

Prayer calendar



DIOCESE OF
Bath & Wells

Living the story. Telling the story.

September 2020

Supported by prayer

I am writing this whilst receiving treatment in hospital, although by the time you read this, I hope that I may be back home having completed my first course of chemotherapy. The first thing I want to say, and I am sure this is echoed by so many, is what wonderful treatment and care I have received from everyone in the hospital. Their kindness, concern and professionalism are beyond words.

What is an unusual experience for me however, is that I have not been allowed to leave my room and the doors and windows have been kept firmly shut. Looking out of my window and craning my neck upwards I am just able to get a glimpse of the sky outside. Without that I would not know whether it was sunny or cloudy or raining outside.

Not that I am in any way complaining. I am safe and receiving the best care imaginable. It is also important whatever may happen to keep a sense of proportion. I vividly recall hearing Terry Waite speak when he came to the diocese on one occasion. It is unimaginable what he went through in those 1763 days in Beirut – the first four years of which were spent in solitary confinement, blindfolded, in a basement room with no windows, with no books or papers, chained to a radiator and sleeping on the floor. His courage and faith are remarkable and have inspired so many people since. I remember him once being interviewed and being asked what the happiest moment of his life was, one that he would cherish forever. He replied: 'When my blindfold was taken off during my release in November 1991. I'd been in the dark – in a basement or blindfolded - for years. For the first time in five years I saw the sky, the grass, the colours, and I felt the wind on my face.'

Terry Waite is also very clear about how the prayers of so many others supported him through those years. As I write I am also very aware of all the prayers that have and are being said for me. That is both humbling and encouraging and once I am getting out and about again, I look forward to being able to thank you personally.

With my thanks, best wishes and prayers for you,

The Right Revd Peter Hancock
Bishop of Bath and Wells

An enormous encouragement

The words of Ecclesiastes remind us that there is a time for everything, a season for every activity under the heavens. Each September we see the seasons move towards autumn and a new school year begins.

This year the return to school of children, young people and adults across our diocese, is uniquely challenging and yet enormously hopeful. The value of schools, as places of learning and of community, is rightly being regarded as of paramount importance across our nation. Education and care has been creatively provided in many new ways over the past few months, with many wonderful stories of selflessness and service.

We also know that many young people and families have deeply missed the routine, the support and fellowship of their school community. As schools welcome back their pupils, staff and volunteers, there is need for much prayer and support. We read in Mark's Gospel that Jesus took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them. As a worshipping community we can actively support and bless all who are returning to school through our prayers.

Please pray for a sense of peace, for those who may be facing a range of emotions about their own return or that of loved ones, for wisdom and grace for those who are offering leadership and support, for encouragement to those who are working, seen and unseen, to keep our schools functioning. Please also remember those who have been affected by the pandemic, not least through exam confusion and isolation.

To know that they are being seen, being supported, being prayed for will be an enormous encouragement and a blessing for all in schools across the diocese. Thank you for your prayerful and practical support as this school year commences. Let us pray that this year God will open up new conversations and exciting ways of schools and church communities working together for good.

