



Prayer Diary

April 2022

'He is going before you into Galilee, there you will see him, as he told you. Mark 16.7.'

Galilee, not Jerusalem, the centre of religious observance, but Galilee, 'out there' where life is lived. This is where they will meet the risen Lord, as he had told them. (Mark 14.28, Matt.28.10). The risen Christ is to be encountered in the so-called 'secular' world. Though, of course, there is nothing 'secular' to God. 'The earth is the Lord's, and all who dwell in it' (Ps 24.1) and, as Paul writes, 'all things were through him and for him.' (Col.1.16).



Have we as Christians become too timid, too comfortable, too settled where we are, too church-centric? Apart from the wonderful work of chaplains and their teams, whose locus is in 'Galilee', I fear we have. In 'Galilee', most people are more interested in life than in religion. This is true of God too! Jesus comes to bring us life, abundant, overflowing life. (John 10.10) Paul describes this life to Timothy as the life 'that really is life'. (1 Tim.6.19)

So, mission is not about us bringing Christ into a godless world. The risen Lord is already alive and at large in the world. God is at work in so many lives outside 'Jerusalem', outside the church. We see this in the Gospels, in the Roman centurion, in the Samaritan leper, in the Syro-Phoenician woman. The harvest is plentiful, says Jesus. This is perhaps especially true in this most precarious time, in which the pandemic has cracked open many of our securities and more of us are conscious of our fragility and our mortality and we face the possibility of an escalating war. People 'out there' are receptive to the good news of Jesus Christ. A recent survey indicated that 51% of people aged 18-34 say that they pray. The harvest is plentiful. What are we doing about it? All of us are called. All of us are sent. The risen Lord said/says 'Go and know that I am with you always to the end of the age.' (Matt.28.20). So, if we do what it says on the tin, we need to get out more!

+ John

Improvements to A Church Near You

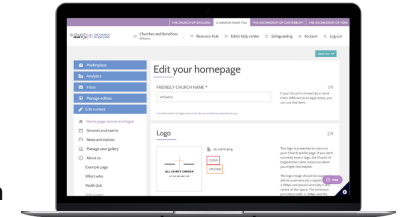
A Church Near You is the Church of England's church-finder tool. Each parish church has A Church Near You profile where they can add service times, contact details and more.

Recently the A Church Near You team has made improvements to the site, based on feedback from users. Here are some of the improvements:

Editor View

Users said: It's sometimes hard to tell what the visitor can see compared to what the editor can see.

ACNY did: Separate editor view area, access it by clicking the single 'edit page' button on your church's menu.



News

News article order

Users said: It doesn't make sense to me the order that news articles appear in.

ACNY did: Order is set to published date order, most recent first.

News article publish dates

Users said: People think the publish date is the date of the event I am sharing news about. **ACNY did:** Publish date no longer visible to visitors.

Church Homepages

Featured News and Events

Users said: Visitors don't realise they can click an arrow to see more news and events.

ACNY did: Made the button on the featured items bigger and wrote 'See all' on it.

Analytics

Users said: I'm not sure if the visitors can see the analytics info that I can.

Users did: Moved analytics information to the new editor view.

Cycle of Prayer - April 2022

With a focus on parishes and schools in Coventry South Deanery

Fri 1

April is National Pet Month. National Pet Month aims to educate the public on responsible pet ownership, celebrates the benefits of having pets and increases public awareness about the role of pet care specialists. We give thanks for all those who care for and look after God's creatures.
*Frederick Denison Maurice, Priest, Teacher of the Faith, 1872

Sat 2

Today is World Autism Awareness Day. The day aims to put a spotlight on the hurdles that people with autism face everyday, as well as celebrating the unique talents of those with autism. We thank God for all people with autism and pray that this day brings greater understanding and awareness to autism spectrum disorders.

Sun 3

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Allesley Park and Whoberley. Clergy: Andy March, Carolyne Powell. Reader: Nic Thorpe. We give thanks for a lively youth group and God's amazing provision with a new Youth Leader. The church has been recently bereaved of one of its key and young leaders, we pray that God would help the church to grieve well and see the fullness of life he has for us.

Mon 4

Eastern Green. Clergy: Jo Joyce. Sue Masters, Lesley Lee. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community. We pray for hospital and hospice chaplains in our diocese. We pray that God gives them strength and wisdom in their work.

Tue 5

Earlsdon. Clergy: Tulo Raistrick. We give thanks that the number of church members volunteering with the Good Neighbours project continues to grow and that our young families weekend in June is now fully booked. Please pray that we will grow in our love for God, for each other, our community and the world, through worship and acts of service.

Wed 6

St Laurence's Primary School, Coventry. Headteacher: Michelle Cuskelly. We pray for God's blessing on pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community.

