year. Please pray that our 'God in my Everything' theme will help us all develop fruitful 'Rules of Life'.

Thu 13

Ascension Day

St Matthew's Bloxam Primary School, Rugby. Headteacher: Anita Timson. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community. We pray for the Glebe Committee which meets this afternoon.

Fri 14

Matthias the Apostle

This week is ME Awareness Week. ME is a long-term neurological condition that can cause many symptoms including debilitating pain and fatigue. An estimated 250,000 people in the UK suffer from it. We pray for all those with ME.

Sat 15

Wolston St Margaret's Primary School. Headteacher: Julia McLeod. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school. We pray for all the NHS staff and care workers who are working tirelessly to care for the sick, elderly and vulnerable during the coronavirus pandemic.

Sun 16

Seventh
Sunday of
Easter

The Revel Group. Clergy: Interregnum. Reader: Charon Hall. We thank God for all the lay leaders in our 6 churches. Please pray for a successful search for a new rector to lead and inspire us.
*Caroline Chisholm, Social Reformer, 1877

Mon 17

Rugby St Andrew. Clergy: Edmund Newey, Barry Collins, Peter Privett, Pam Gould, Graham Hardwick. Readers: Sue Goddard, Gwyneth Hickman. We thank God for the completion of the Eco Garden around the church. We pray for its wider use by the community; and for blessing on our work with the Revd Sharon Crofts at St Cross Hospital and Compassionate Communities.

Tue 18

May the blessing of God be upon our farms and on all the cereal crops of our countryside. May they receive rain to swell the grain and sun to ripen it. We pray that the harvest be safely gathered in and stored, and may we see ourselves as harvesters for eternal life.
We pray for the Bishop's Council which meets today.

Wed 19

Today is World IBD day. It takes guts to talk about Crohn's and Colitis diseases but right now there are over 300,000 people in the UK living with a life long disease. We pray for all those who are suffering in silence because of the stigma and misunderstanding surrounding these diseases.
*Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, Restorer of Monastic Life, 988

Thu 20

St Oswald's CofE Academy, Rugby. Headteacher: Hillary Lorimer. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community.
We pray for the Bishop's Core Staff Team which meets today.
*Alcuin of York, Deacon, Abbot of Tours, 804

Fri 21

St John's Hillmorton. Clergy: Steve Gold, Margaret Simmons. Readers: Helen Merrigan, Paul Thomas. We give thanks for the way the church community has supported each other and the wider community over the last year. Houlton's community has doubled in size since lockdown. Please pray that God will open up new ways to connect with the new residents.

Sat 22

Bagington, Bubbenhall and Ryton-on Dunsmore. Clergy: David Wintle, Penny Hughes. Reader: Rosemary King. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.

Sun 23

Pentecost
(Whit Sunday)

Newbold-on-Avon with Long Lawford. Clergy: Paul Wilkinson, Diane Bussey, Peter Beresford, Sara Bowie. Reader: Jonathan Broom. We thank God for the new opportunities that have come our way during the last year and for the response we have been able to make. Please pray for us as we move forward seeking to renew rather than to recover.

Mon 24

Provost Williams Primary School, Ryton-on-Dunsmore. Headteacher: Claire Hall. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community.
*John and Charles Wesley, Evangelists, Hymn Writers, 1791 and 1788

Tue 25

Leam Valley Benefice. Clergy: Barbara Clutton. Reader: Karen Hatch, Alec Parker. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.
*The Venerable Bede, Monk at Jarrow, Scholar, Historian, 735
*Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, 709

Wed 26

St Andrew's Benn Primary School, Rugby. Headteacher: Abi Huggins. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community.
*Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, 605
*John Calvin, Reformer, 1564

Thu 27

The Revel Primary School, Rugby. Headteacher: Mr A Edwards. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community.

Fri 28

Wolston and Church Lawford. Clergy: Kevin Flanagan, Paul Simmonds. Readers: Jayne Flanagan, David Gadsby, Helen Simmonds, Isobel Wickens. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.
*Lanfranc, Prior of Le Bec, Archbishop of Canterbury, Scholar, 1089

Sat 29

Dunchurch Boughton Junior School. Headteacher: Tracy Miller. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community.

Sun 30

Trinity Sunday

Leamington Hastings CofE Academy. Headteacher: Suzanne Marson. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community.
*Josephine Butler, Social Reformer, 1906
*Joan of Arc, Visionary, 1431

Mon 31

The Visit of
Mary to
Elizabeth

Bilton. Clergy: Tim Cockell, Jonathan Smith. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.
We thank God for our brothers and sisters who serve and worship in other Christian denominations.

From Lament to Action

The Archbishops' Anti-Racism Taskforce has published its report 'From Lament to Action' proposing a suite of changes to begin bringing about a change of culture in the life of the Church of England.



It issues a warning to the Archbishops that a failure to act could be a "last straw" for many people of UK Minority Ethnic (UKME) or Global Majority Heritage (GMH) backgrounds with "devastating effects" on the future of the Church.

The report sets out 47 specific actions for different arms of the Church of England to implement across five priority areas: participation, governance, training, education and young people.

Without these changes the Church risks denying and disregarding the gifts of a significant part of the nation, the Taskforce makes clear.

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York said in response to the report:

"Racism is a sin. Of this, we have no doubt. Anything which diminishes the value and beauty of each individual person, made in the image of God, is sinful. There is no place for it in the world, and we are determined to make sure there is no room for it in the Church.

But it is here. We have seen, time and time again, people being bullied, overlooked, undermined and excluded from the life of the Church, from the family of God. It breaks our hearts, and we are truly sorry.

We welcome this report from the Anti-Racism Taskforce, which we commissioned last year to help us understand what progress we might have made towards tackling racism in the Church of England."

For more information and to read the report see the news section of the diocesan website.

Radio Plus Recharge with the Revd Lizzy Holland



From Monday 19th April the Revd Lizzy Holland, Rector at All Saints in Allesley, will be hosting a weekday lunchtime show, Radio Plus Recharge, on Radio Plus (101.5FM).

This show is about talking faith in a fun and accessible way with the people of Coventry and beyond as well as sharing what Christians in the city are up to and how people can get involved if they are interested. Lizzy would love to share the wonderful work that you are doing in and for the city, and the surrounding areas, so if there's a charity you are involved in or if your church is doing something you would like to tell people about, do contact Lizzy (revlizzyholland@gmail.com) so it can be shared on the show. Please do also direct people towards Radio Plus who might appreciate some positive listening with a light Christian approach.

Lizzy says:

"It's so much fun being in the studio and wonderful to be able to chat faith with people all over the City of Coventry"

Tune in to hear Lizzy on Radio Plus Recharge on weekdays between 1-2pm.