



Prayer Diary

February 2022

Together, let us shine with the light of your love

As January turns to February this year, we celebrate Candlemas, this very special time of remembering when the infant Jesus was taken to be presented in the Temple, and the elderly Simeon and Anna saw in this baby all that God was promising, for the future. It was for them the point at which God's promises became a reality, the fulcrum between the past and the future. It is the crucial point that our world still needs today – that God's plan did not stop with the birth of his Son, and cannot be thrown out with the Christmas tree. It is just the beginning of his incarnate presence among us, and we need to see beyond it.

But it took Simeon and Anna, with all their years behind them, to hold this baby, gaze in wonder at him, and translate his presence to the young couple before them and the world around them. It took the two of them, who had long been, in Pope Francis' words, 'wasting time in adoration before the Lord', to understand this. The young family, and the world outside, needed them; equally Simeon and Anna needed to hold Jesus in their arms.

Young and old needed each other, and were incomplete without each other. It is surely one of the many great sadnesses of Covid that a gulf appears at times between old and young. But we do need each other, and are incomplete without each other. This has been as difficult in our churches as anywhere, but we pray that once again, across the generations, in whatever way, we may hold each other, pray our blessings on each other, depend on and support each other, and that together we may walk in the fullness of God's light and love, moving from the crib to the cross.

To adapt the words of the Candlemas Acclamation:

Together, we stand near the place of new birth.
Together, we turn from the crib to the cross.
Together, we go to carry his light.
Together, let us shine with the light of your love.



Revd Jill Tucker
Dean of Self-Supporting Ministry

Fairtrade Fortnight

For two weeks each year at the end of February and start of March, thousands of individuals, companies and groups across the UK come together to share the stories of the people who grow our food and drinks, mine our gold and who grow the cotton in our clothes; people who are often exploited and underpaid.



In 2022, Fairtrade Fortnight runs from Monday 21 February until Sunday 6 March and is even more crucial this year as the global economy recovers from Covid-19. Since last year, the G7 and COP26 have both taken place. Over 33,000 campaigners joined 1.8m Fairtrade farmers and workers in backing the Be Fair With Your Climate Promise challenge to world leaders at the UN COP26 summit. But frustration came as the wealthiest nations failed to recognise the urgent need to invest in farmer expertise by delaying their promised \$100bn annual funding to the most climate vulnerable countries until 2023.

Throughout the fortnight, an online *Choose the World you Want* Festival will run with people coming together in a show of support for the farmers behind our food on the front line of the climate crisis.

Please pray for fairness and justice in all economic dealings and especially for small producers in developing economies, that they may receive a fair price for what they produce. Pray that consumers make informed choices.

We are all part of the Fairtrade movement and have the power to drive long-term change, not only with our shopping choices but in spreading the message. What difference will you make during Fairtrade Fortnight this year?

Find out more on www.fairtrade.org.uk

Cycle of Prayer - February 2022

With a focus on parishes and schools in Southam Deanery

Tue 1

Long Itchington & Marton. Clergy: Interregnum. Reader: Terry Morris. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.
*Brigid, Abbess of Kildare, c.525

Wed 2

Presentation of Christ in the Temple

As we celebrate the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, we thank God for the faithfulness of Simeon and Anna. We pray that we would learn how to reflect God's light in the communities in which we live, work and learn.

Thu 3

This week is Sexual Abuse & Sexual Violence Awareness Week. In the UK, 20% of women and 4% of men have experienced some type of sexual abuse since the age of 16, however often this is not reported due to fears about not being believed. We pray that this week helps bring awareness and gives a voice to victims.

Fri 4

Today is World Cancer Day. Under the tagline, 'Close the Care Gap.' the day will explore how accessing cancer care can be difficult. Income, education, location and discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and disability are just a few of the factors that can negatively affect care. We pray that this day helps raise awareness to #CloseTheCareGap

Sat 5

The Offchurch Group (TOG). Clergy: Hugh Priestner. Readers: Jackie Brown, Richard Spicer. We give thanks for our passage through the pandemic, creating a freshness in our worship and deeper unity. We also give thanks for the faith of a number of our congregation facing adversity. We pray for our partnerships in ministry, particularly focused towards children & teenagers.