Thu 7

Today is World Health Day, and the slogan for 2022 is "Our planet, our health" WHO estimates that more than 13 million deaths around the world each year are due to avoidable environmental causes. Over 90% of people breathe unhealthy air resulting from burning of fossil fuels. We pray for healing for our planet.

Fri 8

Fletchamstead. Clergy: Steve Burch. Readers: Helen Kearney, Tim Pollard, Anne Lancaster. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.

Sat 9

We pray for all parishes that are currently experiencing a vacancy. We pray for the appointment processes, that the right ministers will be found to lead these parishes forward. We also pray for the new opportunities in lay ministry during the vacancy.
*Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Lutheran Pastor, Martyr, 1945

Sun 10

Palm Sunday

We pray for those who serve in local and national government. We pray for wisdom as they make hard decisions. We pray that God would refresh and give new purpose and enthusiasm for their work.
*William Law, Priest, Spiritual Writer, 1761
*William of Ockham, Friar, Philosopher, Teacher of the Faith, 1347

Mon 11

Monday of Holy Week

We pray for clergy who are currently taking a sabbatical, and for those who are planning one during the next twelve months. We pray that these sabbaticals will bring refreshment, renewal and a re-focus of ministry. We pray for the Diocesan Audit Committee which meets today.
*George Augustus Selwyn, first Bishop of New Zealand, 1878

Tue 12

Tuesday of Holy Week

This week is Parkinson's Awareness Week. As there is no cure for Parkinson's, this is an annual opportunity to raise awareness and much needed funds to support people with living with the condition, to improve quality of life and to ensure that people live better for longer. We pray that this week is effective.

Wed 13

Wednesday of Holy Week

April is International Caesarean Awareness Month. One in four babies born in the UK is delivered by a caesarean section. Caesareans can be life-saving interventions for women and babies when complications occur. We pray for the medical teams who carry out caesareans and we pray for healing for women who have caesareans.

Thu 14

Maundy Thursday

Bridge Benefice. Clergy: David Hammond, Ann Peachey, Sarah Ashelby. Reader: Andrew Smith. Thank God for the church coming back strong after Covid and enjoying new ways of being together including monthly breakfast church with part of the service outside. Pray for us as we reach out to those moving into the new housing in the parish.

Fri 15

Good Friday

"When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died; my richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride." As we remember Jesus' obedience, even to death on a cross, we ask God to meet us in our brokenness.

Sat 16

Easter Eve

We pray for all those who are waiting. We remember those who are expecting good news today, of a birth or a reason to celebrate. We pray too for those who are waiting for the unknown and for those who will receive sad or difficult news today.

*Isabella Gilmore, Deaconess, 1923

Sun 17

Easter Day

He has risen - Jesus is alive! We pray for Easter celebrations in communities and households across the diocese this morning.

Mon 18

Monday of
Easter Week

Tile Hill. Clergy: Ed Backhouse. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.

We give thanks for all those who make music in the Cathedral. We pray for new ways for the Cathedral to make connections with the choir families.

Tue 19

Tuesday of
Easter Week

Finham St Martin. Clergy: Matt Taylor, Abby Rhodes. Reader: Andrew Barclay. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.

*Alphege, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1012

Wed 20

Wednesday of
Easter Week

At this time of renewal we thank God for all that he gives us, particularly for creation, which continues to sustain and delight us. We give thanks for the colours, sights, smells and sounds of spring, for the song of birds, the call of lambs in the fields, new growth emerging from the earth and everything that means new life, we thank you Lord.

Thu 21

Thursday of
Easter Week

This week is Allergy Awareness Week. Allergies are very common and effect 1 in 4 people in the UK. For a small minority allergies can be life threatening. We pray for more research into prevention and treatment of allergies.

*Anselm, Abbot of Le Bec, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1109

Fri 22

Friday of Easter
Week

St James Styvechale. Clergy: Josh Maynard. Reader: Barbara Carr. We thank God that we are seeing lots of old faces returning including our families. As we continue to shape church in this new post COVID world, we pray for wisdom and God's love to be at the centre.

Sat 23

Saturday of
Easter Week

Chapelfields St Mary Magdalen. Clergy: Edward Le Brun Powell. Reader: Richard Hollingdale. We thank God for our work with students. We pray for our new Choral Scholarship Programme.

Sun 24

Second Sunday
of Easter

April is Bowel Cancer Awareness month. We pray for all those affected by bowel cancer, the medical professionals who care for them, and for all those who are carrying out research, looking for better treatments.

*Mellitus, Bishop of London, first Bishop at St Paul's, 624

Mon 25

Mark the
Evangelist

April is Stress Awareness Month, when health care professionals and experts seek to increase public awareness about both the causes and cures for the problem of stress. We pray for all those affected by stress at this time and for those who seek to support them.