Ed Gregory
Diocesan Director of Education

Tue 1	We pray for Sharon Kindleysides who begins her new role as chief executive and diocesan secretary for the Diocese of Bath and Wells this week. We pray for wisdom and discernment as she settles into the post.	Tue 15	We pray for the national Ministry Experience Scheme and especially for the placements in our own diocese, for those who work with them, teach them and mentor them.
Wed 2	We pray today for Tom and Farhad, the latest two pioneers to join the diocese. As they listen to residents in their new contexts, may God clearly show them where the Spirit is already at work and help them join in.	Wed 16	Creator Spirit, mighty wind of God. You brood over our lives and speak new life into our chaos. Blessed is the Holy One who kindles light in the darkness.
Thu 3	We pray for everyone heading back to school this week: teachers and staff, children, volunteers, governors and those who serve in other ways. We pray for the diocese education team and MAT staff.	Thu 17	As the church remembers the life of Hildegard of Bingen, we pray for all those who have a vision for the future of the church, particularly those working in the arts and music.
Fri 4	We pray for our Bishop, Peter, his family, friends and all who love him, as he continues to receive treatment for Acute Myeloid Leukaemia. May they all know God's peace.	Fri 18	On this day in 1809 the Royal Opera House in London opens. We pray for all those involved in the live entertainment industry, still negatively affected by venue closures and lack of freelance opportunities.
Sat 5	On this, international day of charity, we pray for all those who tirelessly work in the charity sector. We pray for continued funding and support for all the vital work and research they do.	Sat 19	Today our Area and Lay Deans gather for an away day. We pray for God's encouragement and inspiration as they continue to guide our deaneries.
Sun 6	Today the church remembers Allen Gardiner, Founder of the South American Mission Society 1851. We pray for our brothers and sisters across South America, may God bless them in work, rest and play.	Sun 20	Awaken us to your glory. Restore a gentleness of touch. Awaken us to your glory. Bring us an awareness of you. Awaken us to your glory.
Mon 7	This UK Youth Mental Health Day, we pray for all those affected by poor mental health. Especially for young people starting new courses in education or looking for apprenticeships and employment.	Mon 21 Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist Angels	On this, International Day of Peace, we pray for all those who strive to bring peace to our world. We pray for countries that are not at peace and that God will bring wisdom to world leaders.
Tue 8	We celebrate the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary. O Mary of all women, you are the chosen one, Who, ancient prophets promised, would bear God's only Son; All Hebrew generations prepared the way to thee, That in your womb the God-man might come to set us free.	Tue 22	Today is the Autumn Equinox. For the promise of harvest contained within a seed we thank you. For the oak tree within an acorn, the bread within a grain, the apple within a pip, the mystery of nature gift wrapped for us to sow, we thank you.
Wed 9	We pray for all our Church Treasurers as they continue to develop strategies around giving, for the diocese's stewardship advisers and Gary Watson, giving and funding adviser.	Wed 23	Teach us, dear lord, to number our days; that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Oh, satisfy us early with thy mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad in all our days.
Thu 10	On World Suicide Prevention day, we pray for those affected by hopelessness as well as people dealing with suicidal thoughts. We ask that you provide them with comfort and guidance, and the placement of a support system in their life.	Thu 24	Today we pray for those who feel lost, adrift in the ocean of life. May God be their lighthouse, their harbour and their home.
Fri 11	We pray for all Readers in the diocese, who are finding new and imaginative ways to minister at this time. We especially think of those who are ministering in churches which are in vacancy and for those who are starting their training at Sarum this month.	Fri 25	Come Lord, come down, come in, come among us. Come as the wind to move us, come as the light to prove us, come as the night to rest us, come as the storm to test us, come as the sun to warm us, come as the stillness to calm us, come lord, come down, come in, come among us.
Sat 12	Today sees the first gathering of the second cohort of Holy Rumpus students. We pray they will grow in trust of each other whether they are meeting face to face or virtually.	Sat 26	We pray for all those who will be ordained deacon or priest this week. May God richly bless their ministry and mission.
Sun 13	On this, Roald Dahl Day, we pray for children, families and youth workers across the diocese. We pray for opportunities to minister in schools and through uniformed	Sun 27	We pray today for the Street Pastor teams we have in the diocese, as they seek to show the love of God through service in their communities.
Mon 14 Holy Cross Day	Today we pray for our Zambia Link, for the churches and projects that the diocese supports. We pray for a continued flourishing of friendship and mission.	Mon 28	Today we pray for clergy who are changing roles, retiring or moving on, especially for Catherine Sourbut Groves who has been appointed as the next Archdeacon of Lindisfarne in the Diocese of Newcastle.
		Tue 29 Michael and All Angels	Today we celebrate Michael and All Angels. Allow more and more thoughts of your thinking to come into our hearts, day by day, till there at last shall be an open road between you and us, and your angels may go up and down among us, so that we may be in your heaven, even while we are upon your earth.
		Wed 30	As the church remembers Jerome, translator in the 5 th century, we pray for people who continue to work in Bible translation so everyone can have the word of God in their own language.

Send your prayer requests to: comms@bathwells.anglican.org
 Anglican Cycle of Prayer: www.anglicancommunion.org/prayer