Sun 6

Fourth Sunday before Lent

Today is 'Safer Internet Day', which promotes safe and responsible use of the internet. The aim is to teach young people about how to keep themselves safe online. We pray for young people known to us; that God may keep them safe when using the internet.
*The Martyrs of Japan, 1597

Mon 7

Today is the first day of a three day retreat Bishop John is leading at Launde Abbey. The retreat is called 'You are chosen and precious in my sight and I love you', and aims to help participants rediscover the love of God. We pray for Bishop John as he leads this retreat and the participants taking part.

Tue 8

As General Synod meets this week, we thank God for our Diocesan representatives, both clergy and lay, and pray for the on-going conversations and challenges faced by the governing body of the Church of England.

Wed 9

During National Heart Month we pray for the 2.6million people around the UK suffering with Coronary Heart Disease. We thank God for the British Heart Foundation and other organisations offering support to many, and investing in care and treatment developments for the future.

Thu 10

Bishop's Itchington and Radford Semele. Clergy: Martin Green. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community. We pray for the Glebe Committee which meets this afternoon.
*Scholastica, sister of Benedict, Abbess of Plombariola, c.543

Fri 11

The Bridges Group. Clergy: Gillian Roberts. Reader: Peter Jackson. We thank God for the creativity, generosity and faithfulness of everyone through the challenges of the past year. We pray for a clear vision for the future as we seek to fill the two vacancies.

Sat 12

Long Itchington C of E Primary School. Executive Headteacher: Alison Hine. Head of School: Rebecca Richards. We pray for God's blessing upon the pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community.

Sun 13

Third Sunday before Lent

At the end of Go Green Week, we thank God for this complex and beautiful planet, ask for forgiveness for the times we have abused the resources provided for us and ask God to help us develop a better attitude to the planet.

Mon 14

Southam and Ufton. Clergy: Vikki Bisiker. Reader: Stephen Adams. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.
*Cyril and Methodius, Missionaries to the Slavs, 869 and 885
*Valentine, Martyr at Rome, c.269

Tue 15

We pray for those who are unable to leave their homes. We ask God to give encouragement and friendship for those who feel alone. We pray for the Bishop's Council which meets today.
*Sigfrid, Bishop, Apostle of Sweden, 1045
*Thomas Bray, Priest, Founder of the SPCK and the SPG, 1730

Wed 16

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.

Thu 17

Harbury C of E Primary School. Headteacher: Kate Guymer. We pray for God's blessing upon the pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community.
We pray for the Bishop's Core Staff Team which meets today.
*Janani Luwum, Archbishop of Uganda, Martyr, 1977

Fri 18

We pray for the Diocesan Mission Fund committee as it seeks to make grants available to parishes and deaneries engaging in mission. We thank God for the lives that have been transformed by an encounter with God through many different supported projects. We ask God to stir up a desire and heart for mission in individuals and communities across the diocese.

Sat 19

We pray for those who are struggling financially. We remember especially those searching for work and those in need of food and shelter. We give thanks for all those seeking to meet these needs in Churches, charities, the welfare system and foodbanks.

Sun 20

Radford Semele Primary School. Headteacher: Katie Benson. We pray for God's blessing upon the pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community.

Second Sunday
before Lent

Mon 21

We pray for the vulnerable children in our country, their families and the work of organisations like Home for Good. Pray for their work with various Local Authorities across the country, that they would see more people step forward to foster children and teenagers in their area.

Tue 22

We thank God for the work of the Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre (CRMC). We pray for the therapy services they provide, aimed at helping CRMC clients who may have been affected by traumatic experiences. Many have escaped violence in their home countries where they may have been tortured or seen loved ones jailed or killed.