Tue 26

Cheylesmore. Clergy: Arthur Woo. Readers: John Scattergood, Tony Price. We give thanks that our breakfast service is growing and that we have now a partnership with another church to bring our youth work together. We pray that God will energise our new partnership to grow disciples among the youth.

Wed 27

We pray for all who work at the Diocesan Office. We pray for God's guidance as they seek to serve and equip the whole of the Diocese of Coventry.

We pray for the Diocesan Finance Group which meets this morning.

*Christina Rossetti, Poet, 1894

Thu 28

We pray for prison chaplains in our diocese. We pray that God gives them strength and wisdom in their work.

We pray for the Bishop's Core Staff Team which meets today.

*Peter Chanel, Missionary in the South Pacific, Martyr, 1841

Fri 29

This week is MS Awareness Week. We pray for the Multiple Sclerosis Trust, who are working with health professionals across the UK to develop ways of helping MS teams deliver the best possible care to everyone affected by MS.

*Catherine of Siena, Teacher of the Faith, 1380

Sat 30

We thank God for our brothers and sisters who serve and worship in other Christian denominations. We ask God for new opportunities to work together ecumenically to help transform our local communities.

*Pandita Mary Ramabai, Translator of the Scriptures, 1922

Do you have stories of God answering prayer?

A new Christian landmark is to be built in the Midlands. Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer will be a huge, thought-provoking piece of public art, aiming to kindle conversations about prayer.



The iconic structure will be constructed using one million bricks, each brick featuring an answered prayer. This Christian landmark will make hope visible by digitally linking visitors with a database of one million answered prayers, using interactive technology and a bespoke app. Visitors will be able to use their smart device, holding it against any brick to read the individual answered prayers.

Built near Coleshill on the outskirts of Birmingham, Eternal Wall will stand at 169 feet, eclipsing the size of the Angel of the North, and is expected to attract 300,000 visitors each year. 500,000 journeys will see Eternal Wall every week from the M6, M42, HS2, and flight paths from Birmingham Airport.

The idea of the Eternal Wall project is to grow a nation of storytellers who are able to articulate the hope they've found in God through sharing answered prayers – whilst the physical landmark will be in the Midlands, the stories of hope will be accessible via the app from anywhere in the world. The core aim is to Make Hope Visible in the UK and further afield.

The Eternal Wall project are reaching out to UK churches to help them gather answered prayers. You may already have many as a congregation which you could submit, and/or you may have someone in your congregation able to help facilitate gathering more. They are looking for representation from every part of the UK and every church network. These can be submitted any time on their website at <https://www.eternalwall.org.uk/testimony> (written, video or audio are all invited), but they are also holding a 45 minute zoom on Monday 4 April in the early evening to share more about gathering answered prayers on a larger scale.

If you would like to join them to find out more about the project and the process of gathering answered prayers everyone is warmly invited. Drop them a message on volunteer@eternalwall.org.uk to register your interest

St Martin's Finham opens a community coffee shop

St Martin's Finham celebrated a successful first week of its new community Coffee Shop, Revive, with a visit from Bishop Christopher on Sunday 6th March. The Bishop led a service involving the whole church family and then prayed a blessing in the Coffee Shop area. He even got to have a go at making his own latte!



The Coffee Shop opened its doors to the public on Shrove Tuesday, 1st March, and is already proving to be very popular, with many people coming from the local community and beyond to sample the tasty homemade food and good coffee and tea.

The Coffee Shop is part of a whole vision to further open up the St Martin's site to the local community, with a Repair Café, Community Gardening and a children's play area all being planned for the near future. All are designed to help the community to connect with church, God and each other in deeper, more meaningful ways that more fully share the love of Jesus as part of daily life. All are also designed to help combat isolation and loneliness that have been such an issue for so many during the last two years.

Care for our environment is also at the forefront of the Coffee Shop and other community projects, with ethical, locally-sourced produce being used wherever possible. Even the furniture has been part of their efforts to "reduce, reuse, recycle" – with beautiful tables being made from old oak pews no longer in use in the church itself and choir stalls and old lecterns being repurposed to make specials boards, panelling and other furniture.

Revd Matt Taylor, vicar of St Martin's said: *"Many people connected with us online during the pandemic and have begun to see St Martin's as a place of welcome in general terms and we want to build on these strong new links with local residents and open our church site up further, allowing us to share God's love with those around us in practical as well as emotional and spiritual ways."*

The church is excited to welcome people to the Revive Coffee Shop (its opening hours are Tuesday-Friday, 9am-2pm, and Saturdays, 9.30am-12.30pm) and would also love to welcome more volunteers if anyone local to Finham would like to get involved. Contact vicarstmartins@gmail.com to get involved.