

Diocesan Day of Prayer Review October 2025

From noon Wednesday 1st – noon Thursday 2nd October, the Diocese of Lichfield gathered (mainly) virtually to pray. Across 45 different prayer sessions we specifically prayed for;

- All 5 of the Marks of Mission (Teach, Tell, Tend, Transform, and Treasure)
- All but one of our link dioceses overseas (Cork, Cloyne, and Ross; Hyderabad; Matlosane; Melanesia; Nordkirche; and Qu'appelle)
- 16 of our 27 Deaneries (with the remaining 11 all prayed for at different points)
- Various Diocesan Communities, those of Chaplains, Evangelists, Pioneers, and St Chad
- Various diocesan teams and ministries like Education, Spirituality, Strengthening Communities, and Vocations and Training
- Other diocesan initiatives like Dovedale House, Encounter, the Mother's Union, and Shallowford House
- Other things well worth praying for like Persecuted Christians overseas and those suffering from Addiction mainly closer to home
- ...and plenty of things besides!

At least at one point each one of our Chaplaincies, Church Schools, Churches, and Fresh Expressions were specifically prayed for, together with all the faithful officers who make our deaneries function, and each one of our diocesan staff.

At least 77 unique people joined the 'zoom room' for at least one of the sessions, not counting the people attending the Morning and Evening Prayers at the Cathedral, or the glorious 'Cloud of Witnesses' that at one point joined us from Rocester Mother's Union.

I owe a debt of grateful thanks to all those who made the Day possible, including all those who led one or supported any of the 45 sessions (and in some cases, quite a few of them!). Also to several people that I know were prayerfully supporting the Day behind the scenes even though I may never have seen them on screen. My particular thanks go to;

- **Bishop Jan**, who led both our Opening and Closing prayers (and her Cathedral colleagues shared two more sessions along the way)
- **Denise Keen**, my predecessor whose dedication to continuing to support the Day of Prayer extended to joining us in the early hours of the morning from the balcony of her holiday accommodation in Gran Canaria!
- **Family**. With significant electrical work taking place in St Mary's House, this time I welcomed the invitation to spend the 24 hours in the conservatory of my sister and her family. So I specifically owe thanks to my nephew Daniel after denying him access to the intriguing lego that was just out of shot for much of the 24 hours, my niece Emily for regularly keeping me topped up with caffeine and snacks to keep me going, and my sister Hannah and brother-in-law Andy for doing very similar as well as each leading times of prayer of their own.
- **Flexibility**. Shoehorning 45 different prayer slots into 24 hours requires a considerable amount of grace and love from people happy to tweak the time of a session they are prepared to lead, and especially those willing to do so at some of the

less in-demand times. The day simply couldn't happen if people were only willing to pray in daylight times, and I am especially grateful to the natural night owls and early birds, and even more so those who 'spread their wings' at such times when far from natural for them to do so. Those numerous folk who appeared both late Wednesday evening and early Thursday morning did not go unnoticed.

- **Leaders (New) ((at least to me)).** We welcomed Christine Simpson and Liz Farley in praying for Hodnet and West Bromwich Deaneries respectively. Similarly our prayers for Chaplains and their ministry were this time led by David Clark, and this time we specifically prayed for Church Wardens courtesy of Rushall's Bob Barnard. Charles Ruxton led us in some beautifully creative prayers of reflection just before midnight that left me with an image I think I will be holding for a long time to come. Craig Newton joined Steve Vince (more to follow) in praying for Shallowford House and Henry Hope stepped up to lead prayers for our link diocese of Nordkirche with Terry Bloor on a well-earned sabbatical. Gilbert David led prayers for our Companion Diocese of Hyderabad, then returned to lead prayers alongside Ben Whitmore for their deanery of Wednesbury. Helen Emery is new to Diocesan Staff as our Whole Life Discipleship Officer, and stepped up to lead the session on the Second Mark of Mission. This time my colleague leading the Staff Prayers was Jimm Rennie, handily placed on the schedule right before his own Deanery of Walsall. It was a privilege to pray alongside each of Ben, Bob, Charles, Christine, Craig, David, Gilbert, Helen, Henry, Jimm, and Liz; and I certainly hope that it won't be the last time that I do so.
- **Leaders (Returning).** Just as it's lovely to see new people either volunteering (or occasionally being volunteered 😊) to lead sessions, it's equally lovely to see people faithfully returning to lead sessions, DDOP after DDOP, many of them way before by my own time. So thank you to Alex, Carrie, Chris, Colin, Deb A, Deb T, Fi, Hannah, Helen, Jan, Jane, Jeanette, Julia, Jules, Lynne, Mandy, Nicky, Nigel, Simon, and Steve.
- **Mystery Folk.** I have no clue who 'Galaxy Tab' or 'Motorola' were when they joined us at various points but never turned their cameras or microphones on. But God DOES. Thank you for joining us, and, I don't doubt, your prayers.
- **Newcastle Numbers.** While not being aware of the specific attendances at the Cathedral, my thanks go to the good folk of Newcastle Deanery for highest number people in the zoom room over the day. So many folk were on screen and regularly praying I'd hesitate to identify a clear 'leader' for that session. They edged out Leek Deanery on plentiful attendance, so I can confidently say that the city of Stoke-on-Trent was surrounded in prayer!
- **Pastor Axel** from Germany, who this year was the first person to join me in the 'zoom room' and wished us on our way in the time that was to follow.
- **Steve Vince.** As well as leading or co-leading three separate sessions and supporting various others, Steve was easily the most-travelled participant of this iteration of the DDOP (and perhaps any previous one), prayerfully contributing at different points while located at the Cathedral, Shallowford House, his home, his Vicar's study, and finally the same vicar's sitting room for our Closing Prayers.

Richard Barrett, Day of Prayer Coordinator.