Wed 23

During Fairtrade Fortnight we give thanks to God for the progress made in ensuring a fairer wage for all. We pray for all who shop where Fairtrade goods are for sale, that God would grant us an understanding of the impact of our choices.
*Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, Martyr, c.155

Thu 24

St Lawrence C of E Primary School, Napton-on-the-Hill. Headteacher: John Brine. We pray for God's blessing upon the pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community.

Fri 25

St James' C of E Primary School, Southam. Executive Headteacher: Alison Hine. Head of School: Laura Constable. We pray for God's blessing upon the pupils, teachers, staff and governors in this school community.

Sat 26

Harbury & Ladbroke. Clergy: Andy Batchelor. Reader: Alison Abbott. We pray for God's blessing upon the church members and the local community.

Sun 27

We thank God for the work of our local fire and rescue services. We pray for lead chaplain to Warwickshire Fire & Rescue.

Sunday next
before Lent

*George Herbert, Priest, Poet, 1633

Mon 28

Today is Rare Disease Day, a day to raise awareness about diseases that affect less than 1 in 2000 people. Cures or treatments are not often available for people with rare diseases, and some people have to wait years for a diagnosis. We pray for greater understanding of rare diseases.

Coventry Community of the Cross of Nails wins award

At a ceremony on December 11th 2021, the Coventry Community of the Cross of Nails (CCN) was awarded an 'Ecumenical Prize' by the Munich Katholische Akademie.

The prestigious award, which recognises the Community of the Cross of Nails' transformative work in worldwide reconciliation, but especially within Germany, was accepted by the Dean of Coventry, John Witcombe.



The award will enable the CCN to further expand its mission, particularly with young people. Representatives from the German Community of the Cross of Nails, including chairman Dr Oliver Schuegraf, were present to convey the story of the CCN and its work through different churches and institutions in Germany, including, closest to Munich itself, Dachau Concentration Camp. Reinhard Cardinal Marx, the Archbishop of Munich and Freising and a previous recipient of the prize (in conjunction with Lutheran Bishop Heinrich Bedford-Strohm) was also present to share his appreciation for the work of the CCN. Bishop Christopher contributed a lecture entitled 'The Message of Coventry in Europe Today'. The event concluded with the Coventry Litany of Reconciliation.

The afternoon saw Bishop Christopher take part in a panel discussion entitled 'A Culture of Remembrance' together with Dr Schuegraf and Professor Aleida Assmann.

On the previous evening an Ecumenical prayer service was held at St Barbara Kirche in Munich, a former garrison church and now member of the Community of the Cross of Nails. The service was led by Cardinal Marx, Dean John and Bishop Christopher.

Watch the full event and read Bishop Christopher's lecture here—
www.coventry.anglican.org/bishop-delivers-lecture-on-european-solidarity.php

Director of Ministry and Leadership

Archdeacon Barry is pleased to announce that The Reverend Rob Harrison has been appointed as the next Director of Ministry and Leadership.

This is a key role in helping the Diocese of Coventry to deliver its ambitions for a culture change in making and growing new disciples. It involves developing a more mission-focused approach to the planning and deployment of resources in order to launch and grow 150 new worshipping communities by 2030.



Rob is currently Vicar of Neasden in the Diocese of London.

Archdeacon Barry said:

"I'm delighted that Rob will be coming to join us as a colleague in the Diocese. Rob has a great depth of experience in ministry and will be able to draw from a deep well of wisdom and knowledge to work with us in ministry development. I look forward to welcoming Rob in the near future and working with him."

Rob said:

"I'm really looking forward to returning to the Diocese of Coventry, where my life in full time Christian ministry began in 1984. I left Coventry to start Theological College and now return with thirty three years' experience in parish ministry (some full time, some part time) in four very different communities in Southampton and London. At times I have had a parallel career in broadcasting, communication and writing."

Christian ministry in the twenty first century is consistently requiring us to learn new skills, and to look from fresh perspectives. (When COVID appeared, we had to do that very rapidly.) I'm greatly looking forward to working with clergy and lay people across the diocese as we support each other in doing the best we can for God and his Gospel."

Rob will be taking up the post that was recently vacated by Richard Cooke. He will be starting on 11 April.