



‘Prayer is where the action is’

John Wesley



During this **Year of Prayer** our aim is to deepen and strengthen the connection between our time of personal, individual prayer and our corporate prayer with others. We hope there will be many opportunities to grow in prayerfulness and to develop our spirituality. We hope too that the fruit of this growth will be seen in us praying for each other, not just during organised times of prayer and worship but in our conversations over coffee after church, outside the Black Cat tea-room, indeed wherever we share life together.

Whether representing the Church as a PCC member, leading a Home Group or other church activity, many of you reading this will have particular opportunities to take a lead in making prayer not only your own but also our people's first instinct. As you look at the list of activities and aids to prayer below can I personally encourage you to take a step of faith with me this year by committing to trying out what is on offer as together we go deeper in prayer.

1. A program of **teaching throughout this year on prayer** beginning with The Lord's Prayer.
 - The Lord's Prayer series will follow the outline of teaching available via the 24/7 prayer movement with free-to-access teaching videos and study notes available on line <https://www.prayercourse.org>



2. Lent Course based on Hope 18

- Access to study notes available as a free download here: ctbi.org.uk/lent

3. Developing ‘Prayer Triplets’

- Prayer Triplets are a simple and effective way of developing our own prayer life and encouraging others too. The idea is to find two friends whom you can meet with regularly (weekly preferably) to pray for each other and for the wider world. Within your Triplet you can share with each other in confidence and have the invaluable support of friends who can respond to any urgent prayer requests you share with them.
- A guide to how to develop your own Triplet along with a useful 12-week outline to help you get started is available here: <http://www.neighbourhoodprayer.net/content/pages/documents/1348221860.pdf>

4. **Hope 18 & Thy Kingdom Come**

During this year we want to actively encourage all at St John's to participate in this **church-wide initiative across Eastbourne**. This will include several key events in the year ahead.

5. **Parish 'Pilgrimage' and Prayer Walks**

- Pilgrimages have always been an important part of the path of prayer, with the experience of journey, arrival at a holy place, worshipping together and then returning home again refreshed and renewed.
- On the **23 June** we have a pilgrimage planned culminating in a service of Communion at Chichester Cathedral. There will be a variety of options for people of all abilities, including an 11-mile route from Bury to Chichester Cathedral.
- In addition we plan to 'Beat the bounds' of Meads: regular prayer walks around the Parish.

6. **Actively promoting our weekly and monthly prayer times**

If you are not already a regular at one of our weekly or monthly prayer times why not choose one that might work for you and try it out:

- Prayer Plus – an hour of prayer followed by breakfast, 8.30 - 9.30am, third Saturday every month.
- Quiet Prayer – Half-an-hour of quiet prayer in the chapel each Wednesday, 9.30-10am.
- Monday Prayer – Half-an-hour of prayer and opening the scripture together every week, 9-9.30am.

7. **Promotion of the Diocesan Prayer Course called 'Finding God in All Things'.**

8. **Developing a Rule of Life**

- For each of us to have a Way of Living is important if our life of prayer is going to be ordered and disciplined and is going to change the way we live our lives and engage with others and the wider world. There will be practical material on the Diocesan website about how to make a **Rule of Life** which could make this Year of Prayer life-changing and life-enhancing for us.

The material, written by Bishop Martin, is called 'IHS: A Way of Living'.

NB. Many of these resources are easily accessed and free online. If you don't have access to a computer or you find any difficulty with downloading the material then speak to the church office who will be pleased to print off anything you need.

Giles Carpenter, *Vicar*