

Praying as a Church

Every Sunday, and on a Wednesday morning at St Edmund's, we meet several times for prayer and worship. The 8 am services are a quiet start to the day - rather than say "I can't come to church because ..." come at the start of the day instead. Evensong from the Book of Common Prayer lasts less than an hour, but is a useful space to pray. Some people get stressed that the choir do the work and they feel excluded - rather, use the space, the music, the peace, to be quiet before God. A small group meet at 8 am every Saturday morning in St Edmund's to pray - could you join them? Services need support.

We will have Evening Prayer at 4 pm on Tuesday 30 May at St Matthew's, and Morning Prayer at 9 am on Thursday 1 June at St Edmund's. Will you come and join me? Looking forward, if I organised myself to say Morning/Evening prayer at set times across the two churches during the week would people come and join me (perhaps just commit yourself once or twice a week)?

Across our two parishes we currently have one Prayer Group and one Housegroup, plus additional groups at Lent and Advent. Would others be interested in being part of something? Could a small group meet, perhaps fortnightly, to pray for those who are simply names on our prayer lists? Could a group pray for our schools and our children's work?

If I organised a Quiet Day somewhere nearby, would people be interested in coming? If I organised an afternoon walk (?3 miles) once a month with tea and prayer in a country church, would people be interested in coming?

Please talk to me, email me, drop me a note, enthuse me ...

Peter Barham - revpeterbarham@btinternet.com - 01332 551404

The Parishes of St Edmund, Allestree
and St Matthew, Darley Abbey



Once again, the Archbishops have challenged us to be part of this global **Wave of Prayer** between Ascension Day (Thursday 25 May) and Pentecost (Sunday 4 June). You can watch Archbishop Justin's introductory video (and find lots of resources and ideas) at <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

This leaflet contains some ideas for individual prayer, details of the services and events across through this period, and some ideas as to how we can deepen the prayer life of our church. Please read it, use it, and enthuse about it. Tell me what you would find helpful, what you would like to do, what you will support.

To quote Martin Luther ... "To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing."

Praying as an individual

When preparing people for Confirmation (and a reminder that we will be starting a course shortly for Confirmation in September) I include this section:

Prayer

- builds our friendship with God. Like any relationship, our relationship with God will develop and grow as we spend quality time on building the friendship.
- was a vital part of Jesus' own ministry. How can we neglect it?
In the morning, while it was still very dark, Jesus got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. (Mark 1.35)
- we grow more like the Lord as we spend more time with him.
- prayer strengthens us for the spiritual battle.
- through prayer God's power is released in the world, in the Church and in our own lives.

People struggle ... Peter needs the discipline of regular daily services (and even then often fails)

Make time, make space

- little and often might well be easier,
- try and make a regular time, but use those few minutes of spare time that open up in our days,
- do not be sidetracked (including by people in church who seem unable to concentrate quietly!),
- turn off the telly, put the phone away - although quiet music can help - pray as you sing,
- use a picture, a candle, make a special place in your home,
- what works now may not work in 5 years time,
- join others,
- ask for advice.

Arrow-prayers a quick "Help" to God when needed ... "what do I say in this situation?", "what do I do now?", "Help this person", "Help me" ...

Don't forget to say "THANK YOU"

You may want a structure, with a psalm and some bible readings - you can find it here, and can download an app for your phone at <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/join-us-in-daily-prayer.aspx>

If you can't always put what you want to say into words, then there are many excellent books of prayers - ask in the Cathedral shop if you need ideas - and plenty of topical prayers on the Church of England website. Daily Bible Reading notes are available, to help you read a passage of the bible every day, to understand it, and to pray with it. Talk to Julie or to Val McFarlane if you want to know more.

You may find it helpful to keep a simple Journal - what did I pray for?, who did I pray for? - and you look back and see God answers prayer. A couple of years ago, a friend in Northumberland filled her church for a weekend with different Prayer Stations and ideas to help us pray - shall I organise that for a weekend in the autumn?

Events

Ascension Day Eucharist on Thursday 25 May,
7.30 pm at St Matthew's. Come and pray together.
The church at Swadlincote have a **Prayer Kite Festival**
and Afternoon Tea on Saturday 3 June (posters in church).
Can anyone go (it's only 15 miles) and get some ideas?
There is a **Cathedral Event** on Sunday 4 June at 3 pm.